



# **SITE COORDINATOR TOOLKIT**

**Communities In Schools of Chicago**



Communities  
In Schools

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Chicago

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Dear Site Coordinators,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year!

We are so excited to be working with you all and with a wonderful array of schools throughout the city. In the often thankless work of carefully cultivating partnerships, scheduling services, and taking that “extra step” for your students, you show yourselves daily to be unsung but very real heroes for Chicago’s schoolchildren. Through your work, students are able to access essential services in priority need areas, enabling them to learn more effectively, stay in school, and prepare for life. You are making a difference, right now. Here at Communities In Schools of Chicago, we are honored and excited to support your work.

Inside this toolkit you will find best practice suggestions and helpful tools for:

- Assessing your school’s priorities
- Coordinating services
- Evaluating program impact
- Nurturing long-term relationships with community organizations

We hope that this guide will be a valuable resource and reference-point for your work throughout the year.

Here is to a great school year and many years of strong partnership!

Sincerely,

Your Communities In Schools of Chicago Partnership Team

## Statement on COVID-19

School Partners:

These are highly uncertain times. There seems to be much we do not know.

At Communities In Schools of Chicago, we do know, however, that our top priority is your safety and well-being. We want to make sure that each school community stays healthy and we can do our part in helping our whole city and nation reach a new normal. CIS of Chicago believes in the power of **relationships** - and we use these nurturing connections to surround students with a community of support.

We also know that relationships are fundamental. During this school year, we will continue to build on virtual communities so we can support one another in addition to supporting our families and students. Our commitment to each other – and to all our partners – will remain strong. This commitment continues to be for the long-term.

In times of crisis, communication is key. We want to encourage as much communication as possible. Strong communication will help us stay close, connected, and better able to serve your schools and students – and each other.

While the COVID-19 crisis keeps us from being “In” schools with the same regularity we once had, the Partnership Team continues to build relationships with students, families, and teachers to provide vital services and support with virtual learning and emotional well-being.

With gratitude for all you do –

Your Communities In Schools of Chicago Partnership Team

## How Does CIS of Chicago Work?

### About CIS of Chicago

Communities In Schools of Chicago is an affiliate of the Communities In Schools national network whose work is active in 25 states and the District of Columbia. At CIS of Chicago, we believe that every student, regardless of race, gender, ability, zip code, or socioeconomic background has what they need to realize their full potential in school and beyond. We walk by their side, in their communities, to challenge the systems and barriers that stand between them and their success in life. Our core values are impact, partnerships, social justice, and integrity.

**Our Mission:** To surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. **Our Vision:** To ensure that every public-school student in Chicago graduates from high school prepared to succeed.

### What Does This Mean in Practice?

*CIS of Chicago is your strategic partner!*

To strengthen service quality and partnership building skills, we provide schools and community partners with **tools, best practices, and training.**

*We want to support you!*

**We train school staff in** identifying priorities, accessing and coordinating services, gauging service effectiveness, cultivating and appreciating community partnerships, promoting brand awareness of CIS of Chicago, and maintaining communication.

**We also teach our community partners** best practices on topics such as content creation, social-emotional learning, cultural responsiveness, program impact, and coordination of learning beyond the classroom.

Once school leaders identify their priorities for the whole school, we work with our network of community partners to connect services to meet those needs. Programs fall within four core areas: the arts, behavioral and mental health, college and career readiness, and health and wellness. In addition to providing whole-school support to all students, CIS of Chicago works intensively with students identified in a growing number of schools. At 30 schools, we embed a full-time, master's level mental health professional, a Student Supports Manager, to provide one-on-one guidance and other intervention strategies to a group of 40-50 students. Of the more than 3,000 students we have supported in this way since Fall 2009:

- 97 percent of 12th graders graduated.
- 95 percent of K-11 students were promoted to the next grade.
- Fewer than 1 percent of students have dropped out.

## **Partnership Expectations**

Your school administration agrees to collaborate with Communities In Schools (CIS) of Chicago and its community partners to provide coordinated, school-based services to address the needs of students and their families from **August 2021-July 2022**.

A CIS of Chicago school partner is a school committed to building positive relationships with their students to help them stay in school and graduate by 1) actively assessing school and student needs, 2) building the capacity of school staff, and 3) utilizing CIS of Chicago's network of community partners to schedule programs for students, staff, and parents that address school community needs.

### **The Essential Partnership Expectations**

These are baseline items that all CIS of Chicago partner schools should anticipate completing in any given school year. Once these essential items have been fulfilled, your assigned School Partnership Specialist will work with you on capacity building and growth in other areas.

1. Connect at least four unique programs from the CIS of Chicago partner network to your school's student, staff or parent/family communities.
2. Observe at least one CIS of Chicago connected programs in your school/for your students and provide feedback through the CIS of Chicago Observation Form (linked in the Connected Services Log).
3. Annually have appropriate representation from your school at a minimum of one training or school partner convening held by CIS of Chicago (ACTIVATE).
4. Provide CIS of Chicago with regular updates about connected programs and services through maintenance of your school's Connected Services Log. Entries should include agency and service name, date of service, grade level and number of students served, and program status.

### **School Role and Responsibilities**

- Access programs through CIS of Chicago's provider network that address identified school priorities. These programs should align with your expressed priorities.
- Designate one or more staff persons to serve as the Site Coordinator(s) for this partnership. This individual should have authority to make decisions regarding the introduction of support services into the school. This person should not be the principal and should also be a full-time staff member.
- Be responsive and accessible to the CIS of Chicago School Partnership Specialist assigned to your school. We ask that the Site Coordinator(s) respond within 48 hours to communications.
- Ensure that classroom teachers remain present in the classroom during any programs provided by community partners encourage the teachers to actively participate in the program to reinforce student learning.
- Share feedback on the partnership through surveys and other data sharing methods.
- Maintain consistent communication with teachers and staff regarding community partners and their programs.

- Provide necessary support to service providers (e.g., arranging meeting spaces, distributing consent forms).

### **CIS of Chicago Role and Responsibilities**

- Work with school Site Coordinator(s) to address your school's priorities through targeted program referrals.
- Designate a dedicated School Partnership Specialist who guides the process of accessing and managing relationships with community partners.
- Be responsive and accessible to the school Site Coordinator(s) and Principal.
- Provide tools and trainings to enhance the effectiveness of program connections and offer opportunities to network with other CIS of Chicago school partners.
- Offer technical assistance to support schools in accessing services or troubleshooting challenges related to service coordination and program quality.
- Consistently communicate with the school to assess the partnership's strength, establish areas for improvement, and set goals for better serving the needs of students, faculty, and families.
- CIS of Chicago will aid in whole school partnership awareness through print materials, in-person meetings, and presentations.

### **Community Partner Role and Responsibilities**

- Work closely with teachers, support staff, the Site Coordinator(s), and other service providers to address student and family needs.
- Maintain a schedule for the provision of services and inform the Site Coordinator(s) of any scheduling problems.
- Attend requested school meetings when possible.
- Provide the school and CIS of Chicago with any feedback from the school community on program quality.



## A COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF CHICAGO REPORT

### CIS OF CHICAGO COMPLETES TWO-YEAR, GOLD-STANDARD EVALUATION OF ITS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

#### Results Verify Significant Improvement in Students' Math and Reading Scores

Communities In Schools (CIS) of Chicago is a dropout prevention organization that works. We help students stay in school, do well academically and graduate. For the 2015-2016 school year, our model is active at 122 Chicago public schools.

