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**CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium**

**Georgia ACRES Project: Activating Communities for Rural Education Success**

Full-Service Community Schools Program (FSCS) CFDA 84.215J

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### REFERENCE LIST OF FREQUENT ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Meaning/Significance
ACRES Project	Activating Communities for Rural Education Success Project
CIS	Communities In Schools
CISGA	Communities In Schools of Georgia
ELA	English Language Arts
FSCS	Full Service Community School
GaDOE	Georgia Department of Education
GMAS	Georgia Milestones Assessment System
ISS	Integrated Student Supports
LEA	Local Education Agency
OST	Out-of-School Time
OWCS	Office of Whole Child Supports
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
SSC	School Site Coordinators
SST	School Support Team
TQS	Total Quality System

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## I. NEED FOR PROJECT & ALIGNMENT WITH FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Georgia ranked seventh worst in the nation for the way it educates rural students.<sup>1</sup> Over half of Georgia school districts (99/181) are characterized by the Georgia Department of Education as high-need rural, meaning they are located in communities with high unemployment rates, low per capita incomes, and high percentages of residents whose incomes are below the state poverty level. Of Georgia’s 8.2M rural residents, 26.5% are under the age of 18, and 28.4% are non-Hispanic Black.<sup>2</sup> Georgia is facing a rural education crisis. Rural enrollment is relatively high at nearly a half million K-12 students, behind only Texas and North Carolina. Student achievement in rural areas is low (well below the performance in non-rural areas), and the state’s achievement gap for rural students in poverty ranks Georgia among the 10 highest-priority states on that measure.<sup>3</sup> More than any other gauge, is the subpar college-readiness results that make Georgia the seventh most serious situation for rural education in the U.S. Gaps that existed prior to the pandemic such as connectivity, teacher retention and recruitment, healthcare, resources and funding, workforce development, and more were only exacerbated by the pandemic.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and in recognition of the challenges faced by its rural districts, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) created the Office of Rural Education and Innovation (OREI) with American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funding to address the needs in rural communities. As

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<sup>1</sup> Showalter, Hartman, Johnson & Klein (2019). ["Why Rural Matters, 2018-2019: The Time Is Now."](#) A Report of the Rural School and Community Trust, The College Board and the School Superintendents Association (AASA).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Rural Definitions: State-Level Maps, [Georgia](#).

<sup>3</sup> Showalter, Hartman, Johnson & Klein (2019). ["Why Rural Matters, 2018-2019: The Time Is Now."](#) A Report of the Rural School and Community Trust, The College Board and the School Superintendents Association (AASA).

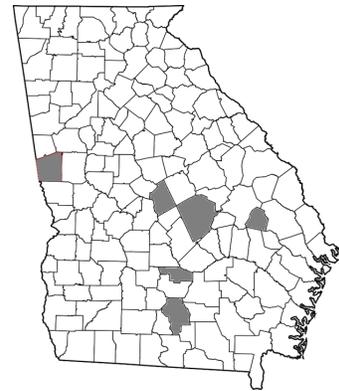
the leading provider of school site based integrated support services in rural communities across the state, Communities in Schools of Georgia (CISGA) is a partner of choice for GaDOE.

CISGA has over 30 years' experience connecting needed community resources with schools. By bringing caring adults and a wide variety of services into schools to address children's unmet needs, CISGA provides a link between educators and the community. The result: teachers are free to teach, and students – many in jeopardy of dropping out – have the opportunity to focus on learning. CISGA is part of the national network and builds statewide capacity of its network of local affiliates working to sustain, grow and improve educational outcomes for under-served youth in 36 school districts, across 32 counties (of which 58% are rural) in the state of Georgia. In the 2021-2022 academic year, CISGA affiliates and subsidiaries reached 83,992 students with Tier 1 supports (i.e., whole-school supports), 6,235 with Tier 2 and 3 supports (i.e., targeted or intensive individualized services with case management services for highly specific needs), and 85,340 students unduplicated across all tiers of service.

Through the OREI ARP ESSER funding, CISGA is currently expanding its evidence-based model of integrated services to support full-service community school models in 11 new school sites and 3 existing CISGA school sites (all different from those proposed in this FSCS grant application). The GaDOE Office of Whole Child Supports (OWCS), established in 2019, assists districts/schools and communities in identifying and addressing student non-academic barriers to success while expanding learning opportunities. The OWCS predecessor office was the GaDOE School Turnaround Office. Prior to the change, from 2019-2021, CISGA was the wraparound support services provider for the School Turnaround Office efforts.

Building on this work, the rural innovation initiative, and in response to local LEA, school and community requests<sup>(O&I)</sup>, CISGA has established the **CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium** (hereinafter referred to as the Consortium) of five (5) CISGA affiliates & subsidiary organizations, seven (7) Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) local education agencies (LEA; i.e., school districts), fifteen (15) schoolwide Title I schools (with a minimum of 2 per LEA), and 37 community partners across six (6) Georgia counties (Ben Hill, Berrien, Candler, Laurens, Troup, Twiggs).

**Figure 1: Geographic Locations of Targeted Counties in Georgia**



The CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium recognizes that community schools are the products of explicit partnerships between the school and other community resources. Our shared core values are: 1) all partners are necessary to improve educational outcomes for students; 2) integration is crucial to the success of the strategy; and 3) leadership and accountability is shared across all partners and stakeholders. The CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium members share a *vision for inclusive and thriving rural communities that offer access to an excellent education that embraces the whole child, leverages community assets to remove barriers for academic success, supports economic opportunity, and improves quality of life for all residents*. With this vision, the Consortium collectively designed the **Georgia ACRES–Activating Communities for Rural Education Success–Project (ACRES Project)** which meets the U.S. DOE FSCS program Absolute Priority 1, 2 and 4. Working together, the consortium will accomplish the following goals:

- **Goal 1:** Increase students achieving academically.

- **Goal 2:** Promote and maintain a safe and supportive culture and climate
- **Goal 3:** Increase social, health, and mental health services and supports for community school students and families
- **Goal 4:** Increase family and community engagement and support
- **Goal 5:** Improved systems for sustainable support & increased coordination of services for students, their families, and community members

With the Georgia ACRES Project, CISGA is supporting alignment of local and state resources to take a systemic approach to improving education for rural Georgia students.

The challenges facing rural communities (e.g., poverty, teacher recruitment and retention, low tax basis, restricted access to healthcare, limited workforce opportunities, lack of infrastructure, geographic isolation, low adult educational attainment) create resource gaps in rural school systems that can lead to opportunity gaps for students. Innovative, evidenced-based solutions are required to address these challenges. The full-service community school model is under tapped in Georgia to address the critical issues facing rural communities. Only one U.S. Department of Education full-service community schools grant has been awarded in the state, which went to a CISGA rural affiliate consortium in 2018. The National Coalition for Community Schools reports only one registered coalition community (Gainesville, North Georgia) and no community schools in Georgia. CISGA is uniquely positioned to support rural educational reform through full-service community schools with a network of affiliates, strong state and local community partnerships, a school-embedded, evidence-based model, training capacity, a trusted resource for parents and families, established data sharing agreements, and data collection and evaluation infrastructure. CISGA currently works with 14,660 rural students

in 23 LEA's across the state to address gaps in education and opportunity for rural Georgia students and families.

### **Competitive Preference Priorities**

The *Georgia ACRES Project meets Competitive Preference Priority 1* by improving students' social emotional, academic, and career development, with a focus on underserved students by creating education settings that are supportive, positive, identity-safe, and inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status, through developing trusting relationships between students (including underserved students), educators, families, and community partners and by providing multi-tiered systems of supports that address learning barriers. CISGA strategically targets services to underserved students. Currently, students served by CISGA are 67% Black; 18% White; 8% Hispanic/Latino; 6% Multi-Racial; and 1% other.

Communities In Schools works inside schools full-time, building relationships with students to empower them to stay in school and succeed in life. The CIS model is a whole child approach that assists with implementing a positive climate by considering the school environment as an essential foundation for children's learning, achievement, and development in all life domains, not just academic. CIS promotes trusting, inclusive relationships that fuel school transformation by helping to create a nurturing safe, respectful climate where caring adults, families and students come to rely on each other as part of a shared approach to student success. Communities In Schools developed an assessment of students' social, emotional, and academic skills and competencies that is intended to give our site coordinators insight into these areas of students' lives. This assessment includes measuring students' feelings of belongingness at school and the amount of social support they feel they receive from family, peers, and teachers. For

students who indicate that they feel they don't fit in or belong at school or that they have little support for others in their lives, site coordinators intervene. The CIS model provides integrated student supports to address the interconnected challenges that affect the health and well-being of students. Research demonstrates that a high-quality model of integrated student supports can foster a supportive learning environment while linking students to services they need to thrive. A designated coordinator manages steps like the planning and integration of programming and resources, allowing teachers to teach and principals to focus on leading the school. The coordinator then leverages community-based resources to connect students and families with extra academic, social, health, and wellness support - all while creating and contributing to a climate of safety and trust.

CIS has the most extensive and rigorous research of any Integrated Student Support provider in the Nation. In the CIS model, three tiers apply to the services Communities In Schools provides, brokers and coordinates. Tier 1: Widely available services designed to foster a positive school climate and address school-level risk factors (e.g., whole-school supports). Tier 2: Targeted services typically provided in a group setting to students with a common need. Tier 3: Intensive, individualized services typically provided in a one-on-one setting to students with highly specific needs. As providers of Integrated Student Supports, Communities In Schools affiliates and staff members are in a unique position to leverage resources from families, schools, and communities to holistically address the negative effects of toxic stress and trauma. The Communities In Schools model is an evidence-based approach that is inherently designed to adapt to the unique needs of different communities and individuals requiring varying levels of support. All staff receive trauma informed educator training.

The *Georgia ACRES Project meets Competitive Preference Priority 2* by implementing one of the CDC Division of Youth Violence Prevention’s recommended strategies for evidenced-based community and state prevention activities with the greatest potential to prevent youth violence and its consequences.<sup>4</sup> The strategy being implemented through the ACRES Project is connecting youth to caring adults and activities.

Research shows that young people’s risk for violence can be buffered through strong connections to caring adults and involvement in activities that help young people grow and apply new skills. Relationships with caring adults, in addition to parents or caregivers, can influence young people’s behavioral choices and reduce their risk for involvement in crime and violence, alcohol and other substance use, and high-risk sexual behavior. These caring adults could include teachers, coaches, extended family members, neighbors, and community volunteers. Exposure to positive adult role models helps youth learn acceptable and appropriate behavior. Through positive interpersonal relationships and learning activities, youth can also develop broad and healthy life goals, improve their school engagement and skills, and establish networks and have experiences that improve their future schooling and employment opportunities. These connections and experiences and the many benefits they contribute to, such as enhanced academic performance, are protective against involvement in crime and violence. Mentoring and after-school programs are two approaches for connecting youth to caring adults and engaging youth in activities to reduce or buffer against their risk for violence perpetration and victimization. Mentoring and after-school programs are integral services of the ACRES Project.

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<sup>4</sup> David-Ferdon, C., Vivolo-Kantor, A. M., Dahlberg, L. L., Marshall, K. J., Rainford, N. & Hall, J. E. (2016). A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The first of Communities In Schools guiding principles is closing the relationship gap by ensuring that every child has a strong one-on-one relationship with a caring adult. CIS works to advocate for policies that create, reinforce, and strengthen opportunities for young people to build developmental relationships with caring adults, thus creating systemic change. The CIS model creates the environment for healthy relationships to form between adults and children. Young people thrive when adults care about them on a one-to-one level, and when they also have a sense of belonging to a caring community. Services are coordinated across multiple community, state, and local agencies and are targeted to improving outcomes for underserved students.

### ***Specific Needs & Gaps in Services within the Georgia ACRES Project LEAs***

The first component of the Communities In Schools® model (see Figure 12, Communities In Schools' Evidence-Based FSCS Model) is a needs assessment that identifies what needs and assets exist and which programs, services, or policies can be pursued in order to address needs and leverage assets for student learning and development. Annually, CIS local affiliates conduct a formal planning process that includes needs input and responsive program design with school boards, principals, teachers, guidance counselors, parents, students, CIS staff, community partners and stakeholders. Through a thorough review of local statistics (e.g., school data, crime statistics, health data, unemployment rates, poverty rates) and stakeholder input (e.g., household surveys, student surveys, interviews, focus groups), local CIS affiliates in partnership with their stakeholders determine what is needed to support the whole child within a particular school and community.

Across the CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium, 6 counties, 7 LEAs and 15 school sites, the following common needs surfaced in planning for expanding full-service

community schools: educational opportunity gaps/academic support, early education, school climate, health and nutrition, positive social-emotional development, and parent and family engagement.

***High-Need Rural Communities***

The six counties targeted by the Consortium’s ACRES Project share the common challenge of being high-need rural communities. Students and families face a host of economic risk factors (See Figure 2, Economic Risk Factors by County for Targeted Counties, 2020) that create unstable home lives and contribute to a growing opportunity and achievement gap that threatens to continue cycles of poverty and inequity.

**Figure 2: Economic Risk Factors by County for Targeted Counties, 2020**

	<b>Children Living in Poverty</b>	<b>Children Living in Single Parent Families</b>	<b>Children Whose Parents Lack Secure Employment</b>	<b>Families, With Children, With Annual Incomes of &lt;150% of the Federal Poverty Threshold</b>	<b>Children With a Substantiated Incident of Abuse and/or Neglect (per 1,000)</b>
<b>Average- GA</b>	19.50%	33.5%	8.0%	26.8%	3.6
<b>Ben Hill County</b>	32.7%	43.7%	9.4%	54.7%	14.0
<b>Berrien County</b>	26.6%	30.9%	12.3%	39.8%	11.4
<b>Candler County</b>	31.8%	46.6%	4.1%	48.7%	6.6
<b>Laurens County</b>	31.0	48.9%	14.5%	41.4%	5.9
<b>Troup County</b>	23.10	41.1%	8.6%	14.3%	6.8
<b>Twiggs County</b>	29%	33.3%	2.5%	14.3%	5.9



<b>West Laurens Middle School</b>	27%	4%	85%	85%	11%
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***Inconsistent Access to Early Learning***

In 1995, Georgia’s Pre-K Program became the nation’s first state-funded universal preschool program for 4-year-olds. Georgia preschool enrolled 66,554 children in 2021, representing 49% of Georgia 4 year olds.<sup>6</sup> Only 8% of Georgia 3 year olds are enrolled in Head Start and there is no state-funded program for 3 year olds. Access to early learning in Georgia has been inconsistent, reliant on local communities to rally resources together through targeted initiatives and has created a patchwork effect. Students in the counties targeted by this Consortium are no exception, as illustrated in Figure 4, Early Education Program Access by County. Inconsistent access to early learning, particularly for children from low-income families, contributes to a growing achievement gap that follows students throughout their lives. By the age of three, children from low-income families nationally know only half as many words compared to their peers and as a result, can be 18 months behind their peers by the time they enroll in kindergarten.<sup>7</sup> Children who are not kindergarten ready are half as likely to read proficiently by third grade, and children who aren’t reading proficiently are four times more likely than their peers to drop out of school.<sup>8</sup> To combat these challenges, the ACRES Project will work to connect more children and families to early learning services and to community based resources that support early learning like Headstart, Evenstart, Babies Can’t Wait, Baby Irish (Dublin City School District in Laurens County), and Footsteps to Brilliance (Ben Hill County School

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<sup>6</sup> The State of Preschool, State Preschool Yearbook (2020). [State Profile for Georgia](#). National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER).

<sup>7</sup> [The Vital Link: Early Childhood Investment is the First Step to High School Graduation](#). Published by ReadyNation, Council For A Strong America.

<sup>8</sup> Id.

District). In Ben Hill County School District at Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy, the ACRES Project will also leverage a four-year state grant for the Literacy for Learning, Living, and Leading in Georgia (L4GA) initiative, which aims to improve literacy outcomes for students from birth through grade 12.

**Figure 4: Early Education Program Access by County<sup>9</sup>**

	# Enrolled in GA Pre-K Program	% Enrolled in GA Pre-K Program	% of children not attending preschools ages 3-4 (2016-2020)
<b>Average- GA</b>	80,328	59%	41%
<b>Ben Hill County</b>	154	66.4%	39.2%
<b>Berrien County</b>	140	49.8%	60.0%
<b>Candler County</b>	105	79.5%	19.2%
<b>Laurens County</b>	404	60.4%	31.6%
<b>Troup County</b>	582	60.4%	46.0%
<b>Twiggs County</b>	24	31.6%	73.6%

***Low Academic Achievement***

Nationally, kindergarten math and reading achievement is slightly higher in rural than non-rural schools, but by third grade, this advantage fades, and non-rural students increasingly out perform rural students from grades 3 to 8.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, overall rural Georgia students struggle academically compared to their urban and suburban peers and Georgia ranks. Georgia has among the lowest levels of spending on instruction for rural students in the country.<sup>11</sup> The students who

<sup>9</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2022). KIDS COUNT Data Center, [Georgia Indicators](#).

<sup>10</sup> Johnson, Kuhfeld, & Soland (2022). [The Forgotten 20 Percent: Achievement and Growth in Rural Schools Across the Nation](#). Center for School and Student Progress.

<sup>11</sup> Showalter, Hartman, Johnson & Klein (2019). ["Why Rural Matters, 2018-2019: The Time Is Now."](#) A Report of the Rural School and Community Trust, The College Board and the School Superintendents Association (AASA).

attend the 15 school sites targeted by the Consortium’s ACRES Project are no exception and students are struggling to meet state standards (defined as performing at the Beginning or Developing levels on the Georgia Milestones Assessment System) as shown in Figure 5.

**Figure 5: Student Performance on the Georgia Milestones Assessment System, 2021**

<b>School Site Name</b>	<b>% of Students Beginning or Developing in Math on GMAS</b>	<b>% of Students Proficient or Distinguished in Math on GMAS</b>	<b>% of Students Beginning or Developing in ELA on GMAS</b>	<b>% of Students Proficient or Distinguished in ELA on GMAS</b>
<b>State Average- Elementary</b>	26.4%	23.6%	28.35%	21.65%
<b>Callaway Elementary School</b>	35.7%	14.3%	38.9%	11.1%
<b>Clearview Elementary School</b>	39.2%	10.7%	40.8%	9.2%
<b>Jeffersonville Elementary School</b>	11.8%	38.8%	20%	30%
<b>Berrien Primary School</b>	23%	27%	30%	20.1%
<b>Berrien Elementary School</b>	23.6%	26.4%	28.7%	21.3%
<b>Ben Hill Elementary School</b>	38%	12%	38.3%	11.7%
<b>Metter Elementary School</b>	35.3%	14.7%	38.5%	11.5%
<b>State Average- Middle School</b>	30.3%	19.7%	28%	22%
<b>Dublin Middle School</b>	46.6%	3.4%	39.9%	10.1%
<b>East Laurens Middle School</b>	29.2%	20.8%	29.8%	20.2%
<b>West Laurens Middle School</b>	25.9%	24.1%	25.6%	24.3%
<b>Twiggs Middle School</b>	48.1%	1.9%	40.1%	9.9%
<b>State Average- High School</b>	29%	21%	31.5%	18.5%
<b>Dublin High School</b>	47.9%	2.1%	26.4%	23.6%
<b>Twiggs County High School</b>	50%	0%	44.2%	5.8%
<b>Fitzgerald High School College &amp; Career Academy</b>	40%	10.1%	34.3%	15.7%
<b>Metter High School</b>	39.8%	10.2%	29.6%	20.4%

A recent study found that a middle school gap between rural and non-rural students may be attributed to larger declines in achievement for rural students over summer break.<sup>12</sup> Access to high-quality summer programs continues to be a challenge for rural students including those in the CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium.

**Figure 6: Current Estimated OST Need in Targeted LEA/School Sites**

School Name	Total Enrollment	Current # of OST Program Slots	Percentage
Callaway Elementary School	587	60	10%
Clearview Elementary School	612	60	20%
Dublin High School	558	120	22%
Dublin Middle School	666	120	18%
East Laurens Middle School	503	20	4%
West Laurens Middle School	1002	20	2%
Jeffersonville Elementary School	820	150	18%
Twiggs Middle School	185	0	0%
Twiggs County High School	206	0	0%
Berrien Primary School	655	131	20%
Berrien Elementary School	640	122	19%
Ben Hill Elementary School	620	56	9%
Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy	796	0	0%
Metter Elementary School	934	140	15%
Metter High School	398	25	6%

***Need to Improve School Climate***

<sup>12</sup> Johnson, Kuhfeld, & Soland (2022). [The Forgotten 20 Percent: Achievement and Growth in Rural Schools Across the Nation](#). Center for School and Student Progress.

In response to the compelling body of research that underscores the importance of school climate, Georgia is the first state in the nation to include school climate as an early indicator in its academic accountability system. The School Climate Star Rating is calculated using data from the Georgia Student Health Survey, Georgia School Personnel Survey, Georgia Parent Survey, student discipline data and attendance records for students, teachers, staff and administrators. While the climate ratings were waived and no 2020-2021 report was issued due to COVID-19, existing 2019 data included in the Georgia Insights School Climate dashboard (see Figure 7, Georgia Insights School Climate Data, Targeted LEA/School Sites, 2019) indicate stark challenges (particularly for school discipline and climate perception by parents, students and personnel for targeted elementary schools) that are likely to be exacerbated by the learning disruption caused by COVID-19.<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 7: Georgia Insights School Climate Data, Targeted LEA/School Sites, 2019**

School Site Name	Chronic Absenteeism (2019) <sup>14</sup>	Discipline Score (2019)	Climate Perception Score (2019)
<i>State Average- Elementary</i>	17.9%	94.3	81.6
Callaway Elementary School	13.9%	92.9	77.1
Clearview Elementary School	22.9%	79.1	77.3
Jeffersonville Elementary School	42.9%	99.9	90.6
Berrien Primary School	31.2%	92.8	90.7
Berrien Elementary School	36.1%	91.9	84.9
Ben Hill Elementary School	20.2%	91.0	74.6

<sup>13</sup> Georgia Department of Education Dashboards (2019). [School Climate | Overview - Georgia Insights for Data. Access Action.](#)

<sup>14</sup> The State of Georgia, Governor’s Office of Student Achievement. Dashboards, Data, Report Card: [Data Dashboards.](#)

<b>Metter Elementary School</b>	<i>19.4%</i>	<i>92.0</i>	<i>79.3</i>
<b><i>State Average- Middle School</i></b>	<i>20.2%</i>	<i>77.5</i>	<i>74.8</i>
<b>Dublin Middle School</b>	<i>35%</i>	<i>71.6</i>	<i>76.5</i>
<b>East Laurens Middle School</b>	<i>18%</i>	<i>70.3</i>	<i>77.7</i>
<b>West Laurens Middle School</b>	<i>10.2%</i>	<i>78.5</i>	<i>77.0</i>
<b>Twiggs Middle School</b>	<i>11.3%</i>	<i>69.3</i>	<i>74.9</i>
<b><i>State Average- High School</i></b>	<i>20.2%</i>	<i>77.5</i>	<i>74.8</i>
<b>Dublin High School</b>	<i>50.8</i>	<i>50.2</i>	<i>73.4</i>
<b>Twiggs County High School</b>	<i>37.1</i>	<i>73.8</i>	<i>72.7</i>
<b>Fitzgerald High School College &amp; Career Academy</b>	<i>22.9</i>	<i>79.8</i>	<i>65.1</i>
<b>Metter High School</b>	<i>5.8</i>	<i>81.7</i>	<i>75.9</i>

In June of 2019, the Georgia School Board Association (GSBA) Rural Task Force released a report recommending four top priorities for rural education funding: early learning, healthcare, and teacher recruitment and retention. The impetus for creating the task force was the growing number of issues facing rural school districts, and an increase in the requests for innovative solutions to the challenges of dwindling student populations, increased poverty, a lack of economic development and other opportunities.

