

Strategic Plan 2021-2026



MISSION

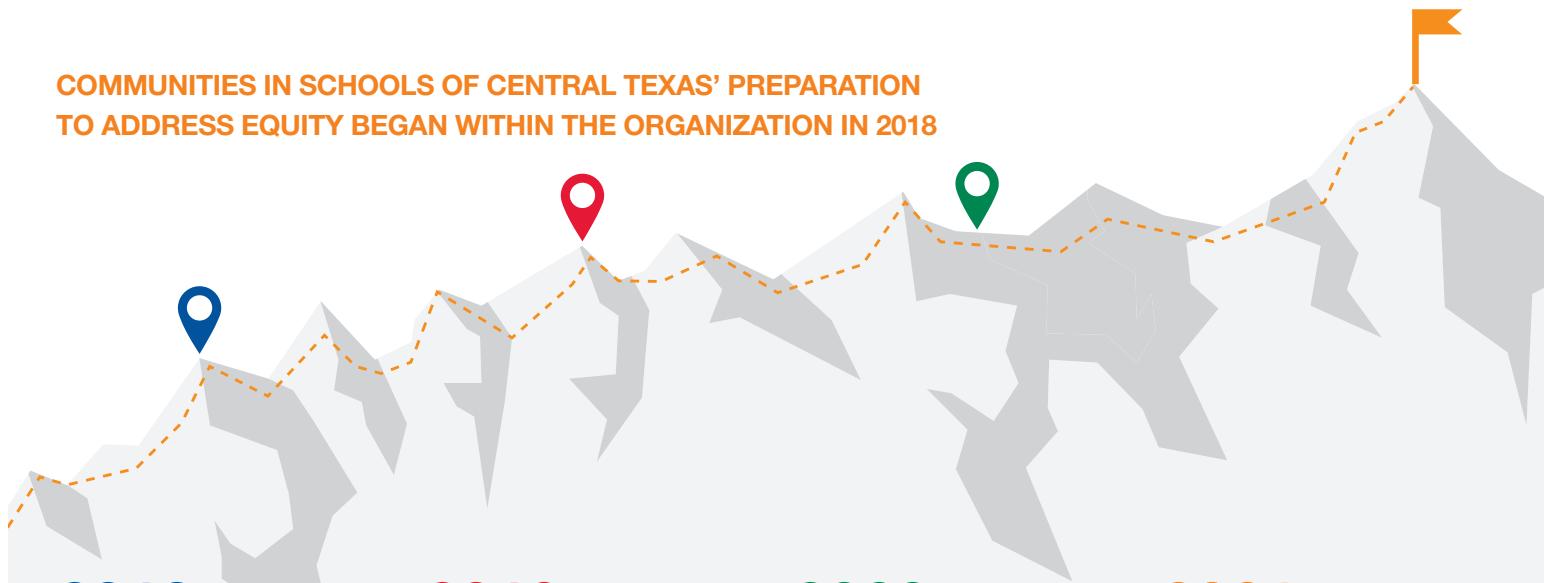
Communities In Schools of Central Texas surrounds students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.



The COVID-19 pandemic deepened the divides that already exist within the educational system—access, opportunities, achievement, and outcomes. Students who experience disparities in these areas have a decreased opportunity to learn, grow, and contribute, and students in historically marginalized and underserved groups are affected to an even greater degree.

At Communities In Schools of Central Texas, we see potential in every student, regardless of race, zip code, or history of marginalization. We acknowledge that structural barriers can be just as hard to overcome as personal challenges and circumstances. We will accelerate and expand our work to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in our policies and practices on behalf of our students and families, and the Central Texas community.

