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Communities In Schools of Central Texas and Austin ISD Welcome National Education Leaders to Showcase Student Support, Success

*U.S. Department of Education Deputy Secretary Cindy Marten,
Assistant Secretary of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development Roberto Rodriguez,
Assistant Deputy Secretary and Director in the Office of English Language Acquisition
Montserrat Garibay, AmeriCorps CEO Michael D. Smith, and
CIS National President Rey Saldaña visit East Austin School*

(Austin, Texas)—Today, Communities In Schools of Central Texas and Austin ISD hosted U.S. Department of Education Deputy Secretary Cindy Marten and Assistant Secretary of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development Roberto Rodriguez at Govalle Elementary School.

The national education leaders are in Austin to participate in SXSW EDU. Their visit to the East Austin school included a roundtable discussion about the [National Partnership for Student Success](#), a public-private partnership among AmeriCorps, the U.S. Department of Education, The Everyone Graduates Center at John Hopkins University, and leading student support providers, including [Communities In Schools](#). The initiative brings together experienced organizations to recruit, train and engage adults to work closely with parents, educators and others as they drive improved academic and social-emotional outcomes for students.

“Students have real lives—and real needs. Many of our students and their families have a hard time accessing and navigating the maze of public and private services that are available to them,” **Sharon Vigil, CEO of Communities In Schools of Central Texas**, said. “Our campus-based program managers bring community resources into schools. We stand by our students in classrooms and every facet of their lives. By addressing their basic needs, nurturing their mental well-being and dismantling barriers, we create safe and supportive environments that empower them to stay in school, graduate and succeed in life.”

CIS serves more than 100 schools throughout Central Texas, including 55 AISD campuses. CIS has partnered with AISD for 39 years and with the Govalle school community for three years.

“Today’s visit at Govalle Elementary School showed once again how AmeriCorps members are providing critical, people-powered support to students in Texas,” **Michael D. Smith, CEO of AmeriCorps**, said. “As we continue to grapple with the disparate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on students and their families, organizations like Communities In Schools are leading the way to answer the President’s call to place more adults in evidence-based, student support roles. We look forward to our continued partnership through the NPSS during our 30th anniversary and for the next 30 years and beyond.”

CIS has one of the longest-standing AmeriCorps partnerships in the region, placing members on school campuses for more than 23 years. About 24 percent of CIS' Central Texas team members are former members of the national service program.

“As the nation’s leading provider of K-12 school-based integrated student supports, Communities In Schools is a proud partner of the National Partnership for Student Success,” **CIS National President Rey Saldaña** said. “Public-private partnerships on this scale transform schools by increasing the capacity of CIS affiliates, allowing more students to receive essential resources while elevating the quality of the services provided. We appreciate the opportunity to visit our local affiliate in Austin to see this collaboration in action.”

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Communities In Schools of Central Texas is a local affiliate of national nonprofit Communities In Schools® (CIS®), an organization that ensures every student, regardless of race, zip code, or socioeconomic background, has what they need to realize their potential in school and beyond. For more than four decades, Communities In Schools has demonstrated measurable success in creating equitable outcomes for schools and students. Communities In Schools of Central Texas works directly inside 100 Central Texas schools in Austin, Elgin, Hays, Lockhart, Manor, and San Marcos school districts, connecting students to caring adults and community resources that help them see, confront, and overcome the barriers that stand between them and a brighter future. Learn more at ciscentraltexas.org.