School counselors are a vital part of creating a school community that nurtures students' social and emotional needs. Yet schools in the CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium lack adequate counselors to provide the necessary support services (Figure 8, Comparison of Student to Counselor Ratio, Targeted LEAs). In fact, the GSBA Rural Task Force identified additional school counselors as a need in the buildings. According to the Quality Basic Education funding formula, the funding ratio of students to counselors is currently at 450:1.<sup>15</sup> The most recent

<sup>15</sup> The Georgia School Boards Association, [GSBA Rural Task Force Recommendations, June 2019](#).

(2015), American School Counselors Association’s (ASCA) State by State Student to Counselor Ratio Report suggests, on average, there are 484 students to one school counselor in a school.<sup>16</sup> This ratio is inadequate to meet the needs for increased school safety and focus on student’s mental health and wellbeing. The ASCA recommends a 250:1 student to counselor ratio. Because counselors play such a crucial role in assisting students in the services they need outside of the classroom, establishing full-service community schools at each of the proposed sites will meet a significant need. While validated data on the number of counselors is only available by LEA, the estimated number of counselors per targeted school sites is estimated to be roughly equivalent or worse.

**Figure 8: Comparison of Student to Counselor Ratio, Targeted LEAs<sup>17</sup>**

School District	Total Student Enrollment	Total Counselors	Student: Counselor Ratio
Candler County School District	2,181	3.1	704:1
Berrien County School District	3,121	5	624:1
Dublin City School District	2,568	7	361:1
Troup County School District	12,468	27	462:1
Twiggs County School District	828	3	276:1
Ben Hill County School District	3,284	6.5	505:1
Laurens County School District	6,545	12	545:1

**Poor Health & Nutrition**

In Georgia the leading cause of school absences are asthma, oral health, and mental health challenges.<sup>18</sup> Healthy students are better learners. According to the CDC, poor nutrition,

<sup>16</sup> Patel & Clinedinst (2019). [State-By-State Student-to-Counselor Ratio Maps by School District](#). The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC).

<sup>17</sup> Id.

<sup>18</sup> Voices for Georgia’s Children (2022). [Healthy Minds and Bodies](#).

lack of physical activity and an overall unhealthy lifestyle can lead to poor academic achievement in children. Studies have shown that healthy children get better grades, attend school more often and behave better in class.<sup>19</sup> However, many rural Georgians have limited access to affordable, quality health care. All counties in the CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium are designated by the State Office of Rural Health as Medically Underserved Area which means the county’s population lacks access to primary care services. Many also lack access to insurance further inhibiting their ability to access care. Georgia ranks 4th in the nation for highest uninsured childhood population in the nation.

**Figure 9: Key Metrics on Access to Healthcare & Nutrition for Targeted Counties**

	<b>Children Without Health Insurance, 2016-2020<sup>20</sup></b>	<b>Child Food Insecurity Rate, 2020<sup>21</sup></b>
<i>Average- USA</i>	<i>5.6%</i>	<i>16.1%</i>
<i>Average- Georgia</i>	<i>7.4%</i>	<i>14.4%</i>
<b>Troup County</b>	<i>4.7%</i>	<i>20.4%</i>
<b>Laurens County</b>	<i>6.0%</i>	<i>23.2%</i>
<b>Twiggs County</b>	<i>2.2%</i>	<i>15.8%</i>
<b>Berrien County</b>	<i>10.8%</i>	<i>17.0%</i>
<b>Ben Hill County</b>	<i>9.1%</i>	<i>23.4%</i>
<b>Candler County</b>	<i>6.9%</i>	<i>20.2%</i>

<sup>19</sup> National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Population Health (2014). “[Health and Academic Achievement](#)”. In collaboration with Action for Healthy Kids and the GENYOUth Foundation.

<sup>20</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2022). KIDS COUNT Data Center, [Georgia Indicators](#).

<sup>21</sup> Feeding America (2020). [Mind the Meal Gap Study](#): Food Insecurity among Overall (all ages) Population in the United States.

In 2017, Voices for Georgia’s Children found that 41% of Georgia’s children ages 3 to 17 struggle to or are not able to access needed mental health treatment and counseling.<sup>22</sup> According to a CDC report, the percentage of children with diagnosed mental, behavioral, and developmental disorder (MBDD) is consistently higher in rural areas.<sup>23</sup> For illustration, 18.6% of children 2-8 living in small rural areas in 2011-2012 had a reported MBDD diagnosis compared to 15.2% of children of the same age group in urban areas. The percentage of middle school and high school students specifically within the targeted schools who report “always” feeling stressed, as well as the percentage of students who report considering seriously harming themselves in the past 12 months also present significant cause for concern about their social and emotional well-being (see Figure 10: Behavioral Risk Factors for Students at Targeted Middle & High Schools). In 2021, nearly 48,000 students in Georgia reported having attempted suicide on the Georgia Student Health Survey.<sup>24</sup> More than 100,000 middle- and high-school students in Georgia reported having seriously considered harming themselves.<sup>25</sup> All counties in the CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium are designated by the State Office of Rural Health as Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas which means the county’s population lacks access to mental health services. Access to mental health services is a significant need in the target communities. Schools, health agencies, parents, and communities can work together to support the link between healthy eating, physical activity, and improved academic achievement of children and adolescents. Schools play a significant role in promoting the health of students and

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<sup>22</sup> Voices for Georgia’s Children (2022). [Healthy Minds and Bodies](#).

<sup>23</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Survey of Children’s Health (NSCH). [Differences in Health Care, Family, and Community Factors Associated with Mental, Behavioral, and Developmental Disorders Among Children Aged 2–8 Years in Rural and Urban Areas — United States, 2011–2012 | MMWR](#).

<sup>24</sup> Voices for Georgia’s Children (2022). [Georgia Kids and Youth Face Mental Health Crisis](#).

<sup>25</sup> Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Student Health Survey 2019

are the most common location for children to receive mental health services. The Georgia ACRES Project will address this need.

**Figure 10: Behavioral Risk Factors for Students at Targeted Middle & High Schools**

School Site <sup>26</sup>	Students Who Report “Always” Feeling Stressed	Students Who Report Considering Seriously Harming Themselves in the Past 12 Months	Students Who Report Drinking Alcohol in the Past 30 Days
State Average	27.5%	18.9%	7.1%
Metter High School	30.8%	22.5%	15.7%
Metter Middle School	18.4%	14.2%	2.9%
Dublin High School	27.9%	15.6%	7.7%
East Laurens Middle School	25.5%	24.5%	7.8%
West Laurens Middle School	21.1%	17%	4.7%
Twiggs Middle School	18.8%	12.5%	6.6%
Twiggs County High School	26%	21.7%	4.3%
Fitzgerald High School	29.2%	18.7%	14.3%

Physical and mental health status, physical activity, and good nutrition all impact how students learn and to overcome these challenges, children and their parents living in rural communities may need additional support. Through ARP funding, Ben Hill County School District, and Twiggs County School District will also each receive a grant of \$10,000 grants to develop school-based health clinics. There is evidence that school-based health clinics lead to improved student performance, reduced dropout rates, less absenteeism, improved staff morale, and more.

***Challenges Facing Parents & Families***

<sup>26</sup> Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Student Health Survey 2019

The parents in counties served by the Consortium face unique challenges that may require additional supports to ensure that their family thrives (see Figure 2, Economic Risk Factors by County for Targeted Counties, 2020). Many face high rates of poverty and a lack of secure employment, creating economic uncertainty and poor physical and mental health outcomes. The negative impact of these environmental stressors on parents is evident in the high rates of physical distress (adults reporting 14 or more days of poor physical health per month, age-adjusted) and mental distress (adults reporting 14 or more days of poor physical health per month, age-adjusted) in targeted counties. (See Figure 11: Adult Health Risk Factors in Targeted Communities).

Adult health behaviors surrounding substance use and misuse are particular challenges for the targeted communities. Ben Hill County, Troup County, Candler County, and Laurens County have been hit hard by the opioid crisis, with critically high levels of opioids being prescribed in the areas. The Opioid Dispensing Rate per 100 Persons for Laurens County is more than twice the national average in the U.S. (43.3) and equates to more than one opioid prescription per person. Ben Hill County and Twiggs County also have a higher incidence of drive deaths that are alcohol related than the state average. Growing up in a household with substance use exposure is an adverse childhood experience (ACE) and can make children vulnerable to additional ACEs, such as abuse and neglect, loss or separation from a parent, or exposure to violence. The presence of such potentially traumatic experiences can be especially harmful to young children, as it can interfere with brain development.

**Figure 11: Adult Health Risk Factors in Targeted Communities**

	<b>Adult Frequent Physical Distress, 2019</b>	<b>Adult Frequent Mental Distress, 2019</b>	<b>Adult Tobacco Smokers, 2019<sup>27</sup></b>	<b>Opioid Dispensing Rate Per 100 Persons, 2019<sup>28</sup></b>	<b>Percent of Driving Deaths that are Alcohol-Impaired 2022<sup>29</sup></b>
<b>State Average</b>	<i>13%</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>57.9</i>	<i>21%</i>
<b>Ben Hill County</b>	<i>18%</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>78.3</i>	<i>33%</i>
<b>Berrien County</b>	<i>18%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>19.9</i>	<i>16%</i>
<b>Candler County</b>	<i>19%</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>77.2</i>	<i>16%</i>
<b>Laurens County</b>	<i>17%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>103.5</i>	<i>16%</i>
<b>Troup County</b>	<i>16%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>23%</i>	<i>77.4</i>	<i>24%</i>
<b>Twiggs County</b>	<i>17%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>.9</i>	<i>25%</i>

Parents struggle to navigate their circumstances and students suffer the impact: every county in the Consortium has a higher incidence rate of child abuse and neglect than the state average for Georgia (see Figure 2, Economic Risk Factors by County for Targeted Counties, 2020). In Ben Hill County, the rate (14.0) is nearly four times the state average (3.6). The mental health implications of trauma constitute an ACE and can reduce academic motivation and hurt academic performance and general levels of engagement in school because when a child experiences prolonged exposure to toxic stress, adverse changes occur in the areas of their developing brains most critical for learning.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> County Health Rankings (2022). [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#): Georgia.

<sup>28</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Drug Overdose and Injury Center (2019). [U.S. County Opioid Dispensing Rates, 2019](#).

<sup>29</sup> County Health Rankings (2022). [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#): Georgia.

<sup>30</sup> Douglas, Chan, Gelernter, Arias, Anton, Weiss, Brady, Poling, Farrer, Kranzler. Adverse Childhood Events As Risk Factors for Substance Dependence: Partial Mediation by Mood and Anxiety Disorders. *Addict Behav.* 2010 Jan;35(1):7-13. doi: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2009.07.004. Epub 2009 Aug 8. PMID: 19720467; PMCID: PMC2763992.

***Hyper-Local Context: Targeted Communities & School Site Needs***

To combat these risk factors that threaten to distract from student learning and success, CISGA is beginning in communities where community schools are needed most and students are most likely to benefit. Consortium LEAs and targeted school sites have been selected because their leadership and school principals understand and believe in the value of the Community School model as a framework for school-wide improvement and change, are prepared to engage in a comprehensive partnership, and are committed to community schooling through their actions, policies, and relationships with stakeholders. In addition, a broad array of community partners and stakeholders in these selected areas are ready, through the Consortium, to rally behind the vision, goals and objectives set for the ACRES Project. While the Communities In Schools needs assessment and service plan model are highly iterative and individualized to the the local context in which they are implemented, below is a more detailed synopsis of how the needs described above look in each selected community.

***Ben Hill County:*** Located in south central Georgia, Ben Hill County is home to the city of Fitzgerald. Serving students from PreK-12, the Ben Hill County School District consists of one pre-school, one primary school, one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school. Just 55% of families have access to broadband internet (USA average is 95%) and 49% of households are led by a single parent.<sup>31</sup> Educational attainment is low overall and just 12.8% of the population goes on to achieve a Bachelor’s degree or higher in their lifetime. The county’s 2021 per capita income was \$18,241 (compared to the Georgia average of \$32,247 and U.S.

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<sup>31</sup> National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) [Common Core of Data Dashboards](#), Search for Public Schools.

average of \$35,672). Ben Hill County's per capita income is only 57% of the state's and 51% of the nation's average. 42.6% of workers are in agricultural, manufacturing, or retail jobs.<sup>32</sup>

These challenges with educational attainment and income are major contributors to the lack of local families with adequate health insurance coverage and approximately one out of every five (18%) of Ben Hill County's residents are currently uninsured. The majority of employment options available to someone who is not a high school graduate are entry level positions that do not offer health insurance or offer it at a price that workers cannot afford. As a result, health and nutrition education, preventive screenings, primary care visits, mental health/substance abuse counseling and even necessary medications are viewed as expensive non-essential luxuries. Stuck in cycles of intergenerational poverty, many residents struggle with addiction: In 2016, Ben Hill County had the highest Opioid Dispensing Rate in the state.<sup>33</sup>

These environmental factors impact students. At Ben Hill Elementary School, 89% of students are economically disadvantaged and 8% are English Language Learners. Students struggle academically, particularly in the area of English Language Arts. Just 34% of third graders are reading on grade level, and by fifth grade only 39%. Students experience health and wellness challenges that distract from the learning environment: In a 2022 survey of Ben Hill County School District staff, 34% indicated that head lice was a major problem for students in the school district and 40% indicated that issues with nutrition, food or eating were a major problem. These challenges extended to social and emotional health, with 66% of staff reporting that emotional problems and 88% of staff reporting that behavioral problems were a major problem.

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<sup>32</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research Annual Report. Georgia Area Labor Profile Annual Labor Force Activity, 2021.

<sup>33</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Drug Overdose and Injury Center (2019). U.S. County Opioid Dispensing Rates, 2016.

**Berrien County:** In rural, sparsely populated Berrien County, industry is limited outside of manufacturing and the major employer is an aluminum boat plant, Chaparral Boating Company. Students in Berrien County face risk factors that threaten their academic, social, and emotional development. The rate of children with a substantiated incident of abuse and/or neglect (per 1000) is 11.4, more than three times as high as the state average of 3.6. Students struggle with school attendance: the rate of chronic absenteeism at Berrien Primary School is 31% and at Berrien Elementary School increases to 36%. In particular, one of the major gaps in educational opportunity in Berrien County is the lack of high-quality early education programs. Because of low access to services, students start school at a disadvantage and fall further behind. In 2021, 70% of students who had not attended any Pre-K program scored below 55 on the Berrien Primary School Kindergarten Readiness test (Early Intervention Program) compared to the 30% of students who participated in a Pre-K program.

**Candler County:** Located in southeastern Georgia, Candler County is home to 10,981 people (2020 U.S. Census), with half of the population residing in the county seat, the small city of Metter. The Candler County School District serves students PreK through 12th and Communities In Schools of Candler County has been a part of the local community for over 30 years. At Metter Elementary School and Metter High School, two schools targeted by the Consortium and ACRES Project, more support is needed to help students meet rigorous state standards. More than twice as many students at Metter Elementary School score Beginning Learner in English Language Arts compared to the state average (47.3 vs. 23.7) Just 27% of third grade students are reading in grade level. At Metter High School, students are challenged by course content: 79.6% of students scored below grade level in Math on the GMAS and only 66% of 12th grade students are considered to be college and career ready upon graduation. Across

grade levels, students in Candler County have particularly high mobility rates, with 17.2% of students at Metter Elementary School enrolling and withdrawing during the school year. High student mobility contributes to learning disruption and lack of continuity in academic content, supportive relationships, and other factors that contribute to positive academic, social, and emotional development for young people.

**Laurens County:** Just west of Candler is Laurens County, where a single CISGA affiliate (CIS of Laurens/Twiggs County) services both Laurens and adjacent Twiggs County. In Laurens, 14.5% of children have parents lacking secure employment, nearly twice the state average (8%). Because of this, 41.4% of families with children have annual incomes of less than 150% of the federal poverty threshold (vs. 26.8 in Georgia and 28% in the U.S.) and 31% of children live in poverty vs. 19.5% in Georgia and 17% in the U.S.). Families in Laurens are more likely than other areas of the state and country to be led by a single parent (48.9% vs 33.5% in Georgia and 34% in the U.S.) and the teen pregnancy rate for 15-17 year olds of 19.4% is more than double the state average (9.9% for Georgia; 15% for the U.S.). While students at East Laurens Middle School and West Laurens Middle School just moved into new building facilities, students have struggled with safety concerns and school climate. In February 2022, a 13-year-old student at East Laurens Middle School was arrested and charged for an armed robbery of another student that occurred on school grounds. In the heart of Laurens County is the **Dublin City School District**. Students in Dublin City particularly struggle academically, failing to meet Georgia state standards for content mastery in Math or English Language Arts. At Dublin City Middle School, 83.7 of students are below grade level in English Language Arts (compared to the state average of 56.7%), and at Dublin High School, 95.8% of students are below grade level in Math (compared to the state average of 52.8%).

**Twiggs County:** Sparsely populated and economically depressed, Twiggs County is the geographic center of the state and part of the greater Macon, GA metropolitan area. The county population has been steadily shrinking since the 1990s. While residents in Twiggs are primarily White (55.9%, 2020 U.S. Census), residents in the largest city in the county, Jeffersonville, are mostly Black (64.7%, 2020 U.S. Census). At Twiggs Middle School, 50% of students scored as Beginning Learners in English Language Arts, more than twice as many as the state average for middle school students in Georgia (24.3%). These academic challenges compound for students, and by high school, Twiggs County High School students are falling further behind. 88.5% of Twiggs County High School students are behind grade level in English Language Arts and 100% are behind grade level in Math. Just 55.1% of high school graduates are considered to be college ready. Health outcomes are a particular challenge and in 2019, Twiggs County ranked last for health outcomes in the state.<sup>34</sup> The Twiggs County Public Schools and CIS affiliate are working to bring medical, dental, vision, and mental health care to residents through the school system

**Troup County:** Located in west central Georgia on the Chattahoochee River and Alabama state border, Troup County is a swath of land just north of Columbus and Fort Benning. The LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce is dominated by industrial manufacturers and suppliers and the area is home to significant plants for Kia Motors, Caterpillar, Interface Carpet, and Remington Arms. Within the Troup County School District, 85% of parents participate in the labor force and 39% of families are headed by a single parent.<sup>35</sup> Students at both Callaway Elementary School and Clearview Elementary School struggle to meet state standards in Math and especially ELA. At Callaway Elementary School, 77.82% of students score as Beginning or Developing learners on the GMAS for ELA, as do 81.66% of Clearview

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<sup>34</sup> County Health Rankings (2022). [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#): Georgia.

<sup>35</sup> National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) [Common Core of Data Dashboards](#), Search for Public Schools.

Elementary School students. In 2021, Clearview Elementary School received an F rating on the Georgia School Grades Report from the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement.

## II. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

### *Requirement: Description of Eligible Entity*

CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium, with CISGA as the fiscal agent, is an eligible entity to apply for the FSCS grant. The Consortium consists of CISGA, five (5) CISGA affiliates & subsidiary organizations, seven (7) Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) local education agencies (LEA; i.e., school districts), fifteen (15) schoolwide Title I schools (2 per LEA), and 37 community partners across six (6) Georgia counties (Ben Hill, Berrien, Candler, Laurens, Troup, and Twiggs).

CISGA is an affiliate of Communities In Schools (CIS), the nation’s largest provider of Integrated Student Supports and a pioneer in the student-centered, full-service school-community connector framework. Today, the CIS network works directly in 2,900 schools in 26 states and the District of Columbia, serving 1.61 million students. CIS® and its affiliate networks are part of the national *Coalition for Community Schools*, and is recognized as a national leader in the community schools movement. The CIS network in Georgia is comprised of the state CIS organization (CISGA), 18 CIS local affiliate CIS organizations and 8 CIS of Georgia subsidiary organizations located throughout the state, predominately in rural counties. CISGA and the local CIS affiliates and subsidiaries provide and coordinate services to students and schools in 36 school districts across 32 counties in Georgia. CISGA, its local subsidiaries and affiliates provide direct support and programs to schools, students, and families. During the 2020-21 school year, CIS affiliates provided services in 141 schools and 7 community-based sites. In addition,

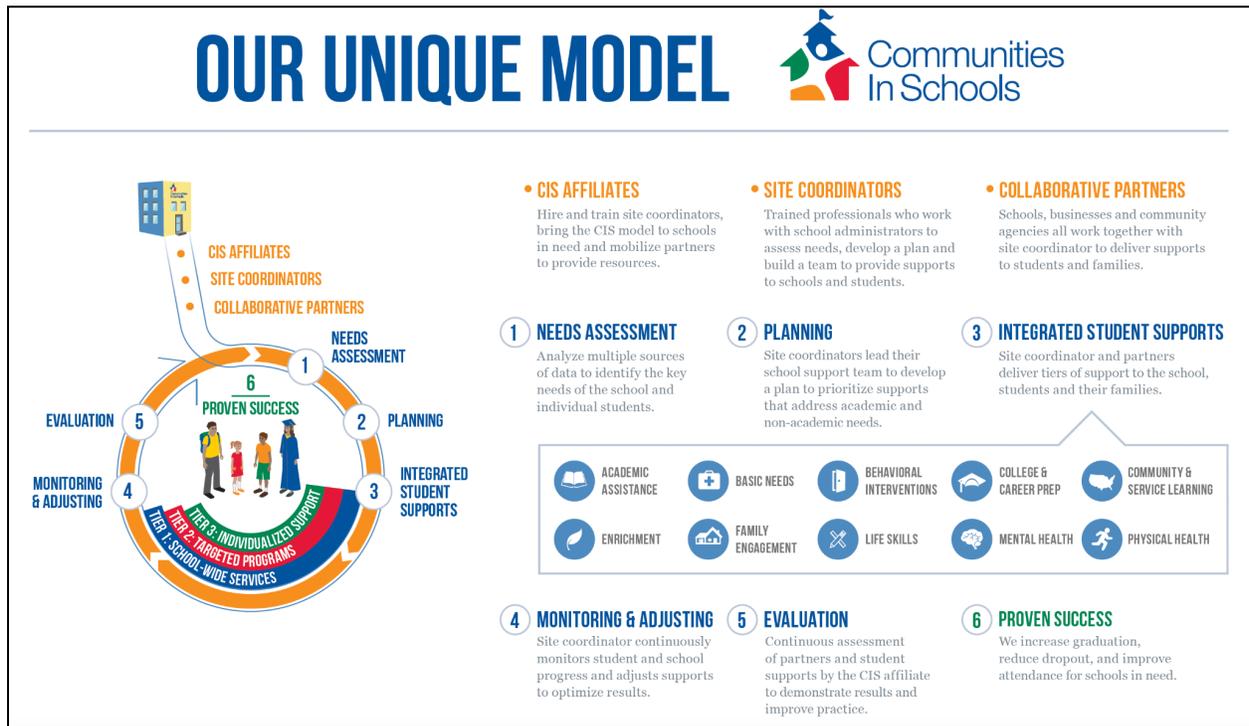
CISGA leads state level partnerships and initiative coordination, provides training and technical support to the local CIS affiliates and subsidiaries, and supports local affiliates and subsidiaries in achieving accreditation through CIS National and demonstrating strong business and school site operation standards in accordance with proven CIS practices and policies. Highlights from CISGA's impact for 21-22 academic year include:

- Reached a total of 28,895 parents with direct services and engagement supports.
- Achieved a total stay-in-school rate of 96.6% for CIS high-need high school students. A total of 462 CIS case managed seniors (94.3% of seniors) graduated.
- 98.1% of high-need elementary students were promoted at the end of the school year.
- 94.9% of middle school students were promoted at the end of the school year.
- 70.6% of case managed students, who were referred for attendance problems (missing 10 or more days per year/5 or more days per semester prior to CIS) and received Tier 2/3 services improved their attendance.
- 77.5% of CIS students with poor academic performance prior to entering the program improved academically
- Out of the 75 school sites with CIS Site Coordinators, and a respondent rate of 58.7, the vast majority of school administrators (94.5%) indicated that they were very satisfied with the coordination of services CIS provides at their school site.