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF CENTRAL TEXAS' PREPARATION TO ADDRESS EQUITY BEGAN WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION IN 2018



2018

- Conducted a CLAS Standards audit
- Hired a DEI Consultant
- Formed an internal team to work on DEI initiatives
- Administered the first annual Promise 54 DEI employee survey

2019

- Formalized and publicized the organization's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and implemented a three-year plan to operationalize the commitment
- Key performance indicators related to DEI goals established for every department, along with cascading goals and DEI dashboard for accountability

2020

- Hired Learning and Development Coordinator to play leadership role in developing and implementing DEI training plan for CISCT staff
- CISCT Board of Directors participated in CIS National Office DEI training series
- CIS staff and AmeriCorps members participated in monthly DEI trainings and dialogue sessions

2021

- DEI training plans established for each staff member specific to area of work
- Affinity groups engaged staff in cross-cultural dialogue
- Launched web-based DEI Learning Resource Center and DEI Learning Management System for CIS Staff with extensive book and video resources and trainings
- Began DEI Professional Development planning for each department.

DEAR FRIENDS,

For more than 35 years, Communities In Schools of Central Texas has been surrounding students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. As we embark on our next strategic plan period, we do so with a renewed commitment to educational opportunity for all, and with a focus on what comes after high school graduation.

We know that students have the strengths to achieve happy, healthy and prosperous lives. Our 2021-2026 Strategic Plan draws on, and is motivated by, the collective wisdom of our stakeholders - centering the voice of students, alumni, and families.

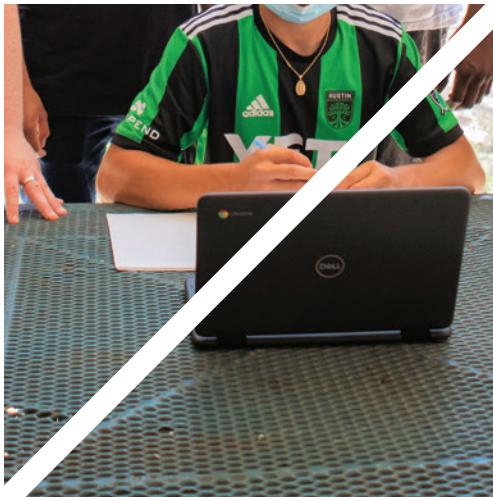
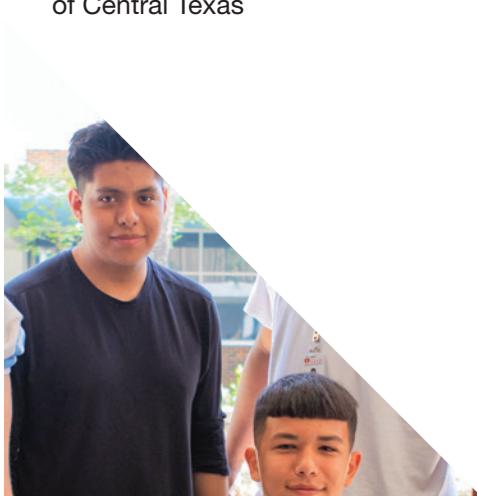
Planning for this strategic plan began in 2019 with the CIS Board of Directors Strategic Plan Committee and Boston Consulting Group. In 2020, Woppard Nichols Associates coordinated focus groups for CIS students and their families, CIS staff, CIS alumni and interviewed school leaders to further ground the plan.

Crises in public health, racial justice and economic uncertainty amplified the impact of systemic inequities. Therefore, this strategic plan challenges us to be stronger leaders in the fight for educational equity and our new strategic plan will guide our focus. I am proud to present to you Communities In Schools of Central Texas' 2021-2026 strategic plan.



SUKY STEINHAUSER

Chief Executive Officer
Communities In Schools
of Central Texas



How This Strategic Plan Was Developed:

- Using a collaborative and inclusive process
- Based on data, not assumptions
- Considering the context of this moment in history
- Putting students and families at the center
- With a vision for greater long-term impact

The 2021-2026 Strategic Plan is grounded in a passion for social justice and designed to empower all students to take charge of the future they want—for themselves, for their communities, and for each other.

