

**COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS SPRING 2014 REPORT**

# **CHANGING THE PICTURE OF EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA**





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**CHANGING THE PICTURE OF EDUCATION  
IN NORTH CAROLINA**

“We can all agree it makes economic sense to help students graduate and provide them an opportunity to make a living wage and become tax-paying citizens. I have partnered with Communities In Schools for more than 12 years because I see the power of the work Communities In Schools does to change lives, one child at a time. Education and skills-based learning is the key to a child’s ability to make a living wage and become part of a vital business community. Communities In Schools of North Carolina provides every child the pathway and ability to stay in school and succeed in life.”

—**TINA WILSON**, MANAGER OF CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP & CORPORATE AFFAIRS FOR IBM IN NORTH CAROLINA;  
CHAIR, COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Communities In Schools** is a nationwide network of passionate professionals working in public schools to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Communities In Schools has served North Carolina for the last 25 years. This year, Communities In Schools of North Carolina is serving more than 215,000 students on 441 campuses, helping to break the cycle of poverty, school failure and underemployment.

**This report outlines** the accomplishments of Communities In Schools of North Carolina during the 2012 – 2013 school year. It includes data on the percentage of students who were promoted from one grade to another, graduated from high school, or otherwise improved their performance as a result of their involvement with Communities In Schools; and describes how this success was achieved.

“Children in poverty come to school every day with tremendous burdens that hinder their ability to learn. It’s hard to focus on math or reading when you’re hungry or sick or worried about where you’re going to sleep at night. In those conditions, it can seem like the ‘escape valve’ has been welded shut from the outside.”

—**DANIEL CARDINALI**, PRESIDENT, COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS

# ABOUT COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS IN NORTH CAROLINA

COMMUNITIES  
IN SCHOOLS  
SPRING 2014  
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Because I was served by Communities In Schools of North Carolina, I completed school and today I am living my dream working as a police officer. Now, I reach out to kids in my community to help them understand the value of education and the possibilities it can provide.”

—RASHAUD TRICE, POLICE OFFICER AND COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA BOARD MEMBER

Communities In Schools is the only dropout prevention organization proven to both lower dropout rates and increase graduation rates. What sets Communities In Schools apart is the organization’s holistic approach to addressing both the academic and nonacademic needs of students. Working with school staff, Communities In Schools site coordinators — who are positioned in schools — identify students in danger of dropping out, assess what resources they need, and then provide those resources through the appropriate community partnerships. These resources include food, clothing, transportation, housing, medical care, mentoring, tutoring, academic supports and much more.



## THE STUDENT

**JAMAL TATE**, served by Communities In Schools of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, could have been dismissed as just another kid who had landed in jail, but his student support specialist saw a motivated leader who would go on to become the president of the first college-based Communities In Schools alumni group.

At 16, with three stints in jail, a strained relationship with his mom and a lack of focus, Jamal was failing his classes and was on the road to becoming a dropout. Communities In Schools worked with Jamal while he was in jail, coordinating with his site coordinator, who put a plan in place to support Jamal as he returned to school. Jamal’s site coordinator helped him finish assignments, kept him focused on plans for college and helped him catch up so he could graduate on time.

Today, Jamal is a junior in college with a 4.0 GPA. He is also working to build bridges



to college for other students who need support by spearheading a campus organization called Communities In Colleges, modeled after Communities In Schools’ mission to help students stay in school and achieve in life. He is working to lay the foundation to expand to community colleges across the state with models that keep students in college and on a path to a brighter future.



**THE STUDENT SUPPORT SPECIALIST**

**JACINTA BLAIR**, Communities In Schools Student Support Specialist at Rockingham County Schools, finds joy in opening her middle school students’ eyes to the possibilities that exist after graduation.

Obstacles to student academic success come in all shapes and sizes, from poverty and poor attendance to bullying, low self-esteem, lack of initiative and limited parent involvement. Helping a student bring up a failing grade to a passing one, or improving attendance by several days a month can mean the difference between dropping out or achieving in life. Each challenge is as unique as each child Blair sees.

“My job is to help students find their pathway to the future early in life and provide the positive influence, resources and tools to encourage them along the way,” Blair said. “Kids need hope and someone who cares. I offer those through one-on-one relationships coupled with evidence-based interventions that work.” Blair is changing the picture for her kids, one student at a time.