CISGA and the Consortium recognize that many students and their families have a hard time accessing and navigating the maze of public and private services. There may be ample resources in a community, but without someone on the ground who is able to connect these resources with the schools and students that need them most. Through a school-based Site Coordinator, using the CIS evidenced-based model (Figure 12), CIS serves as the lead partner to bring community resources into schools to empower success for all students by removing barriers for students at risk of dropping out, keeping kids in schools and on the path to graduation. A detailed

description of the CIS Integrated Support Services model aligned to the FSCS pillars is provided on page 37 in Figure 13.

**Figure 12: Communities in Schools’ Evidence-Based FSCS Model**



The FSCS model will serve as a sustainable structure for the delivery and implementation of integrated student supports (ISS). CIS has the most extensive and rigorous research of any ISS provider in the Nation. In a comprehensive review of research conducted by the Learning Policy Institute for the Community Schools Playbook, 9 of the 17 Tier 1 and/or 2 studies (Strong or Moderate evidence) of integrated student support programs are evaluations of CIS. Rigorous third-party evaluations show some positive benefits associated with the CIS model, including attendance and graduation gains. A 2008 evaluation of CIS indicated that CIS schools across seven states made statistically significant gains in attendance and 4th-grade mathematics, compared to demographically similar non-CIS schools. Schools in this study that were fully implementing the CIS model also showed statistically significant improvements in graduation

and dropout rates.<sup>36</sup> A similarly constructed evaluation released in 2017 showed that CIS elementary schools significantly improved their attendance rates in comparison to non-CIS schools. In addition, while two other third-party evaluations found that middle and high school students randomly assigned to receive intensive case management services did not differ significantly from other students at CIS schools in terms of academic achievement and attendance, these studies did show that casemanaged students participated in more meetings with adults in school to discuss academics and personal goals, and were more likely to meet with mentors, receive tutoring, and participate in career planning activities. These same students also reported doing better on outcomes that contribute to academic achievement, including having a caring adult in their lives, developing high-quality peer relationships, and maintaining positive educational attitudes.<sup>37</sup>

The CIS model is directly aligned to the FSCS four pillars (Figure 13, The Four Pillars of the Evidence-Based Communities in Schools Model). CIS has developed quality standards for implementation of its model. Local network affiliates go through an accreditation process (e.g., Total Quality System - TQS). TQS are best practice standards for Business Operations (CIS Affiliate Level – CIS Organization led by Executive Director) and Site Operations (CIS Model School Level – led by CIS Site Coordinator).

### **Figure 13: The Four Pillars of the Evidence-Based Communities in Schools Model**

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<sup>36</sup> Somers, M. A., & Haider, Z. (2017). Using integrated student supports to keep kids in school: A quasi-experimental evaluation of Communities In Schools. New York, NY: MDRC.

<sup>37</sup> ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 4: Randomized controlled trial study Jacksonville, Florida. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 5: Randomized controlled trial study Austin, Texas. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 6: Randomized controlled trial study Wichita, Kansas. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; Parise, L. M., Corrin, W., Granito, K., Haider, Z., Somers, M., & Cerna, O. (2017). Two years of case management: Final findings from the Communities In Schools random assignment evaluation. New York, NY: MDRC.

The Four Pillars of Community Schools – TQS Accreditation Alignment and Evidence			
Integrated Student Supports	Expanded & Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities	Active Family and Community Engagement	Collaborative Leadership and Practices
<p><b>CIS TQS Site Standards include documentation of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIS School Support Team</li> <li>• School Needs and Resource Assessment</li> <li>• School Support Planning</li> <li>• School-wide supports</li> <li>• Monitoring of School Progress and Goal Achievement</li> <li>• Reporting</li> <li>• Targeted Case Management</li> <li>• Student Assessment – Risk and Protective Factors, SEL, School Performance</li> <li>• Individual Student Support Plan</li> <li>• Student Support Services</li> <li>• Student Progress Monitoring and Goal Achievement</li> <li>• Reporting</li> </ul>	<p><b>CIS TQS Site Standards include documentation of Supports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for Students and Families:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ After School Programs</li> <li>○ Before School Programs</li> <li>○ Weekend Programs</li> <li>○ Summer Programs</li> <li>○ Enrichment Services</li> <li>○ Service Learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>CIS TQS Business Standards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage inclusion of parents and community members in planning.</li> <li>• Has policies for community partner engagement.</li> </ul> <p><b>CIS Site TQS Standards include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A CIS SC led school support team that can include school personnel, community members, parents and students.</li> <li>• Regular meetings and reporting to the school support team.</li> <li>• Documentation of supports for Students and Families.</li> <li>• Regular communication with parents of caseload students.</li> <li>• Parent Engagement activities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>CIS TQS Business Standards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CIS affiliate board of directors reflects the diversity and needs of its communities and service areas.</li> <li>• The CIS Executive director serves as the main contact and convener of community partners.</li> <li>• CIS has policies and procedures for partner and volunteer engagement.</li> </ul> <p><b>CIS Site TQS Standards include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SC led school support team that creates and oversees school support plan.</li> <li>• Resources provided by community partners and volunteers.</li> </ul>

Both CISGA affiliates and subsidiaries within the CISGA network have well established partnerships with the LEAs and partner schools as well as long standing relationships within their communities. Deep collaboration takes dedicated effort and time, and becomes evident in the daily formal and informal social exchanges within a school community and between the school and the broader community. Trusting relationships fuel school transformation by helping to create a nurturing safe, respectful climate where caring adults, families and students come to rely on each other as part of a shared approach to student success. To establish a Communities in Schools affiliate in a community, the school system must be a formal partner; there must be adequate funding and private-sector leadership to support the affiliate; they must establish a leadership board that is reflective of the community; and the board must commit to raising awareness and sustaining the programs. Figure 14, CISGA Affiliate/Subsidiary Operational History in Targeted Counties, provides evidence of the longstanding local partnerships for which the proposed FSCS are built. The ACRES Project provides a comprehensive plan to spread and deepen community schools in the targeted communities reaching more students.

**Figure 14: CISGA Affiliate/Subsidiary Operational History in Targeted Counties**

<b>CISGA Affiliate/Subsidiary</b>	<b>Year Established</b>	<b>School District</b>	<b>Years in Partnership</b>
<b>CIS Candler County</b>	1990	Candler County School District	32 Years
<b>CIS Berrien County</b>	1997	Berrien County School District	25 Years
<b>CISGA in Laurens/Twigg Counties</b>	1998	Dublin City School District	23 Years
		Laurens County School District	23 Years
		Twigg County School District	9 Years
<b>CIS Fitzgerald/Ben Hill</b>	1992	Ben Hill County School District	30 years
<b>CISGA in Troup County</b>	1989	Troup County School District	33 Years

At all 15 school sites, CIS Site Coordinators will lead their School Support Team to develop a plan to prioritize supports that address academic and non-academic needs. In the CIS model, the three tiers apply to the services Communities In Schools provides, brokers and coordinates. Tier 1: Widely available services designed to foster a positive school climate and address school-level risk factors (e.g., whole-school supports). Tier 2: Targeted services typically provided in a group setting to students with a common need. Tier 3: Intensive, individualized services typically provided in a one-on-one setting to students with highly specific needs.

**Requirement: Preliminary MOU**

In planning the ACRES Project, the Consortium developed and executed a preliminary memorandum of understanding (MOU) that clearly states the consortium and project purpose, shared vision, and goals (see Appendix A; Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding, CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium). The MOU demonstrates the engagement of a broadly represented consortium of nonprofits (CISGA and local affiliates/subsidiaries as well as others), LEAs, school personnel across functions and levels, businesses, local government entities, families and students (via the school-based Support Teams), and philanthropy. The MOU

provides evidence of the commitment of all members to assist CISGA and local affiliates/subsidiaries to plan, develop, coordinate, provide, and evaluate pipeline services. The MOU also identifies specific initial commitments for roles and responsibilities of all identified Consortium members in support of meeting student and family needs in alignment with the FSCS pillars and with specific pipeline services. Throughout year 1 of the ACRES Project and then ongoing annually thereafter, each local school-based site work team (facilitated by the site-coordinator) will continue to identify and refine understanding of needs, map assets and engage through coordination necessary resources and partners. This broadly representative consortium will not be stagnant, rather, will grow and evolve to ensure all voices are fully engaged, all stakeholders are represented and active, and all needs are met.

**Requirement: Description of Capacity of Eligible Entity**

CISGA is uniquely positioned to serve as the backbone organization for the Consortium with the CIS evidence-based model, established partnerships, accredited affiliates/subsidiary structure, and training, technical assistance, evaluation and data collection infrastructure. For example, the CIS Data Management System is used for documenting most program aspects including: site coordination activities, school assessments and support plans, Tier 2 service provision, case management, individual student assessments and support plans, Tier 2/3 supports, student and school performance metrics, progress monitoring and goal achievement. All affiliates/subsidiaries are required to report metrics on attendance, suspensions, course grades (Language Arts, Science, Social Studies and Math), and end of the year promotion status.

CISGA's team provides a broad array of trainings, professional development opportunities, support tools, and other offerings to build the capacity of local affiliates. For example, CIS hosts a Summer Training Institute annually for School Site Coordinators across the

state to build their capacity in key areas. Recent Summer Training Institutes have featured sessions on Mental Health First Aid, trauma-informed care, social-emotional learning (including programs such as Harmony SEL and Positive Action), developmental assets, addiction supports, and other supports for youth development. (Note that a detailed description of management and resources capacity can be found in Section V, Quality of the Management Plan, starting on page 90). CIS delivers an evidence-based model, brokers in community services and partners, and engages families and communities. Whole-school, targeted and intensive services are coordinated and delivered in schools. The CIS model comprehensively supports the needs assessment, planning and monitoring functions to established a system the enables all the standards for FSCS to be met.

The CIS model is listed on the National Dropout Prevention Centers registry of model programs at the highest level with strong evidence of effectiveness rating having been evaluated using an experimental or strong quasi-experimental design conducted by an external evaluation team and having strong empirical evidence demonstrating program effectiveness in reducing dropout and/or increasing graduation rates and/or having significant impact on dropout-related risk factors.<sup>38</sup> CISGA has the capacity to marshal the human, financial and other resources necessary to effect positive change in the communities targeted by the ACRES Project. CISGA has a strong leadership, management team and current staff of approximately 18 full-time and 1 part-time employee, and is governed by a volunteer board of directors. CISGA's annual operating budget is \$7,576,525. The organization adheres to all Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and has stringent internal controls in place. CISGA also has established partnerships with the Georgia Department of Education, the U.S. Attorney's Office, Senator

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<sup>38</sup> National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC). Model Programs Database: [Communities In Schools](#).

██████████, Congressman A. Drew Ferguson, Congressman Austin Scott, and  
Congressman ██████████ that will be leveraged to support the ACRES Project. Please see  
Appendix A for Letters of Support.

CISGA capacity built into the design of the ACRES Project also supports long term sustainability within rural districts. Centralizing community engagement and planning, as well as partnership development at the CIS affiliate/subsidiary level, ensures that individual schools are not forced to compete with one another for limited pools of resources in their community. Instead, through this model, School Site Coordinators can focus on planning and service provision in the schools, rather than splitting their time to focus on ongoing resource development for the program.

**Requirement: Comprehensive Plan**

The Consortium, with CISGA as the backbone organization, has developed a comprehensive plan to ensure the 15 FSCS exemplify **shared ownership** at all levels; **spread** to encompass the entire school population and support the school improvement plans as well as overall district reform; provide **depth** of services to remove barriers for students and families with the greatest challenges; and leverage partnerships and local assets for **sustainability**. As detailed in Appendix A, Preliminary MOU, CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium, the Consortium and the ACRES Project are grounded in a shared vision created collaboratively by the stakeholders, decision-making is shared at all levels, and student success was and is the driving force of educators, families, and community partners in our planning.

The comprehensive plan for the ACRES Project will establish 15 FSCS across 7 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and 4 high schools. In the instances where need was

identified, feeder schools were targeted to support transitions between elementary and middle and middle to high school. While local CIS affiliates/subsidiaries have worked in partnership with the target districts and schools for many years, the ACRES Project will be the first comprehensive effort to formalize all efforts in alignment with the evidenced-based FSCS model. Through the ACRES Project, 15 school sites will have full-time CIS Site Coordinators. While specific details are tailored to each school’s student, family and community needs, new evidence-based pipeline services are being coordinated at each of the targeted school sites through the ACRES Project and existing services are being expanded and delivered more effectively through the coordination enabled by the ACRES Project (see Figure 15, New & Existing Pipeline Services Provided by School Site). The ACRES Project plan is designed to build on local ESSR investments and align with all existing improvement efforts across the systems (state, county and local) to significantly transform rural educational opportunities in 6 counties across the state and serve as a model for other Georgia LEAs.

**Figure 15: New & Existing Pipeline Services Provided by School Site**

<b>GA ACRES Project: List of Pipeline Services</b>								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Service A:</b> High-quality early childhood education programs.</li> <li>● <b>Service B:</b> High-quality school and OST programs and strategies.</li> <li>● <b>Service C:</b> Support for a child’s transition to elementary school, from elementary school to middle school, from middle school to high school, and from high school into and through postsecondary education and into the workforce, including any comprehensive readiness assessment determined necessary.</li> <li>● <b>Service D:</b> Family and community engagement and supports, which may include engaging or supporting families at school or at home.</li> <li>● <b>Service E:</b> Activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness, which may include job training, internship opportunities, and career counseling.</li> <li>● <b>Service F:</b> Community-based support for students who have attended the schools in the area served by the pipeline, or students who are members of the community, facilitating their continued connection to the community and success in postsecondary education and the workforce.</li> <li>● <b>Service G:</b> Social, health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports.</li> <li>● <b>Service H:</b> Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation programs.</li> </ul>								
School Site	Service							

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<b>Callaway Elementary School</b>	Existing	New	New	New	N/A	New	New	New
<b>Clearview Elementary School</b>	Existing	New	New	New	N/A	New	New	New
<b>Dublin High School</b>	Existing	New						
<b>Dublin Middle School</b>	New	Existing	New	Existing	New	Existing	Existing	N/A
<b>East Laurens Middle School</b>	N/A	Existing	New	New	New	New	New	N/A
<b>West Laurens Middle School</b>	N/A	Existing	New	New	New	New	New	N/A
<b>Jeffersonville Elementary School</b>	Existing	New	New	New	N/A	New	New	N/A
<b>Twiggs Middle School</b>	Existing	New	New	New	New	New	New	N/A
<b>Twiggs County High School</b>	Existing	New	New	New	New	New	New	N/A
<b>Berrien Primary School</b>	Existing	Existing	New	Existing	N/A	N/A	New	N/A
<b>Berrien Elementary School</b>	Existing	Existing	New	Existing	N/A	N/A	New	N/A
<b>Ben Hill Elementary School</b>	Existing	Existing	New	New	N/A	Existing	New	New
<b>Fitzgerald High School College &amp; Career Academy</b>	N/A	New	Existing	New	Existing	Existing	Existing	New
<b>Metter Elementary School</b>	Existing	Existing	Existing	Existing	New	New	Existing	New
<b>Metter High School</b>	N/A	Existing	Existing	Existing	Existing	Existing	Existing	New

The comprehensive plan includes all U.S. DOE FSCS required application components as detailed in the subsequent narrative sections.

**Requirement: Student, Family, and School Community to be Served & Needs Assessment**

In the CIS model, the school-based Site Coordinators formally (in partnership with their School Steering Committees and School Support Teams) conduct school and student needs assessments annually. These assessments both are informed and inform the annual review of the school improvement plans. The needs assessment process involves review of multiple sources of data including data collected by school districts and schools as part of overall school improvement initiatives, surveys and discussions with staff, parents and students, and evaluation results from the previous year. Needs are prioritized in consultation with school administrators, the School Support Team, and CIS School Steering Committee (which includes student representation) are used as the foundation for site operations planning for the FSCS. A detailed description of the needs of each community including demographic data is provided in the Quality of Project Need section starting on page 5.

Among the 15 targeted schools, the lowest percentage of students eligible for free-reduced lunch rate in a school is 51%. The Georgia Governor’s Office of Student Achievement issues annual reports that include A-F letter grades based on school performance and other useful information about the school, such as performance on statewide assessments, the make-up of the school’s student body, the graduation rate, and additional academic information. All but two of the 15 targeted school sites scored a C or below on the 2018-2019 report, the most recently available data due to COVID-19.

**Figure 16: Georgia Governor’s Office of Student Achievement School Letter Grades<sup>39</sup>**

School	School Letter Grade 2018-2019
Callaway Elementary School	D
Clearview Elementary School	F

<sup>39</sup> Georgia Governor’s Office of Student Achievement, [School Letter Grades](#).

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<b>Dublin High School</b>	F
<b>Dublin Middle School</b>	F
<b>East Laurens Middle School</b>	B
<b>West Laurens Middle School</b>	C
<b>Jeffersonville Elementary School</b>	D
<b>Twiggs Middle School</b>	C
<b>Twiggs County High School</b>	D
<b>Berrien Primary School</b>	C
<b>Berrien Elementary School</b>	D
<b>Ben Hill Elementary School</b>	D
<b>Fitzgerald High School College &amp; Career Academy</b>	D
<b>Metter Elementary School</b>	D
<b>Metter High School</b>	B

With such a significant magnitude of need within each of the school communities, over the five-year ACRES Project, the Consortium aims to reach at a minimum of 75% of the total enrollment of each school through appropriate coordinated Tier 1, 2 or 3 level services (i.e., whole-school supports, targeted, or intensive individualized services with case management services for highly specific needs). Whether a student has immediate needs such as food, clean clothes, help with homework, to more complex, long-term needs like emotional support or counseling to cope with and heal from a traumatic event - the caring Site Coordinators will be in the schools working with their school-based School Support Teams to provide or connect students to the empowering resources they need to achieve in school and graduate on time prepared for adult life. Services include case management, attendance monitoring, home visits,

tutoring, mentoring, life skills, job and career readiness, and referrals to other needed services provided by program partners, businesses, volunteer groups, school staff and CIS staff.

**Requirement: Pipeline Services**

The ACRES Project will provide an array of pipeline services (see Figures 15, 20, 21, 22, and 24) tailored to the specific needs of each school community. Services and partners were identified during the application process based on the existing needs assessment and work of local CIS affiliates/subsidiaries delivering ISS in partnership with the school districts. All identified partners signed the preliminary MOU. Upon grant award, each school will hire a site coordinator, engage a steering committee, review the existing data sources and complete a thorough needs assessment and services plan for their specific school in collaboration with the School Support Team and School Steering Committee (which includes student representation). The site coordinator will then enlist any additional partners (to be represented as additions in the final MOU) and begin coordinating services for students and families. The 15 FSCS sites do not currently fully implement the FSCS model. Therefore, this process for establishing the infrastructure is required to ensure shared decision making and full alignment of services with student and family needs. The services are evidenced within the CIS model and have demonstrated that students report doing better on outcomes that contribute to academic achievement, including having a caring adult in their lives, developing high-quality peer relationships, and maintaining positive educational attitudes.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 4: Randomized controlled trial study Jacksonville, Florida. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 5: Randomized controlled trial study Austin, Texas. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 6: Randomized controlled trial study Wichita, Kansas. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; Parise, L. M., Corrin, W., Granito, K., Haider, Z., Somers, M., & Cerna, O. (2017). Two years of case management: Final findings from the Communities In Schools random assignment evaluation. New York, NY: MDRC.

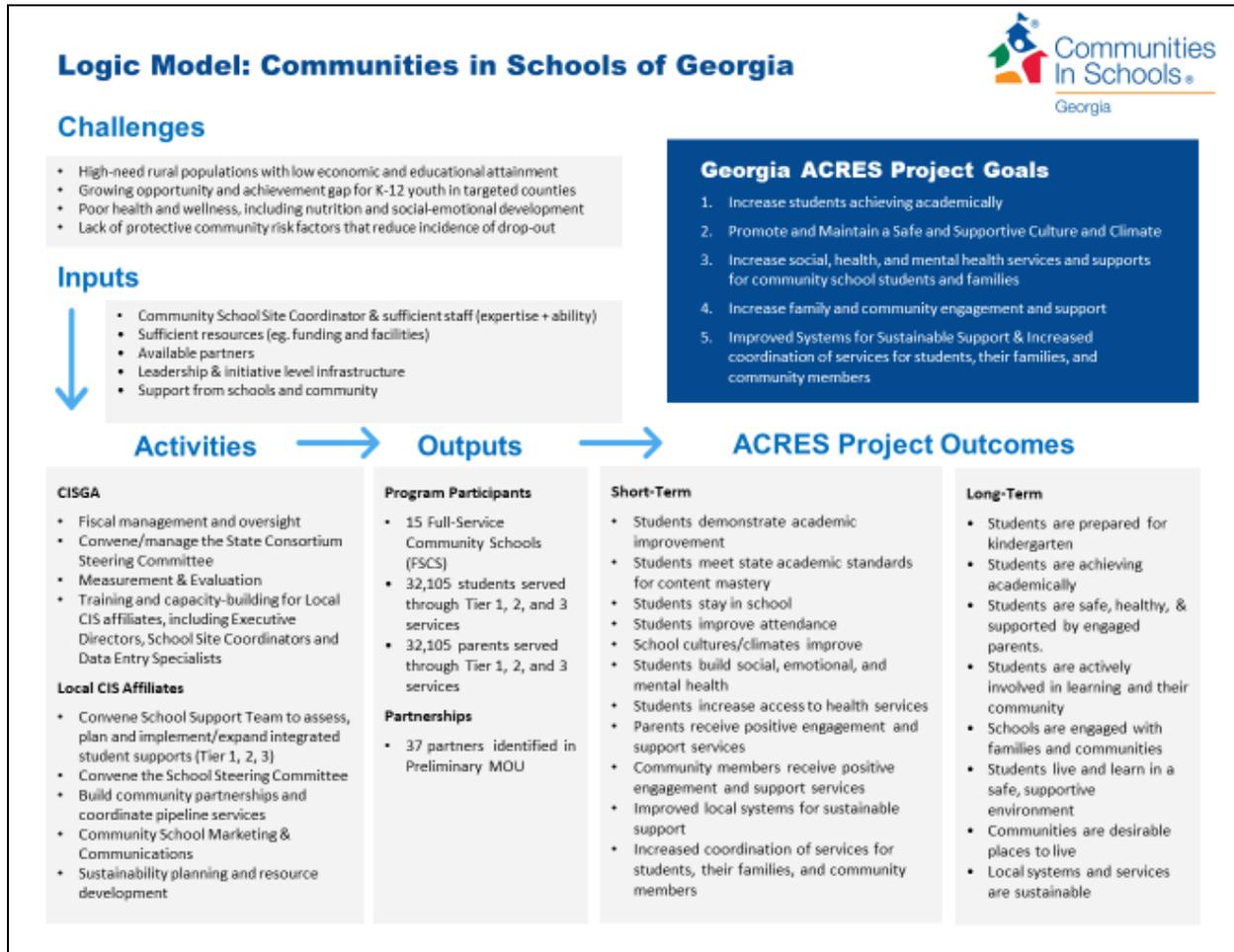
As indicated in Figure 15, New & Existing Pipeline Services Provided by School Site, and in Figure 19, Projected Number of Individuals (Students & Families) to be Served, the ACRES Project has been designed to meet the annual FSCS performance measure to increase the percentage and number of individuals who receive services during each year, as represented in the objectives Figure 18. Over the course of the project the number of individuals receiving services will increase. The percentage of students as a proportion of the overall school enrollment will increase, and the number of students within each Tier of service (e.g., Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3) will also increase. In addition, through the project evaluation (see Quality of Evaluation section starting on page 111), the ACRES project will track, monitor, report, and use to inform continuous improvement the FSCS NFP established set of indicators including: student chronic absenteeism rates; student discipline rates, including suspensions and expulsions; school climate information, which may come from student, parent, or teacher surveys; provision of integrated student supports and stakeholder services; expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities; family and community engagement efforts and impact; information on the number, qualifications, and retention of school staff, including the number and percentage of fully certified teachers, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, and rates of teacher turnover; graduation rates; changes in school spending information; collaborative leadership and practice strategies, which may include building the capacity of educators, principals, other school leaders, and other staff to lead collaborative school improvement structures, such as professional learning communities; regularly convening or engaging all initiative-level partners, such as LEA representatives, city or county officials, children’s cabinets, nonprofit service providers, public housing agencies, and advocates; regularly assessing program quality and progress through individual student data, participant feedback, and aggregate outcomes to develop strategies for

improvement; and organizing school personnel and community partners into working teams focused on specific issues identified in the needs and assets assessment. Pipeline services are also discussed in the quality of project services section starting on page 75.