Who provided input



30

parents/caregivers
during focus groups



60

students during
focus groups



14

senior leadership team
members through interviews



23

staff during
input sessions



4

CIS affiliates shared experience
and best practices (Charlotte,
Houston, Memphis, San Antonio)



10

CIS Board members
through interviews



4

school district
staff interviews



93

alumni
through surveys



10

alumni
through interviews



DATA & RESEARCH

12%

- Within six years of leaving high school, young adults without a post-secondary credential have only a 12% chance of earning a living wage.

14%



- Only 14% of Central Texas students currently complete a post-secondary credential within six years of leaving high school.
- Educational attainment leads to poverty rate decline and median income increases drastically with higher levels of education.
- Data and research from E3 Alliance show that enrollment rates in institutions of higher education have been steadily decreasing among Central Texas students even before the pandemic, and the disparity between students from low-income and non-low-income households remains consistent.
- The best predictor of student success is the extent to which families encourage learning at home and involve themselves in their child's education. Children with engaged parents are more likely to graduate from high school and attend post-secondary education.



Communities In Schools of Central Texas will focus on key academic indicators and family engagement to support student achievement and ensure that more students are on-track to graduate and achieve post-secondary success. These indicators are:



LITERACY

A national study released in 2021 shows that students who do not read proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to leave high school without a diploma than proficient readers.



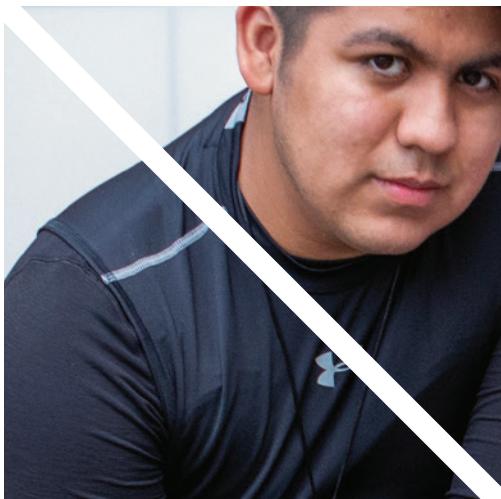
MATH

Students who take college-level math in high school are more likely to go to college after graduation; yet half as many low-income students in Central Texas take Algebra 1.



COLLEGE READINESS

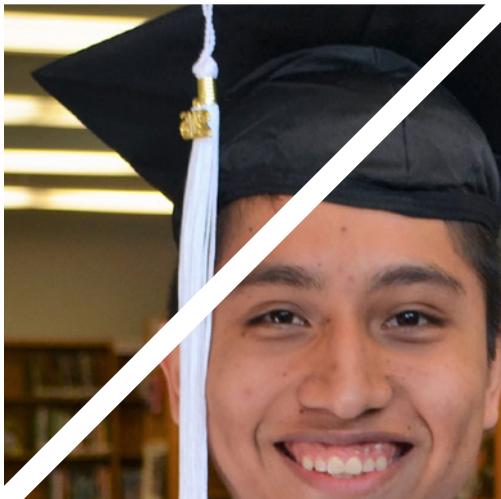
Despite graduation rates that are higher than all but two other states, Texas ranks 22nd in measures of college readiness and ranks below the national average in all four core subject areas.



THE 2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN WILL BE FOCUSED ON TWO AREAS:

PROGRAM EXCELLENCE

because we know students have the strengths
to achieve happy, healthy and prosperous lives.



The Strategic Plan has set the following targeted goals to be reached by 2026:

Strategic Plan Goal #1: Students will Succeed in School

In order for CIS students to be ready to graduate from high school, we will ensure that students improve academics, behavior, and attendance so that they are on track for post-secondary opportunities.

- CIS students close the math/ELA achievement gap at the rate of 3% per year served.
- 90% of CIS students improve Academics and Behavior and Attendance.

Strategic Plan Goal #2: Students will Achieve in Life

We will ensure more CIS students attain a post-secondary credential because CIS believes that education is the ticket to a more secure future and can bolster racial and economic equity within our communities.

- 51% of high school students who receive CIS services for at least two years enroll in post-secondary education.
- 51% of CIS high school grads that enroll in a post-secondary program successfully complete one full year of post-secondary education toward a degree or other credential.