**Communities In Schools recognizes that if basic needs are not met, children are unable to learn.**



Working with each school’s administration, Communities In Schools identifies students who lack skills to succeed including access to services to meet basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter, and utilizes community resources to assist with meeting these needs. Other whole-school offerings include parenting programs, grief and loss counseling, and bullying prevention programs.



**THE PRESIDENT AND CEO, COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA**

Coming from more than 20 years in the field of juvenile justice, **ERIC HALL** has seen what happens when children fail to receive the necessary supports and interventions on time.

Kids across the K-12 spectrum face challenges related to poverty, including access to basic needs and services, food, health care and mental health services. “I was attracted to Communities In Schools because it combines the art of relationship building with the



science of evidence-based practices to target the needs of students and remove barriers to success,” said Hall, president and CEO of Communities In Schools of North Carolina. “What we do works, the evidence proves it, and it is making a difference for thousands of students and families across North Carolina.”

The key to the success of the Communities In Schools approach is a one-on-one relationship developed between a student and a well-trained professional who can link the school and student to proven programs and interventions. Hall believes the laser focus on individual growth and student outcomes is creating tangible impact every day, and some of the best return on investment he has ever witnessed.

**All of Communities In Schools’ work is guided by the “Five Basics” — a set of essentials that every child needs and deserves:**



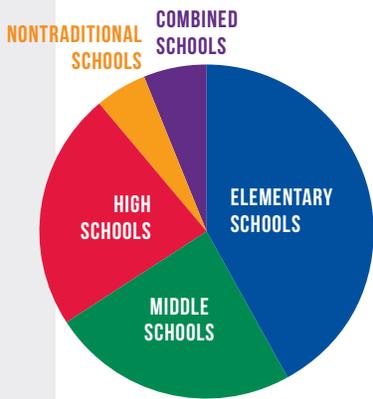
- A one-on-one relationship with a caring adult
- A safe place to learn and grow
- A healthy start and a healthy future
- A marketable skill to use upon graduation
- A chance to give back to peers and community

**Communities In Schools of North Carolina**

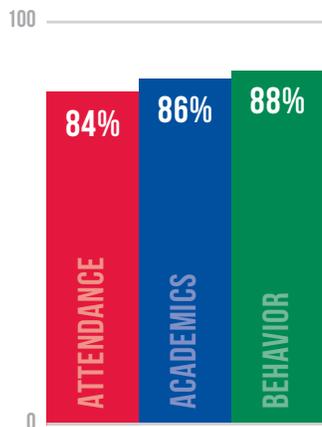
**2012 – 2013 School Year Highlights**

- › 187 elementary schools, 107 middle schools, 103 high schools, 21 nontraditional schools and 23 combined schools were served.
- › Approximately 215,500 students receive integrated student supports from the Communities In Schools network in North Carolina; 196,558 students received Level One\* services and 19,139 students received Level Two\*\* targeted and sustained interventions.

- › **97% of seniors receiving targeted and sustained services (and for whom data were available) graduated.**
- › **96% of the students in grades K – 11 who received targeted and sustained services (and for whom data were available) were promoted to the next grade.**



**NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOLS SERVED BY COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS**



› **84%** of the students in grades K – 12 who received targeted and sustained services with an attendance goal met their goal. For some students, the goal was to increase the number of days they attended and for others it was to maintain their attendance levels.

› **86%** of the students in grades K – 12 who received targeted and sustained services with an academic performance goal met their goal. These goals, which are tailored to each student, may have included improving class grades, overall GPA, standardized test scores or homework completion.

› **88%** of the students in grades K – 12 who received targeted and sustained services with a behavioral goal met their goal. This relates to school behavior and can include: improving classroom behavior and reducing disciplinary referrals for fighting, disruptive or disrespectful behavior (bad language, talking back, etc.).



We use research-supported practices and evidence-based interventions, but at the heart of our model, it is the one-on-one relationship that is formed with students — this is what makes great things happen for kids at all ages. We have to meet the kids where they are and provide them with hope, care and a vision of what the future could be.

—ERIC HALL, PRESIDENT AND CEO, COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

\*Level One services, also known as whole-school preventative services, are provided to all students, regardless of their risk for developing serious problems. Examples of these services include health fairs, attendance initiatives, anti-bullying campaigns, parent engagement activities/events, and motivational speakers.

\*\*Level Two services are targeted and sustained interventions provided for specific students over an extended period of time. These services are provided based on individual student needs and include services such as one-on-one academic tutoring, mentoring, coordination of medical or dental resources, and counseling.