In fall 2015, CIS of Chicago learned results from an in-depth evaluation of our Partnership program, which focuses on connecting a range of support services and programs provided by community partner organizations to the city's public school students. The program was evaluated via a randomized control trial study – the gold standard of social science research. It was conducted by Professor David Figlio, director of the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University and a leading expert in the evaluation of education policies and practices.

CIS of Chicago has carried out the Partnership program work evaluated in Professor Figlio's study for more than 20 years.

The Partnership program, along with the Intensive program, constitute the core of our organization's programmatic work. The Intensive program places a full-time CIS of Chicago social worker in a school to coordinate support programs for all students and to provide in-depth case management to targeted students at serious risk of dropping out.

The central question of Professor Figlio's multi-year evaluation of the Partnership program asked: What impact does CIS of Chicago's Partnership program, which focuses on linking a variety of social, emotional, health and enrichment support programs and services to schools, have on students' core academic achievement and attendance?

All student data examined in the study were for the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years. Following are key findings.

**MAIN FINDING** The main finding from the study is that CIS of Chicago's program of connecting non-academic support programs and services to schools improves student achievement in math and reading. The term "achievement in math and reading" means that schools included in the study, and which partnered with CIS of Chicago during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years, saw an educationally and statistically significant greater proportion of their students perform proficiently in math and reading on the Illinois Standard Achievement Test (ISAT) compared to a group of schools that were examined in the study, but which did not partner with CIS of Chicago during 2012-2013 or 2013-2014. Students performing proficiently in math and/or reading in elementary school are considered by the Illinois State Board of Education to be on track for future academic success.

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**MORE THAN 850,000  
CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL  
STUDENTS HAVE BEEN POSITIVELY  
IMPACTED BY CIS OF CHICAGO  
AND ITS WORK CONNECTING  
NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORT  
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO  
SCHOOLS.**

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**MAJOR OBSERVATIONS** At the end of the two-year study, schools in partnership with CIS of Chicago saw almost 45 percent of their students score proficiently in reading on the ISAT compared to less than 40 percent for schools not partnered with CIS of Chicago. Similarly, almost 53 percent of students at CIS of Chicago partner schools scored proficiently in math during Year Two of the study, compared to only 47.3 percent of students in non-CIS of Chicago schools. These findings were statistically significant at the 95 percent and 90 percent confidence levels respectively.

**CIS OF CHICAGO MODEL** All 122 Chicago public schools in partnership with CIS of Chicago in 2015-2016 will benefit from our Partnership program, whose impact on student math and reading achievement has now been verified by the rigorous evaluation outlined in this paper. Five of these partner schools will also benefit from the work of a full-time CIS of Chicago social worker. This CIS of Chicago staff member will implement the full Intensive program of case managing at-risk students and linking all students to a variety of support services.

**PROGRAM COSTS** CIS of Chicago's core program model, which was analyzed in this evaluation study and found to improve student performance in math and reading, is highly cost-effective. During the 2015-2016 academic year, for example, CIS of Chicago will connect an estimated 50,000 Chicago public school students to the same types of support programs and services in which students attending the 18 schools analyzed by Professor Figlio participated.

With CIS of Chicago's FY16 operating budget anticipated to be \$2.4 million, this translates to a per-student cost of \$48. Other educational interventions that deliver similar results to the CIS of Chicago program, often cost \$1,000 or more per student.

**CIS NATIONAL** CIS of Chicago's national organization, Communities In Schools, has commissioned two independent studies of the impact of our Intensive program. An initial five-year longitudinal study by the research group ICF International found that the full Intensive program of service linkage and case management results in a statistically significant increase in students: (a) graduating on time from high school and (b) staying in school. As part of CIS National's ongoing evaluation, a second study of the Intensive program, undertaken by MDRC, is expected to be released in 2016.

**NEXT STEPS** CIS of Chicago intends to use the findings of Professor Figlio's study for a variety of purposes. During the next year, the organization will share the results of the study with our funders, school and community partners, and Communities In Schools affiliates across the country. CIS of Chicago also intends to leverage the study's findings to inform long-term strategy and resource allocation decision-making.





# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CIS OF CHICAGO PROGRAM EVALUATION

Here are the responses to the most frequently asked questions about the formal evaluation of CIS of Chicago's Partnership program.

### How were schools chosen to participate in the study?

During the winter and spring of 2012, CIS of Chicago conducted a search for Chicago public schools to join its network, starting in the 2012-2013 academic year. A total of 92 Chicago public schools applied for consideration. A team of CIS of Chicago staff reviewed each of these 92 schools' applications; team members also conducted follow-up interviews with the principal and other key leaders at each school that applied. Of the 92 applicant schools, 47 were determined to be good fits for CIS of Chicago partnership.

### What factors were used to determine if schools were well matched for CIS of Chicago partnership?

The selection team relied on a set of related criteria that it had used to guide similar new partner searches in previous years. Each school was rated on a combination of important factors, including: its vision for partnering with CIS of Chicago; the need of its students and school community; the strength of leadership demonstrated by the principal and other key staff; and evidence of strong communication channels between the school and external partners.

### Were all 47 good-fit schools ultimately selected to join the CIS of Chicago network in 2012-2013?

No. Twenty of the 47 schools were randomly chosen to join the CIS of Chicago network in fall 2012. The other 27 schools in the pool were not selected.

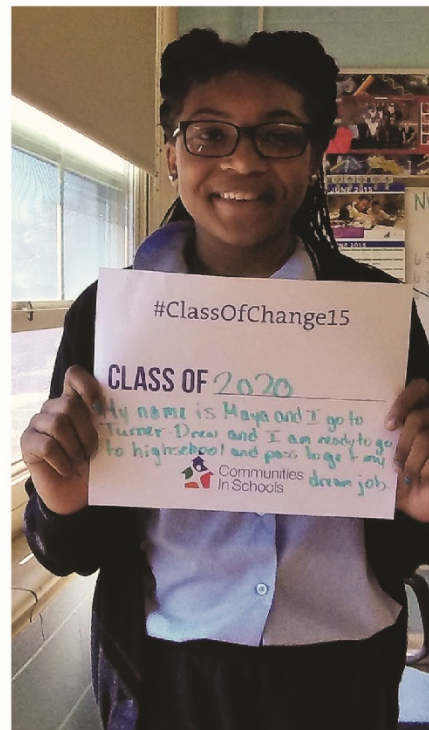
### Why were the 20 partner schools chosen randomly? Why not just choose the 20 best schools from the pool of 47 good-fit schools?

CIS of Chicago, with the assistance of Professor Figlio of Northwestern University, designed a lottery to choose CIS of Chicago's 20 new partners from the larger group of 47 schools. Through this Randomized Control Trial approach, the 20 schools randomly selected to join the CIS of Chicago network effectively became an "Experimental Group" that the Northwestern researcher used to gauge the impact of the CIS of Chicago "treatment" on a variety of student outcomes. The other 27 schools not selected to work with CIS of Chicago served as a Control Group. Student outcomes between the 20 Partner Schools (Experimental Group) and the 27 Control Group schools could thus be compared and, through advanced statistical analysis, enable Professor Figlio to pinpoint the impact of CIS of Chicago partnership on student outcomes. Schools

in the Control Group were invited to re-apply for CIS of Chicago Partnership in the future, through an expedited process, if/when funding became available to further expand the organization's school partner network.

### What is the benefit of using a Randomized Control Trial design for the study?

Randomized Control Trials (RCT) are the gold standard of research. They have long been used in medical trials and more recently have been adopted by social-science researchers and education scholars. The reason RCT studies are considered to be best practice in research is because they are able to show causality between an intervention and an outcome. In the case of this study, the treatment that Professor Figlio tested was whether CIS of Chicago partnership improved student outcomes.