**Requirement: Annual Measurable Performance Objectives & Outcomes**

The ACRES Project directly supports the U.S. DOE FSCS program goals of (i) Prepared for kindergarten; (ii) Achieving academically; and (iii) Safe, healthy, and supported by engaged parents. Over the course of the 5-year project, the Consortium aims to increase the number and percentage of families and students targeted for services each year (Figure 19). Baseline data for each school site will be reviewed in the first quarter of the project launch. Figure 18 provides overall project goals and objectives.

**Figure 17: Communities in Schools Logic Model, ACRES Project**



**Figure 18: Georgia ACRES Project Goals & Objectives**

<b>Goal 1: Increase students achieving academically.</b>	
<b>Objective 1.1:</b>	Annually, 60% or more of students receiving Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 services who were referred for poor academic performance will show improvement in grades as measured by the average of all academic course grades (i.e., mathematics, social studies, science and language arts).
<b>Objective 1.2:</b>	Annually, we will achieve stay-in-school rate of 90% or above for Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 case managed students.
<b>Objective 1.3:</b>	Annually, achieve a promotion rate of 90% or higher for elementary and middle school students receiving Tier II and/or Tier III services.

<b>Objective 1.4:</b>	Annually, increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding state standards in math by 1.5 percentage points.
<b>Objective 1.5:</b>	Annually, increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding state standards in English Language Arts or reading by 1.5 percentage points.
<b><i>Goal 2: Promote and Maintain a Safe and Supportive Culture and Climate</i></b>	
<b>Objective 2.1:</b>	Annually, 60% or more of students receiving Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 who were referred for attendance problems (missing 10 or more days per year/5 or more days per semester prior) will show improvement in attendance, missing fewer days per year while receiving services.
<b>Objective 2.2:</b>	Annually, 60% or more of students receiving Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 services who were referred for behavior problems (having incidents of school suspension) will show improvement in behavior, having few suspensions per year while receiving services.
<b>Objective 2.3:</b>	Annually, reduce the percent of chronically absent students by 2%.
<b>Objective 2.4:</b>	Annually, the number of behavior incidents at each school will decline by 2%.
<b>Objective 2.5:</b>	By year 3, the school climate rating will show improvement in one or more of the climate rating components.
<b><i>Goal 3: Increase social, emotional, and mental health services and supports for community school students and families</i></b>	
<b>Objective 3.1:</b>	Over 900 (10%) students will be placed in targeted CIS case management to support their social-emotional, behavioral and academic growth each school year.
<b>Objective 3.2:</b>	Annually, 60% of CIS caseload students will demonstrate improvement in one or more measures of social-emotion well-being and/or positive relationships.
<b>Objective 3.3:</b>	The number of students receiving schoolwide enrichment, social-emotional, physical and mental health and basic needs support services will increase from 75% (6,800 students) of the student population to at least 85% (7,700 students) of the student population by year 5, an increase of 2 percentage points per year.
<b>Objective 3.4:</b>	Annually, the number of students and families receiving physical and mental health services will increase by 3%.
<b><i>Goal 4: Increase family and community engagement and support</i></b>	
<b>Objective 4.1:</b>	Annually, CIS site coordinators will provide direct services to families of 300 (33%) or more of case managed students.
<b>Objective 4.2:</b>	Annually, 7,000 parents (75%) of the student population will participate in one or more school-wide events.

<b>Objective 4.3:</b>	In year 1, 2,000 community members will receive one or more services through FSCS with the number served increasing 5% each year thereafter.
<b><i>Goal 5: Improved Systems for Sustainable Support &amp; Increased coordination of services for students, their families, and community members</i></b>	
<b>Objective 5.1:</b>	The GA ACRES schools will provide services to 16,000 students, parents and community members in year 1, with the total number reached increasing each year by 2%.
<b>Objective 5.2:</b>	Annually, 80% of students receiving Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 services are satisfied with their relationship with their site coordinator.
<b>Objective 5.3:</b>	Annually, 80% of school personnel are satisfied with services provided by the FSCS consortium.
<b>Objective 5.4:</b>	Annually, 80% of members of collaborative leadership teams are satisfied with their team/school decision-making processes.
<b>Objective 5.5:</b>	Annually, the number and/or variety of community partnerships increases.

Achieving these goals and objectives will also progress the work toward long-term goals that apply to the entire Community Schools Partnership, including: 1) improved academic performance, 2) increased social/emotional learning and life skills, 3) improved physical and mental health, 4) increased graduation rates, 5) improved partnerships between schools and families, 6) increased family involvement in education, and 7) increased family connections to community resources.

**Individuals to be served.** Currently (FY22), CISGA and its affiliates/subsidiaries serve 1,833 students and 1,546 parents across the 15 targeted school sites. Of these, 12 school sites have some level of CIS engagement but no School Site Coordinator is present and a full range of programs and services are not currently being provided. Over the course of the five-year ACRES Project, the Consortium will enable services to be provided to a total of 32,105 students and an additional 32,105 parents. This represents approximately 71% of student enrollment at the targeted school sites per year and is a dramatic increase in supportive services from status quo. Modest increases have been included throughout the five-year project to account for attrition,

new students and families entering the LEAs for targeted school sites, and new students receiving intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 services. Overall, these projections are conservative and assume a baseline projection of only one adult served annually per student, but through implementation the Consortium estimates that more than one adult parent/guardian, as well as siblings, are likely to be served through pipeline services and Tier 1, 2 and 3 supports.

**Figure 19: Projected Number of Individuals (Students & Families) to be Served**

\*Please note that projections are inclusive of Tier 1-3 level services

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School Site Name	Total Enrollment	Projected Number of Students & Families to be Served									
		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
		Students	Adults	Students	Adults	Students	Adults	Students	Adults	Students	Adults
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,296</b>	<b>6,272</b>	<b>6,272</b>	<b>6,345</b>	<b>6,345</b>	<b>6,420</b>	<b>6,420</b>	<b>6,493</b>	<b>6,493</b>	<b>6,575</b>	<b>6,575</b>
Callaway Elementary School	587	440	440	445	445	450	450	455	455	460	460
Clearview Elementary School	612	459	459	464	464	469	469	474	474	479	479
Dublin High School	558	419	419	420	420	425	425	430	430	435	435
Dublin Middle School	666	500	500	505	505	510	510	515	515	520	520
East Laurens Middle School	503	377	377	380	380	385	385	390	390	395	395
West Laurens Middle School	1002	752	752	755	755	760	760	765	765	770	770
Jeffersonville Elementary School	820	240	240	245	245	250	250	255	255	260	260
Twiggs Middle School	185	139	139	140	140	145	145	150	150	155	155
Twiggs County High School	206	155	155	160	160	165	165	170	170	175	175
Berrien Primary School	655	491	491	496	496	501	501	506	506	511	511
Berrien Elementary School	640	480	480	485	485	490	490	495	495	500	500
Ben Hill Elementary School	620	465	465	475	475	480	480	485	485	490	490
Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy	796	580	580	585	585	590	590	595	595	600	600
Metter Elementary School	1048	475	475	480	480	485	485	488	488	490	490
Metter High School	398	300	300	310	310	315	315	320	320	335	335

**Requirement: Description of Pillars of Full-Service Community Schools**

In laying the groundwork and developing the Consortium and Georgia ACRES Project, CISGA and its local affiliates engaged program design input and established and/or expanded partnerships with local, municipal and state education leaders; local and state elected officials;

business owners; law enforcement officers; and community residents (including parents and students). As referenced on page 35, the CIS model is evidence-based and aligned to the FSCS four pillars. Each of the CIS affiliates/subsidiaries in the Consortium have achieved CIS accreditation, which set baseline standards for nonprofit operations and minimum requirements for our work in schools. These standards are aligned to the CIS Model and reinforce our commitment to evidence-based practices and accountability. The CIS affiliates/subsidiary accreditation also evidences that each have established and are implementing (albeit in varying degrees) the FSCS four pillars. ***Through the ACRES Project, each CIS affiliate/subsidiary will work over the five-year project period to optimize implementation of FSCS model within each school to provide more comprehensive services to meet the needs of more students and families and to build a sustainable school improvement system with their LEAs.*** The following narrative provides a detailed description of each pillar and how it will be more fully implemented as a result of the ACRES Project.

### **Pillar I. Integrated Student Supports (ISS)**

A growing body of research shows that students succeed when schools embrace a whole child perspective that integrates social, emotional, and academic development.<sup>41</sup> CIS surrounds students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Our evidence-based approach, adapted to meet each community's unique needs, is the basis for our success. ***CIS offers both school-wide and more intensive interventions, including those related to academics, basic needs and physical health, mental health, and social skills and life***

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<sup>41</sup> Taylor, R. D., Oberle, E., Durlak, J., & Weissberg, R. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: A meta-analysis of follow-up effects. *Child Development*, 88(4), 1156–1171. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/cdev.12864> (accessed 11/30/18); Darling-Hammond, L., & Cook-Harvey, C. M. (2018). *Educating the whole child: Improving school climate to support student success*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

*skills, among others.* The CIS model, for which this grant will support, met a preliminary level of evidence requirement to be funded by the Social Innovation Fund and findings have confirmed a preliminary level of evidence.<sup>42</sup> Further, CIS is a nationally recognized leader in evidence-based ISS. A Randomized Control Trial Study of Case Managed Students by ICF International, found that students receiving case managed support through CIS during critical transition years (9th to 10th grade and 6th to 7th grade) had more favorable outcomes than non-case managed students.<sup>43</sup> Currently, for the 15 targeted schools CIS affiliates/subsidiaries provide ISS services to 97 of students (FY22). As detailed in Figure 13 on page 36, the following describes how ACRES Project will enable the local CIS affiliates/subsidiaries to fully impelment the ISS pillar.

***Full-Time Site Coordinator:*** Currently, only 2 of the targeted schools have full-time Site Coordinators and 1 has a part-time Site Coordinator. While the local CIS affiliate/subsidiary has provided services and supports to the targeted schools, no dedicated staff resources has been based in the other targeted schools. The ACRES Project will enable the optimization of the ISS pillar by fully funding and placing a school-based Site Coordinator at each of the 15 target schools. CISGA will provide training and establish a community of practice for the Site Coordinators, led by the Director, Partnerships & Network Relations. The goal of the community of practice will be to formalize networking and best practices sharing across the School Site Coordinators working on the ACRES Project. The peer-to-peer aspect of the learning process

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<sup>42</sup> Parise, L., Corrin, W., Granito, K., Haider, Z., Somers, M.A. (2017).

<sup>43</sup> ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 4: Randomized controlled trial study Jacksonville, Florida. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 5: Randomized controlled trial study Austin, Texas. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 6: Randomized controlled trial study Wichita, Kansas. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; Parise, L. M., Corrin, W., Granito, K., Haider, Z., Somers, M., & Cerna, O. (2017). Two years of case management: Final findings from the Communities In Schools random assignment evaluation. New York, NY: MDRC.

will help build the capacity of the local teams working to implement student support services and help contribute to innovative solutions and idea sharing.

***School Support Team:*** The School Support Team will work to plan supports, identify and facilitate direct service provision to students, and help with implementation of the Consortium model within the schools. They will champion the Communities In Schools model within the school and help to plan, monitor progress, improve coordination, remove barriers, and other activities as necessary and requested. ISS will be managed collaboratively, rather than by only the School Site Coordinator. With the addition of a full-time School Site Coordinator, robust School Support Teams will be activated in each of the 15 target schools as a result of the Georgia ACRES Project.

***School Steering Committee:*** To elevate diverse stakeholder voices, each school site will also have a School Steering Committee led in partnership by the principal and School Site Coordinator. The role of the School Steering Committee is to advise on the needs, interests and priorities of the students and families being served. Each School Steering Committee will include school personnel, teachers, students, parents, community partners, and other stakeholders as appropriate to the local community. Students co-constructing with staff is essential and the School Steering Committee will honor youth voice by soliciting student feedback and acting upon it, using the information to drive program offerings as reasonable and appropriate.

***Needs Assessment & Planning:*** An essential role of the site-coordinator is supporting the needs assessment and planning process. The addition of the full-time site-coordinator role through the ACRES Project will ensure all stakeholders are engaged in the assessment and planning process, and that a thorough understanding of needs and alignment of community

resources and assets takes place. The site-coordinator will work across partners to select relevant programs and tiered supports that match the unique needs and strengths of each school and each of its students. For example, with regard to chronic absenteeism, CIS Site Coordinators look at school-level and individual student data to see if there is an attendance problem, how pervasive it is, and what percentage of students are chronically absent. They gather data to better understand the underlying causes of chronic absenteeism, they undertake a meaningful process for engaging students and families in specifying needs and assets, then coordinate and align services and strategies to address the root causes at the right level for each school or student.

***Coordinated Student Supports:*** The site-coordinators will work closely with the student Support Teams to identify needs and then will connect students and families to the right supports and services in a seamless manner and ensure delivery of differentiated or tiered supports to serve each student in a school while focusing attention on targeted students who have significant needs. As a result of this additional capacity built through the ACRES program, more students will have access to all levels of supports (Tier 1, 2, and 3) and case management as needed. Currently, capacity for Tier 2/3 case management ISS is very limited at the target schools.

***Data Tracking/Reporting/Evaluation:*** The capacity built through the placement of a site-based coordinator through the ACRES program also enables ongoing data tracking and evaluation to ensure high-quality implementation and continuous improvement. Research shows building in systems of continuous improvement supports better outcomes for students.<sup>44</sup> Data sharing agreements are in place through the preliminary MOU (see Appendix A; Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding, CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium).

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<sup>44</sup> Moore, K. A., Lantos, H., Jones, R., Schindler, A., Belford, J., Sacks, V., & Harper, K. (2017). Making the grade: A progress report and next steps for integrated student supports. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends.

**Community Partnerships:** Through the ACRES Project, the CIS affiliates/subsidiaries will collaborate with existing providers and recruit new partners as required to fulfill specific needs, strategically bringing additional resources into the school to build capacity without duplicating efforts. Figure 15 on pages 41-42 provides an overview of the new and existing pipeline services to be provided at each school. Given that the ACRES Project targets rural communities, partners tend to be spread across a county, rather than neighborhood/school localized. A key coordination function and sustainability factor, is that the CIS affiliate/subsidiary can act as a broker establishing agency to agency partnerships that benefit multiple individual school sites based on needs. This assessment process guides the development of strategic partnerships for integrated student supports and direct services. Figure 20 below provides a listing of Consortium partners by county and depicts how partners align to FSCS pillar implementation as documented in the preliminary MOU (see Appendix A; Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding, CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium). As noted, these relationships will be expanded and new partnerships formed as necessary to meet all student needs.

**Figure 20: Consortium Partners by CIS Pillar Model**

County	Consortium Partner	Pillar 1	Pillar 2	Pillar 3	Pillar 4
<b>Ben Hill County</b>	Ben Hill County Family Connection	X	X	X	X
	Ben Hill County Elementary School			X	X
	Ben Hill County School District	X	X	X	X
	CIS FBHC	X		X	X
	Dorminy Medical Center			X	X
	Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Library		X	X	X
	Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy	X	X	X	X

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	Fitzgerald Housing Authority			X	X
	Fitzgerald Tourism, Arts & Cultural		X	X	X
	Fitzgerald-Ben Hill Chamber of Commerce			X	X
	Monitor Enrichment Center	X	X	X	X
	Street Smart Youth Project Inc.		X		X
	Wal-Mart Supercenter #686			X	
<b>Berrien County</b>	21st Century Grant Program in Berrien County Schools		X		
	Berrien Chamber of Commerce			X	
	Berrien County Commissioners	X		X	X
	Berrien County Nashville Rotary Club		X	X	
	Berrien County School District	X			X
	Berrien Elementary School	X			X
	Berrien Primary School	X			X
	Boy Scouts of America		X		
	CASA Program			X	
	City of Nashville	X			X
	D.A.D.S. Organization			X	
	Family Connection/Communities In Schools of Berrien Co.	X	X		X
	Perry Memorial Library		X		
	South Georgia Medical Center Berrien Campus			X	
<b>Candler County</b>	CIS of Candler Co	X	X	X	X
	City of Metter	X			
	Candler County Board of Education	X			X
	Family Connection			X	
<b>Laurens County</b>	Dublin City Schools	X			X
	CISGA in Laurens/Twiggs	X			X
	Laurens County Board of Ed				X

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	Dublin Housing Authority			X	
	Laurens County Family Connection			X	
	Oconee Regional Library System		X		
<b>Troup County</b>	AmeriGroup	X		X	
	Callaway Elementary School	X	X	X	X
	Circles of Troup County			X	
	Clearview Elementary School	X	X	X	X
	Communities of Tomorrow			X	
	Get Troup Reading		X	X	
	Goodwill Industries	X		X	
	Kia Georgia	X			
	LaGrange Housing Authority		X	X	
	Rosemont Baptist Church	X			
	Salvation Army	X			
	Troup County Family Connections	X		X	X
	Troup County School System	X		X	X
United Way of West Georgia	X		X	X	
<b>Twiggs County</b>	Twiggs County Family Connection			X	
	Twiggs County Public Schools	X			X

## Pillar II: Expanded Enrichment Learning Time

Research demonstrates that rich opportunities to learn outside the classroom can increase academic and beyond-academic outcomes, including improved student attendance, behavior, and achievement, higher graduation rates, development of social, emotional, and leadership skills, and reduced involvement in juvenile crime.<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, not all students have equal access to

<sup>45</sup> Maier, A., Daniel, J., Oakes, J., & Lam, O. (2017) Community Schools: An evidence-based school improvement strategy. Learning Policy Institute and the National Education Policy Center, 2017.

expanded learning time and as a result, these differences in learning opportunities widen the achievement gaps between young people from high- and low-income households. Only 18% of Georgia school age children participate in afterschool, and 44% more Georgia children would enroll if a program was available in their community.<sup>46</sup> Through the ACRES Project, CIS affiliates/subsidiaries will work to ensure that expanded learning is part of the core work of the school site and increase access to expanded learning to more students. As much as possible, staffing structures will blend roles across school day and after school time, so that some staff work in both settings. For example in Berrien County at Berrien Primary School and Berrien Elementary School through their 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs, school day teachers work in the expanded learning program and serve as “academic liaisons.” These staff members help bridge the school day and after school or summer learning strategies and structures and provide content expertise.

The ACRES Project will expand learning opportunities for students at targeted schools during out-of-school time through a robust network of community partnerships (see Figure 21: Student Support Services for Expanded Learning Time at Targeted Schools). While not all services are currently provided on-site, service assessment and planning over the course of the five-year grant period will help shift services to occur on-site at schools. This includes a focus on working to support growing the capacity of existing out-of-school time providers as necessary and appropriate.

**Figure 21: Student Support Services for Expanded Learning Time at Targeted Schools**

School Name	Partnership/Service Description
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<sup>46</sup> Afterschool Alliance. [America After 3PM \(2020\)](#).

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<b>Ben Hill Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with the Monitor Enrichment Center, the only afterschool program in Ben Hill County, on out-of-school time programming and parent engagement</li> <li>• Leveraging the Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Library’s summer reading program for students</li> </ul>
<b>Berrien Primary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveraging the Berrien County Primary School’s 21st Century Community Learning Center program</li> <li>• Leveraging the Perry Memorial Library’s summer reading program, the Youth Summer Library Challenge</li> </ul>
<b>Berrien Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveraging the the Berrien County Elementary School’s 21st Century Community Learning Center program</li> <li>• Partnering with Boy Scouts of America to start a new Boys &amp; Girls Scout Troop for students</li> <li>• Leveraging the Perry Memorial Library’s summer reading program, the Youth Summer Library Challenge</li> </ul>
<b>Callaway Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with Get Troup Reading, leveraging a four-week summer literacy program to support student learning and prevent summer learning loss</li> </ul>
<b>Clearview Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with Get Troup Reading, leveraging a four-week summer literacy program to support student learning and prevent summer learning loss</li> </ul>
<b>Dublin High School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with the Oconee Regional Library System to give students access to library services, including summer and out of school time programming designed for students and families</li> </ul>
<b>Dublin Middle School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with the Oconee Regional Library System to give students access to library services, including summer and out of school time programming designed for students and families</li> </ul>
<b>East Laurens Middle School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with the Oconee Regional Library System to give students access to library services, including summer and out of school time programming designed for students and families</li> </ul>
<b>Fitzgerald High School College &amp; Career Academy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with the Monitor Enrichment Center, the only afterschool program in Ben Hill County, on out-of-school time programming and parent engagement</li> <li>• Leveraging the Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Library’s summer reading program for students</li> </ul>
<b>Jeffersonville Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While there are currently no OST services available for students in Twiggs County, through the assessment and planning process, the School Site Coordinators and Schools Support Teams will work to address this gap.</li> </ul>
<b>Metter Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveraging an existing on-site afterschool program, The After School Program at MES, to serve students</li> </ul>
<b>Metter High School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveraging existing on-site mentoring program and tutoring services for students, including outreach to help students with college applications</li> </ul>

<b>Twiggs County High School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While there are currently no OST services available for students in Twiggs County, through the assessment and planning process, the School Site Coordinators and Schools Support Teams will work to address this gap.</li> </ul>
<b>Twiggs Middle School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While there are currently no OST services available for students in Twiggs County, through the assessment and planning process, the School Site Coordinators and Schools Support Teams will work to address this gap.</li> </ul>
<b>West Laurens Middle School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with the Oconee Regional Library System to give students access to library services, including summer and out of school time programming designed for students and families</li> </ul>

### **Pillar III: Active Family & Community Engagement**

Research shows that parent and family engagement efforts have a positive effect on the academic success of students.<sup>47</sup> Meaningful mechanisms for family and community engagement, led by welcoming and culturally informed staff, can strengthen the school community, build positive relationships and school climate, and improve student outcomes on many measures, including attendance, discipline, and academic achievement. Families who are supported by the school to understand academic goals and strategies are better able to support student learning—both inside and outside of the classroom.

