



Communities In Schools: A Cost-Efficient Model for Reaching Underserved Youth

How much is it worth to keep a child in school and off the streets? Consider the lost potential for that child. Then, consider the costs we all pay. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 57 percent of adult dropouts are unemployed, compared to 40 percent of adults who completed high school and 23 percent of those with a bachelor's degree. And the Department of Justice reports that U.S. taxpayers spend more than \$22 billion annually to keep dropouts in state prisons.

Now, consider this. It costs an average of just \$164 a year for Communities In Schools (CIS) to provide services to a child.

How Are the Costs Kept So Low?

Paid staff represent just 5 percent of the Communities In Schools workforce. Last year, 3.1 million hours of service were donated to Communities In Schools by 64,549 volunteers, at a value of nearly \$63 million. In addition, 18,750 community partners provided service throughout the network.

Leveraged Resources

Communities In Schools works within the existing school and social service systems. Whether a child needs glasses, tutoring, nutritious food or just a safe place to be, Communities In Schools finds the resources and brings them to the child. By working in partnership – not competition – with other youth-serving organizations, services are delivered in the most cost-effective way. Often the services exist within a community, but families may not know how or where to access them. That's where Communities In Schools can lend a hand.

Complements Federal Education Policies

While education policies and political leadership have changed over the years, the core principles of Communities in Schools have remained consistent. These principles have also consistently received bi-partisan support. During the last 15 congressional budget appropriation cycles, Communities In Schools has received federal funding. For every dollar of federal funding received at the national level, Communities In Schools has leveraged \$115 across its network in support from other sources.

Impressive Results

Dropout rates among ethnic minorities in some economically depressed communities are as high as 50 percent. The more than 1.3 million students directly served by Communities In Schools have been identified as being at risk of dropping out, and 91 percent of them qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Seventy-six percent of these students who were tracked by CIS improved their attendance during the 2007-2008 school year, and 79 percent of them improved academic performance. For CIS-tracked students, the dropout rate is 3 percent, half the event dropout rate published by the National Center for Educational Statistics.

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