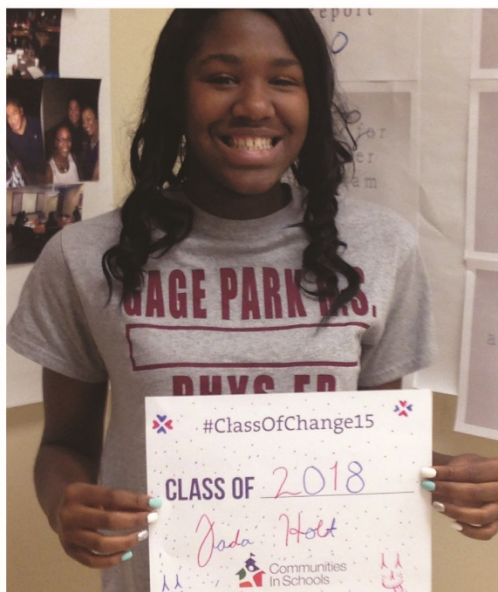
### What specific student outcomes did the study measure?

The study focused on measuring two main outcomes: (1) student proficiency in math and reading, as reflected on the spring 2013 and spring 2014 Illinois Standard Achievement Test (ISAT); and (2) student attendance rates during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years. ISAT testing data from more than 10,000 students was examined in both years of the study to gauge CIS of Chicago’s impact on math and reading; data from more than 16,500 students was collected from Chicago Public Schools for both years of the study to determine CIS of Chicago’s impact on student attendance. Note that only students in grades 3-8 participated in ISAT testing in spring 2013 and 2014, whereas attendance data is collected for all elementary school students.

### Even though the 20 CIS partner schools in the study were randomly selected from the larger pool of 47 good-fit schools, isn’t it possible that those 20 selected schools were substantially different from the 27 Control Group schools — potentially biasing the results of the study?

Yes. To guard against that possibility, the study analyzed the 20 CIS of Chicago partner schools against the 27 Control Group schools that were not selected to be CIS of Chicago partners. That analysis showed that at the start of the study period, in fall 2012:

- All 47 schools were K-8 institutions;
- The 20 CIS of Chicago Partner Schools and 27 Control Group Schools were nearly identical in terms of their:
  - Low-income student percentage;
  - English as a Second Language population;
  - Percentage of students meeting reading and math proficiency standards on standardized tests the year before the study began (i.e., 2011-2012); and
  - Percentage of Special Needs students.
- The 20 CIS of Chicago Partner Schools differed somewhat (but not at levels determined to be statistically significant) from the 27 Control Group Schools in the following ways:
  - CIS of Chicago Partner Schools had a higher percentage of African American students; Control Group Schools had a higher percentage of Latino students; and,
  - CIS of Chicago Partner Schools had a higher percentage of students new to the school at the start of the 2012-2013 academic year than Control Group Schools did.



### Were any other safeguards built into the evaluation to further limit the chance of the study reporting inflated benefits of the CIS of Chicago program model to students at the 20 Partner Schools?

Yes. The study took an Intent-to-Treat approach in reporting all student outcomes. This means that the ISAT math and reading outcomes examined in the study related to any student who was enrolled in one CIS of Chicago partner schools on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of school during the 2012-2013 academic year. Thus, even if a student was present on the twentieth day of 2012-2013, but then transferred later in the year and did not return to that school or another CIS of Chicago partner included in the study during the remainder of 2012-2013 or 2013-2014, his/her ISAT results were nonetheless included in calculating the impact of the CIS of Chicago “treatment.” Using an Intent-to-Treat approach is a standard of social science research. Applying this conservative approach led to a moderate reduction in the observed benefit of CIS of Chicago partnership on students’ math and reading achievement.

### Did the historic closing of more than 50 CPS schools during the 2013-14 academic year impact the study?

Yes. Two of the 20 CIS of Chicago partner schools included in the study, as well as one of the 27 Control Group schools, closed before the start of the 2013-2014 academic year (Year Two of the study). Although Professor Figlio was able to obtain student test score data and attendance data (Continued on page 6)



Chart 1

Study Year	Measure	18 Partner Schools [CIS of Chicago]	26 Control Schools [non-CIS of Chicago]	Percentage Point Difference: Partner Schools vs. Control Schools	Relative Difference: Partner Schools vs Control Schools
Year One 2012-2013	Spring 2013 ISAT READING Proficiency	44.7% <sup>1</sup> of students proficient	41.4% of Students proficient	+3.3	8.0%
Year Two 2013-2014	Spring 2014 ISAT READING Proficiency	44% <sup>2</sup> proficient	39.7% proficient	+4.3 PPT	10.8%
Year One 2012-2013	Spring 2013 ISAT MATH Proficiency	48% <sup>3</sup> proficient	44.8% proficient	+3.2 PPT	7.1%
Year Two 2013-2014	Spring 2014 ISAT MATH Proficiency	52.9% <sup>3</sup> proficient	47.3% proficient	+5.6 PPT	11.8%

<sup>1</sup>Statistically significant at the 99 percent confidence level

<sup>2</sup>Statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level

<sup>3</sup>Statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level

(Continued from page 5) from 2012-2013 for students who attended these three schools when they were still open, he chose to not include that data in his final analysis. For this reason, the study results reported in this paper are based on student outcomes observed at 18 CIS of Chicago partner schools and 26 Control Group schools that were open during both 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. That said, the fundamental positive benefits of CIS of Chicago partnership held even when closed schools were included in the evaluation analysis.

**What specific positive student outcomes were observed at the 18 CIS of Chicago partner schools that were included in the study’s final analysis?**

As noted above in Chart 1, the study found that a higher percentage of students at CIS of Chicago partner schools performed proficiently in math and reading on the spring 2013 and spring 2014 ISAT tests.

In addition, several distinct groups of students continued by the second year of the study to derive even greater benefit from their schools partnering with CIS of Chicago†:

- More African American students – 11.4 percentage points greater – achieved proficiency in math on the spring 2014 ISAT compared to all African American students covered in the study that year.

- More Latino students – 4.3 percentage points greater – achieved proficiency in reading on the spring 2014 ISAT, compared to all Latino students covered in the study for that year.
- More low-income students – 4.7 percentage points greater – achieved proficiency in reading on the 2014 ISAT, compared to all low-income students included in the study for that year.

†All results presented in this section are statistically significant at the 95% confidence intervals.



Chart 2

Study Year	Measure	18 Partner Schools [CIS of Chicago]	26 Control Schools [non-CIS of Chicago Control]	Percentage Point Difference: Partner Schools vs. Control Schools	Relative Difference: CIS Schools vs Control Schools
Year One/2012-2013	% of students attending $\geq$ 95% of all school days	63.5% <sup>1</sup> meeting/exceeding threshold	60.5% meeting/exceeding threshold	+3.0 PPT	+4.9%
Year Two/2013-2014	% of students attending $\geq$ 95% of all school days	63.1%	63.9%	-.9 PPT	-1.3%

<sup>1</sup>Statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level

**What impact did CIS of Chicago have on student attendance?**

The study confirmed that CIS of Chicago partnership improved student attendance rates during year one of the study; however, these benefits were not observed in the second year of the study. Similarly, no distinct group of students (e.g., African American, Latino, low-income backgrounds) enjoyed attendance benefits in both years of the study as a result of attending one of the 18 CIS of Chicago partner schools analyzed in the study. See Chart 2.