Strategic Plan Goal #3: CIS will serve more Students

CIS will continue to increase our impact to meet the need in our rapidly growing region, giving more students access to the supports that they need to succeed in school.

- CIS will increase total students reached by 20% through partnerships and new and existing services, based on criteria we establish.

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

in order to support
impactful programs.

Strategic Plan Goal #4: Renew Agency Culture

Communities In Schools of Central Texas resilience, inclusiveness and innovative approaches will lead to high employee engagement and high-quality services.

- CISCT is a Great Place to Work, as certified by Great Place to Work®.

Strategic Plan Goal #5: Infrastructure and Systems

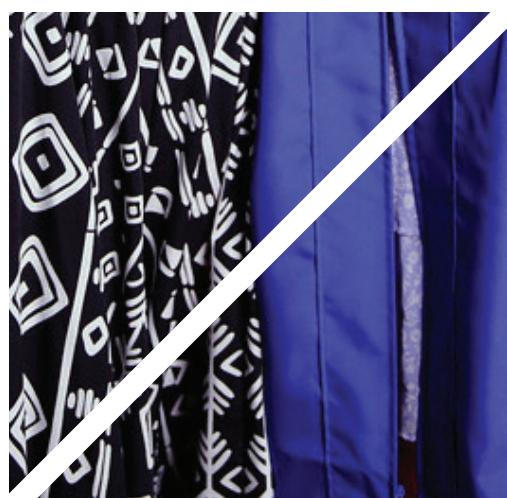
Our people fulfill our mission; therefore, CIS of Central Texas is committed to developing a strong internal infrastructure and systems that support staff efficiency and effectiveness to maximize our community impact.

- 80% of all staff “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that they have the resources they need to do their job effectively.

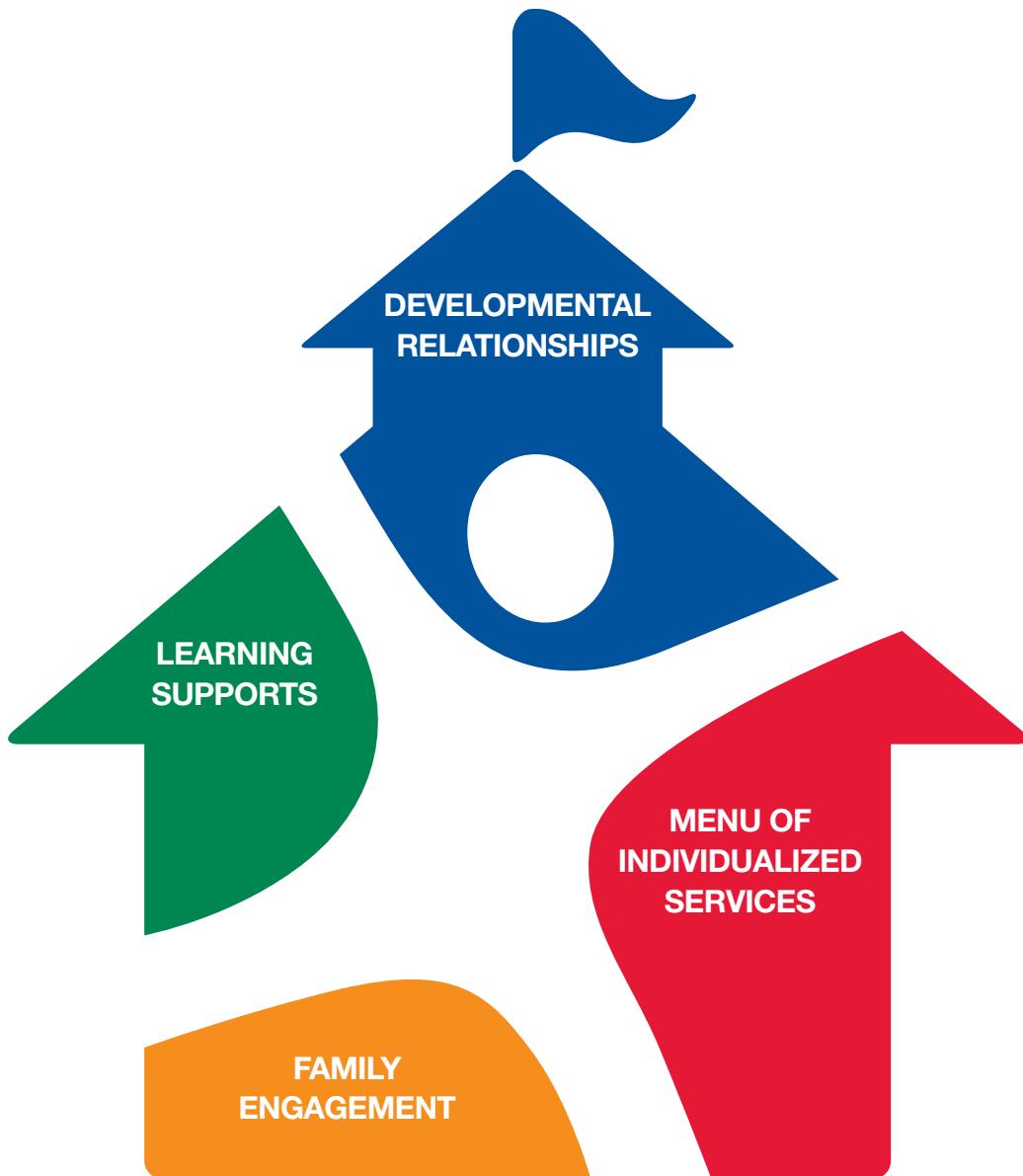
Strategic Plan Goal #6: Visibility and Development for Equity

