

HELPING KIDS STAY IN SCHOOL AND PREPARE FOR LIFE

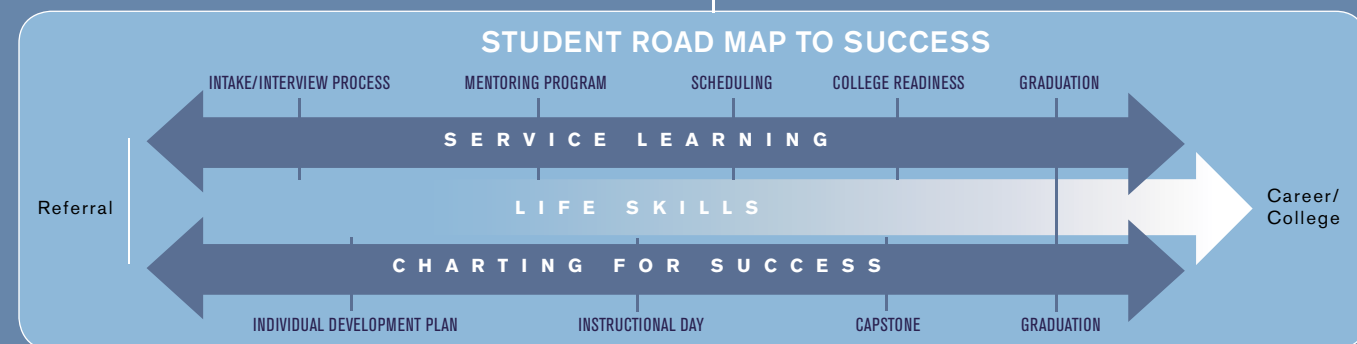


Performance Learning Centers (PLCs) are non-traditional high schools—an initiative of Communities In Schools, the nation's largest dropout prevention organization. PLCs are academically rigorous, college preparatory high schools for students who have not been successful in a traditional high school environment. Through a self-paced curriculum, students who may have fallen behind in credits due to absenteeism, academic struggles or disengagement from school are often able to catch up and graduate on time, prepared for college, a career and life. The PLC concept was developed by Communities In Schools of Georgia, and the first PLC began serving students during the 2002-2003 school year.

Today, there are more than 30 operational PLCs in the Communities In Schools network, with the majority of them in Georgia. Through an investment by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the PLC initiative is being expanded to North Carolina, Washington state, Virginia, Pennsylvania and Georgia. By 2009, 43 PLCs are expected to be operational.

What makes the PLC special?

- Schools are small—averaging only 75-150 students which helps to exemplify a positive school climate.
- With a low student/teacher ratio, students can receive one-on-one attention.
- Students self-manage their performance track through a high tech/hands-on curriculum which meets state education requirements.
- Eligible students can dual-enroll at a local community college or university, boosting their potential for post-secondary education.
- Every PLC is equipped with a services coordinator, who helps students with non-academic issues that could be affecting their ability to reach their full potential.
- The atmosphere at a PLC is more like a professional training environment than a classroom.
- Through project-based learning, students apply strategies that require critical thinking and teamwork to their curricula.



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EMPOWERING STUDENTS

FOR A LIFETIME OF SUCCESS

Performance Learning Centers

REAL STORIES. REAL PEOPLE.



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Robert Guy is the first member of his family to graduate from high school. The oldest of eight children, Robert faced economic and personal challenges as a young person. He grew up in Georgia, where his family moved often, putting him at risk of not graduating on time. Robert was home-schooled for most of his life. To fulfill his dream of becoming a lawyer, he needed to graduate from an accredited high school and have grades that would make him eligible for scholarships. With the help of the Classic City Performance Learning Center® (PLC) in Athens, a Communities In Schools of Georgia non-traditional high school, Robert steadfastly moved toward his goal. He continues his journey today at Morehouse College in Atlanta, where he is studying political science. He has received scholarships to attend Morehouse, one of the most prestigious, historically black colleges in the nation – and with a grade point average of 3.5, will continue to be eligible for academic scholarships.

"I've always known that my education comes first," Robert said. "After visiting the local high school and doing some research, my mom and I went to check out the PLC. We met with Dan Hunter (principal), who talked to us and showed us around the school."

Robert was sold, and applied for admission to the school, which offered the advantage of being a small, self-contained learning environment with a low student-to-teacher ratio, high academic standards, personalized programs and a flexible schedule. With

his positive outlook, strong academic ability and ambitious goal of graduating ahead of time, Robert was a natural choice for the Classic City PLC.

Once there, Robert "fell in love" with the PLC. "It was like a family, and became like home," he said of his two years there. "At the PLC, they get to know you as a person. They cared about what was going on in my life, and how it impacted my education and ability to focus on learning."

His first year there, Robert had a lead role in creating the school's student council, and, not surprisingly, served as president. He was also very involved in major fundraising activities for the school's relief effort following the 2005 hurricane season. "Robert also excelled in the creative arts," added Jaya Chauhan, Robert's learning facilitator and advisor at the PLC. "He was very interested in writing, producing and acting. He produced a musical rap presentation, in collaboration with two other students, during the 2005 Thanksgiving holiday season, which aired on a local radio station."

In a personal essay about his experience at the PLC, Robert once wrote, "I have teachers who genuinely care about me and who would do anything to make sure I succeed...I am at a place where people care about my dreams, goals and future...Without this school, CIS and Classic City PLC, I doubt I would have made it."

Communities In Schools (CIS) is the largest dropout prevention organization in the United States. Founded in 1977, CIS has affiliates in 27 states and the District of Columbia helping kids stay in school and prepare for life. By partnering with local school districts and community organizations, CIS is able to connect needed resources and services to kids and their families. Services that are provided can be whole-school initiatives, intensive short-term services for students with immediate needs and sustained services for students needing ongoing support. Nearly 1.2 million students are directly served each year by CIS. With the help of CIS, 80-90 percent of students have made better grades, reduced their discipline problems and stayed in school. The CIS Five Basics® form the cornerstone of the Performance Learning Center concept. CIS believes EVERY child needs and deserves:

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

CIS provides support for PLCs in many ways.

• On the school level

CIS provides a site coordinator who monitors attendance and will make home visits, if necessary, while managing programs, mentoring, service-learning and internships.

• On the local level

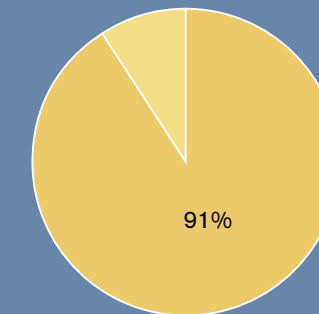
A CIS local executive director acquires business partners for the school, supports the mentoring program and assists in the student selection process.

• On the state level

The CIS state office provides initial training, which is followed by regular onsite training and ongoing technical support.

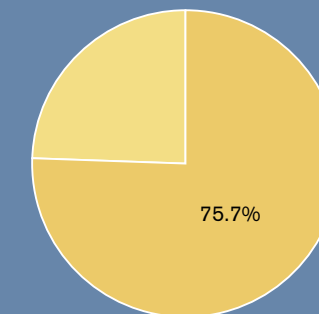
BIG RESULTS FROM A SMALL SCHOOL

PLC Students 2007 Improvement in Academics



91 percent of PLC students improved their academic performance while in the program.

PLC Students 2007 Improvement in Graduation



75.7 percent of PLC students classified as seniors at the beginning of the year graduated in 2007.