Because research also shows that the quality of interactions between parents and staff is more important than the frequency of interactions, the ACRES Project will support an intentional focus on creating a trusting relationship.<sup>48</sup> As adults who may be a primary point of contact between parents and the school, the CIS Site Coordinators will be aware of the importance of making parents feel welcome in the school environment and, help to facilitate staff-wide training about meaningful and empathetic school-parent interactions.

<sup>47</sup> Jeynes, W. H. (2012). A Meta-Analysis of the Efficacy of Different Types of Parental Involvement Programs for Urban Students. *Urban Education*, 706-742.

<sup>48</sup> Jeynes, W. H. (2005, December). [Parental Involvement and Student Achievement: A Meta-Analysis](#). Family Involvement Research Digests.

As previously described, the CIS affiliates/subsidiaries have a strong history and deep commitment to authentically partnering with families and community members. Much engagement and leg work has been done on the front end of the ACRES Project assessment and design process and will continue through implementation. Developing a full understanding of the strengths and challenges of the community and determining the appropriate mix of services, supports, and opportunities is a collaborative and iterative process in partnership with families and the community. The CIS Site Coordinators facilitate this effort. A continuum of family and community engagement practices, such as help for parents in supporting the needs of students, classes for families and community members, volunteer opportunities, inclusion on school leadership teams, and leadership coaching to support their full participation will be offered as a result of the ACRES program. Examples of family engagement activities include parenting classes, workforce and career support, facilitating access to supports that can help to meet basic needs, and other referral services. Currently (FY22), the CIS affiliates/subsidiaries served 1,224 parents with direct and indirect services at the three targeted school sites where the local CIS provides services. The ACRES Project will also help to significantly improve parent engagement through regular communication via both low-tech (written and verbal communication) and high-tech (social media and robo calls) methods, depending on school norms and preferences.

**Figure 22: Student Support Services for Family Engagement at Targeted Schools**

School Name	Partnership/Service Description
<b>Ben Hill Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leveraging programming and outreach from Ben Hill County Family Connection, such as the Fitzgerald Partnership for Youth (CYPSY Cohort funding); providing Raising Highly Capable Kids classes for parents; Salvation Army for rental and utility assistance to families in need; and Toys for Tots.</li> <li>● Partnering with the Fitzgerald Housing Authority to provide support/basic needs to families</li> <li>● Leveraging programs at the Fitzgerald Tourism Department to</li> </ul>

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	<p>provide students and families with tours, enrichment classes, and summer camps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leveraging donations from the Wal-Mart Supercenter #686 to help meet basic needs for families and students</li> <li>● Partnering with the Monitor Enrichment Center, which will provide parents/families with free parenting classes</li> </ul>
<b>Berrien Primary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Partnering with South Georgia Medical Center Berrien Campus to provide resources, info, and back-to-school supply donations to students and families</li> <li>● Leveraging donations of dictionaries from the Berrien County Nashville Rotary Club to the families of all third grade students at Berrien Primary School</li> </ul>
<b>Berrien Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Partnering with South Georgia Medical Center Berrien Campus to provide resources, info, and back-to-school supply donations to students and families</li> </ul>
<b>Callaway Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Partnering with United Way of West Georgia to increase access to basic needs and childcare for parents/families</li> <li>● Partnering with LaGrange Housing Authority to provide parent engagement programming and support on access to basic needs</li> <li>● Partnering with Circles of Troup County as a referral source for parents to assist with making strides to exit poverty and become self sustaining</li> <li>● Partnering with Goodwill Industries to provide parents with referral services for job training, resume writing and job fairs.</li> <li>● Partnering with Communities of Tomorrow to provide referral services for parents to help with sustaining or finding adequate and safe housing, as well as providing them with the stability, tools and resources to make better financial decisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Clearview Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Partnering with United Way of West Georgia to increase access to basic needs and childcare for parents/families</li> <li>● Partnering with LaGrange Housing Authority to provide parent engagement programming and support on access to basic needs</li> <li>● Partnering with Circles of Troup County as a referral source for parents to assist with making strides to exit poverty and become self sustaining</li> <li>● Partnering with Goodwill Industries to provide parents with referral services for job training, resume writing and job fairs.</li> <li>● Partnering with Communities of Tomorrow to provide referral services for parents to help with sustaining or finding adequate and safe housing, as well as providing them with the stability, tools and resources to make better financial decisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Dublin High School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leveraging full-time Family Engagement Coordinators on-site through Dublin County School District</li> </ul>
<b>Dublin Middle School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leveraging full-time Family Engagement Coordinators on-site through Dublin County School District</li> </ul>
<b>East Laurens Middle School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Current family engagement efforts at East Laurens Middle School are in need of expansion and through the assessment and planning</li> </ul>

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	<p>process, the School Site Coordinators and Schools Support Teams will work to address this gap.</p>
<b>Fitzgerald High School College &amp; Career Academy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveraging (through the Literacy for Learning, Living, and Leading in Georgia 2021 grant) new parent and community nights to educate people about the importance of literacy and to initiate community support for literacy growth. This includes hosting in-person or virtual educational meetings, literacy nights with a special guest reader or speaker, workshops (e.g., creative writing, completing applications), and materials for supporting students’ literacy at home.</li> <li>• Leveraging programming and outreach from Ben Hill County Family Connection, such as the Fitzgerald Partnership for Youth (CYPSY Cohort funding); providing Raising Highly Capable Kids classes for parents; Salvation Army for rental and utility assistance to families in need; and Toys for Tots.</li> <li>• Partnering with the Fitzgerald Housing Authority to provide support/basic needs to families</li> <li>• Leveraging programs at the Fitzgerald Tourism Department to provide students and families with tours, enrichment classes, and summer camps.</li> <li>• Leveraging donations from the Wal-Mart Supercenter #686 to help meet basic needs for families and students</li> <li>• Partnering with the Monitor Enrichment Center, which will provide parents/families with free parenting classes</li> </ul>
<b>Jeffersonville Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current family engagement efforts at Jeffersonville Elementary School are in need of expansion and through the assessment and planning process, the School Site Coordinators and Schools Support Teams will work to address this gap.</li> </ul>
<b>Metter Elementary School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveraging the existing Metter Elementary School Parent and Family Engagement Plan to integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with Head Start, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other program</li> </ul>
<b>Metter High School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveraging existing parent and family engagement programming, including activities and events through the Parent and Family Engagement Calendar, ESOL Family Night, and other targeted tools and resources like the Parent &amp; Family Digital Learning Guide</li> </ul>
<b>Twiggs County High School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current family engagement efforts at Twiggs County High School are in need of expansion and through the assessment and planning process, the School Site Coordinators and Schools Support Teams will work to address this gap.</li> </ul>
<b>Twiggs Middle School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current family engagement efforts at Twiggs Middle School are in need of expansion and through the assessment and planning process, the School Site Coordinators and Schools Support Teams will work to address this gap.</li> </ul>

<b>West Laurens Middle School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Current family engagement efforts at West Laurens Middle School are in need of expansion and through the assessment and planning process, the School Site Coordinators and Schools Support Teams will work to address this gap.</li></ul>
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CISGA will provide training and resources to build the capacity of Site Coordinators (and educators and school staff as appropriate) to support designing and implementing effective engagement strategies in collaboration with stakeholders. Through CISU (the one-stop online portal to access CIS resources, learning tools, and systems from the national organization), all ACRES Project School Site Coordinators will have access to a dedicated *CIS School Site Coordinators Learning Pathway*. These trainings include:

- **Communities In Schools and Me: The Site Coordinator** - This course is designed to provide School Site Coordinator with an orientation to their primary roles and responsibilities and an overview of resources available to them.
- **Implementing Integrated Student Supports** - This course details Integrated Student Supports, how we define tiers of support, and how we implement each tier.
- **Engaging the School Support Team** - This course will define the School Support Team and ensure that the School Site Coordinator understands this team’s role and can identify who belongs on this team at their school.
- **School Support Planning, Part I: Assessing Needs** - This course explains how to co-lead the School Support Team in conducting a school needs assessment: a diagnostic effort to understand the community and capture school demographics.
- **School Support Planning, Part II: Setting Goals and Planning Supports** - This course is the second part of the School Support Planning series. It focuses on identifying goals, tracking metrics, and linking tiered supports to established goals for the school.

- **Case Managing as Part of ISS** - This course explains case management and the case management process from the CIS perspective and the School Site Coordinator’s role in case management.
- **Data Tracking and Reporting** - This course will prepare School Site Coordinators to manage community partnerships at the school level.
- **Collaborating with Partners** - This course will prepare School Site Coordinators to manage community partnerships at the school level.

Through these trainings, school sites will be better equipped to incorporate local knowledge from the communities they serve into community school practices and curriculum. Training will also support cultural competency, so they can build trusting relationships with families and community members.

#### **Pillar IV: Collaborative Leadership & Practices**

The CISGA model recognizes that the collaborative leadership and practices pillar connects and reinforces the other pillars, making it foundational for the success of a community school strategy. Efforts under this pillar aim to support parents, students, teachers, principals, and community partners in building a culture of professional learning, collective trust and shared responsibility using strategies such as site-based leadership teams and learning communities. Research has demonstrated that with increased leadership among families and community members, schools are better able to serve as centers of community where everyone belongs, everyone works together, and our young people succeed.<sup>49</sup> Deep collaboration among school staff and service providers ensures that systems of comprehensive supports are integrated within

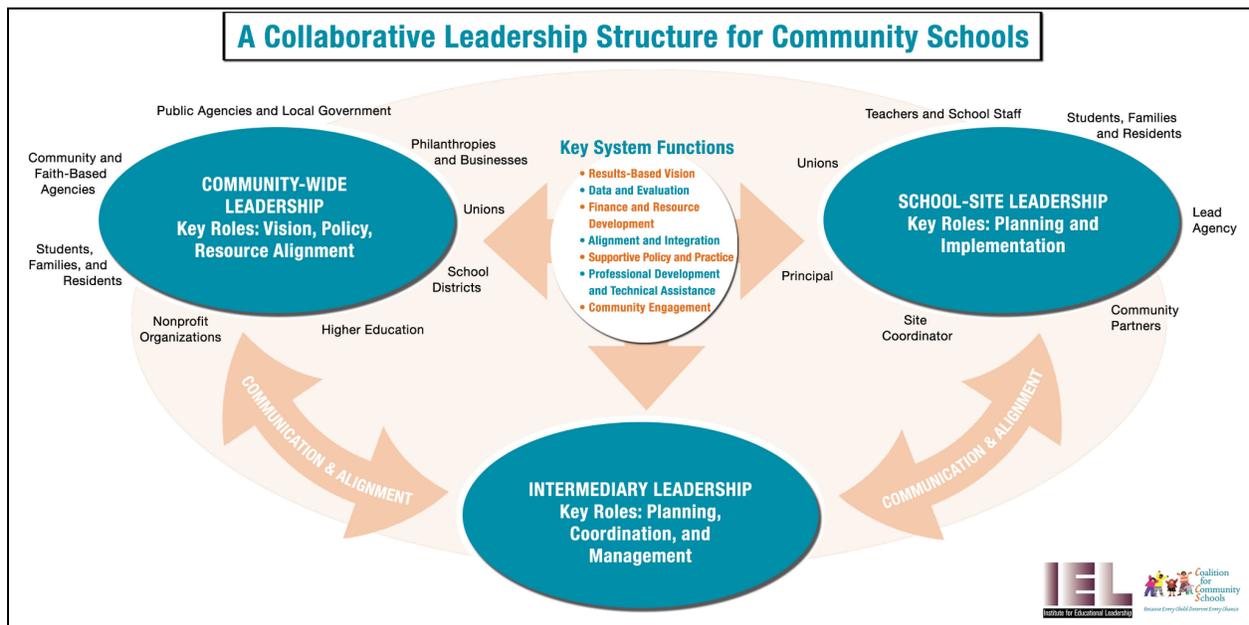
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<sup>49</sup> Coalition for Community Schools (n.d.). School-community partnerships essential in a reauthorized ESEA. Washington, DC: Coalition for Community Schools.

the daily functioning of the school; for example, monitoring student needs, adjusting interventions, and influencing school climate and schoolwide policies in collaboration with staff and leadership.

All members of the Consortium understand that this level of deep trust and collaboration takes time and intention to develop and must be nurtured. Through the ACRES Project, CISGA and its affiliates/subsidiaries will foster shared leadership through implementing the shared leadership structure identified by the Coalition for Community Schools, of which CIS is a member (Figure 23).

**Figure 23: A Collaborative Leadership Structure for Community Schools**



To operationalize this model, the ACRES Project has been designed with collaborative planning, implementation, and oversight guided by representative leadership teams that includes students, families, teachers, other school staff, principals, community school directors, community partners, and community residents. These teams exist at the school, district, and state level.

- **State:** The CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium is managed by CISGA as the backbone organization. Shared leadership is an enumerated value shared by members of the Consortium, who are committed to a collaborative leadership model. For more information on the vision, values and goals of the Consortium, please see Appendix A, Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium. The state CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium will be convened biannually and managed by the Chief Program Officer, although working teams may meet with greater frequency on identified needs as appropriate.
- **County:** County-level leadership on the ACRES Project will be provided by the local CIS affiliate’s Board of Directors or an established committee of their Board of Director serving as the FSCS County/District Level Steering Committee. The county-level leadership will be convened on a quarterly basis and managed by the local CIS Executive Directors.
- **School Site:**
  - **School Support Team:** By working to plan supports, identify and facilitate direct service provision to students, and implement the Consortium model within the schools, the School Support Team is the heart of the student and family-facing components of the FSCS model. This group will meet weekly, on average, with flexibility for holidays, school breaks, and other business needs that may interrupt this cadence. The School Support Team is convened and managed through close working collaboration between the school leadership, principal, and School Site Coordinator. Parent/family representatives may be represented on this team. Students are not members of this team due to the sensitive nature of topics

discussed (i.e., addressing specific case management needs for individual students with Tier II and III supports).

- **School Steering Committee:** Led in partnership by the principal and School Site Coordinator, the School Steering Committee advises on the needs, interests and priorities of the students and families being served. This group will meet more frequently as needed in the initial launch phases of the FSCS then quarterly thereafter. Each School Steering Committee will include school personnel, teachers, students, parents, community partners, and other stakeholders as appropriate to the local community.

As detailed above, this model distributes leadership at all levels to tackle specific tasks. For example, students are struggling in math and the need for an afterschool STEM program is identified and prioritized collectively. A specialized work team is charged with addressing the need. In this scenario, the team might identify all possible partners. The local CIS Executive Director would leverage existing or new partnerships to resource for that need (e.g., community college robotics program). A parent might lead a volunteer group from their place of employment to deliver the program with the college. The site-coordinator would support publicizing the opportunity to students and families and connecting them to the service. Teachers would support alignment of the program to the curriculum of the school day. Using this collaborative leadership structure, CIS engages all stakeholders in meaningful leadership roles that support better student outcomes. This model enables CIS and local Support Support Teams to be nimble to respond to locally surfaced needs and assets. Through the ACRES Project, CISGA will support capacity-building and professional learning opportunities to improve the ability of all stakeholders to collaborate and engage in a process of continuous improvement, as

well as ensure that shared leadership extends beyond staff to include students, families, community members and partners.

**Plans to Ensure that Each Full-Service Community School has a Full-Time Coordinator**

Through the ACRES Project, each school will be equipped with a full-time Community School Site Coordinator. The Community School Site Coordinator is responsible for engaging the team in every aspect of the CIS work in the school, including the needs assessment, planning, services, monitoring, reporting, and other activities. The Community School Site Coordinator meets with the team regularly and reports progress toward goals and program implementation. Having the School Support Team ensures that CIS is integrated into the school operations and that plans mesh well with school improvement goals. These Community School Site Coordinator will be overseen by the local CIS affiliate/subsidiary and report to the local CIS Executive Director. Community School Site Coordinator will leverage the system, build connections with the school and external partners, facilitate for inclusion, and cultivate trust with stakeholders. They also analyze and present data, and manage budgets and projects. The required minimum qualifications for the School Site Coordinator role are a Bachelor’s degree or demonstrated relevant equivalent experience in education, social work or related field, as well as a valid driver’s license and automobile insurance. They must demonstrate an ability to understand and apply basic child and adolescent development principles; communicate and develop positive relationships with youth; adapt, facilitate and evaluate age appropriate activities with and for the group; identify potential risk factors (in a program environment) and take measures to reduce risk; as well as work as part of a team through a collaborative, shared leadership model in partnership with school personnel. For additional information, please refer to the Management Plan for Local CISGA Affiliates/Subsidiaries, starting on page 102.

Each year, CISGA hosts a targeted two-and-a-half day training designed for all new CIS Site Coordinators, followed by a two-day Summer Training Institute for all CIS Site Coordinators. New CIS Site Coordinators training prepares new staff for the role of the CIS Site Coordinator, introducing them to all elements of the CIS model at school sites. Topics covered include: the roles and responsibilities of the CIS Site Coordinators, conducting school-wide needs assessments, development of site plans, providing effective multi-tiered student supports, development of individualized student support plans, effective case management, and site team development and implementation. The All Site Coordinator Summer Training Institute content varies from year to year, based on an annual assessment of CIS Site Coordinator needs. Through the Summer Training Institute, Site Coordinators receive training in evidence-based strategies to implement at their school site, and in some cases receive certificates of completion. Recent Summer Training Institutes have featured sessions on Mental Health First Aid, trauma-informed care, social-emotional learning (including programs such as Harmony SEL and Positive Action), developmental assets, addiction supports, and other supports for youth development. In addition, CIS Site Coordinators are introduced to organizations and potential partners to support their communities. These include organizations such as 4-H, Kate's Club (which assists students dealing with bereavement and loss), and organizations such as AmeriGroup that can provide funding for students to participate in programs such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

In addition to the Summer Training Institute, CIS Site Coordinators have other opportunities for training throughout the year. In January each year, Winter Training Roundtables are held for CIS Site Coordinators to learn from and share what is working with one another. CIS National also provides training and resources to help build the capacity of CIS Site Coordinators, including town hall meetings and specialty trainings. CIS National has an online CIS University,

a one-stop online portal to access CIS resources, learning tools, and systems. This includes trainings in a variety of areas that School Site Coordinators can access as needed on topics like child safety, social and emotional wellness, grants management, and compliance, as well as a dedicated Student Supports Institute. As part of CISU, there is a dedicated CIS School Site Coordinators Learning Pathway that enables individuals to become certified as CIS School Site Coordinators by CIS National. The Student Supports Institute includes asynchronous trainings that include topics like Addressing Academic Loss as a Tier 2 Support, Assessment Strategies to Drive Service Provision, Building Harmonious Relationships and Creating Inclusive Environments, Building Relationships with Families Who Have Experienced Trauma, Data Driven Program Manager Using Data to Understand and Adjust CIS Programming. Offerings are regularly updated and expanded to respond to trends in student and family needs nationally and regionally.

**Requirement: Local Annual Evaluation & Progress Monitoring**

Continuous improvement is a commitment and strategy of the Consortium to use data to collaborate, strategize, track student progress, and address issues that otherwise go unnoticed. The Consortium recognizes that the 15 FSCS in the ACRES Project will be at different stages of development and progress at different paces. A culture of continuous improvement will be promoted at all levels through training and instilling practices of data review, analysis and reflection. Throughout the shared leadership structure, CISGA will support professional development of teams to be able to identify problems and utilize an improvement methodology such as “plan, do, study, act,” cycles, to develop systems that use community data and experiences to transform schools. Trainings offered to the Consortium on continuous improvement include data collection, goal setting, progress monitoring, and use of reports

generated in CIS Data Management (CISDM). During new School Site Coordinator training, the CISGA Evaluation Department provides training in utilizing individual student assessment data to inform development of student support plans, includes setting SMART goals for caseloads to inform decisions about appropriate supports to address student needs. School Site Coordinators are also trained in progress monitoring and reviewing student and school progress. Strategies to assist affiliates in improving services and supports are also detailed, such as annual satisfaction surveys of students and principals that illuminate challenges or emerging needs in order to help identify and develop resources to address them.

The Consortium has developed systems for data collection that capture accurate data that are connected to identified outcomes and aligned with a logic model (Figure 17, page 48). The CIS site team regularly monitors and adjusts services as needed to maximize effectiveness and impact. The team also provides regular progress reports to school and affiliate leadership. At a minimum on an annual basis or as specific needs arise, the steering committees will meet to review all performance data and make recommendations for the next school year. Data collection agreements have been put in place through the preliminary MOU. The CIS site team implements a systematic data collection plan to evaluate the effectiveness of services on achieving school-wide goals and addressing the needs of individual students. The CIS site team will also provide annual end-of-year reports to school and affiliate leadership. These reports are used to inform planning for the following year. All CIS Site Coordinators receive training from CISGA on the use the CIS data management system (CISDM) from the CISGA evaluation department. Please see the full evaluation plan with all data collection and analysis methods for the project in the Quality of Project Evaluation section beginning on page 111.

**Requirement: Plans for Sustaining Programs & Services**

For over 30 years, CISGA has focused on bringing community resources into schools to reduce barriers and sustained efforts across the state. The board of directors is committed to this program and the educational reform that results from full-service community schools. The ACRES Project aligns to CISGA’s strategic plan, state education reform initiatives and the school improvement plans of the partner districts. As partners have come to understand the significance of the collective impact model, more strategic collaboration will enable partners to pursue resources to support the continuation of the work.

CISGA’s resource development team will work with local affiliates/subsidiaries and partners to identify additional resource opportunities to support aspects of the ACRES project beyond the life of the grant. Additionally, a subcommittee of the Consortium has been established to work on resource development and explore ways to collectively pursue additional opportunities to support the work. A resource development plan will be developed exploring local, state and national opportunities for grants as well as exploring fundraising activities. The ACRES Project is also strategically leveraging existing resources within targeted schools, LEAs, and communities, as detailed in the Adequacy of Resources section starting on page 83. In addition, the CISGA Project Manager will serve as a liaison to the Chief Philanthropy Officer and Resource Development Coordinator to support needs related to long-term sustainability and resource development for the project and Consortium.

**III. QUALITY OF PROJECT SERVICES**

The ACRES Project embraces a truly shared leadership model that is reflective of a broad representation of stakeholders including district leadership, school personnel, CIS

affiliates/subsidiaries, local non-profit partners and community agencies, parents and students. The Consortium consists of all partners at the local school/district, county and state levels. Each CIS affiliate/subsidiary champions the ACRES Project in their county and serves as the lead partner for the school district. For example, a Steering Committee is organized at the district level (with representation of each district participating school site) and at the school level (focused on planning and execution for their specific school). The Site Coordinator facilitates coordination across the school teams and sub-working groups to carry out the work (e.g., assessment, service delivery plans, partnership, data collection, monitoring and continuous improvement) for the FSCS site. CISGA will create communities of practice at the county level to share learnings across the ACRES Project cohort and support each school site in fully implementing all four pillars of the evidence-based FSCS model.