CIS inspires donor support because CIS is well-known for serving students well and for advancing community and educational equity.

- When surveyed, 80% of stakeholders report that they would positively recommend CIS to their peer group.
- Private funding for operations increases by 20% over 5 years and more than \$10 million in capital is raised.



HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

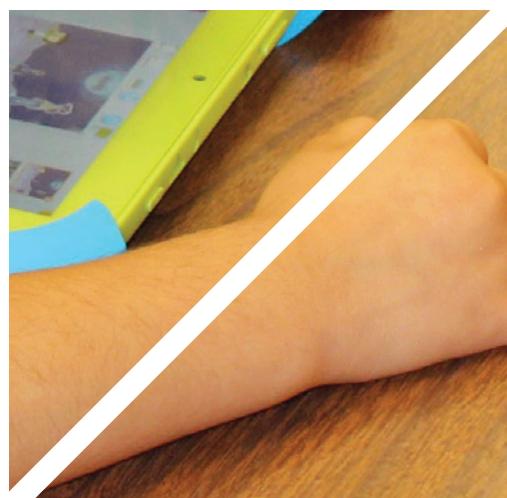


CIS of Central Texas Program Managers play a pivotal role as the point of contact working inside the school coordinating and providing integrated student supports.

By utilizing a developmental relationships framework, learning supports, family engagement, and a menu of individualized services, Program Managers can serve more students in a school and also focus attention on targeted students that have significant needs.

THE FOUNDATION OF CIS PROGRAMMING

- Academic support
- Assistance with basic needs
- Development of students' emotional learning and skills
- Developmental relationships
- Enrichment activities
- Family engagement
- Menu of individualized services
- Support for emotional wellness

