



Communities
In Schools®

Pittsburgh-Allegheny County



2022 IMPACT REPORT

Reengagement



Our Mission

To surround students of the Greater Pittsburgh region with a community of support, empowering them to achieve in school and succeed in life.

Our Vision

Communities in Schools of Pittsburgh-Allegheny County (CISPAC) strives to be the leader of the community school implementation throughout the Pittsburgh Region ensuring an equitable education experience for ALL students.

Our Commitment

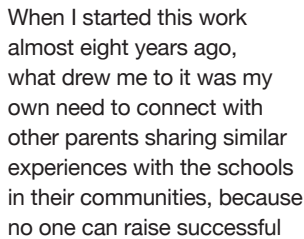
CISPAC exists to be a community leader and advocate of educational equity for all students, particularly those who are most vulnerable and underserved. We cannot ignore the facts. Because of injustices of the past, Pittsburgh's most vulnerable are predominantly made up of black and brown students – historically, currently, and into the foreseeable future. We stand firm in our belief that individual value, potential, and ability is not defined by race. If we are going to continue as a civil society, economic access and empowerment must be accessible to all.

We declare that the lives of every student we serve matter. They are our priority. They are our future. They are our champions.



PITT

- Regine → Wednesday
- Claire → Friday
- PiPer → Friday
- Devin → Wednesday
- Sam → Thursday
- Anyali → Wednesday
- Gary → Monday
- Ivy → Monday



CISPAC's mission has always been to surround students with a community of support empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. With the educational and societal upheaval of the past two years, we have been called to provide more targeted services to the students and families we serve. We more than doubled our program staff during the 2021–22 school year, adding new reengagement services, support for homeless students, and more enrichment and supportive programming.

We are also transforming our service to cover more students in our region. At the end of fiscal year 2022, we launched an expansion in Westmoreland County in partnership with the Richard King Mellon Foundation, New Kensington Arnold, Burrell, Greensburg Salem school districts, and the Northern Westmoreland Career and Technical Center. When RK Mellon announced funding to address chronic absenteeism as an obstacle to students achieving economic mobility as adults, we knew that our Integrated Student Support model would make a measurable impact.

By embedding CISPAC staff in high need districts we are simultaneously working with the district, school, community, students, and families to assess needs and address them. It is truly our mission in action. We go where needs are high, pull together our partners, and make space at the table so that all voices are heard.

We are so excited to share this year's Impact Report with you and showcase our successes, our growth, and our expanding vision for how CISPAC can help students, from all over our region, break down barriers to education, in school and beyond.

Bridget Clement
Executive Director





Bringing Kids Back to the Classroom

If 2022 at CISPAC was defined by a single word it would be “growth.” Between a Westmoreland County expansion and a contract to implement Cure Violence Global’s evidence-based program, CISPAC’s footprint grew like it never has before. All of it was possible because of the mission-driven people that work at CISPAC. Two of those people, Bryan McCarthy and LaQuandra Bennett, were promoted to leadership positions to oversee these new initiatives. Their knowledge of the work, commitment to equity in education, and dedication to CISPAC’s mission made them ideal fits to serve in their new management roles.

About the Westmoreland County Attendance Initiative

Thanks to the generous support of The Richard King Mellon Foundation, CISPAC is activating attendance and family engagement specialists to work in school and out in the community to bring kids back to the classroom. By going door-to-door and meeting families where they are, CISPAC is helping families find the resources and tools they need to ensure their students stay in school and succeed in life.



Thanks to this investment of \$775,000, CISPAC is providing full-time attendance support specialists to support three school districts in Westmoreland County (Burrell, Greensburg-Salem, and New Kensington-Arnold) and the Northern Westmoreland Career and Technology Center.

Chronic absenteeism and truancy are big problem in many of our local districts — problems that only increased in the last few years due to complications from the pandemic and return to school. **Students who miss large amounts of school not only see their grades suffer but are also more likely to drop out or end up in the juvenile detention system.** But absenteeism is often a symptom of more complicated problems at home. Anything from mental health issues to poverty and food insecurity can lead to students abandoning school to meet their other needs.

CISPAC’s team, lead by Bryan McCarthy, is tackling this problem through a community-school model where resources that students need are brought into the school. Community-based staff make connections with other providers and, most importantly, with families to build custom support for students.



“

I do this work because I believe that with the right support and resources you can overcome any obstacle.”

LaQuandra Bennett, Team Manager

LaQuandra quickly rose the ranks at CISPAC starting as an Implementation Specialist in 2021 and now serving as one of the organization’s first Team Managers. LaQuandra possesses the perfect blend of direct service to youth and families and community engagement. Holding two Masters degrees and clinical experience, she is able to provide the kind of supportive, and trauma-informed supervision that her team needs to do this work successfully. As a 2020 Heinz Fellow, LaQuandra developed skills in tutoring, teaching, mentoring, and social supports in an urban education setting. In her new role, she oversees most of CISPAC’s Allegheny County footprint.



