



Communities
In Schools

Greater Tarrant County

6707 Brentwood Stair Road, Suite 510
Fort Worth, TX 76112
(817) 446-5454

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Peyton Salavarría, (817) 773-0896, peyton.salavarría@cistarrant.org
Julie Hatch, (817) 919-7648, ccjhatch@sbcglobal.net

WHY IS KEEPING AT-RISK STUDENTS IN SCHOOL CRITICAL TO EVERYONE?

**7th Annual Report to the Community
Tuesday, February 5 at 8 a.m.**

Public & Media Are Invited to Attend

TARRANT COUNTY – Fighting the school-dropout rate continues to be one of Tarrant County's top priorities.

- Young people without diplomas are the last to be hired, the first to be laid off, and often the last to be rehired.
- Statistically, they're more likely to be involved in criminal activity and more likely to be incarcerated.
- They're more likely to rely on public assistance, and they're more often uninsured.
- As parents, they are less likely to expect their own children to graduate, thus perpetuating the cycle.

**7th Annual Report to the Community
Tuesday, February 5**

8 – 9:30 a.m.

The Women's Club of Fort Worth – 1316 Pennsylvania Avenue, 76104

- \$25 per person; \$250 per table of 10

Register at www.cistarrant.org or by calling (817) 446-5454, X245

KEY PRESENTERS – available for interview & photographs

Success Story #1 – Emahni Holliday, Central Junior High

Emahni has experienced many trials, from drug abuse to losing her brother this past Thanksgiving. She used to react with anger and misbehavior. With the help of her CIS social worker and school staff, Emahni is able to work through her anger and sadness in a healthy way.

Success Story #2 – Christine Thompson, Senior at Azle High School

Christine's father ran a meth lab in her house, which lead her to develop a rare lung condition. Her father was eventually taken to jail, and Christine's mother and step-father we granted

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**7th Annual Report to the Community – Communities in Schools of Tarrant County
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custody of her and her older brother. Things started getting better until she found out her father had passed away. Not long after that, her mother was also arrested for drug possession. While these tragedies were occurring in her life, Christine was able to turn to her CIS social worker, Noel Haas, to work through her grief and depression. Christine is now on the track to attend Lubbock Christian University to study nursing.

- Zim Zimmerman – councilman, City of Fort Worth-District 3 & mayor pro-tem
- Mike Steele – president and CEO, Communities in Schools of Tarrant County

It is evident that failing to complete high school impacts the whole community. In fact, new research confirms that an investment of \$1 to increase graduation rates yields a return on investment of over \$13. At a time when even more children are living in poverty, schools and education remain the most powerful anti-poverty tools available. Great schools always have been, and remain, the economic driver for our country's future.

The good news? We are heading in the right direction. In Texas, the four-year graduation rate climbed to 78.9% - just above the national average. Here in Tarrant County, in three years we have reduced the number of students leaving school before graduation by about 1,000.

The bad news? Graduation rates for Hispanic and African American students still lag behind white graduation rates by almost 6 percent and 13 percent respectively.

Heading in the right direction? Yes. Much more work to be done? Absolutely.

About Communities In Schools of Tarrant County

Communities In Schools of Tarrant County is a 501c3 non-profit that is part of a national network of CIS programs serving more than 1.2 million students. CIS is placed in 40 schools across 9 Tarrant County school districts this year, serving students who are identified by their schools as most at-risk of dropping out. CIS serves not only students, but their families, assessing their unique needs and working with more than 80 community partner organizations to connect the students with the resources they need to address a wide range of issues. The mission of CIS is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.

www.cistarrant.org