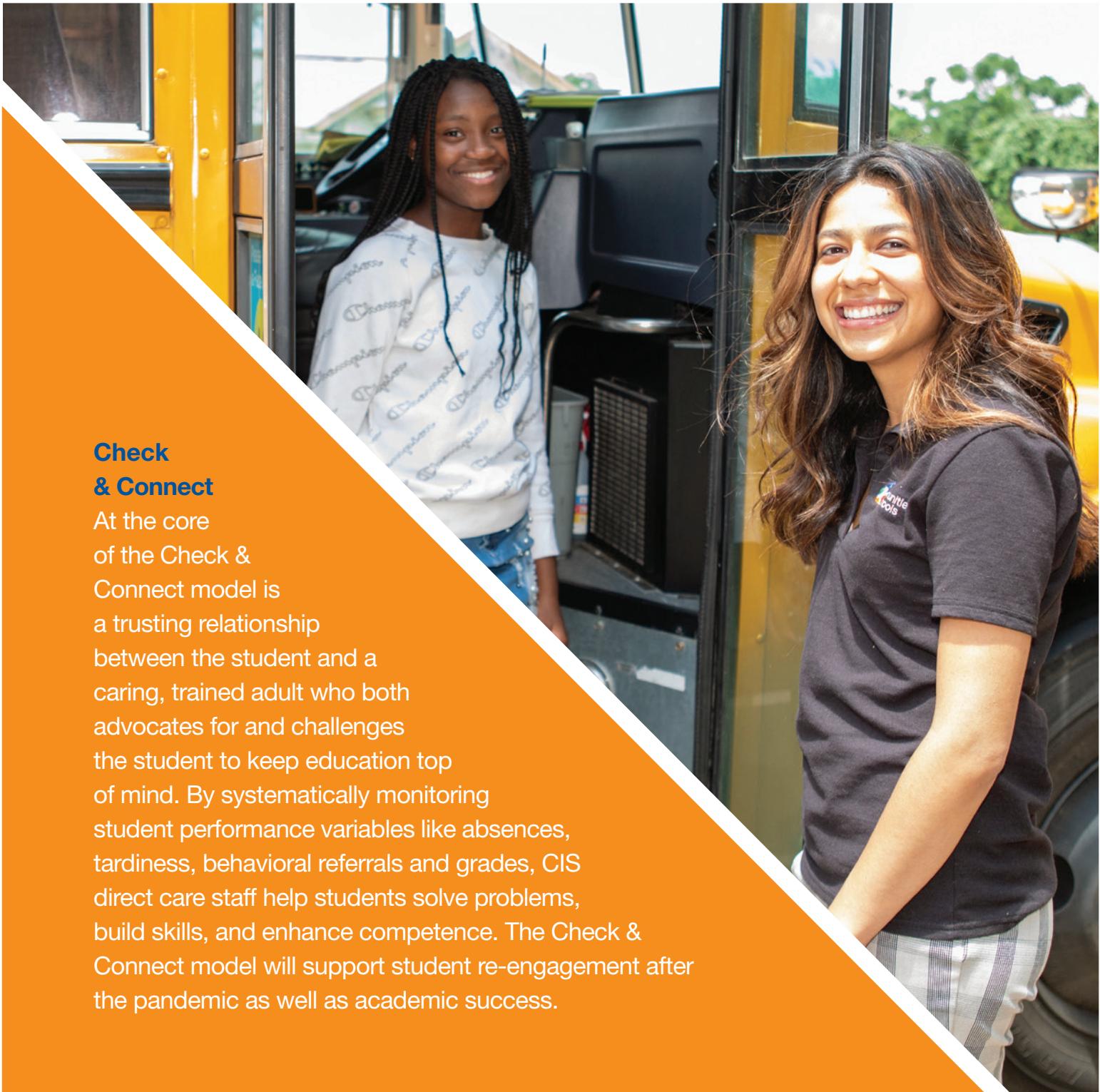


HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Along with other strategies and interventions, Communities in Schools will expand the following methods to achieve our Strategic Plan goals.

Check & Connect

At the core of the Check & Connect model is a trusting relationship between the student and a caring, trained adult who both advocates for and challenges the student to keep education top of mind. By systematically monitoring student performance variables like absences, tardiness, behavioral referrals and grades, CIS direct care staff help students solve problems, build skills, and enhance competence. The Check & Connect model will support student re-engagement after the pandemic as well as academic success.