Figure 15 on page 41 provides a list of the new and existing services by school to be coordinated through the ACRES Project. Twelve (12) of the fifteen (15) targeted schools will be new school sites for the local CIS affiliate/subsidiary, meaning no services were offered through the coordinated CIS model previously. For the three sites having some previously offered services, the FSCS will be optimized (meaning growing capacity across all four pillars) through the ACRES Project. As detailed throughout this narrative and in accordance with the evidence-based FSCS model, each school site will annually complete an assessment and services design process to meet the specific needs of their school community. This process provides for shared leadership and decision-making by all stakeholders using subgroup (e.g., team) structures at the school level. As mentioned earlier, CIS support services are classified into three tiers – Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3. Affiliates provide any combination of the support tiers of service within the school sites they serve, as dictated by the collaborative assessment and service design

process. Tier 1 resources and supports are widely accessible to all students at a school site and typically have short-term durations of a few hours or days. Some examples of these types of resources and services include providing clothing and school supplies, coordinating school-wide events such as career fairs, bringing in health care professionals to conduct annual screenings and providing short-term counseling in crisis situations.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 resources and services are targeted for specific students with identified risk factors such as poor academic performance, poor attendance, frequent behavior issues, or social needs (case management). Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports are sustained interventions which may take place over several weeks or may be ongoing throughout the school year. Tier 2 supports are targeted services typically provided in a group setting to students with a common need and may include services such as tutoring, afterschool programs and life skills training. Tier 3 supports are intensive, individualized services typically provided in a one-on-one setting to students with highly specific needs and may include services such as mentoring and counseling. Tier 2 and 3 services are tracked as case managed. Students' progress towards accomplishing individualized goals or outcomes is monitored.

To support identification of specific students in need of services, all CIS affiliates use an early warning system approach in the school sites they serve. Specific criteria for referral varies from site to site and is identified by the School Site Coordinators in partnership with school leadership and the full School Support Team as part of the development of the annual School Support Plan. While building in flexibility in the planning process to best serve the needs of individual schools and communities, the CIS School Support Plan Template guides School Support Teams through a set of questions and discussion prompts as part of the necessary planning to develop a shared process for the referral of students. These include topics such as:

eligibility criteria for student identification for case management; anticipated number of targeted students to be case managed by CIS or others within the school; a description of the referral process, including roles and responsibilities; and suggested triggers, such as attendance, reading on grade level, or class disruption.

The ACRES Project supports each local FSCS in building a continuum of coordinated supports, services, and opportunities for children from Kindergarten to career. CIS local affiliates provide a variety of types of services following best practices and proven interventions in dropout prevention. The services available at a particular school site will depend on the needs of the students and the school, as well as the resources available to meet those needs. CIS services fall into the following categories (see Figure 12, Communities in Schools' Evidence-Based FSCS Model ): case management, basic needs and resources, academic assistance, life skills/social development, family engagement/ strengthening, physical health, mental health, behavior interventions, college/career preparation, community service/service learning, and enrichment/motivation. See Figures 15, 20, 21, 22, and 24 for specific pipeline services and local partners) tailored to the specific needs of each school community. While localized through specific community partners and tailored to the unique needs of each school, student community population, in general the following types of pipeline services will be coordinated. Note this list is not exhaustive and is meant to be representative of those offered across the 7 LEAs and 15 FSCS school sites.

***Service: High-quality early childhood education programs***

Within each school community, early childhood education programs are identified and coordination of access to those services are provided to families. The ACRES Project will work to connect more children and families to early learning services and to community based

resources that support early learning like Headstart, Evenstart, Babies Can't Wait, Baby Irish in Laurens County, and Footsteps to Brilliance in Ben Hill. Some elementary school sites offer on-site early childhood programs. In addition, through parent engagement activities, the site coordinators build intentional strategies to connect younger siblings to these services. These coordinated services support the direct alignment of the ACRES Project with the U.S. DOE FSCS goal to ensure that children are prepared for Kindergarten.

***Service: High-quality school and OST programs and strategies***

Through the ACRES Project, school site coordinators and steering committees will work to increase access to OST programs that are school-based as well as connect students to appropriate community-based OST programs. For example, some sites will leverage 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs to provide school-site afterschool and summer programs. Other sites are bringing Girl/Boy Scouts Troops to their schools. (See full description of expanded learning time opportunities beginning on page 59).

***Service: Support for a child's transition to elementary school, from elementary school to middle school, from middle school to high school, and from high school into and through postsecondary education and into the workforce, including any comprehensive readiness assessment determined necessary.***

The school districts use Georgia Kindergarten Readiness Assessments as well as Georgia standardized tests to support assessment of preparedness to transition between grade levels. Georgia's College & Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) is a comprehensive school improvement, accountability, and communication platform for all educational stakeholders that promotes college and career readiness for all Georgia public school students. The CCRPI is Georgia's annual tool for measuring how well its schools, districts, and the state itself are preparing students for the next educational level. It provides a comprehensive roadmap to help

educators, parents, and community members promote and improve college and career readiness for all students. The CIS model supports transitions by providing interventions that help students prepare socially, behaviorally and academically to progress. Often there is significant overlap between School Support Teams and school transition teams. When applicable, the FSCS School Site Coordinators will support coordination of services that positively impact children's transition. Examples also include activities that support both families and students in making transition such as organizing visits for students and families to middle school or high school, providing parent workshops on transition planning, and near-peer mentoring programs. In addition, an array of academic assistance services such as after-school and summer programs, tutoring, homework assistance, and test preparation are coordinated to support student transitions.

***Service: Family and community engagement and supports, which may include engaging or supporting families at school or at home.***

A variety of family engagement and family strengthening services such as parent education and workshops as well as parent involvement activities are coordinated. See the family engagement sections starting on page 62 for detailed descriptions of services provided.

***Service: Activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness, which may include job training, internship opportunities, and career counseling AND community-based support for students who have attended the schools in the area served by the pipeline, or students who are members of the community, facilitating their continued connection to the community and success in postsecondary education and the workforce.***

College and career preparation services include career planning, internships, training programs, college exploration, college application support and scholarships. College and career preparation services are frequently Tier 1, whole-school activities. Examples of Tier 1 college/career preparation services include:

- Events to register and orient students to the GAfutures website;
- Lessons/activities in college and career planning/exploration;
- Information sessions on topics like dual-enrollment and financial aid;
- College and Career Fairs; and College Tours.

Many CIS affiliates/subsidiaries also have strong relationships with their local Workforce Investment Act Boards that provide youth (ages 16-24) with work experiences, and coordinate services through these Department of Labor partnerships.

***Service: Social, health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports***

The site coordinators will provide social, health, nutrition, and mental health services to students and families. Physical Health services includes health screenings and education, drug and alcohol prevention, and linkages to dental and eye care providers. Mental health services are provided through linkages to mental health counseling supports in the communities. A variety of behavior interventions such as attendance programs, anger management and conflict resolution, gang prevention and violence prevention will be offered and coordinated. Lastly, social emotional development programs include mentoring, leadership skills programs, school safety, personal skills development and abstinence education.

***Service: Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation programs***

Some of the CIS affiliate/subsidiaries are also part of the CIS National Challenge Schools Initiative implementing the Positive Action curriculum in small groups with case managed students. Positive Action is a K-12, evidence-based social emotional learning program based on the intuitive philosophy that we feel good about ourselves when we do good things. Positive Action is rated Effective on the program registry for the Office Of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Treatment group students reported statistically significantly

less substance use, sexual activity, violent behavior, serious violence-related behavior, and bullying behavior, compared with control group students. Positive Action is organized into six units with the curriculum customized by grade level. The units are self-concept, positive actions for your body and mind, managing yourself responsibly, treating others the way you like to be treated, telling yourself the truth and improving yourself continually. In addition to the individual student implementation of Positive Action, each of the sites will be implementing the Positive Action School Climate module. In addition, many of the OST programs that will be offered/coordinated through the ACRES Project are evidenced-based positive youth development programs. Researchers have promoted a positive youth development model to address the needs of youth who might be at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. In Troup County, these efforts align with the Northern District of Georgia’s Project Safe Neighborhoods program, which aims to support and foster partnerships between law enforcement, schools, and local community leaders to prevent and deter future criminal conduct among youth. Troup County has specifically been identified by the U.S. Department of Justice as a priority enforcement area for Project Safe Neighborhoods.<sup>50</sup>

As stated earlier in this narrative, the services are evidenced within the CIS model and have demonstrated that students report doing better on outcomes that contribute to academic achievement, including having a caring adult in their lives, developing high-quality peer relationships, and maintaining positive educational attitudes.<sup>51</sup> As indicated in Figure 15, New & Existing Pipeline Services Provided by School Site, and in Figure 19, Projected Number of

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<sup>50</sup> U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Georgia. “[Project Safe Neighborhoods](#).”

<sup>51</sup> ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 4: Randomized controlled trial study Jacksonville, Florida. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 5: Randomized controlled trial study Austin, Texas. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; ICF International. (2010). Communities In Schools national evaluation. Volume 6: Randomized controlled trial study Wichita, Kansas. Arlington, VA: Communities In Schools; Parise, L. M., Corrin, W., Granito, K., Haider, Z., Somers, M., & Cerna, O. (2017). Two years of case management: Final findings from the Communities In Schools random assignment evaluation. New York, NY: MDRC.

Individuals (Students & Families) to be Served, the ACRES Project has been designed to meet the annual FSCS performance measure to increase the percentage and number of individuals who receive services during each year, as represented in the objectives in Figure 18. Over the course of the project the number of individuals receiving services will increase.

#### **IV. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES**

In designing the ACRES Project, the Consortium has committed sufficient partnerships, staffing resources and leveraged resources to ensure successful execution, management and sustainability. (See detailed management plan beginning on page 91). The project galvanizes community resources within participating communities to better support students, families and school communities. Consortium partners are deeply committed and share a vision for inclusive and thriving rural communities that offer access to an excellent education that embraces the whole child, leverages community assets to remove barriers for academic success, supports economic opportunity, and improves quality of life for all residents (see Appendix A; Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium). The match for the ACRES Project at the state and local levels is significant and includes facilities, services, staffing, and other contributions to ensure successful implementation. During Year 1's process to finalize the Consortium MOU process, all in-kind match will be quantified and documented and will be from non-federal sources.

**Plans for a Full-Time Site Coordinators at Each School Site**

Through the Georgia ACRES Project, a full-time School Site Coordinator will be embedded at each of the 15 targeted school sites, working collaboratively with school leadership and stakeholders to tap into new, existing and underutilized resources within participating communities and connect them to students and families. The School Site Coordinator is responsible for helping with planning, integrating, coordinating, and facilitating programs and services at each school. The School Site Coordinator works through the School Support Team and the School Steering Committee (which includes representation of all stakeholders, including students and families) to carry out the planning and delivery of services (see pages 105-106 for detailed School Site Coordinator role and responsibility).

Within each school district and county, CIS Executive Directors will work to ignite new partnerships and grow existing partnerships in support of the FSCS in their county including the long-term sustainability of the site-coordinator position. These efforts will be mirrored at the statewide level, where CISGA’s Director of Partnerships & Network Relations will develop and build new statewide partnerships. In collaboration with the Consortium partners, CISGA’s Chief Philanthropy Officer and Resource Development Coordinator will develop and implement a resource development and sustainability plan for the ACRES Project that engages donors, grantors and partners across all sectors. CISGA also works to advocate as appropriate for state-level funding to help support drop-out prevention in the state of Georgia, including engaging the Governor’s Office and Georgia Department of Education (GADOE). This includes an explicit focus on youth from low-income and rural backgrounds. In recent years, these efforts have been successful and CISGA plans to continue this concerted effort under the leadership of the Executive Director.

The evidence-based CIS Model is unique because it provides a comprehensive range of community services, also known as integrated student services, for a minimal cost of less than \$200 annually per student. This occurs by placing a School Site Coordinator directly in the schools to conduct school and student needs assessments and develop comprehensive support plans that address obstacles to learning, followed by coordinating, delivering and tracking the identified needed services. These efforts dovetail with the needs identified in existing school improvement plans and ongoing needs assessments conducted by the School Site Coordinator in partnership with stakeholders. These supports remove barriers and disruptions to learning for students by providing them with the resources they need, from tutoring services to eyeglasses or a safe place to be afterschool and during the summer.

Substantial resources are leveraged to support the implementation and sustainability of the FSCS at the state, county and local levels. FSCS funds will supplement and not supplant other funding sources. In total, approximately \$2,591,111 in funds (not including facilities) have been preliminarily identified in support of the ACRES Project and is projected to grow as we additional partners and service contributions to the project. CISGA operates several projects that provide specialized services for schools and students, that will be leveraged to support the ACRES Project when appropriate. These other grants and initiatives include: AmeriCorps Tutorial Grant; Multi-Agency Alliance for Children (MAAC); Reality UTM Financial Literacy Program; Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) CIS National Challenge Schools Initiative; Georgia STOMP (Stop Tax On Menstrual Products); Humana Healthy Horizons™; CIS National Panda Cares Initiative; Building Opportunities in Out-of-School Time (BOOST); Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network (GSAN); and the Georgia DOE Office of Rural Education and Innovation (REI).

Locally leveraged resources include for example, at Berrien Primary School and Berrien Elementary School, CIS of Berrien County will partner with their 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs to provide out-of-school time programming to students and families that supports the expanded learning time pillar. The program is managed by the Berrien County Board of Education and the 2022-2023 academic year is the fourth year in the five-year grant period. Each of the two schools received a grant award of \$260,107 to support afterschool and summer programming, which can be leveraged through the ACRES Project to provide pipeline services for students at these two schools. In Troup County at Callaway Elementary School and Clearview Elementary School, plans for long-term sustainability planning including exploring how to best leverage student academic supports and family engagement services available through existing Title IV funding managed by the Troup County School District. In the Dublin City School District at Dublin Middle School and Dublin High School, two in-kind Family Engagement Coordinators will be leveraged to support student needs in Pillar III. The School District also has a Mental Health Services department that the Dublin Middle School and Dublin High School Site Coordinators can partner with to serve students and families through referral services. Through ARP funding, Ben Hill County School District and Twiggs County School District will also each receive a grant of \$10,000 grants to develop school-based health clinics. There is evidence that school-based health clinics lead to improved student performance, reduced dropout rates, less absenteeism, improved staff morale, and more. At Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy, the Georgia ACRES Project dovetails with their recent Literacy for Learning, Living, and Leading in Georgia grant (L4GA) for \$1.4 million over four-years. The L4GA grant is designed to fuel a transformative process of increasing literacy across the school and community, including investing in the technology required to make it a one-to-one school

where each student is given a laptop to use throughout his high school years. This has allowed teachers to launch a number of learning experiences that were not previously possible, including increasing access to virtual learning.

The proposed costs of the Georgia ACRES Project are reasonable considering the scope of the program as designed. The total grant request for the Consortium’s ACRES Project is \$15,000,000, representing an average cost per student served of \$467,22. The cost to provide this full suite of FSCS benefits and pipeline services to students and families represents tremendous value when compared to other student support service programs, such as the average program cost for 21st Century Community Learning Centers of \$1,000 per child.

Nationally, in 2012, the CIS national organization conducted a Return on Investment cost benefit analysis of its Integrated Student Support model through Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. (EMSI). The goal of this rigorous, third-party investment analysis was to quantify the economic and social returns to society of Communities In Schools 113 nationwide affiliates to taxpayers, businesses, and students. EMSI concluded that every \$1 invested in a CIS program produces an estimated future return on investment of \$11.60 in economic benefits. EMSI’s benefit-cost framework complies with standards set by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Collectively, the Consortium has brought together the following partners (Figure 24: Partnerships for Student Supports & Pipeline Services) at the state and local levels to provide student supports and pipeline services at targeted schools through the ACRES Project:

**Figure 24: Partnerships for Student Supports & Pipeline Services**

Partner Name	Partner Role	County	School Sites
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Communities In Schools of Georgia – Georgia ACRES Project  
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21st Century Grant Program in Berrien County	Mentoring, Academic success, tutoring, enrichment, healthy food provided, transportation	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School Berrien Primary School
AmeriGroup Insurance Company	Sponsoring events, hosting community events, providing donations for youth and families, and help assisting families in need of health coverage.	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
Ben Hill County Family Connection	Fitzgerald Partnership for Youth; providing Raising Highly Capable Kids classes for parents; Salvation Army for rental and utility assistance to families in need; and Toys for Tots.	Ben Hill County	Ben Hill Elementary School Fitzgerald High School
Berrien Chamber of Commerce	Student scholarships and academic support	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School Berrien Primary School
Berrien County Commissioners	Provides in kind office space and sits on FC/CIS Board of Directors.	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School Berrien Primary School
Berrien County Nashville Rotary Club	Provides the Dictionary project in partnership with FC/CIS. 300 Dictionaries are given out to 3rd students yearly.	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School
Boy Scouts of America	New out-of-school time education and enrichment program for students	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School
CASA Program	Court appointed special advocates for children in the court system or foster care	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School Berrien Primary School
Circles of Troup County	Referral source for parents to assist with making strides to exit poverty and become self-sustaining	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
City of Nashville, GA	Provides in kind office space and sits on FC/CIS Board of Directors.	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School Berrien Primary School
Communities of Tomorrow	Communities of Tomorrow (COT) exists to bridge the gap between people whose voices have been marginalized and the resources in place to help them. Assisting parents with sustaining or finding adequate and safe housing to provide families with stability, as well as tools and resources to make better financial decisions.	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
D.A.D.S. Organization	Student mentoring program to support single-parent households; in-kind support (school supplies, bikes, etc.)	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School Berrien Primary School
Dorminy Medical Center	Training and educational speakers on sexual risk avoidance; serve on local Board of Directors	Ben Hill County	Ben Hill Elementary School Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy

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Dublin Housing Authority	Basic needs; family and community engagement and supports	Laurens County	Dublin High School Dublin Middle School
Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Library	Summer Reading Program; serve on Board of Directors	Ben Hill County	Ben Hill Elementary School Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy
Fitzgerald Housing Authority	Support for basic needs for families; referrals; serve on Board of Directors	Ben Hill County	Ben Hill Elementary School Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy
Fitzgerald Tourism, Arts & Cultural	Educational enrichment and out-of-school time programming in arts and other area	Ben Hill County	Ben Hill Elementary School Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy
Fitzgerald-Ben Hill Chamber of Commerce	FLEX training and mentorship in entrepreneurship, including experience and contest for high school students	Ben Hill County	Ben Hill Elementary School Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy
Get Troup Reading	Literacy support for 3rd grade reading, summer programming	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
Goodwill Industries	Partnership to assist with clothing and other needs; parent job training, resume writing and job fairs.	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
Kia Georgia	Kia provides school supplies annually to help sustain our school supply closets for our students at each CIS Site and our central office	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
LaGrange Housing Authority	Afterschool programs, housing, parent engagement	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
Laurens County Family Connection	Family and community engagement and supports	Laurens County	Dublin High School Dublin Middle School East Laurens Middle School West Laurens Middle School
Monitor Enrichment Center	Afterschool education and enrichment for students; parenting classes; summer programming	Ben Hill County	Ben Hill Elementary School Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy

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Oconee Regional Library System	Access to library services for students	Laurens County	Dublin High School Dublin Middle School East Laurens Middle School West Laurens Middle School
Perry Memorial Library	Summer Reading Program and Community Resource Day	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School Berrien Primary School
Rosemont Baptist Church	Mentors, tutors, event volunteers, clothing, shoes, uniforms and gift cards for student incentives	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
Salvation Army	Food, clothing, utility and rental assistance for families in need.	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
South Georgia Medical Center Berrien Campus	Community partner on Community Collaborative board, sponsor for various programs and/or Community Resource Day to provide resources and back to school supplies.	Berrien County	Berrien Elementary School Berrien Primary School
Street Smart Youth Project Inc.	Partner on educational content for youth	Ben Hill County	Ben Hill Elementary School Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy
Troup County Family Connections	Collaboration with other county agencies to promote community and agency involvement in early learning programs and Family Expos, resource and information sharing for community partners.	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
Twiggs County Family Connection	Family and community engagement and supports	Twiggs County	Jeffersonville Elementary Twiggs County High School Twiggs Middle School
United Way of West Georgia	Funding, literacy programming, access to services to supply basic needs and childcare	Troup County	Callaway Elementary School Clearview Elementary School
Wal-Mart Supercenter #686	Weekly in-kind product donations for students and families	Ben Hill County	Ben Hill Elementary School Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy

## **V. QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **A. Broadly Representative Consortium, Defined Roles/Responsibilities, Preliminary MOU**

With Communities In Schools of Georgia (CISGA) as the backbone organization and fiscal agent, the CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium is designed to support the needs of students and families in the 15 targeted school sites targeted by the Georgia ACRES Project. The CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium members share a vision for inclusive and thriving rural communities that offer access to an excellent education that embraces the whole child, leverages community assets to remove barriers for academic success, supports economic opportunity, and improves quality of life for all residents. With a total of 59 partner organizations, including 7 school districts, 15 school sites, and 37 community partners, consortium partners span industries and sectors, from nonprofit organizations and social services to corporate entities and major employers in the community. As outlined in Appendix A, Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium, all Consortium partners are committed to reflecting the needs of each of these communities and their stakeholders.

As outlined in the Preliminary MOU, CISGA will provide technical assistance and capacity building to support local affiliates and subsidiaries in successful implementation of the ACRES Project in targeted schools. They will also lead monitoring and evaluation, provide fiscal management of Consortium revenue and expenses, and initiate and support resource sustainability planning. The affiliates and subsidiaries for CISGA in Berrien County, Troup County, Ben Hill County, Dublin City, Laurens County, Twiggs County, and Candler County will each serve as the local lead partner in establishing FSCS in each of the targeted schools using the

evidenced-based FSCS model and implementing support services for students and families. This includes planning, developing, coordinating, providing, and evaluating pipeline services for students schoolwide in school sites targeted by the Consortium through the role of the School Site Coordinator and School Support Team, in partnership with school leadership, parents, and partners and community leaders. The principals at targeted school sites will foster a shared leadership model among the Community School Site Coordinator and local Consortium partners, as well as engage school district leadership and service coordinators (Title I, etc.) in the Consortium as appropriate to leverage resources for the FSCS model. School principals will also work with their School Site Coordinators to integrate the FSCS efforts with the school improvement plans and any existing student support structures. In addition, 34 additional Consortium partners will collaborate on promoting, implementing and expanding the community school initiative anchored in the four pillars: integrated student supports; expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities; active family and community engagement; and collaborative leadership practices. Special roles and responsibilities related to student and family pipeline services are detailed in Appendix A, Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), CISGA Rural Schools Innovation Consortium. Through the five-year project, additional partners will be identified and engaged as determined through the collaborative assessment and planning process.

## **B. History of Effectiveness with Diverse Stakeholders, Including Students & Families**

CIS has a demonstrated track record of bringing together with diverse stakeholder groups, including parents and families, to achieve a shared vision and goal. Diversity, inclusion and equity are core values, and currently, CISGA is a primarily female-led organization. Formally at the state level, CISGA makes a concerted effort to seek out governance and board

leadership from individuals of diverse backgrounds and communities. These decisions are informed by diversity in all forms, including geographic, race and ethnicity, age, gender, industry, ability/disability, and skill sets. Current strategies for board diversification include working to expand their board to include a greater dimension of education leaders to ensure that a superintendent, a principal, and a teacher are all represented. They also work to engage and recruit alumni of CIS programming in their governance. Mirroring this commitment, all CIS affiliates are required to maintain a local Board of Directors that is reflective of their community. The racial demographics of CISGA's current caseloads are also reflective of this commitment: 67% Black; 18% White; 8% Hispanic/Latino; 6% Multi-Racial; <.5% American Indian/Alaska Native; <.5% Asian or Pacific Islander; and .7% Other.

