

Overview

CIS's Three-tiered Differentiated Support Model uses ESSA's evidence-based provisions and best practices for its community school strategy that is aligned with the New Mexico Public Education Department's (PED) Community Schools Framework. PED's Community Schools Framework is based on the "Four Pillars of Community Schools" that have been identified by the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), a nonprofit education policy and practice research organization (2017), as forming a comprehensive community school strategy.

LPI completed a systematic review of 143 research studies of community schools and found most community schools share the following four key pillars of support:

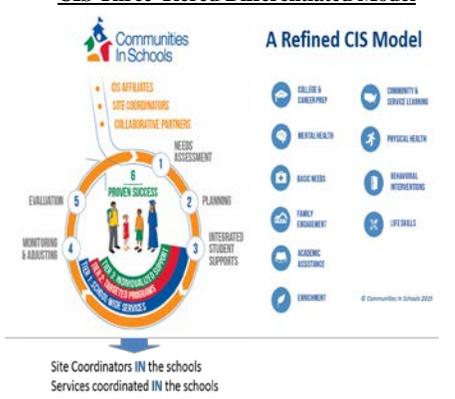
- Integrated student supports;
- Expanded learning time and opportunities;
- Family and community engagement; and
- Collaborative leadership and practice.

ESSA defines evidence-based interventions as being supported by "strong evidence (Level 1 or Tier 1)," "moderate evidence (Level 2 or Tier 2)," promising evidence (Level 3 or Tier 3)," or evidence that "demonstrates strong theory or rationale (Level 4 or Tier 4)." At a minimum, for an intervention to show strong, moderate, or promising evidence, it must be supported by at least one well-designed and well implemented study with statistical controls for selection bias. In its analysis of 143 community school studies, LPI found there is enough evidence to support the community school approach as an evidence-based intervention under ESSA. LPI found "strong" or "moderate" evidence-based interventions within CIS's Model of Differentiated Supports through the Four Pillars.

Supports are delivered across and through CIS's three-tiered model: Tier I supports are school wide, and available to all students; Tier II supports help small groups of students with a common need and are available to all students; and Tier III supports provide intensive case management or individual targeted support for the students identified as most at-risk, also available to all students. The tiered level of supports delivered within the Four Pillars are as follows:

Integrated Student Supports. LPI found "strong" evidence-based interventions in CIS' Differentiated Tiered Support Model within Integrated Student Supports. They are School-wide (Tier I) supports that are available to all students and include tutoring, attendance incentives and access to basic needs support that include healthy food (through food pantries, daily snacks, and free weekly grocery distribution), emergency funds (for rent, utilities, transportation), clothing (including shoes, winter coats, and hygiene supplies), school supplies, and health clinics.

CIS Three-Tiered Differentiated Model



Site Coordinators **IN** the schools
Services coordinated **IN** the schools

Impact

For the 2019-20 school year, 15 CIS Site Coordinators working inside 10 Title I Santa Fe Public Schools provided:

- 1,101 students with academic assistance
- 530 students with college & career preparation
- 2,295 students with enrichment/motivation programs
- 3,130 students and their families with family engagement activities
- 1,055 students with Social-emotional learning and mentoring opportunities
- 358 students with physical health supports

Direct Student Supports: Site Coordinators spent 10,388 direct service hours providing emotional support, consulting with parents, facilitating distance learning, and working with school staff. 30+ community partners work closely with CIS to deliver services and supports.

Emergency Fund Support: Between March and June 2020, CIS distributed more than \$75,000 from our Covid Relief Emergency Fund to assist families experiencing extreme financial distress. Funds covered rent, utility and medical bills. During June and July, CIS distributed an additional \$150,000 in emergency fund support to CIS families.

Digital Learning/Communication during COVID-19:

In March 2020, CIS learned that only 65 percent of CIS families across the ten SFPS schools had internet access. By the end of the school year, digital connectivity increased to 81 percent through advocacy and emergency funds to purchase hot spots and internet access enabling more students to engage in digital learning.

Volunteers: In 2019-20, approximately 80 volunteers tutored students in Prekindergarten through high school in person pre-COVID and virtually since April 2020.

Basic Needs: In 2019-20, CIS provided 143,000 meals to families in CIS schools through CIS's weekly meal/grocery distribution program. Food pantries and clothing and school supply closets were maintained at each school and hygiene kit supplies were always readily available. Annual coat drives occurred at each school between November and early December. With the onset of COVID, food and other supply distributions occurred at school pick up or by direct delivery.

Case Management/Individual Targeted Support:

88 percent of CIS students improved in attendance. 83 percent of CIS students graduated. 73 percent of those who graduated planned to enter post-secondary education or the military. Three students received CIS-designed scholarships - the CIS Carson Honor Society and Future Forward Scholarship – for outstanding accomplishment.

School Climate/Culture: In a survey conducted by CIS in 2019, 95 percent of teachers across the ten schools indicated the presence of CIS in their school had significantly improved school culture and morale, for all.

The heart of CIS' work is relational. Site Coordinators take the time to forge trusting relationships with students and families ensuring they get to the heart of and understand each student's unique reality. As such, Site Coordinators are poised to take action to support and guide every student to greater safety, strength, well-being and opportunity.

Photographed below:

CIS Site Coordinator, Heather Sellers (center) during the 2019 Capital High School graduation with some of her students.



Approximately 10% of the students we serve- those who are identified by principals, teachers, and school wellness staff as most at-risk- receive intensive case management (Tier III) or individual targeted support. Case management includes an individual needs assessment, a tailored support plan, referrals to expanded and enriched learning time groups and outside services, and metric goals for improvement in attendance, behavior, or academics.

Expanded and Enriched Learning Time. LPI found “moderate” evidence-based interventions in Expanded and Enriched Learning Time. CIS' model includes afterschool enrichment programs, tutoring and mentoring, and social/emotional support. CIS's targeted (Tier II) social/emotional wellness supports include weekly small groups (during school or after school hours) such as: anti-bullying initiatives, positive behavior supports, grief and trauma support, and support for immigrant students (including tutoring and mentoring in both native and target language).

Active Family and Community Engagement. LPI found “moderate” evidence-based interventions in Active Family and Community Engagement. CIS Site Coordinators provide student/parent and family nights, classes for parents, weekly parent coffees and facilitate communication between parents and school staff. They provide advocacy for families (including support for immigrant and non-English speaking families) and individualized support, home visits, and referrals to outside agencies. They work with family, teachers, and community agencies and service providers to help families navigate services and ensure they are surrounded with a community of support that helps them to feel empowered as participants in the school and greater community.

Collaborative Leadership and Practice. LPI found “moderate” evidence-based interventions in Collaborative Leadership and Practice. Site Coordinators work closely with each school's Site Based Leadership Team (principals, teachers, school wellness staff, families, service providers and community stakeholders) to survey and assess the school community and assess the community's unique needs and assets. Site Coordinators create an annual School Support Plan rooted in strategies that will improve five key indicators- attendance, behavior and social-emotional skills, academic performance, access to basic needs, and parent/family/community engagement. Supports are adjusted throughout the school year with ongoing input from the Site Based Leadership Team.

Research conducted by LPI has shown the CIS model has a positive impact on both short- and long-term student success indicators. LPI indicates schools that have implemented the CIS model with fidelity have seen improvements on academic achievement, student attendance, student behavior, school culture and climate, and quality family engagement (Oakes, J., Maier, A., & Daniel, J. (2017). *Community Schools: An Evidence-Based Strategy for Equitable School Improvement*).