**Overall, why are the results of the study important?**

The results of Professor Figlio’s study suggest that schools in partnership with CIS of Chicago for two years can expect four additional students per every 100 participating in standardized testing to achieve at proficiency levels in reading compared to schools not in partnership with CIS of Chicago. In mathematics, the comparable figure is 5 additional students achieving proficiency per 100 tested.

Because the partnership program is so cost-effective, it is possible for our organization to serve 1,000 students—close to the total enrollments of two average-size CPS elementary schools—for less than \$50,000 a year.

Note that the Illinois State Board of Education considers achieving proficiency in math and reading an important indicator of future academic success.

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**OF THE 40,000 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN GRADES 3 THROUGH 8 AT SCHOOLS SERVED BY CIS OF CHICAGO’S PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM, 1,720 MORE GAINED PROFICIENCY IN READING AND 2,240 MORE GAIN PROFICIENCY IN MATH.**

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**If you would like to learn more about Communities In Schools of Chicago, please call 312.829.2475, ext. 16.**

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[www.facebook.com/cischicago](https://www.facebook.com/cischicago)**



### **Does CIS of Chicago have other impact data from formal evaluations?**

Yes. As noted on page two, our national organization has commissioned two independent studies of the impact of our Intensive program. This program places a CIS of Chicago social worker full-time in schools to do two key things:

1. Implement CIS of Chicago's Partnership program of linking students to a variety of support services, which is the program whose impact Professor Figlio at Northwestern analyzed in the separate study outlined in this report; and
2. Case manage students identified by their teachers, principals and parents—up to 10 percent of a school's population—as being off track academically and significantly at risk of dropping out. Case management includes providing ongoing counseling, goal-setting sessions, academic and career counseling and extra-curricular opportunities to help targeted students improve their grades, attendance and behavior in school.

An initial five-year longitudinal study by the research group ICF International found that the full Intensive program of service linkage and case management results in a statistically significant increase in students: (a) graduating on time from high school and (b) staying in school. A second study of the Intensive program, undertaken by MDRC, is expected to be released in late 2016.

## Who Are the Players?

### Communities In Schools of Chicago

We create meaningful connections between schools unable to meet the full range of student needs and community organizations able to address those needs with a rich diversity of support resources. In the 2021-2022 school year, we will provide whole school supports to 175 schools by bringing in more than 1,000 programs and services from 200+ community organizations. These include nonprofits, corporations, individuals, and government agencies. Additionally, in 30 of our partner schools, we place a full-time, master's level mental health professional, a Student Supports Manager, to provide more intensive help to targeted students with high need. This program model, the Intensive Program, is 1) separate from the Partnership Program 2) application and interview based for acceptance 3) based on a cost-sharing model 4) not available to be joined mid-year.

### You - a CIS of Chicago Partner School!

Congratulations! You are now part of a network of 175 Chicago public schools with **access to programs and resources, tools, best practices, and training**. A CIS of Chicago school has access to a network of more than 200 organizations offering a range of programs and resources. CIS of Chicago creates meaningful connections between schools unable to meet the full range of student needs and community organizations able to address those needs with a rich diversity of no-cost support resources.

A CIS of Chicago partner school is a school committed to building positive relationships with their students to help them stay in school and graduate by:

1. Actively assessing school and student needs
2. Building the capacity of school staff
3. Utilizing CIS of Chicago's network of community partners to schedule programming for students, staff, and parents that address school community needs

*CIS of Chicago schools should expect to communicate often: communicate with teachers, communicate with community partners, and communicate with CIS of Chicago.*

### The Site Coordinator Team

Having multiple staff members on a Site Coordinator team can help with navigating complex school environments, implementing a wider range of targeted programming, and developing a more comprehensive understanding of changing needs within the school community. Site Coordinator (SC) teams also help build continuity of communication and leadership in case there is staff turnover. CIS of Chicago recommends team members take on a specific role on the team.

Site Coordinator team members can be school faculty members such as:

- Social workers
- Counselors



- Case managers
- Assistant principals
- Lead literacy teachers
- Teachers & teachers' aides
- Arts liaison
- Other support staff

### **The School Principal**

As members of the Site Coordination Team, principals set the tone for how a program is received and supported at the school. Principals:

- Bring together the right staff to play a role on the Site Coordinator Team.
- Authorize Site Coordinators to access and implement key programs and services through a variety of providers.
- Help develop plans for accessing a range of support services to address core student and family needs.
- Cultivate a school culture that is welcoming to external community partners.
- Aid in tracking which organizations are in the school building.
- Foster relationships with community partners that will lead to long-term partnerships.

## **Site Coordinator Role Description**

The **Site Coordinator** is the main liaison between the school and Communities In Schools (CIS) of Chicago as well as the school and external service providers. The Site Coordinator is an integral member of a successful CIS of Chicago and school partnership team and is someone that understands the needs of the student population and the school community at large in addition to being an organized relationship-builder. It is recommended that the school's Site Coordinator be someone other than the principal and must be a full-time staff member.

### **Site Coordinators should be an individual or team of people who:**

- Enjoys working on a team.
- Has excellent communication and organization skills.
- Has a deep understanding of the needs of the school community.
- Has the authority to make program decisions and/or has ongoing and active communication with school administration and/or leadership.
- Has a reasonable amount of time aside from or in coordination with their typical responsibilities to designate towards maintaining the CIS of Chicago partnership.

### **Benefits to being a CIS of Chicago Site Coordinator:**

- Opportunity to grow relationship building and strategic planning skills.
- Professional development opportunities.
- Networking and collaboration with other schools and Site Coordinators.
- Working to build resources and a community of support for your school community.
- Bolstering your already critical role as a promoter of high school graduation within your school community.

### **Key components to the Site Coordinator role include:**

#### **COMMUNICATION**

- Ongoing communication with CIS of Chicago, namely, your school's dedicated School Partnership Specialist.
  - Meet with CIS of Chicago at least three times per year at strategic times: beginning, middle and end of the school year.
  - Keep your School Partnership Specialist aware of the happenings in your school. This can be done via a formal touchpoint or through the Connected Services Log.
- Ongoing communication with appropriate staff within the school.
  - Work closely with school leadership/administration to agree on school priorities.
  - Give special consideration to methods and procedures to survey staff and students to determine these priorities.

- Ensure there is a feedback loop to allow school staff to communicate about scheduled program(s).

### REQUEST PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES/REFERRALS

- Help your School Partnership Specialist understand what your program needs are via email, phone or as part of your in-person meetings.
- Put us to work! Your CIS of Chicago Specialist can assist with opportunities to support your school community overall.

### CONNECT PROGRAMS

- Facilitate the connection of CIS of Chicago community partner programming to your school's students, families, and staff.
  - *Schools should plan to connect no fewer than four programs each school year as the baseline. These programs should align to the school's expressed priorities.*

### KEEP THE CONNECTED SERVICES LOG UP TO DATE

- Keep the school's Connected Services Log up to date (linked via Google).
  - Details needed here will include organization, program name, number and grade level of students served.
  - Update after each program as scheduled/completed or on a consistent schedule that works for you i.e., quarterly.