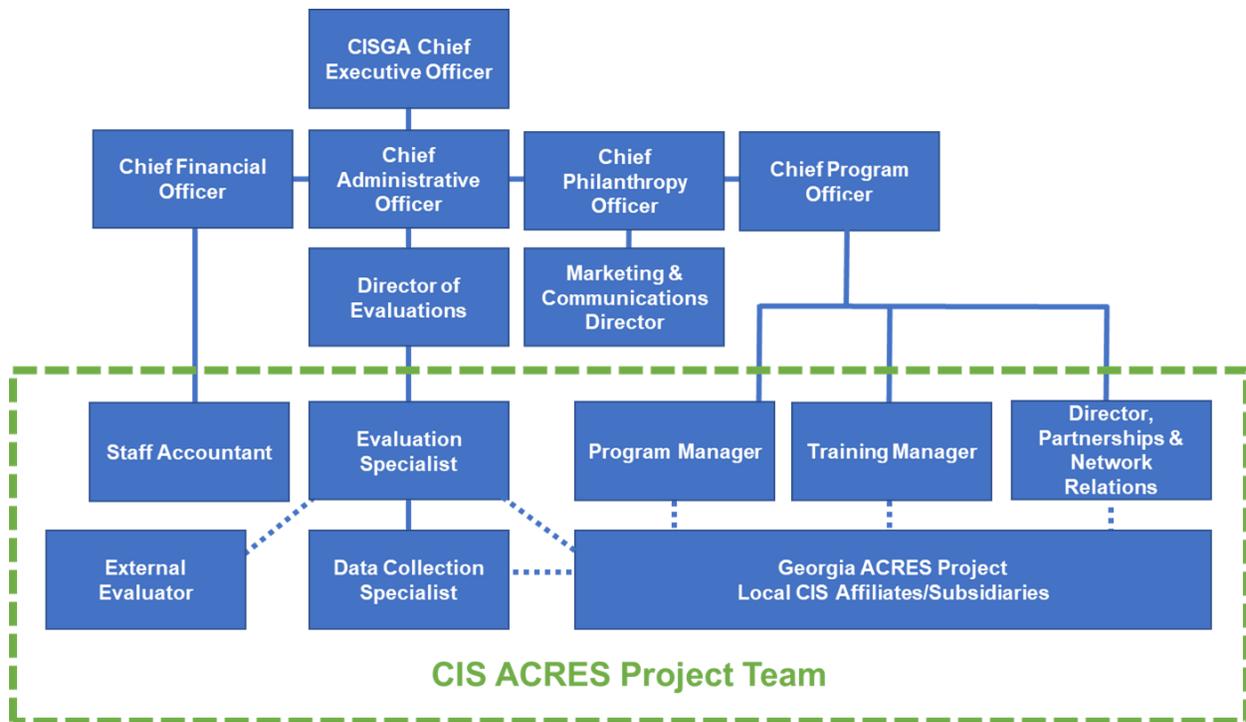
Over the last 25 years, CISGA has successfully managed and implemented subaward projects funded through the federal agencies and state agencies, as well as many through other nonprofits and foundations. CISGA has managed subaward grants from the U.S. Department of Education (5 grants); the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (3 grants); The Corporation for National and Community Service—AmeriCorps (25 grants); AmeriCorps VISTA (17 grants); and Learn and Serve (2 grants) programs. In addition, CIS of Georgia has managed a number of state and private (nonprofit, foundation) multi-site subaward grants. CISGA has demonstrated its capacity to manage multi-site subaward projects, including fiscal management and programmatic implementation. CISGA's proven track record in grants management has included management of pass-through funding, program planning and development, training, monitoring for program compliance, communications, and data collection and program evaluation.

CISGA's multi-site grants management experience has been verified and well-documented through independent audits. In the area of programmatic implementation, CISGA underwent audits in 2005 and 2016 by the Performance Audit Division of the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts examining CISGA's dropout prevention services provided through state funding. Both performance audits concluded that CISGA was effective in its dropout prevention and graduation improvement efforts with at-risk youth, and that CISGA's model delivered cost effective services and was effectively leveraging state funds to bring additional resources into the schools. On the fiscal side, CISGA develops financial management policies and protocols for each grant with local CIS affiliate and subsidiary subrecipients and utilizes a fund accounting system. CIS affiliates and subsidiaries must submit a grant budget for approval. Once reviewed, approved, and granted, subrecipients are provided with required templates and training to support reporting on program expenditures, including allowable expenses, matching funds (if applicable), required documentation, and the approval process for reallocation of budget line items. CISGA follows industry best practices for nonprofit and financial management and undergoes an independent financial audit annually, including audits of federal grant programs with subrecipients. CISGA has received clear financial audits with no exceptions on all state and federal grants received. For the purposes of the ACRES Project, a Staff Accountant will provide fiscal management and oversight to ensure compliance with all grant requirements and track grant spending. More information on key milestones for fiscal management have been included in Figure 28, Key Project Milestones, Georgia ACRES Project, and Figure 29, Georgia ACRES Project - Detailed Project Timeline.

**C. Adequacy of the Management Plan to Achieve Objectives of the Proposed Project On Time & Within Budget, Including Clearly Defined Responsibilities, Timelines & Milestones for Accomplishing Project Tasks**

As the lead partner for the Georgia Rural Schools Innovation Consortium, CISGA will lead management of the Consortium and the Georgia ACRES Project. The Consortium and the ACRES Project have been intentionally designed to include complementary layers of shared leadership at the state, county, and school site level.

**Figure 25: Staffing Structure for CISGA**



**Management Plan: Communities In Schools of Georgia (CISGA)**

Since 2014, CISGA has been led by Carol Lewis, President and Chief Executive Officer. Her involvement with Communities In Schools first began as a volunteer and mentor to CIS students in 1989 in Troup County. She is skilled at many levels of the organization having served as a local board member, CIS executive director of an affiliate in her hometown of LaGrange,

community development specialist and manager of Community Development in the state office and most recently as Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of CIS of Georgia. Carol oversaw the expansion of the CIS Network in Georgia through securing and managing numerous public and private source grants, including Parental Information and Resource Centers Program (PIRC), Compassion Capital Fund, Adolescent Family Life, AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, and Reading is Fundamental (RIF). As President and CEO, Carol ultimately oversees all CIS of Georgia work, in partnership with school districts, to reduce the dropout rate among at-risk kids in Georgia. The Chief Executive Officer role is a full-time position and approximately 5% of their time will be spent championing and overseeing the ACRES Project in bringing a full team to each affiliate, and her time will be provided in-kind to the Consortium by CISGA.

At CISGA, the **Chief Program Officer**, Leslie Myles will lead a team that is responsible for ensuring the successful implementation of ACRES. The Chief Program Officer reports to the President & CEO of CISGA. As Chief Program Officer, Leslie oversees direct support to CIS School Site Coordinators and implements professional development, training, and other capacity building and technical assistance supports. She also oversees the coordination, integration, and delivery of all programs, contracts and related services, promoting collaborative relationships between program areas and ensuring that the expectations of funders, partners, constituents, clients, and other stakeholders are consistently met. As such, she will lead the management and engagement of the Consortium. Leslie has over 16 years of experience working with and in FSCS models, holds a masters degree in Counselor Education from Clark Atlanta University, and is a Licensed Professional Counselor. The Chief Program Officer role is a full-time, FLSA-exempt position and approximately 20% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project

providing support and training to the FSCS Site Coordinators, which has been included in the grant budget.

The **Director of Partnerships & Network Relations**, [REDACTED], reports to the Chief Program Officer. The Director of Partnerships & Network Relations is responsible for providing support and oversight to local CISGA affiliate/subsidiary Executive Directors, as well as developing and leading statewide partnerships. She will also oversee continual quality improvement in organizational development and student service delivery for the purposes of the ACRES Project. This includes overseeing state and national TQS standards for all CIS affiliates, including an annual Data Verification, Parent/Guardian Consent, and Background Verifications.

[REDACTED] is an experienced network communication, marketing and operational leader with more than 20 years of experience. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Communications from Boston University. The Director of Partnerships & Network Relations role is a full-time position and approximately 25% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project, which has been included in the grant budget.

The **Project Manager** reports to the Chief Program Officer. The Project Manager is responsible for the overall project management and monitoring of key milestones and deliverables related to the success of the ACRES Project, including coordinating across the CISGA team. The Program Manager ensures the timely execution on all grant deliverables, budgets, and grant reporting. The Program Manager also supervises, coaches, and supports across the project team to ensure project implementation fidelity to the FSCS model. In addition, the Project Manager will serve as a liaison to the Chief Philanthropy Officer and Resource Development Coordinator to support needs related to long-term sustainability and resource development for the project and Consortium. The Project Manager role is a full-time position

and approximately 100% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project, which has been included in the grant budget.

The **Training Manager** reports to the Chief Program Officer. The Training Manager is responsible for designing and executing professional development, training, and other capacity building and technical assistance supports and special program services. This includes training on the overall Communities In Schools Model and FSCS, as well as dedicated training sessions that will be specific to the Georgia ACRES Project. Each year, the Training Manager also leads a targeted two-and-a-half day training designed for all new CIS Site Coordinators, followed by a two-day Summer Training Institute for all CIS Site Coordinators. The required qualifications for the Training Manager position are 3-5 years of experience in student support, education, or youth development. The Training Manager role is a full-time position and approximately 50% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project, which has been included in the grant budget.

CISGA's **Chief Philanthropy Officer** will oversee resource development and sustainability planning for the Georgia ACRES Project. They are responsible for planning, coordinating, and assuring implementation of strategies to develop donors, grants, contracts, and contributions to properly support the financial needs of CISGA. They also assure development and maintenance of appropriate systems to fund development, including volunteer and donor management, research and cultivation, gift processing and recognition. The Chief Philanthropy Officer role is a full-time, FLSA-exempt position and approximately 5% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project providing support and training to the FSCS Site Coordinators, which will be provided in-kind to the Consortium by CISGA.

CISGA's **Chief Administrative Officer**, [REDACTED] will provide oversight on monitoring, data collection, evaluation, and grant and fiscal management for the Consortium and the Georgia ACRES Project. This role oversees administrative services such as human resources, facilities management, information technology, evaluations, finance, and compliance with a keen focus on improving efficiency and fidelity in each of these areas. For the Georgia ACRES Project, this includes ensuring that CISGA staff are equipped with the training and support to be successful and monitoring implementation of policies or procedures within CISGA to ensure contract compliance with regulations [REDACTED] has more than 30 years of expertise in implementing and evaluating programs at the state and local level. [REDACTED] holds a Masters of Arts degree in Sociology and Applied Social Research from Tulane University, and Bachelor degrees in Sociology and Biology from Newcomb College at Tulane University in New Orleans. She is also a member of the American Evaluation Association. The Chief Administrative Officer role is a full-time, FLSA-exempt position and approximately 5% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project, which will be provided in-kind to the Consortium by CISGA.

The **Director of Evaluations & Technology** reports to the Chief Administrative Officer. The Director of Evaluations is responsible for creating evaluation reports and constructing customized evaluation reports for donors, grants, affiliates and programs as necessary. They also plan and oversee all organizational technology needs, including executing technology trainings, advising on computer and software purchases for the organization, and providing technical assistance and support as needed. The required minimum qualifications include a bachelor's degree in a social science discipline and five years experience in research methodology and qualitative and quantitative data analysis for evaluation and assessment purposes. The Director

of Evaluations role is a full-time, exempt position and approximately 10% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project, which has been included in the grant budget.

The **Evaluation Specialist**, [REDACTED], reports to the Director of Evaluations. The Evaluation Specialist is responsible for designing and implementing the ACRES Project evaluation (in partnership with the External Evaluator, with whom they will collaborate), developing all reporting protocols, providing/coordinating training in data collection, monitoring data collection and leading network reporting. This includes building data collection tools, analyzing data, and delivering written reports and presentations [REDACTED] has 15 years of experience in program evaluation and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master of Science in Social Psychology from the University of Georgia. The Evaluation Specialist role is a full-time, FLSA-exempt position and approximately 25% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project, which has been included in the grant budget.

The **Data Collection Specialist**, [REDACTED], reports to the Director of Evaluations. The Data Collection Specialist is responsible for supporting CISGA and local affiliate personnel in data collection through training and technical support. They will assist with program evaluation efforts for the ACRES Project by providing technical support in data collections, monitoring data collection quality and assistance with data entry as needed. The required minimum qualifications include a high school diploma, strong analytical and quality control skills, high level of attention to detail, and a high level of computer skills in word processing, spreadsheet, databases, and presentation software. [REDACTED] has more than 17 years of experience supporting CIS affiliates on data collection. The Data Collection Specialist role is a full-time, FLSA-exempt position and approximately 25% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project, which has been included in the grant budget.

In addition, an **External Evaluator** for the Georgia ACRES Project, Dr. Andrian Neely, will be supervised by the Evaluation Specialist. In partnership with the Evaluation Specialist, Andrian will lead the external evaluation components of the Georgia ACRES Project. This includes helping to develop measures, analyze data and provide recommendations for improving program activities. Adrian holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Teaching and Teacher Education from Georgia State University, in addition to two graduate certificates from Georgia State University in Methods in Quantitative Research and Program Evaluation Certificate. They also hold a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Master of Education in Science Education from University of Georgia. Adrian has deep expertise and experience in program evaluation, including serving as an equity evaluation consultant for Mathematica, evaluating programmatic work led by a multi-stakeholder alliance for Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate, and serving as a documentarian providing ongoing recommendations and insights on a cross departmental, collaborative project for the Centers for Disease Control. The External Evaluator is designed as a part-time consultant and relevant costs have been included in the grant budget.

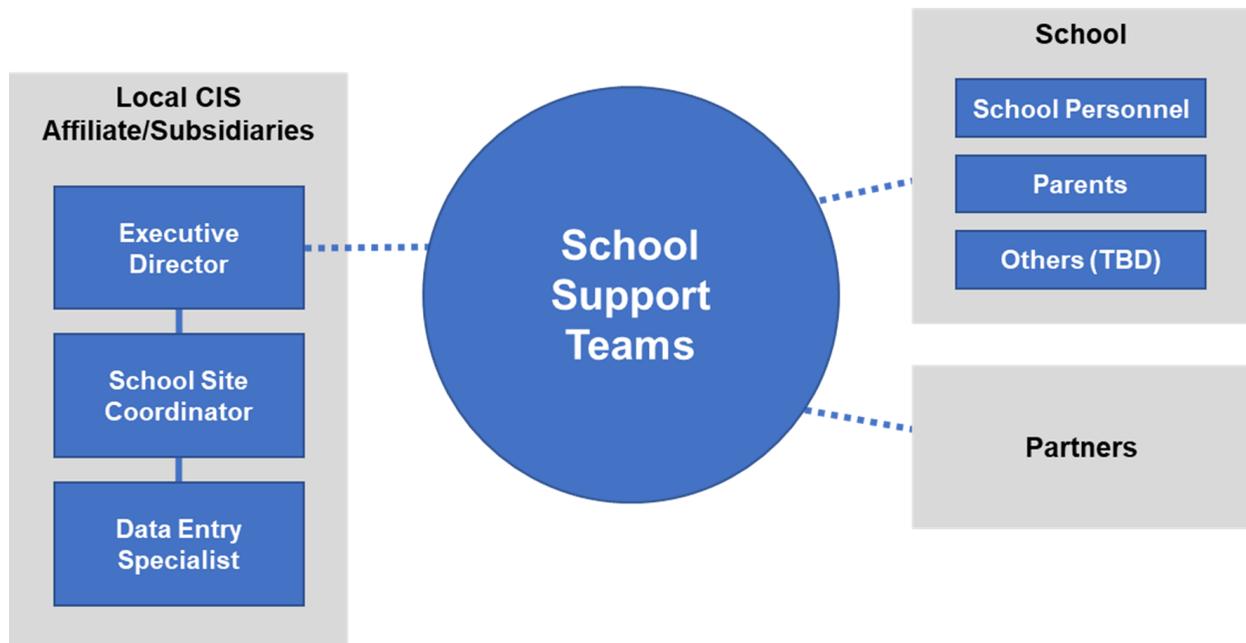
The **Staff Accountant**, Omari Harris, reports to the Chief Financial Officer. The Staff Accountant is responsible for overseeing accounting operations, monitoring overall grant spending, and working with the Chief Financial Officer as needed on improving or changing current practices to increase efficiency. On the Georgia ACRES Project, that includes grant accounting, budgeting, analysis, reporting and conducting special projects as assigned. Required qualifications include a four year degree in accounting from an accredited college or university and a minimum of one year of fiscal and grants management experience in a nonprofit environment. Omari holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting from the

University of West Georgia. The **Staff Accountant** role is a full-time, non-FLSA-exempt position and approximately 5% of their time will be spent on the ACRES Project, which has been included in the grant budget.

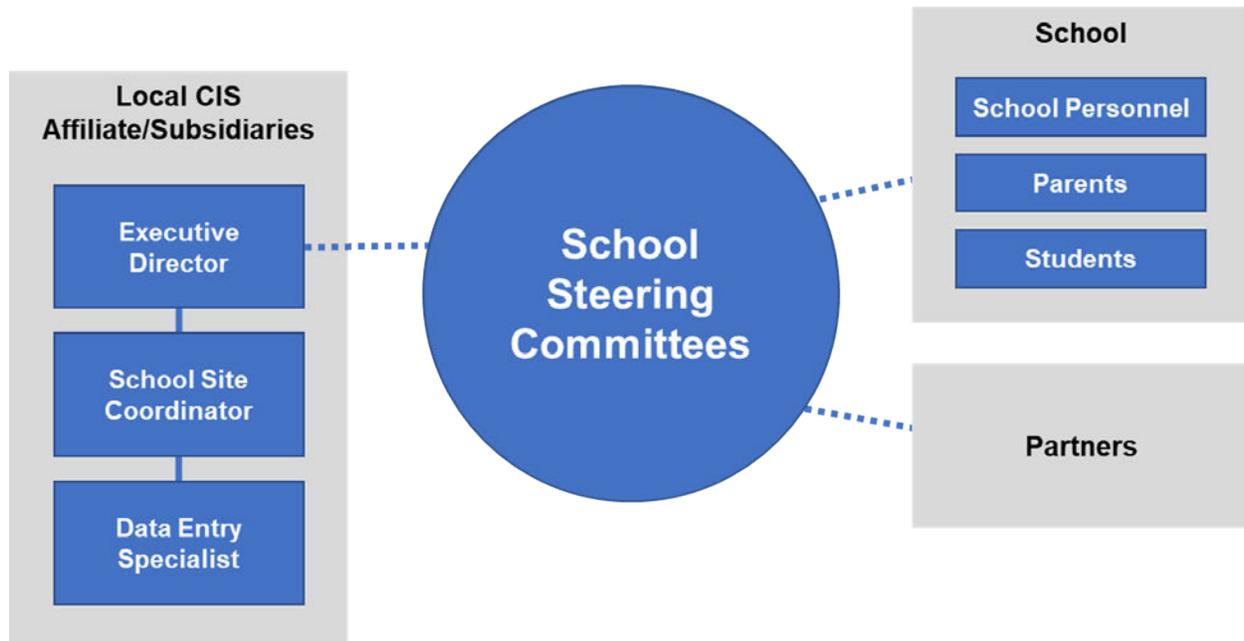
**Management Plan: Local CISGA Affiliates/Subsidiaries**

Locally, the CIS affiliate/subsidiary will serve as the lead partner in the local Consortium for the the ACRES Project. The CIS affiliate/subsidiary will serve as the employer of record for the full-time School Site Coordinators who will champion and coordinate through a School Support Team and working with the School Steering Committee, that is comprised of school personnel, parents, students, and community partners.

**Figure 26: Staffing Structure, Local ACRES Project Implementation**



**Figure 27: Complementary Staffing Structure, School Steering Committees**



The **Executive Directors** are each responsible for the successful implementation of the Consortium and the Georgia ACRES Project at school sites located within their assigned school districts and/or counties. A total of five Executive Directors are involved, including the Executive Directors for: Berrien County; Troup County; Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County; Laurens and Twiggs County; and Candler County.

- **Berrien County Executive Director:** [REDACTED] has been working on state and federal grants through Communities In Schools of Berrien County for 12 years. Her background is in economic development and she previously worked for the City of Nashville before coming to work with Family Connection/Communities In Schools of Berrien County to manage the Grant to Reduce Alcohol Abuse (GRAA. Sara has managed over 14 grants, including 4 private foundations, 3 federal grants, and 7 state grants. [REDACTED] is actively involved in the community and embedded in a number of organizations working to support youth and families in Berrien County, including serving on the CASA Advisory

Board, Berrien Community Partnership for Children Board of Directors, Performance Learning Center Academy Governing Board, Berrien County Rotary Board of Directors, and the Berrien County 21st Century Community Learning Center Advisory Board. Sara attended Moultrie Technical College and Abraham Baldwin College.

- **Troup County Executive Director:** [REDACTED], a nonprofit leader with a decade of tenure in her current role and experience working in statewide roles that center on vocational training, compliance auditing, and partnerships. Currently, she also serves on the Troup County Strategic Planning Board of Directors. [REDACTED] has a Bachelor of Business Administration from LaGrange College and a Master of Public Administration from Troy University.
- **Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County Executive Director:** [REDACTED] an experienced community leader with 19 years of experience working on FSCS models in the area. [REDACTED] holds an Accounting Diploma from East Central Technical College. She also graduated from Fitzgerald High School College & Career Academy, one of the schools targeted by the Georgia ACRES Project.
- **Laurens & Twiggs County Executive Director:** [REDACTED] has been working with Communities in Schools for 23 years in Laurens County. [REDACTED] earned her Bachelor of Science in Social Science from Mercer University, Masters of Business Administration from Wesleyan College, and Graduate Certificate in Management of Non-Profit Agencies from Capella University.
- **Candler County Executive Director:** [REDACTED] has 12 years of experience working on FSCS models, including the past 5 years as Executive Director of CIS of Candler County. Prior to that, [REDACTED] worked in the Candler County School System at

Metter Intermediate/Middle School, equipping her with a unique vantage and navigation ability that enables smooth coordination across needs and services. Roberta has an accounting degree from Ogeechee Technical College in Statesboro, GA.

Each local CIS affiliate's Executive Director reports to their Board of Directors. The Executive Director represents the affiliate and the Board of Directors, directs and implements advocacy and public policy activities related to dropout prevention, possesses a thorough understanding of cultural competency and has proven experience working with nonprofit boards, supervising personnel, fiscal management, strategic planning and fundraising. On the ACRES Project, they are tasked with championing Communities In Schools in their community, building relationships that help to funnel supports and assets toward students, providing financial oversight, and meeting with school leadership on a monthly basis, as appropriate. They supervise the School Site Coordinators for each school site located in their territory and build community partnerships that respond to evolving student and family needs as identified through the five-year grant period. The required minimum qualifications for the position include demonstrated strong nonprofit administrative and management skills and experience working with volunteer committees, as well as in grants development and community outreach. They must possess a Bachelor's degree (master's degree preferred) in public administration, education, social science or a related field. In addition, previous experience in nonprofit management and dropout prevention programs is preferred. The **Executive Director** roles are full-time positions and a percentage of their time will be charged to the grant budget (please see Budget Narrative for details).

Each of the 15 school sites served through Consortium and the Georgia ACRES Project will have a dedicated, full-time **School Site Coordinator**. This role is responsible for overall

planning and managing of CIS operations at the schools in the implementation of the CIS model of integrated student supports. On the ACRES Project, the School Site Coordinator reports to the Executive Director and provides them with weekly updates on progress, challenges, and opportunities for collaboration within and beyond their school site. In partnership with school leadership, the School Site Coordinators lead the annual site-based needs and assets assessment; monitor student progress; facilitate alignment of school, family, and community resources; facilitate and are members of School Support Teams; facilitate communication between partners; and manage data collection. This includes identifying services and personnel within their local school site that they can interact with and leverage for the purposes of the partnership. In partnership with the principal or school leadership, they will also help to convene the CIS School Steering Committee (including student representation) quarterly. The required minimum qualifications for the School Site Coordinator role are a Bachelor’s degree or demonstrated relevant equivalent experience in education, social work or related field, as well as a valid driver’s license and automobile insurance. They must demonstrate an ability to understand and apply basic child and adolescent development principles; communicate and develop positive relationships with youth; adapt, facilitate and evaluate age appropriate activities with and for the group; identify potential risk factors (in a program environment) and take measures to reduce risk; as well as work as part of a team through a collaborative, shared leadership model in partnership with school personnel. The School Site Coordinator roles are full-time positions and a percentage of their time will be charged to the grant budget (please see Budget Narrative for details).

