

CIS of Alaska Organizational Description

Helping Students Stay in School and Graduate Prepared for Life

Somberly, statistics recently reported that for every 50 ninth graders who enter school in Alaska, only 31 will graduate from high school and only 14 will go on to college, according to a new report from the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. Source: KTUU Channel 2 News, May, 2008

CIS of Alaska Network

State Office
Anchorage, Alaska

State Office Initiatives:

- **Career Exploration Opportunities (CEO)**
- **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**



Affiliates

CIS of Anchorage

Anchorage School District, AVAIL

CIS of Bethel

Lower Kuskokwim School District

CIS of Juneau

Alaska Staff Development Network and Juneau Borough Schools

CIS of Mat-Su

Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District

CIS of Nome

Nome Public Schools

We Get Results (preliminary CIS of Alaska Network 2007-2008 Outcomes)

- The network served **5,279 children and youth** across the state
- Of the CIS students tracked for attendance - **86% improved** in attendance
- Of the CIS students tracked for behavior - **83% improved** in behavior
- Of the CIS students tracked for academic improvement - **80% improved** academically
- Of the CIS students tracked for promotion - **95% promoted** to the next level
- Of the CIS eligible seniors tracked (targeted to graduate) - **94% graduated** on time.
- 134 students, primarily from rural areas, participated in career exploration and readiness activities through the CEO program.
- As a result of support by CIS of Alaska, an additional 2,372 children are enrolled in new Imagination Library programs in Fairbanks and Wainwright in addition to the 875 children participating through Nome and Juneau Affiliate hosted IL programs, totaling 3,247 Alaskan children! Mat-Su and Mountain View are developing IL programs.

Success Through Partnerships and Collaboration

Representing the local/community level, CIS Affiliates had *102 community partnerships*, *222 local volunteers* and *51 locally engaged board members* whom provided *3781 volunteer hours*. Additionally, the State Office, CIS of Alaska, benefited greatly by and expanded our impact through the support of over *50 local, state and national partnerships*.

At the cost of \$72,750, for approximately one month of CIS of Alaska programs and services the network leveraged \$863,671 in services and resources to benefit CIS students.

Dollar for dollar, the right investment in our children's future.

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Organized in 2003 to serve at-risk students in Alaska, we are founded on the recognition that most students who drop out of school are dealing with a variety of obstacles that present barriers to their education and that **only a few of these are school-related**; most stem from overarching family and community issues like **poverty, violence, alcohol and drugs**.

With sites in Anchorage, Bethel, Juneau, Mat-Su and Nome, Communities In Schools of Alaska is making remarkable progress in positively affecting the high school drop-out rate. Consider the following:

- **CIS of Bethel** is working with the District Court, the community of Bethel and its neighboring villages to address underage drinking. Our Community Diversion Panel has had 155 referrals from the Bethel and Chevak District Courts in the past year. Thirty-one first-time *Minor Consuming Alcohol* Offenders completed our program. We've only seen a 6% recidivism rate three months post-program completion and a 9% recidivism rate at six months post completion. Recidivism was defined as repeat MCA or other alcohol-related charges. We have recently begun accepting Repeat and Habitual Offenders, assisting them to get into residential treatment programs and support them during aftercare. CIS is working toward bringing an adolescent alcohol-drug treatment program back to Bethel, as the community has identified this as a priority. This summer our Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws/Youth Court Program is set to begin.
- **CIS of Juneau** has been operating an effective and very successful care coordinator program that provides at-risk students with needed services to help them stay in school. Since the inception of the program four years ago, we have served over 500 students, 90% of whom are Alaska Native. Of those students, less than 5% dropped out of school. The program works!
- **CIS of Mat-Su** referred to the *Mat-Su Day School's Alternative to Suspension (ATS)* program 27 students who were at extremely high risk of dropping out of school. Twenty-five of these students were successful in continuing their education and CIS worked to transition them back to their boundary school.
- **Career Exploration Opportunities (CEO)** a statewide initiative, works to expand career opportunities to Alaskan youth, specifically targeting rural high school students through providing a blended learning program with video-conferencing as an integral component. Last year CEO served 134 students (exceeding its target of 125 students) from seven districts in schools from Anchorage, Buckland, Juneau, Takotna, Nome, Shaktoolik and Shishmaref. Next year CEO is positioned to expand to additional rural schools and serve up to 200 students. Students, teachers, administrators and business partners alike continue to validate that CEO helps to engage students in school and prepare them for Alaskan careers. Additionally, CIS of Alaska CEO and the University of Anchorage have recently partnered to provide a *CIS CEO Scholarship* (providing free tuition and books) for youth interested in a logistics operations career certificate program.
- **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**, another statewide initiative and an early intervention program to combat illiteracy, started with a pilot program in Nome in response to the Nome elementary principal's observation that children were reporting to kindergarten unprepared, especially in the area of reading. The program quickly spread to Juneau where over 600 children have enrolled with another 2000 additional children eligible, but lack of funds has slowed signups. Wainwright, Wrangell, Ketchikan and Fairbanks also have active IL programs with Mat-Su, Mt. View, Petersburg and Girdwood poised to come on line. Statewide, over 4,000 children birth to five are enrolled, including the First Family's newest addition, Trig Palin. Reading is fundamental. A recent survey saw the number of parents reading to their children jump from 50% to 75% in one year! The Imagination Library is a proven effective program that helps children start school ready to learn and has been adopted by Best Beginnings.
- **And, CIS is evidence-based--our model works!** The CIS Model is proving very effective. Research shows that comprehensive, integrated student services are necessary components of effective, school-based efforts to increase graduation rates and improve student achievement.

Communities In Schools of Alaska is focused on the priorities of this State: Education, Literacy, Graduation and Career Development. CIS of Alaska is making a difference.