“

Putting a caring adult in a child’s life will make a difference. Our one-on-one model puts a mentor in a child’s life — someone they can trust, talk to, and meet with on a regular basis — someone they know cares about them.”

Bryan McCarthy, Team Manager

Bryan, CISPAC’s longest tenured staff, has dedicated his career to helping young people succeed in school and in life. He was previously a site coordinator in Sto-Rox Upper Elementary and Primary Schools where he became an integral member of their team. Bryan brings with him a belief that all children can succeed, given the right resources and a caring adult. For many students that encounter Bryan, he is that caring adult. He was the recipient of the Communities In Schools-Pennsylvania Keystone Award, a distinction given only to the most effective Site Managers. As Manager of our Westmoreland Initiative, Bryan is leading a team of six staff that are working to build relationships with students while coordinating school-wide programs.





New Ways to Help

Homeless Resources

According to the Homeless Children’s Education Fund, **over 3,200 children and youth in Allegheny County were experiencing homelessness in the 2019-2020 school year**, and due to the health and financial crises of the last few years, that number has only continued to grow. CISPAC’s Homeless Services team is designed to be a bridge for students experiencing homelessness and their families to supports and resources to help with both immediate needs and long-term stability. They work with teachers and administrators throughout the county to teach the warning signs of homelessness so students may be identified for support. Over the past year, our two Homeless Resource Specialist have worked directly from **over 40 students and their families** from schools throughout Allegheny County. **We work both in-schools, providing food, clothing, and other needs, and beyond the classroom, helping parents connect with resources for health and wellness, job training, and affordable housing.**



Stop the Violence

Everyone should feel safe going to school and throughout the school day.

Unfortunately, violence is a prevalent issue in many communities throughout the city. There is no easy or quick solution for stopping this violence, but we can help our students and youth feel safe as they go to and from school. **But it is only as a community that we stop the violence in our neighborhoods and keep our kids safe.**

In Sto-Rox, **CISPAC is partnering with Focus on Renewal, Grow Sto-Rox, the AIU, and the Allegheny Department of Human Services to implement Cure Violence Global’s evidenced-base program throughout McKees Rocks and Stowe Township.** CISPAC is building a team of people who are from the community. The program will put “violence interrupters” in place throughout the community to stem the tragic rise in street and gun-violence. CISPAC is also working with its partners to create Safe Passages to help students get to and from school safely, after-school diversionary programs and workforce development opportunities for the whole community. These programs seek to uplift the Sto-Rox community to fight back against violence together.





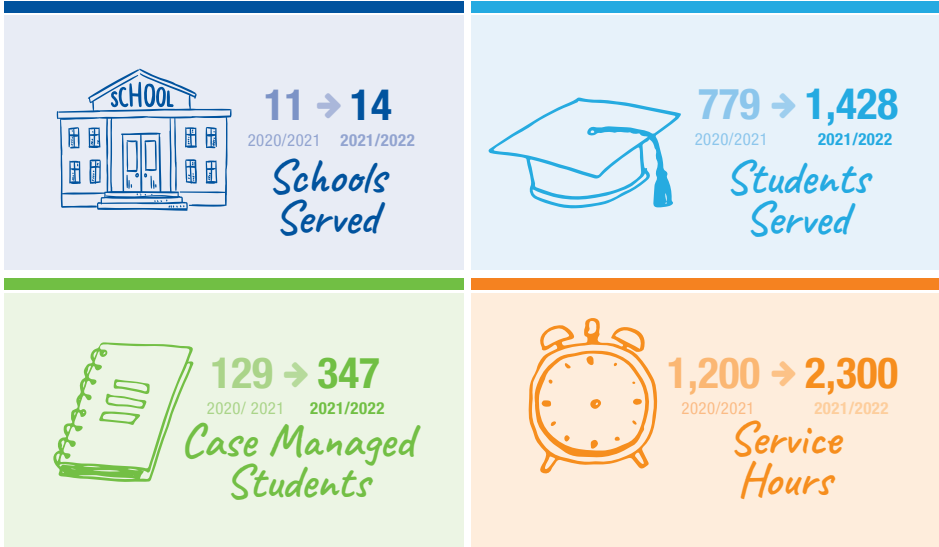
Data Driven Success

Data has always been central to CISPAC’s mission and operations. Data helps us understand the specific needs of each community we serve and set goals and benchmarks to measure our progress. As our organization grows, so too must our capacity to effectively collect and analyze data to measure our success in new programs and services.