### OBSERVE PROGRAMS

- Observe and/or facilitate the opportunity for school personnel to observe community partner programming connected at your school. The CIS of Chicago Observation Form is linked within your school's Connected Services Log for your convenience. You may distribute this form to your colleagues as you see fit.
  - *Schools should plan to formally observe a program and provide feedback using the Observation Form at least once per academic year. This process can be completed by anyone within your school community (this does not include students or parent/family communities).*

### ATTEND ACTIVATE EVENTS

- The ACTIVATE training series is our suite of professional development and networking events offered to schools in the CIS network. These events are offered at no-cost to our school partners and range in scope, scale, and subject matter.
  - *Schools should plan to attend and/or ensure representation from the school at a minimum of one ACTIVATE event per academic year.*

### PROVIDE FEEDBACK!

- Tell CIS of Chicago what the school needs in terms of programs, capacity building, or other programming support; this is separate from the program observation process.



- Both Site Coordinators and principals have a formal opportunity each spring to complete a survey to give feedback to CIS of Chicago.

### UTILIZE THE CIS OF CHICAGO RESOURCE SITE

- The Communities In Schools of Chicago website houses our School Partner Resource Site, a password protected landing page for all things Partnership Program. Site Coordinators may use this website to access the Site Coordinator toolkit, a calendar of contemporary ACTIVATE events as well as other valuable tools and resources.
  - *To login, visit the following [webpage](#) (select “Login – For School Partners”).*
  - *The password to access this content is **educate** (all lowercase, no punctuation).*

## **Steps to Coordinating a Service: Choosing Priorities**

### **Step 1: Choosing Priorities**

Your time is valuable so you will want to be able to focus your energy on your school's top priorities. Here is a list of steps to help you do so:

- Talk with members of your school community. Your school's stakeholders have valuable insight as to their wants and needs, opportunities for curriculum connection as well as what types of programming would be most successful in practice.
- Conduct a needs assessment or use existing needs assessment data.
- Discuss your school's priorities with your School Partnership Specialist.
- Contact your CIS of Chicago School Partnership Specialist to discuss emerging concerns at your school.
- While your priorities cannot change throughout the year, we can refer whatever programming may be of interest/value to your school community even if said programming falls outside of your priority selections.

**NOTE:** Should you desire or require additional resources to choosing your school's priorities, please let your School Partnership Specialist know! We would be happy to assist in the creation of a new resource to meet your school's specific or emergent needs.

## Priority Tool 2021-2022

### 2021-2022 Priority List for Schools (school select 8)

School Name:

Arts & Culture		Health & Wellness		College & Career	
	Arts Residency (Long Term)		Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention		Career Awareness
	Dance Education		Eye Exams and Glasses		College Preparatory
	Music Education		Nutrition Education		Financial Education
	Visual Arts Education		Healthy Dating Relationships		Literacy Workshop
	Drama Education		Physical Activity Program		Mentoring
	In-School Performance		Physical Health Service		Social Science and Civic Engagement
	Arts & Culture Field Trip		Physical Wellness Education		STEM Programming
	Motivational Speaker		Safety Education and Emergency Preparedness		Tutoring
Behavioral and Mental Health			Sexual Health/Puberty	Notes:	
	Anti-Bullying/Cultural Responsiveness Education	Fundamental Needs			
	Counseling	Basic Amenities & Hygiene Items, Food & Clothing, School Supplies, and Other			
	Mental Health Education				
	Social Emotional Learning				
	Stress Management Education				

## Priority Tool 2021-2022 with Descriptions

### Arts

**Arts Residency**

*3+ sessions in any arts discipline.*

**Dance Education Workshop**

*Short-term program where students will move and learn about spatial awareness, dance, and dance concepts.*

**In-School Professional Performance**

*A performing arts group (e.g., music, dance, theater, spoken word) travels to your school to perform. The format may be for a large auditorium or individual classrooms.*

**Music Education Workshop**

*Short-term program where students will learn about musical concepts and participate in music making.*

**Drama Education**

*Short-term program where students will learn about theatrical concepts and participate in creative writing projects..*

**Arts & Culture Field Trip**

*Students travel to experience live performances or visual art in person. Busing may or may not be included.*

**Motivational Speaker**

*Programs encourage goal setting, making healthy decisions, and knowing that actions today can impact the future.*



## College and Career Readiness

### **Career Awareness**

*Opportunities for students to learn about various career opportunities and varied, often non-linear career paths.*

### **College Preparatory**

*These are programs centered around college planning e.g., the financial aid process, scholarships, and application processes.*

### **Financial Education**

*Students have the opportunity to learn more about credit, personal financial management, and basic banking concepts.*

### **Literacy Workshop**

*These programs are focused on helping students to improve their reading and writing. Services in this priority will include creative writing workshops, reading help, and family literacy nights.*

### **Mentoring**

*Programs under this priority focus on helping individual students achieve academically and improve their emotional well-being typically through a 1:1 model.*

### **Social Science & Civic Engagement**

*Programs that provide the skills, knowledge, and habits necessary to effectively contribute to and participate in the social, political, and economic life of their communities and world.*

### **STEM Programming**

*Programs under this priority area take an interdisciplinary approach to learning where rigorous academic concepts (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) are coupled with real world lessons.*

### **Tutoring**

*Tutoring programs focuses on-one one-one or small group tutoring services to enhance literacy and academic achievement.*



## Health

### **Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention**

*These are programs that promote and implement prevention and early intervention strategies to reduce the impact substance use disorders and promote mental health.*

### **Eye Exams and Glasses**

*Vision providers provide students with comprehensive eye exams, glasses, and eyeglass vouchers.*

### **Nutrition Education**

*Workshops offered on nutrition and wellness education. Workshops typically include tailored cooking demonstrations/food preparation, a meal or snack, and are interactive for all members of the family.*

### **Physical Activity Program**

*Small or large group recreational and exercise workshops.*

### **Physical Health Service**

*Wellness units provide physical exams, sports physical, immunizations, lab testing, hearing and vision screening.*

### **Physical Wellness Education**

*Encourages the balance of physical activity, nutrition and mental well-being to keep your body in top condition including Asthma management and oral health care.*

### **Safety Education and Emergency Preparedness**

*These programs prepare parents and students for both natural disasters (tornadoes, floods, etc.), medical emergencies (choking, seizures, burns, etc.) and strategies to promote crime prevention and public safety.*

### **Sexual Health/Puberty**

*Curriculum and workshops that provide education on topics such as puberty education, reproductive health, and healthy sexual behaviors.*



## Behavioral and Mental Health

### **Anti-Bullying/Cultural Responsiveness Education**

*Programs teach knowledge of bullying behaviors (an imbalance of power, purposeful, repetitive; includes cyberbullying) and skills to build safe environments. Programs can also teach knowledge of stereotypes, biases, human and civil rights and skills to create a culture of safety and inclusion.*

### **Counseling**

*Services include individual and group therapy.*

### **Mental Health Education**

*Workshops teach topics such as child/adolescent mental health, signs and symptoms of depression or suicidal ideation, youth trauma, and responding to self-harm. Most programs are education for adults.*

### **Social Emotional Learning**

*Partners across focus areas integrate SEL skill-building into the lessons. Programs labeled Social Emotional Learning have objectives primarily focused on teaching students skills to manage their own emotions, work with others, and set goals and make responsible decisions.*

### **Stress Management Education**

*Programs teach how to recognize, cope with, and manage stress.*

## Fundamental Needs

### **Fundamental Needs**

*Partners provide items, services and resources in the areas of hygiene, food & clothing, school supplies, and other needed areas.*

## Steps to Coordinating a Service: Scheduling

### Step 2: Scheduling

Identifying appropriate services, scheduling, and preparing other school staff for programming makes up the bulk of Site Coordinator responsibilities. Your CIS of Chicago School Partnership Specialist will be available to trouble-shoot or answer questions throughout this process. Here is a list of steps to take:

1. Based on your school's priority selections, obtain program referrals from your CIS of Chicago School Partnership Specialist.
  - *We realize "referral" has multiple meanings in the school setting, particularly for those working in the behavioral and mental health space. For CIS of Chicago, "referral" refers to a one pager detailing a program's goals, primary audience, scheduling instructions, and other logistical details. CIS of Chicago program referrals are in Google Document format.*
2. Get input from principal, teachers, and other relevant staff.
3. Schedule with agency.
4. Ensure and reserve the availability of all necessary rooms and equipment (auditorium, overhead projector, tables, etc.).
5. Obtain approval for all field trips.
6. Obtain parental permission, if needed.
7. **Update Connected Services Log.**

**Note:** If a program is **unavailable or booked**, it will say so in the title of the document.

*For example, it may read:*

[The\\_Anti\\_Cruelty\\_Society\\_Making\\_a\\_Difference\\_21-22](#)

*If it is booked, it will read:*

[BOOKED\\_The\\_Anti\\_Cruelty\\_Society\\_Making\\_a\\_Difference\\_21-22](#)

## Template Email for Reaching Out to Partners

Hello [Organization Name Here]

My name is [Your Name Here] and I am the Site Coordinator at [Your School Name Here], a CIS of Chicago partner school. I would like to schedule your [Service/Program Name Here]. Further details are below.

Please let me know what next steps are.

Thank you!

School Name: [School name again here]

Grade(s) Served: [What grades are you hoping to connect?]

Preferred Date(s): [Is there a specific date you'd like this program?]

Time of Day: [Is there a specific time this program needs to take place?]


## Checklist for Reaching Out to Partners

- ✓ Identify who you are.
- ✓ What school are you calling/emailing on behalf of?
- ✓ **Be sure to indicate you are a CIS of Chicago partner school.**
- ✓ What program/service would you like?
- ✓ When would you like the program to occur? (Dates and times if you have them)
- ✓ What grades or students would you like to serve?
- ✓ Is there any other information the partner needs out front?



## EXAMPLE REFERRAL

**PROGRAM REFERRAL**




**Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center (ChicagoCAC)**

<b>Mental Health Awareness</b>	<b>School Staff, Community Partners</b>	<b>Workshop</b>	<b>1 Session</b>	<b>Live Virtual</b>
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**Road to Resilience: Intro to Trauma**

\*ChicagoCAC can offer a total of two scholarships for two presentations during the 2019-20 school year (for the entire CIS of Chicago network)\*



**Program Description:**

- This presentation is best offered following Keeping My Family Safe or Recognizing Signs of Child Abuse
- Defining trauma
- Understanding the prevalence of trauma in society
- The impact of trauma on individuals and communities
- Elements of a trauma-informed environment
- How to support children, families and yourself

**Audience:** professionals and community members  
**Location:** at your facility by request, or at ChicagoCAC throughout the year  
**Language:** English and Spanish  
**Duration:** 1-2 hours

**To Schedule this Program:**

- Please contact Laura Daily at least 30 days prior to expected training date.
- Notify your CIS of Chicago school specialist when you have scheduled the program.

**Contact Information:**  
 To request a Virtual Training:  
<https://www.chicagocac.org/what-we-do/outreach-education/training/training-request/>  
 Laura Daily  
 ldaily@ChicagoCAC.org  
 312-492-3718

## **Steps to Coordinating a Service: Prepare School Community for Programming**

### **Step 3: Prepare School Community**

Preparing your school community for programming is a key step in the scheduling and connection processes. It ensures that the program is delivered smoothly, minimizes disruption to the regular school day, and strengthens your relationship with community partners - incentivizing them to return to work with your students for many years to come! Integral components to school community prep can be found below as well as in the “Steps to Coordinating a Service” section.

- Confirm with the presenter. When applicable, provide them with directions to the main entrance. If you know that the school is difficult to find or that GPS gives incorrect directions - let the community partner know!
- Notify the clerk, school security, and front office staff that a partner will be coming. Inform them of what to do when they arrive and where to direct them.
- When necessary, remind teacher(s) that a program will be working with students during scheduled instructional time so that they can appropriately update their daily lesson plans and/or alter class time structure.
- If a partner is delivering programming on a difficult subject matter, they may provide you with parent resources to help them answer questions and guide children when they are at home. Make sure that these materials are delivered to parents in a timely manner.

**NOTE:** Some partners may include pre and post evaluations as part of their programming. You should confirm with the presenter if there is an expectation that any of this is done prior to or after the partner delivers the program.

## **Steps to Coordinating a Service: Observation and Feedback**

### **Step 4: Observation and Feedback**

Communities In Schools of Chicago strives to connect schools with quality programs. To ensure this and to support our community partners, we ask that you provide us with honest, constructive feedback about any program that serves your school community.

Do not forget to gather information about how the service went and to thank the partner for its work in your school. You should:

- Observe the service yourself.
- Chat with participants or observers of the service.
- **Complete CIS of Chicago Program Observation Form (linked in Connected Services Log).**
- Thank the agency and inquire about their experience at your school.
- Let your CIS of Chicago School Partnership Specialist know how the service went.
- The Observation Form can be completed by any of your colleagues who observe a program, attend a field trip, or lend their classroom as programming space. Please forward this form along as you see fit!

### **More on Observation and Feedback**

#### **Why should I provide observe and provide feedback?**

Evaluating services helps CIS of Chicago gauge the impact of community partnerships and adjust as needed. Providing us with feedback ensures that our community partners retain competent program facilitators, have a strong curriculum, and effectively address your school's priority areas. Additionally, we provide training for our community partners under the heading of NAVIGATE. Your feedback directly informs the topics and aspects of programming we train our partners on.

#### **How can I provide feedback?**

There are many ways to observe and provide feedback about programs. Consider using a combination of formal and informal methods to capture feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders.

##### *Informal Methods:*

- Chat with a student, parent, teacher or agency after the service.
- Observe the service yourself.

##### *Formal Methods:*

- Use pre and post assessment to measure changes in student knowledge.
- Use written evaluation forms with participants or observers after the service.
- Collect a copy of any evaluation results that may have been collected separately by your agency partner.



- Conduct a small discussion, debrief or focus group.
- Gather quotes or impact (success) stories from program participants or observers.

**How do I use the evaluation information I gather?**

- Share with school leaders, staff, or program participants.
- Share with the community partner and your School Partner Specialist.
- Use the information in school publications or funding applications.

**Be sure to thank the agency and inquire about their experience at your school!**

## **Steps to Coordinating a Service: Complete Connected Services Log**

### **Step 5: Complete Connected Services Log**

#### **What is the Connected Services Log?**

The Connected Services Log is a communication tool that is used by both the Site Coordinator and the School Partnership Specialist to provide program information for the school year. It is a Google document that is shared with the Site Coordinator or Site Coordinator Team Members at the beginning of each academic year.

#### **Why is the Log important?**

The Connected Services Log provides the School Partnership Specialist with the necessary program information needed to track how Communities In Schools of Chicago is meeting the needs of the school population and provides scheduled program information for CIS of Chicago staff members who would like to observe the program. Help us support you toward your goals!

2020-2021 Connected Programs and Services Log

[2020-2021 Referral List](#) (What programs have been referred to my school?)  
[Communities In Schools Observation Form](#) (Give us feedback!)

