

GOOD NEWS FROM CIS | WINTER 2025 | Success Stories | Volunteer | Donate

Dear Friends,

For 40 years, we've walked alongside students, breaking down barriers and ensuring they have the resources and relationships to thrive. Over 100,000 students have had the support of Communities In Schools-Charlotte, and as we enter this milestone year, our work has never been more important.

The world around us is shifting, and so are the needs of students.

Because we are embedded in schools, we can respond in real time—adapting to challenges as they arise and ensuring students have the support they need to stay on track. The work may evolve, but our commitment remains the same: to be there for students, no matter what.

This has always been a shared effort, and as we look ahead, we invite you to lean in with us—however you engage, your support fuels this work and creates real opportunities for students.

Thank you for being part of this mission. Together, we'll continue to build a future where every student can succeed.

M

Men Tchaas Ari President and CEO Celebrating 40 Years of Student Success
Over 100,000 Students Served

Welcome to Our New Board Members

Strong leadership drives lasting change. We're excited to welcome two new leaders to our Board of Directors:

Dr. Ingrid W. Medlock

Chief of Staff and Community Engagement Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Foli Pontillo

Global Head of IR Intelligence, VP Nasdaq

Their expertise will help shape the future of CIS and deepen our impact in schools.

Explore our full Board of Directors on our website.



Dr. Ingrid Medlock



Foli Pontillo



Coca-Cola and Food Lion Fuel Meaningful Connections

At CIS, a bottle of water or a snack is often more than just a refreshment—it's an entry point for a conversation, a simple moment that can build trust and lead to deeper support. A recent mid-year replenishment of snacks and bottled water from Coca-Cola and Food Lion ensures that our team

can use these resources through the rest of the school year to encourage attendance, start conversations, and reinforce that students are seen and supported.

Thanks to these generous partners, our Site Coordinators have what they need to turn small moments into meaningful connections.

Safe Journey: Empowering Teen Parents to Graduate and Thrive

Safe Journey is a school-based program designed to ensure that pregnant and parenting teens can earn their diploma while building a strong future for their children. By combining education, mentorship, and parenting support, Safe Journey takes a multigenerational approach that strengthens opportunities for both students and their families. Each year, this CIS program supports 100+ teen parents, helping them stay on track to graduate while deepening their connection with their children, families, and communities.



Led by Program Director Steffanie Lewis, with a team of five dedicated case managers across 14 CMS schools, Safe Journey provides the guidance, resources, and encouragement teen parents need to thrive in school and beyond. What does this look like in action? Case Manager Shakara Taylor shares why this work is transformational—watch the video here!



Setting Goals for 2025: More than a Resolution

At Westerly Hills Elementary, Site Coordinator Tiffany Tyson kicked off the year by helping students set their Goals for 2025—whether academic, behavioral, or personal.

Why does this matter? Because setting goals builds agency, motivation, and a sense of

possibility. It also reinforces the link between daily attendance and long-term success—because being present is the first step toward achieving any goal.

#BeingPresentMatters

In case you haven't seen it, check out this <u>Communities In Schools PSA</u> currently airing on TV stations across the country. "The Longest Roll Call" raises awareness about chronic absenteeism and the challenges that prevent students from attending school. Our Site Coordinators are present in schools to find solutions to absenteeism and support students by connecting them to the resources they need to thrive. When CIS is present in schools, 99% of our students are present and ready to learn!



Save the Date! Dine Out For Kids® is Tuesday, June 17

Your meal fuels the future.

Join us on Tuesday, June 17 for Dine Out For Kids®, where dining at a participating restaurant helps fund CIS programs that support students year-round.

Want to get involved?

Restaurants: Sign up to participateCompanies: Sponsor the event



Contact Julie Craighead at icraighead@cischarlotte.org to learn more.



Volunteer with CIS: Create Opportunities for Students in 2025

When you volunteer with CIS, you help expand opportunities for students—whether in schools, at events, or through career and mentorship programs.

Current Need: We need volunteers to support several Career Fairs we are planning for students this spring. We are looking for enthusiastic participants to share information about their

profession/career, company, and educational background with students. This is a great corporate group or individual volunteer opportunity. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Phyllis Cunningham for details, pcunningham@cischarlotte.org.

There are many other ways to get involved—learn more <u>here on our website</u> and complete our <u>Volunteer Interest Form!</u>



Building Social Capital for the Next Generation

Opportunities grow when your network grows. Our <u>DifferenceMakers® CLT program</u> connects students with leaders across industries, expanding their social capital and future possibilities. Through mentorship, professional connections, and hands-on experiences, students gain access to the people and opportunities that help turn ambition into action.

Through our partnership with The Gambrell Foundation, this program equips young leaders with the skills, relationships, and confidence to create lasting impact in their communities.

See DifferenceMakers® CLT in action! <u>Watch the video</u> to hear first-hand from students and mentors about the power of these connections.

Follow us on social for our latest news and stories!