At some of the 15 school sites, a **Data Entry Specialist** partners with the School Site Coordinator on data input and monitoring of student success. For these sites, the Data Entry

Specialist reports to the School Site Coordinator. They will assist with program evaluation efforts for the ACRES Project by providing technical support in data collections, monitoring data collection quality and assistance with data entry as needed. The required minimum qualifications include a high school diploma, strong analytical and quality control skills, high level of attention to detail, and a high level of computer skills in word processing, spreadsheet, databases, and presentation software. The Data Entry Specialist is a part-time position and a percentage of their time will be charged to the grant budget (please see Budget Narrative for details).

**Timeline: Key Activities & Milestones for the Georgia ACRES Project**

Ensuring the successful management and implementation of the ACRES Project as it has been designed will require synchronized work by individuals across organizations and teams. Below, Figure 28 provides an overview of the timeline for the ACRES Project, including key activities and milestones.

**Figure 28: Key Project Milestones, Georgia ACRES Project**

	Year 1				Years 2-5			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>State Level: Communities in Schools of Georgia (CISGA)</b>								
Grant Award								
Hire Staff								
Launch Project								
Refine Evaluation Plan & Launch Data Collection								
Refine Training Calendar & Launch Trainings								
Provide leadership training/PD for team								
Community School Marketing & Communications								

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Partnership Building								
Sustainability Planning								
<b>Local CIS Affiliates</b>								
Hire Site Coordinators								
Site Coordinator Onboarding & Training								
Convene School Support Teams Regularly								
Convene School Steering Committee Quarterly								
Annual Needs Assessment								
Annual Planning								
Coordinate Services & Recruit Additional Partners								
Community School Marketing & Communications								
Deliver Services								
Collect Data								
Monitor Progress & Continuous Improvement								

Below, Figure 29 expands on the overview of details outlined in Figure 28 above and provides additional information on responsibilities for key roles.

**Figure 29: Georgia ACRES Project - Detailed Project Timeline**

<b>Key Activities &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Work with Consortium partners to modify Preliminary MOU and create final Consortium MOU	CISGA: Chief Administrative Officer	January 2023, complete by end of Year 1
Monitor grant spending to date and review actual project expenses compared to actual	Staff Accountant	Monthly; beginning in February 2023
Initiate planning for long-term project sustainability through a diversified resource development strategy	CISGA: Chief Development Officer	Spring 2023
Hire Project Manager	CISGA: Chief Program Officer	Spring 2023
Establish communication channels, norms, and meeting	CISGA: Director,	Spring 2023

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schedule for Consortium members	Partnerships & Network Relations, Project Manager	
Develop structure and cadence for ACRES Project learning community	CISGA: Director, Partnerships & Network Relations, Project Manager	Spring 2023
Finalize evaluation plan and develop necessary support, trainings, and guidelines on data collection, sharing, measurement, etc.	CISGA: Evaluation Specialist	Spring 2023
Plan and host ACRES Project Kickoff with CIGNA staff, local Communities In Schools affiliates/subsidiaries, and other partners and stakeholders as appropriate	CISGA: Chief Program Officer, Director, Partnerships & Network Relations, Project Manager	Spring 2023
Post position descriptions for full-time School Site Coordinators at targeted schools, conduct screening and interview process with eligible candidates, and hire	Local CIS Executive Directors	Spring 2023
Secure necessary technology equipment and other supplies for School Site Coordinators	Local CIS Executive Directors	Spring 2023
Travel to FSCS Project Directors Meeting in Washington DC (two-day conference; 4 project staff)	CISGA: Project Director, Evaluator, two partners TBD	Annually, beginning in 2023 (TBD)
Develop and manage statewide partnerships that support the CIS network and School Site Coordinators	CISGA: Director, Partnerships & Network Relations	Ongoing; beginning Fall 2023
Host onboarding and Summer Training Institute for School Site Coordinators	CISGA: Training Manager	Annually; beginning in Summer 2023
Provide dedicated trainings on data collection, measurement, and evaluation to School Site Coordinators and Executive Directors as appropriate	CISGA: Training Manager and Evaluation Specialist	Annually; beginning in Summer 2023
Work with partners to coordinate resources necessary to support students and families within the community, including at targeted school sites participating in the ACRES Project	Local CIS Executive Directors	Summer 2023
Establish referral system and shared procedures on intake, assessment and referrals to address the needs of students and families, in coordination with school leadership and stakeholders	School Site Coordinators	Summer 2023
Ongoing coordination with the External Evaluator	CISGA: Evaluation Specialist	Monthly; beginning in Summer 2023
Convene School Support Team (weekly, as practicable and schedules allow) for collaboration	School Site Coordinators	Weekly, beginning in Fall 2023 with breaks

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		for summer/holidays as appropriate
Conduct annual school assessment, in coordination with school leadership and stakeholders	School Site Coordinators	Annually; beginning in Fall 2023
Based on annual school assessment results, determine and plan Tier 1, 2, and 3 services for students and families, in collaboration with school leadership and stakeholders	School Site Coordinators	Annually; beginning in Fall 2023
Work to implement Tier 1, 2, and 3 services, in partnership with the School Support Team	School Site Coordinators	Ongoing; beginning in Fall 2023
Deliver ongoing capacity building trainings, supports, and resources for Executive Directors and School Site Coordinators throughout the school year	CISGA: Training Manager	Ongoing; beginning in Fall 2023
Provides regular progress reports to schools and affiliate leadership	CISGA: Evaluation Specialist	Quarterly; beginning in Fall 2023
Data monitoring and quality assurance	CISGA: Evaluation Specialist, and Data Entry Specialist	Ongoing; beginning in Fall 2023
Promotion and marketing to build a culture of FSCS within the school community, in coordination with school leadership and stakeholders	School Site Coordinators	Ongoing; beginning in Fall 2023
Promotion and marketing to build a culture of FSCS within the broader community (pamphlets, website, etc.)	Local CIS Executive Directors	Ongoing; beginning in Fall 2023
Presentation(s) at school district, Parent Teacher Association, and other community meetings on the FSCS model, student and family needs, progress toward goals, and calls to action for audiences to get involved in or support this work	Local CIS Executive Directors and School Site Coordinators	Ongoing; beginning in Fall 2023
Meet with school district and county leadership to discuss progress to date through the Georgia ACRES Project, including identification of additional needs, opportunities for collaboration, and other priority needs	Local CIS Executive Directors	Monthly; beginning in Fall 2023
Launch community of practice for the School Site Coordinators	CISGA: Director, Partnerships & Network Relations	Fall 2023
Conduct informational and training meetings with school staff and service providers to make them aware of case management services	Local CIS Executive Directors and School Site Coordinators	Annually; beginning in Fall 2023
Convene CIS School Steering Committee (including student representation)	Principals & School Site Coordinators	Quarterly; beginning in Fall 2023
Provide ongoing oversight and support to affiliates through monthly meetings and regular communications	Director, Partnerships & Network Relations	Ongoing; beginning Fall 2023

Case management as appropriate, in coordination with school leadership and stakeholders	School Site Coordinators	Ongoing; beginning in Fall 2023
Host Winter Training Roundtables for School Site Coordinators	CISGA: Training Manager	Annually; beginning in Winter 2023
Partnership maintenance and stewardship for continuous quality improvement (i.e. satisfaction surveys, listening sessions, etc.)	Local CIS Executive Directors	Ongoing; beginning in Fall 2023
Provide annual end-of-year reports to school and affiliate leadership	CISGA: Evaluation Specialist	Ongoing; beginning in Spring 2024

## VI. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION

### **A. Evaluation Methods are Thorough, Feasible, & Appropriate to Proposed Project Goals, Objective & Outcomes**

The CIS model of integrated student supports is a continuous improvement model that is built with on-going assessment and evaluation throughout the school year. To support our affiliate network evaluation efforts, the Communities In Schools state office has had an evaluation department to conduct internal evaluations and provide ongoing technical support in assessment, data collection and evaluation for the past 25 years. [REDACTED] an evaluation and education researcher, will lead the independent evaluation of the Georgia ACRES Project. The CISGA evaluation department will support the work of the independent evaluation team.

[REDACTED] and team will undertake a mixed-methods evaluation of the ACRES project, conducting process, outcome and systems change evaluation. The team will explore the impact of implementing the FSCS model on academic achievement, physical and mental health, family engagement and connectedness, and partnerships between schools and families. Additionally, the Evaluation Team proposes to work closely with the Consortium, CIS, district personnel, families, extended project personnel, and community stakeholders to provide necessary feedback to improve the program.

The process evaluation will focus on ensuring that CIS personnel serve sites by addressing the four pillars of community schools: 1) integrated student supports; 2) expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities; 3) active family and community engagement; and 4) collaborative leadership and practices. The evaluation team will use data service data from the CIS data management system to show the type and number of services provided, the number of students and family members served, and collaborative actions between site coordinators and school personnel. Documentation of engagement and collaboration activities will show the number and frequency of meetings, types of stakeholders involved, and topics discussed. The evaluation team will also provide evidence that sites implemented the CIS Model with fidelity, consistent with annual CIS monitoring procedures.

The outcome evaluation will focus on three areas: 1) student academic outcomes (Goal 1); 2) school-wide outcomes such as school climate (Goal 2) and service provision (Goal 3); and 3) family/community engagement (Goal 4) and shared leadership (Goal 5) outcomes that will lead to sustainability of the community schools model at the grant sites. The evaluation team will use student data from the partner districts, school climate data from the Georgia Department of Education and CIS surveys, CIS service data, and surveys and focus groups of stakeholder groups to assess those outcomes.

The goal tables (Figure 30) below provide information on how the evaluators will evaluate performance for each objective.

**Figure 30: Evaluation Plan for Georgia ACRES Project Goals**

<i>Goal 1: Increase students achieving academically</i>		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Data Source and Timeframe</b>

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1.1 Annually, 60% or more of students receiving Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 services who were referred for poor academic performance will show improvement in grades as measured by the average of all academic course grades (i.e., mathematics, social studies, science and language arts).	Number and percent of students demonstrating improvement. Academic measure is average of year-end scores for the four core academic course grades (academic average).  Program year performance compared to Pre-program baseline for caseload students with referral reason listed as poor academic performance.	Grade data provided by school district each marking period and entered into CISDM; grade average will be calculated at the end of the school year from CISDM data
1.2 Annually, we will achieve stay-in-school rate of 90% or above for Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 case managed students.	Number and percent of caseload students; student enrollment status, percent of students not leaving school as a dropout.	Student retention data provided by school district at end of school year; percentage calculated using caseload data in CISDM
1.3 Annually, achieve a promotion rate of 90% or higher for elementary and middle school students receiving Tier II and/or Tier III services.	Number of caseload students; percent of middle and elementary student promoted at end of school year	Student promotion data provided by school district at end of school year; percentage calculated using caseload data in CISDM
1.4 Annually increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding state standards in math by 1.5 percentage points.	Georgia Milestones math assessment scores; Year over year comparisons of the percent of students demonstrating math proficiency at the school level.	Georgia Milestones math assessment scores provided by Georgia DOE through school district at end of school year
1.5 Annually increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding state standards in English Language Arts or reading by 1.5 percentage points.	Georgia Milestones ELA assessment scores; Year over year comparisons of the percent of students demonstrating ELA proficiency at the school level.	Georgia Milestones ELA assessment scores provided by Georgia DOE through school district at end of school year
<b><i>Goal 2: Promote and Maintain a Safe and Supportive Culture and Climate</i></b>		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Data Source and Timeframe</b>

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<p>2.1 Annually, 60% or more of students receiving Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 who were referred for attendance problems (missing 10 or more days per year/5 or more days per semester prior) will show improvement in attendance, missing fewer days per year while receiving services.</p>	<p>Number and percent of caseload students; individual students' percentage of days attended during the year; compared to baseline (pre-caseload) for caseload students referred for chronic absenteeism.</p>	<p>Student attendance data provided by school district each marking period and entered into CISDM; percentage calculated using caseload data in CISDM</p>
<p>2.2 Annually, 60% or more of students receiving Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 services who were referred for behavior problems (having incidents of school suspension) will show improvement in behavior, having few suspensions per year while receiving services.</p>	<p>Number and percent of caseload students; individual students' number of suspension incidents during the year; compared to baseline (pre-caseload) for students referred for behavior problem.</p>	<p>Student suspension incidence data provided by school district each marking period and entered into CISDM; percentage calculated using caseload data in CISDM</p>
<p>2.3 Annually, reduce the percent of chronically absent students by 2%.</p>	<p>Percentage of enrolled students missing 10 or more days per year; compared to previous year</p>	<p>Student attendance data provided by school district each marking period; school enrollment data provided by school district twice per year</p>
<p>2.4 Annually, the number of behavior incidents at each school will decline by 2%.</p>	<p>Number of suspension incidents; compared to previous year</p>	<p>School-wide student suspension incidence data from Governor's Office of Student Achievement Student Discipline Dashboard, updated annually</p>
<p>2.5 By year 3, the school climate rating will show improvement in one or more of the climate rating components.</p>	<p>Georgia Department of Education school climate star rating, overall rating, and subscale ratings; compared to previous year</p>	<p>Georgia Department of Education school climate ratings released in Fall of the following year</p>
<p><b><i>Goal 3: Increase social, health, and mental health services and supports for community school students and families</i></b></p>		
<p><b>Objective</b></p>	<p><b>Measure</b></p>	<p><b>Data Source and Timeframe</b></p>

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3.1 Over 900 (10%) students will be placed in targeted CIS case management to support their social-emotional, behavioral and academic growth each school year.	Number and percentage of student placed on CIS caseload and receiving CIS Tier 2 or Tier 3 services classified as academic assistance, behavioral interventions/modifications, or life/social skills	CISDM caseload data updated at least monthly; based on year-end data
3.2 Annually, 60% of CIS caseload students will demonstrate improvement in one or more measures of social-emotion well-being and/or positive relationships.	Total and subscale scores on SEAD (SEL) and DR360 (positive relationships) measures; the SEAD and DR360 assessments were developed for CIS by Search Institute	Pre- and post-test scores on SEAD and/or DR360 measures administered by site coordinators and recorded in CISDM; at least twice annually
3.3 The number of students receiving schoolwide enrichment, social-emotional, physical and mental health and basic needs support services will increase from 75% (6,800 students) of the student population to at least 85% (7,700 students) of the student population by year 5, an increase of 2 percentage points per year.	CIS Tier 1, 2 and 3 services classified as enrichment/ motivation, life/social skills, physical health, professional mental health or basic needs	CISDM service records updated at least monthly; school enrollment data provided by the CIS site coordinator and other service partners. Reported to school district twice per year
3.4 Annually, the number of student and families receiving physical and mental health services will increase by 3%.	CIS Tier 1, 2 and 3 services classified as physical health or professional mental health; compared to previous year	CISDM service records updated at least monthly; based on year-end data
<b><i>Goal 4: Increase family and community engagement and support</i></b>		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Data Source and Timeframe</b>
4.1 Annually, CIS site coordinators will provide direct services to families of 300 (33%) or more of caseload students.	Number and percent of family members receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 services classified as case management or family engagement	CISDM caseload and service records updated at least monthly; based on year-end data

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4.2 Annually, 7,000 parents (75%) of the student population will participate in one or more school wide event.	Number of family members receiving Tier 1, 2 or 3 services classified as academic assistance, enrichment/motivation, family engagement, life/social skills, physical health, or professional mental health	CISDM service records updated at least monthly; school enrollment data provided by school district twice per year
4.3 In year 1, 2,000 community members will receive one or more services through FSCS with the number served increasing 5% each year.	Number of community members participating in Tier 1, 2 or 3 services; documentation of community member participation; compared to previous year	CISDM service records updated at least monthly; sign-in sheets and other documentation of community member participation; based on year-end data
<b><i>Goal 5: Improved Systems for Sustainable Support &amp; Increased coordination of services for students, their families, and community members</i></b>		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Data Source and Timeframe</b>
5.1 The GA ACRES schools will provide services to 16,000 students, parents and community members in year 1, with the total number reached increasing each year by 2%.	Number of individuals served at the GA ACRES FSCS.	CISDM student and family service numbers across all Tiers; Documentation of services to community members (sign-in sheets); collected monthly, reported quarterly.
5.2 Annually, 80% of students receiving Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 services are satisfied with their relationship with their site coordinator.	Five questions on the CIS of Georgia annual survey of caseload students.	CIS of Georgia annual survey of caseload students in Spring; results available in June
5.3 Annually, 80% of school personnel satisfied with services provided by the FSCS consortium.	Survey questions for school administrators, teachers, and other staff members. Focus group questions for selected school personnel	Surveys and/or focus groups of school personnel in Spring; results available in June
5.4 Annually, 80% of members of collaborative leadership teams satisfied	Survey and focus group questions for collaborative leadership team members	Surveys and/or focus groups of collaborative leadership team members conducted annually

with their team/school decision-making processes.		
5.5 Annually, the number and/or variety of community partnerships increases.	Number of organizations with formal partnership agreements with CIS; types of organizations	Partnership data recorded in CISDM and other internal CIS documentation; collected annually

**Required Indicators.** CISGA and the external evaluation team are aware that there are required measures that must be reported each year, many of which overlap with the metrics that will be utilized to assess our performance to objectives. The table below lists all required indicators, whether CIS currently collects the information, and the source/method of data collection. Many of the indicators are already collected through our annual needs assessments and as part of the CIS Model. We will need to build new data collection mechanisms for some indicators. The CISGA team will work with the external evaluators to develop new data collection tools and procedures as needed.

**Figure 31: Data Collection Plan & Source for Required Indicators**

<b>Required Indicators</b>	<b>CIS Data Collection</b>	<b>Source/Collection Method</b>
Student chronic absenteeism rates	<b>Currently collect</b> – standard metric included in the annual CIS school needs assessment	Data from School system and Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA)
Student discipline rates, including suspensions and expulsions	<b>Currently collect</b> – standard metric included in the annual CIS school needs assessment	Governor’s Office of Student Achievement’s K12 Student Discipline Dashboard
School climate information, which may come from student, parent, or teacher surveys	<b>Currently collect</b> – standard metric included in the annual CIS school needs assessment	Climate Rating from Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE)

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Required Indicators	CIS Data Collection	Source/Collection Method
Provision of integrated student supports and stakeholder services	<b>Currently collect</b> Tiered students supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CIS site coordinator collect Tiered services and supports to students and families in CISDM;</li> <li>● Will expand capacity to collect supports to community members</li> </ul>
Expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities;	<b>Currently collect</b> some data on student participation in afterschool programming	OST services to CIS students are documented in CISDM for case managed students.
Family and community engagement efforts and impact;	<b>Currently collect</b> - family engagement efforts. <b>Will expand</b> capacity to collect community supports	CIS site coordinator records of services to parents in CISDM
Information on the number, qualifications, and retention of school staff, including the number and percentage of fully certified teachers, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, and rates of teacher turnover	<b>Will</b> obtain district data as part of our external evaluation	Some is reported in the School Report Cards from Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA)
Graduation rates	<b>Currently collect</b> – standard metric included in the annual CIS school needs assessment	GaDOE calculates cohort graduation rates annually, released in October
Changes in school spending information;	<b>Will</b> obtain district data as part of our external evaluation	District Budgets; GaDOE and GOSA
Collaborative leadership and practice strategies, which may include building the capacity of educators, principals, other school leaders, and other staff to lead collaborative school improvement structures, such	<b>Will add</b> collection of data as part of our external evaluation	Meeting Records; Focus Groups; Surveys

Required Indicators	CIS Data Collection	Source/Collection Method
as professional learning communities;		
Regularly convening or engaging all initiative-level partners, such as LEA representatives, city or county officials, children’s cabinets, nonprofit service providers, public housing agencies, and advocates	<b>Will add</b> collection of data as part of our external evaluation	Meeting Records; Focus Groups; Surveys
Regularly assessing program quality and progress through individual student data, participant feedback, and aggregate outcomes to develop strategies for improvement	<b>Currently collect</b> – CIS model has ongoing progress monitoring of student performance, schoolwide goal monitoring and goal achievement, and feedback from annually conducted surveys of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student data from school district</li> <li>● Progress monitoring in CISDM</li> <li>● Aggregate data from schools, GaDOE and GOSA</li> <li>● CIS Student Surveys</li> </ul>
Organizing school personnel and community partners into working teams focused on specific issues identified in the needs and assets assessment.	<b>Will add</b> collection of data as part of our external valuation	Meeting Records; Focus Groups; Surveys

The CISGA evaluation team will provide the independent evaluator with de-identified data from CISDM for their analysis of student academic and behavioral improvement, Tiered service data, SEL assessment scores and survey data for use. The internal team will also assist with collection of schoolwide metric data. The external evaluators will be responsible for collecting all focus group and collaborative and community survey data.

The evaluators will produce an annual evaluation report detailing progress of the GA ACRES project to the project timeline for implementation and performance to goals/objectives

by the end of September each year. Results of the annual evaluation will be shared with all members of the collaborative and the school support team. The results will be utilized in annual planning and for the purposes of identifying gaps to be included in the school needs assessment. Copies of the annual evaluation will be made available on the CISGA website.

**B. Extent to Which Methods of Evaluation Will Provide Performance Feedback & Permit Periodic Assessment of Progress Toward Achieving Intended Outcomes**

CIS' evidence-based model of wraparound support for students and schools follows a continuous improvement model. The CIS Network has a secure web-based data management system (CISDM) that was designed by our National organization to allow our CIS site coordinators to collect data on all aspects of our model. Data collected in CISDM include: school needs assessments and support plans with planned schoolwide supports and program goals; individualized needs assessments and support plans for students on CIS caseload; collection of tiered supports at the school and student levels; and monitoring of student and school progress and goal achievement. Results from the program year help drive changes as needed to services delivered during the school year and make improvements in the next year.

CIS network affiliate staff are formally trained by members of the CISGA evaluation team in data collection. The team is available throughout the year for technical assistance and monitors data collection. Local affiliate staff validate all data entered into the data system. The evaluation team is responsible for reporting to funders on the results of the programming delivered by the network. The Georgia CIS network collects the following outcome data for all caseload students: attendance, number of suspensions, and grades in the four core subject areas. For high school students, the number of course credits is also recorded. Site coordinators collect

the data for each grading period and at the end of the year. They also track individual student and school-wide goals at the same intervals.

Each member of the FSCS will submit quarterly reports of progress toward implementation and document collaborative activities and meetings. The evaluation team will build data collection tools to help us to monitor program implementation and community engagement with the FSCS.

**C. Extent to Which Methods of Evaluation Provide Valid & Reliable Performance Data on Relevant Outcomes**

CISGA and local CIS affiliates have data sharing agreements with their partner school systems that ensures CIS is given access to school information for caseload students. In addition, the partner districts provide aggregate school-wide data relevant to the goals set by CIS and the schools sites. CISGA monitors data collection throughout the year to identify challenges with collection and entry of data. As a component of the CIS business standards for operations, each year data validations are conducted to monitor quality of documentation, fidelity of implementation and quality/accuracy of data collection.