Community Partner	Program /Service	Priority	Date (if multiple sessions, list date of 1 <sup>st</sup> session)	Grade(s) served	# of students, parents or staff	# of sessions if more than one	Scheduled or Completed	Comments
Art Institute of Chicago	Art and Science Tour	Visual Arts Programming	01/01/01	6-8	6th: 25 7th: 31 8th: 17	1	Completed	*EXAMPLE*
Oral Health Forum	Total Tooth Truth	Oral Health Education	December	K-3rd	All	1	Completed	In CW - ZC
Oral Health Forum	Dental Hygiene Kits	Fundamental Needs	December	PreK-8th	387	1	Completed	In CW - ZC
The Period Collective	Menstrual Items	Fundamental Needs	12/14/20	All	100	1	Completed	6,740 items delivered so far In CW - ZC
RAINBOWS	Curriculum	SEL	3/2/21	Staff	7	14	Completed	In CW - ZC Priority Met!
Caron Treatment Centers	Toolbox Training	Alcohol & Substance Abuse	3/23/21	Staff	1	1	Completed	In CW - ZC
Chicago AHEC	Speakers Bureau	Career Awareness	4/6 or 4/7	3-5	48	1	Completed	In CW - ZC Priority Met!
Metro. Water Reclamation District	Water Wellness	STEM Programming	4/12/21	2nd, 3rd, 4th	30	1	Completed	In CW - ZC
Princeton Vision Clinic	Eye Exams & Glasses	Eye Exams & Glasses	5/14/21	PreK-8th	1	1	Completed	In CW - ZC

## **Internal Communication (Within Your School)**

Communication with your staff, student, and parent communities about the partnership with Communities In Schools of Chicago is necessary to take full advantage of the programming and services offered by CIS community partners and is key for a successful partnership.

Communities In Schools of Chicago wants to ensure the school community is aware of the partnership while continuing to connect no-cost programs in the areas of art, behavioral and mental health, college and career readiness, and health and wellness.

### **Types of Internal Communication**

- **Brand Awareness**

- CIS of Chicago will provide posters and other marketing materials. Please post posters in common areas throughout the school building.
- Post information about special CIS of Chicago related connections on bulletin boards or school websites.
- Let your school community know that when referrals are sent out, they are coming from CIS of Chicago and our network of community partners.

- **Grade Level Meetings and Professional Development**

- Your School Partnership Specialist is available to present to the school staff on the mission and vision of CIS, types of programs available through the partnership, and the history of your school's relationship with CIS. The Site Coordinator can also request information to present to their school community.

- **Information Flow Back to the Site Coordination Team**

- For CIS of Chicago to best support your school, we need to understand the impact our partnership is having on your students and school community at large. One imperative way to understand this is to simply be aware of the services you have taken advantage of. This is done through the Connected Services Log.
- The key is making sure the Site Coordination Team is explicitly aware of programs that may have been scheduled or implemented by staff outside of that team. This requires clear and consistent flow of communication.

### **Tips for Successful Communication Flow at your School**

- ✓ Set up a weekly email that goes to your whole staff with a request to provide you with program information or input it directly in your Connected Services Log.
- ✓ Put a CIS of Chicago box out near your office or the main office of your school where staff can put in program information that they have utilized and/or request programs from CIS of Chicago.



- ✓ Ask for a standing spot in staff meetings and other internal convenings where you can get program details and feedback.
- ✓ Print staff a Connected Services Log for them to have and fill out and turn into you intermittently or at each quarter's end (see example in the following pages).
- ✓ Include that you are the CIS of Chicago Site Coordinator in your signature line of your email.
- ✓ Be sure school leadership is looped in and aiding where possible.

## **CIS of Chicago Communication**

### **Newsletters**

- The CIS of Chicago Partnership Team sends a quarterly newsletter to build regular communication with our partner schools.
- The newsletter will highlight programming capacity, updates in and around CIS of Chicago, upcoming ACTIVATE events, as well as other important information.

### **Beginning, Middle, End of Year Meetings**

- We meet with the Site Coordinator/Site Coordination Team at least three times per year (beginning, middle, and end of the year) with the principal attending at least one meeting, typically the beginning of the year meeting.
- During each meeting, we will discuss school priorities and emergent needs, fulfillment of the Partnership Expectations, quantitative and capacity building goals, and other items as needed.
- These meetings serve to strengthen our partnership and ensure student success.

### **Emails and Phone Calls**

- Your School Partnership Specialist can best be reached via email or phone call. We will respond within 48 hours. Feel free to reach out anytime!



## **The ACTIVATE Training Series**

### **What is ACTIVATE?**

The ACTIVATE Training Series addresses the expanding needs of our school partners and CIS of Chicago's ongoing commitment to improve the quality and capacity of partner-provided programs. These events can vary in tone, location, and presentation format. Topics are selected on the basis of need, observation, and partner feedback. Changes to the landscape of CPS also informs this series, its subject matter, and the timeliness of the presentation of information. Above all else, the primary objective of ACTIVATE convenings is to support you, our school partners, through professional development and inter-school collaboration opportunities.

### **Types of ACTIVATE Events**

- **New School Orientation (NSO)**
  - The audience of New School Orientation is specific to schools that are brand new to the Communities In Schools network.
  - NSO is an opportunity for new school partners, first-year Site Coordinators, administration, and other support staff to learn about the work of CIS, how community partner interactions can help build and/or maximize a thriving school community, as well as tactics for maintaining the partnership.
  - This toolkit, provided at New School Orientation and/or at the beginning of each scholastic year, is a permanent resource in your repertoire.
  
- **Community Partner Spirit Week**
  - Community Partner Spirit Week is a celebration of seasonal observances and curriculum connections, all while helping you meet your 2021-2022 partnership goals and connecting students, families, and staff to quality no-cost programming. This is a week-long event that takes place entirely over email. All week long, our team highlights available, interactive, and high-capacity programs in accordance with pre-selected themes. Spirit Week communications also hold space for giveaway opportunities, relevant media, and student activities.
  
- **Workshops**
  - In a typical school year, Communities In Schools of Chicago offers two workshops for Site Coordinators and other applicable school staff to attend. The subject

matter is often determined by survey feedback, other or previous workshop evaluations, and communication with partners.

- *It is important to note that CIS of Chicago does not yet offer continuing education credits for workshop attendance.*

- **Geographic School Meetups**

- Conceived in SY20, geographic school meetups will convene schools that are in similar areas within the city of Chicago (i.e. Southside, Westside, far Southeast side, etc.). These meetings will not only serve as a networking opportunity, it will allow Site Coordinators working within the same geographic region to discuss successful partner connections, available community resources, student need as it pertains to community area, and what CIS of Chicago can learn from working with schools in certain locales.

- **Tailored Support**

- Each year, tailored support is available to a small number of schools in each School Partnership Specialist's portfolio. Goals of tailored support will be based on the school's capacity-building goals and/or other areas where extra support is needed. These areas of support are identified by both the Site Coordinator and the Partnership Specialist. Tailored support can take many forms (example: connecting a school with a specialized consultant to train applicable staff in use of technology within the partnership) but in most cases will exist within the confines of the working relationship between the Site Coordinator and the designated School Partnership Specialist.

## **Capacity-Building Tactics**

As a reminder, the primary components of the CIS of Chicago partnership are as follows:

1. Connect at least four unique programs from the CIS of Chicago partner network to your school's student, staff or parent/family communities.
2. Observe at least one CIS of Chicago connected programs in your school/for your students and provide feedback through the CIS of Chicago Observation Form (linked in the Connected Services Log).
3. Annually have appropriate representation from your school at a minimum of one training or school partner convening held by CIS of Chicago (ACTIVATE).
4. Provide CIS of Chicago with regular updates about connected programs and services through maintenance of your school's Connected Services Log.

