



Scaling for Success Cohort Talking Points & Message Frames

Communities In Schools announced the first cohort of affiliates receiving Scaling for Success funding for the 2023-2024 school year as part of a \$165 million investment from the Ballmer Group.

The first round of funding distributed to affiliates totals \$13 million of the \$165 million investment. The Ballmer Group funding is designed to catalyze local public and private investment in the model through a 1:1 match requirement over the first three years and commitments to fully fund the work long-term.

This investment enables CIS in partnership with school districts and local schools to provide critical coordinated resources to students such as a trained professional who can help connect them to supports and resources needed to succeed in school.

CIS affiliates, in partnership with local school district partners, applied to access these funds to help CIS scale its integrated student supports model to 1,000 new majority low-income schools over the next five years (including affiliate schools and licensed partners).

The increased implementation of CIS' evidence-based model of integrated student supports in more Title I eligible schools nationwide will have a direct impact on student success, increased attendance and engagement, and more students graduating from high school.

Participating affiliates for the first cohort are located in the following areas: Appalachian Highlands, Atlanta, Bay Area, Cape Fear, Catoosa Co, Central Texas, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Chesterfield, Coastal Bend, East Texas, Eastern Pennsylvania, Hampton Roads, High Point, Houston, Galveston, Greater Tarrant, Georgia, Indiana, Lake County, North Texas, Northeast Texas, Northern Virginia, Northwest Michigan, Palm Beach, Pennsylvania, Permian Bay, Ohio, San Antonio, South Carolina, South Central Texas, Southeast Harris and Brazoria, Southeast Texas, Tennessee, Memphis and VOA.

The selected CIS affiliates represent fourteen states, including, California, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

The 2023-2024 cohort is expected to reach approximately 213 new schools and deepen resources at 32 existing CIS school sites, reaching an additional 130,000 students during the school year. There will be another opportunity for additional affiliates to apply for funding in 2024 and for licensed partners to access funding.



CIS estimates the creation of 260 new jobs - including site coordinators, program managers, and direct service staff - working inside schools as a result of the private/public match investment.

Media Inquiries: Whitney Faison, Director of Communications, Communities in Schools National Office, faisonw@cisnet.org, 315-420-6049

FAQs

Q. How much money does this investment represent?

A. This catalytic financial investment from our funding partner, Ballmer Group, consists of up to \$165 million in a private, philanthropic commitment. It will be distributed to affiliates and licensed partners specifically in support of Title I-eligible schools around the country. The process requires an initial 3-year match of local funds to support implementation of the CIS model of integrated student supports to schools. With the combined investment and local matching funding, this will allow the CIS evidence-based model to grow into 1,000 new Title I-eligible schools over the next five years.

Q. How will the investment be used?

A. The investment will be used by local CIS affiliates and licensed partners to support the growth of the CIS evidence-based model to 1,000 new Title I-eligible schools in districts across the country. Each affiliate or licensed partner that meets the requirements will receive funding to bring services to students and families that keep students in school, maintain their path towards economic mobility and help them realize their potential and dreams.

Q. Explain how this funding will “unlock public dollars?”

A. One of the requirements for recipients to receive this private funding is to secure commitment for an equal match from public and private funders, with the majority match coming from public funding. Participants will be encouraged and supported in accessing matching funds from federal, state and/or local public dollars whether that be from education, workforce development, health and human services or public safety, etc. to pay for this essential work. This approach exemplifies how addressing the problem of inequity is everyone’s responsibility and requires a public/private partnership to be successful and sustainable.

Q. How does the application process work?

A. The application process is straightforward. In communities and states with a CIS presence, a local affiliate in partnership with their school district may apply for funds that include criteria for addressing student needs, hiring of personnel to manage the delivery of services and most importantly, the use of matching public funds so the program becomes self-sustaining after the



initial three-year investment period. Additionally, for school districts, state departments of education and other organizations in areas without a CIS presence, they can learn more about whether they are eligible to become a licensed partner through this investment: [\(LINK\)](#)

Q. Can you provide more details about the application process?

A. The application process for this investment includes certain requirements, including: the need to match funding for three years, which equals 50 percent of the cost to place a site coordinator in a school and demonstrate the ability to sustain implementation long-term. There is no limit to the amount a local affiliate in partnership with their school district can ask for as long as they can secure the matching public funds. The purpose is to secure a match over three years with a plan to sustain beyond that period. A separate FAQ with investment requirements is available [here](#).

Q. How much time do affiliates have to implement funding?

A. The first payment was distributed to affiliates in July. Affiliates have the 2023-2024 school year to use the funding for the expansion of services and investment of resources. Affiliates are required to re-apply every year for continued funding for each subsequent school year. An affiliate can add new schools each year as long as they can meet the requirements of the investment.

Q. Are there any restrictions or requirements for these funds?

A. Yes, these are “restricted funds,” meaning that they are only available to CIS local affiliates, existing CIS licensed partners and new licensed partners to grow into new Title I eligible schools with the required public match. Additional requirements for accessing these funds are in place to ensure accountability, sustainability and to demonstrate impact.

Q. What makes this public/private partnership new?

A. The public/private partnership model is longstanding and well-known. What is different about this announcement is the intentionality and the scale of this investment. This matching funding model is very purposeful in its ability to leverage philanthropic dollars to secure public dollars to address inequities in education. We are a national network of non-profit organizations with an evidenced-based model, partnering with a national philanthropic partner and school districts across the country - all coming together to be very intentional about the investment. The central focus of this initiative relies on a return-on-investment model that is purposeful, with intended outcomes and accountability.

Q. How did this partnership come about?



A. We are fortunate to have had a longstanding relationship of trust with our funding partner, Ballmer Group. When we discussed what it would take to significantly multiply our impact, they responded with interest. We came to them with a detailed business plan, and they funded it at our highest level of recommendation. We are fortunate to have a track record in funding for sustainable growth which we demonstrated through another partnership that allowed us to reach more than 150 schools with our evidence-based model in a similar 3-year period. The outcome anticipated with this initiative is to increase our reach by 1,000 schools.

We are ensuring this investment is going to make a difference through a unique “regranting” methodology. This is the first time we have set up a fund of this size that will allow us to regrant to our network and to districts to reach an unprecedented scale of our model. Communities In Schools will maintain stewardship over centralizing, managing, and monitoring this new approach, including the application process. We will select local affiliates in partnership with their school districts that meet the criteria and for those who did not receive or apply for funding this first year, we will help them prepare for the next round as we anticipate 1 to 2 more cohorts over the next three years. We will also engage new school districts in states without a CIS presence who express interest in becoming eligible for these funds through licensed partnership.