Family Engagement

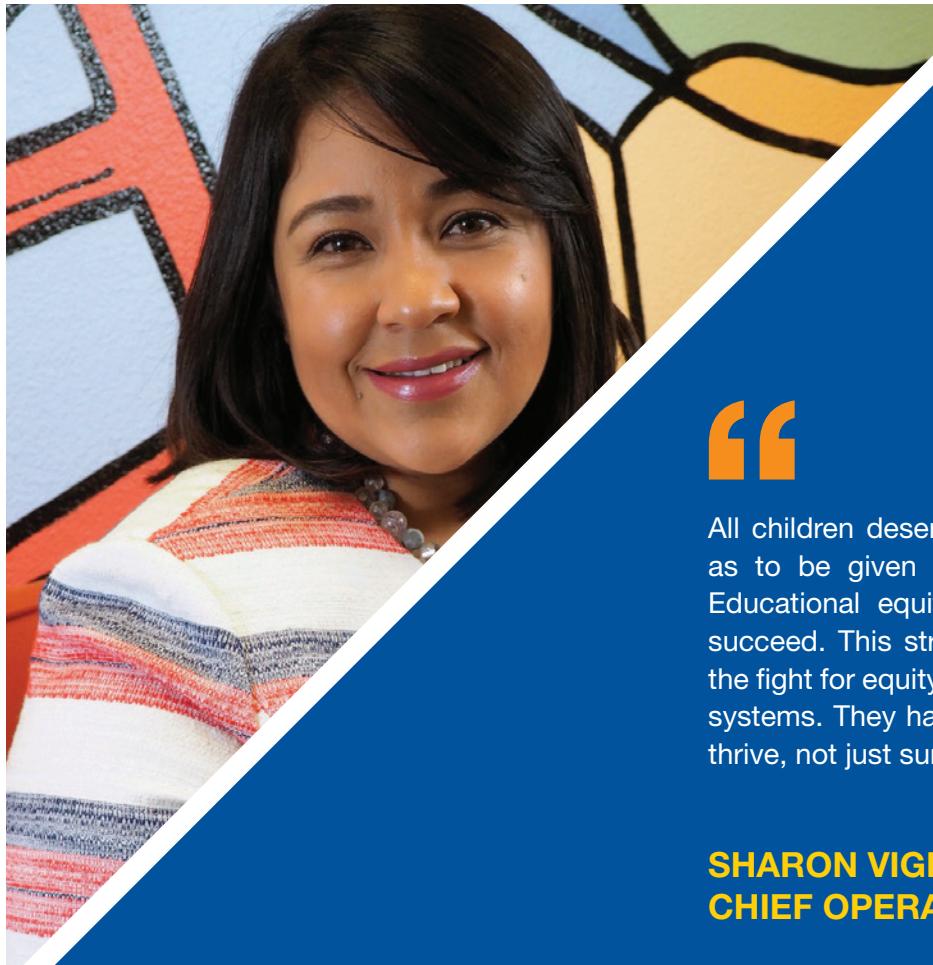
Family engagement is essential for student success and impacts student achievement. Research shows that when families are engaged with their child's school and learning, they are:

- More excited and positive about school and learning
- More likely to enroll in higher-level programs
- Have fewer discipline issues inside and outside of the classroom
- Attend school more regularly
- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Graduate and enroll in a post-secondary program

At Communities In Schools of Central Texas, we will build partnership with families because we know that:

- All families have dreams for their children and want them to have the best opportunities possible
- All families have the capacity to support their child's learning
- Families and CIS staff are equal partners in supporting student success
- It is the responsibility of Communities In Schools to build partnerships with families





“

All children deserve to be loved and supported, as well as to be given the tools to reach their full potential. Educational equity is the key to ensuring all children succeed. This strategic plan, rooted in love, is a tool in the fight for equity. Our students can do more than survive systems. They have the strength to change systems and thrive, not just survive.”

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**SHARON VIGIL,
CHIEF OPERATIONS & EQUITY OFFICER**



IN SCHOOLS AND BEYOND

At Communities In Schools of Central Texas, our trained direct care professionals help ensure all students have the same opportunity to succeed. Learn more at ciscentraltexas.org