Below are what we call capacity-building tactics, goals and objectives designed to build upon the essential Partnership Expectations thus growing your school as a CIS of Chicago partner as well as your role as a Site Coordinator. Together with your CIS of Chicago School Partnership Specialist, you/your team will decide what tactics your school will focus on each school year.

### **Choosing Priorities**

- Include all SC team members and the principal, if possible, in a discussion on priorities.
- Facilitate a needs assessment discussion at a parent or faculty meeting to identify priorities for student, faculty, and parent services.
- Gather feedback from students to learn what students identify as priorities.

### **Scheduling and Completing Services**

- Formalize the roles the various SC team members will have in the service coordination process, including areas of specialty (e.g., the music teacher handles all arts programs).
- Set specific goals for the year for students served and programs accessed.
- Add principal and all members of the SC team to an email group.
- Target specific grades that have been underserved in the past for program connections.
- Share program opportunities with teachers for them to choose programs.
- Assist teachers with program scheduling.

### **Building Awareness**

- Add additional Site Coordinator(s) and involve multiple staff members in the service-coordination process.
- Include principal in at least one meeting.
- Post information about special CIS of Chicago related connections on a bulletin board, in the school newsletter, or on the website.
- Regularly remind staff of the partnership with CIS of Chicago and the resources available to them.
- Invite your CIS of Chicago School Partnership Specialist to speak to school staff about the partnership.



### **Open Communication**

- Respond to emails and phone calls from community partners and CIS of Chicago within 48 hours.
- Email scheduled and completed program information to principal and applicable staff.
- Cc your School Partnership Specialist when contacting/scheduling with agencies.
- Once a program has been scheduled, contact your School Partnership Specialist to let them know; include the program name, date, and students served.
- Give your School Partnership Specialist feedback about programs.
- Proactively complete a beginning, middle, and end of the year meeting with your School Partnership Specialist to discuss and monitor goals.

### **Evaluation**

- Collect anecdotal feedback from students, teachers or parents about a program.
- Communicate with School or Community Partnership Specialist quickly if a program does not go well.

### **Cultivation/Appreciation**

- Notify front office staff of scheduled program so they can welcome presenters.
- Verbally thank community partners immediately after a connected service.
- Make a quick call to thank your community partners.
- Send thank you letters from the staff, principal or students.
- Invite effective community partners to return to your school.
- Host a community partner appreciation event (e.g., appreciation breakfast).

## **Ways to Appreciate Community Partners - Extended**

1. Post welcome and/or thank you on school marquee or in main office.
2. Be available to greet and escort community partner upon arrival.
3. Introduce community partner staff to key faculty, particularly for long-term partnerships.
4. Encourage teachers to post welcome sign in classrooms.
5. Send thank you notes, drawings and/or letters from students.
6. At the start of each new school year send notes and/or school information to your previous year's partners.
7. Highlight community partners in your school newsletter; send newsletters to partners.
8. Create a bulletin board featuring community partners.
9. Invite community partners to school events, such as the open house.
10. Invite community partners to share stories of the program's impact at school meetings and events.
11. Include information about or links to community partners on your school website.
12. Share a quote or impact story about programs with your community partners.
13. Give partner staff a token of appreciation (e.g., a pen with school name, folder with school insignia).
14. Create certificates of appreciation for community partners.
15. Include community partners in school-wide planning meetings.

## **The Alfred G. Ward Spirit of Giving Award**

The Spirit of Giving Award was established by our Board of Directors to honor Alfred G. Ward, a founding director who spent 15 years enriching the organization. Al was important in shaping both the Communities In Schools national movement and the vision of Communities In Schools of Chicago. His commitment to children, family and community was deep and flowed from a profound respect for the value and worth of all people.

We have been honored to present partners with this award since 2004 and we continue that honor now. The Al G. Ward Spirit of Giving Award gives us the opportunity to recognize one school and one community partner who have consistently gone above and beyond expectations and impacted their community through a commitment to bettering the lives of our youth. They largely do this work under the radar, day in and day out, simply because it is the right thing to do. This award is intended to recognize this work and the outstanding community leaders serving Chicago's children.

Every spring, each School Partnership Specialist nominates one or more Site Coordinators from his/her/their portfolio whose work embodies the CIS of Chicago core values. These nominations are then considered by our Board of Directors who go on to select the year's Spirit of Giving Award winner. Winners may be a single individual or a Site Coordinator team and receive recognition from the whole of CIS of Chicago, a gift card, as well as a token of our appreciation and congratulations (plaque, certificate, statue, etc.).

**NOTE:** First year Site Coordinators are not eligible for nomination for the Al G. Ward Spirit of Giving Award.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How can I still make sure I am connecting with the minimum number of services when partners are not allowed in the building during times of remote learning?**

Our team has been working with our community partners over to transition historically in-person programming to be Live Virtual and/or Pre-Recorded. This also provides more opportunities for our entire school network to have access to the same programs. Further, we will be offering fundamental need items can now be counted towards services as well.

### **What is the role of Site Coordinators in CIS of Chicago partner schools?**

Site Coordinators access and coordinate needed programs, evaluate the effectiveness of programs, and report back to CIS of Chicago on school needs and partnership connections. *See more in “Who are the Players?”*

### **What is the role of principals in CIS of Chicago partner schools?**

Principals set the tone for how a program is received and supported at the school. They also help support plans for accessing a range of support services to address students’ and families’ core needs. *See more in “Who are the Players?”*

### **How do I find out about program opportunities?**

Program referrals are sent electronically to the Site Coordinator/Site Coordination Team.

### **Can you just give me a binder or catalogue with all the programs and partners listed?**

While we want to make it as easy as possible for schools to get needed programs, there are several variables that prevent us from providing unlimited access to this kind of information. Aspects like availability and facilitators for our community partners change rapidly and we would not be able to ensure fidelity in a resource like this. Instead, use your School Partnership Specialist! He/she/they will be happy to assist.

### **How do I keep track of programs that we utilized throughout the school year?**

You will track all programs you have scheduled and/or completed in your shared Google form with your School Partnership Specialist called the **Connected Services Log**.

### **Are programs at a cost to schools?**

Community partners in the CIS of Chicago network provide services at no-cost to CIS of Chicago partner schools. If a partner ever requests payment, loop in your School Partnership Specialist as soon as you are able.

### **How long does the CIS of Chicago partnership last?**

CIS of Chicago develops enduring partnerships with schools. As long as the partner school and CIS of Chicago feel that the partnership is beneficial to all parties, the partnership will continue annually. Likewise, the partner school must maintain the Partnership Expectations which is agreed upon annually.

### **What if I have not maintained the minimum requirements of partnership?**



If there has been a pattern of not meeting the minimum requirements of partnership, the school will receive a letter clarifying the need for the partnership and will provide steps for the school to take in order to remain a partner.

**How often am I expected to meet with my School Partnership Specialist?**

Site Coordinators meet with their CIS of Chicago School Partnership Specialist annually at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year, at minimum. Often, our partnership requires additional touchpoints and face-to-face interaction to best meet school and student need.

**I need help over the summer, can I still reach out to you?**

YES! We are here year-round and are happy to assist with program needs over the summer and plan for the coming school year too.

**Are there any professional development or networking events to connect with other schools and community partners?**

The objective of ACTIVATE is to support our school partners, particularly Site Coordinators, through professional development and inter-school collaboration opportunities. Partner schools will receive, at minimum, a save-the-date and formal invitation in the weeks leading up to an ACTIVATE event. *See more in ACTIVATE.*