To that end, **Sara C. Berg** has become CISPAC’s new **Director for Program Success**, taking over management of data collection and analysis. Having been with CISPAC for 4 years as director of programming, Sara’s extensive knowledge of the services we offer and the communities we serve has advanced our data collection practices so we collect more relevant data and better utilize it to uplift the students of our region.

CISPAC’s Growth at a Glance





Looking ahead

The 2021-22 school year was an incredible year of growth for CISPAC – and we’re only just beginning. **We are pleased to announce CISPAC has received a \$8.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to implement a Full-Service Community School program in our region.** Over the next five years, this grant will drastically expand our capacity to break down barriers that limit student academic performance in our region.

The funding provided by this grant will allow CISPAC to grow our staff by more than two-fold and expand our existing community school programming throughout Allegheny County. This will allow for both more school-wide services like creating Free Stores to provide food, clothing, and other basic needs, in addition to increased one-on-one support like case management, mentoring, trauma support, and more. **We look forward to reporting more on this exciting development in the year to come!**

4 Pillars of a Full-Service Community School

1 Integrated Student Support	2 Expanded and Enriched Learning Opportunities	3 Active Family and Community Engagement	4 Collaborative Leadership
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Westmoreland County

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Heather Lake
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ARNOLD SCHOOL
DISTRICT**
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Specialist

Tessa Falatovich
Implementation
Specialist

PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
**Sakinah Shaahid-
Lowman**
Site Manager — Arsenal

STO-ROX
Dominick Sydney
Implementation Specialist

Mike McCarthy
Program Supervisor —
CURE Violence

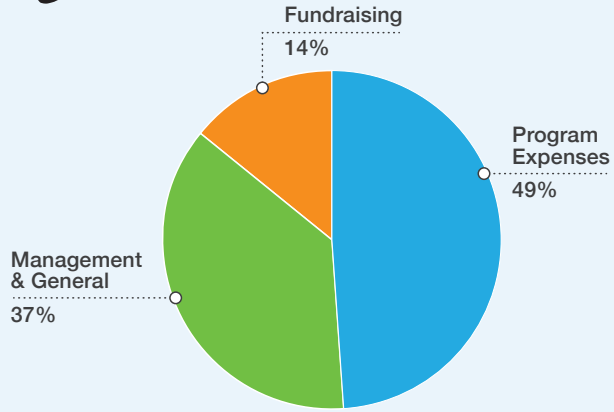
Mike Mott
Program Manager —
CURE Violence

Kai Smith
Implementation Specialist

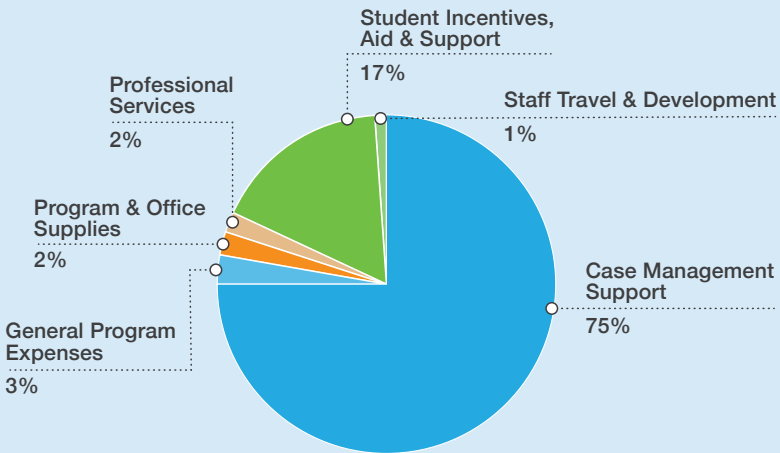


Financial Data

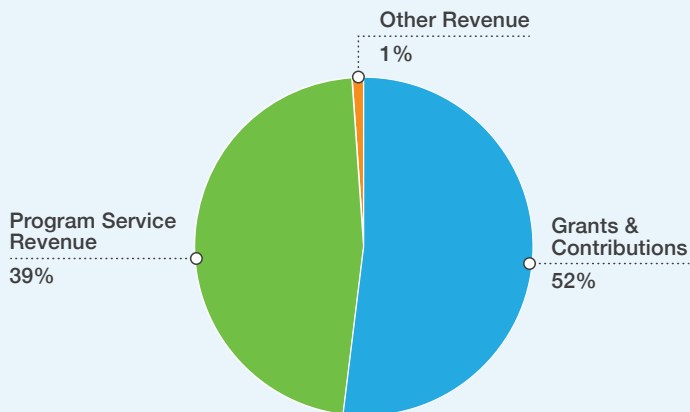
Expenses



Program Expenses



Revenue



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