



**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
**Peter Wuenschel (713) 305-5638**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 1, 2009**

**PRESS RELEASE: Communities In Schools - A Day at the Capitol**

AUSTIN, TX – Over 200 students, volunteers, parents and business people from around the state traveled to Austin last week to show their support for Communities In Schools (CIS), the nation’s largest and most effective dropout prevention program.

The day began with a rally on the Capitol, steps emceed by Mike Wilson, Executive Director of Communities In Schools – Baytown, with a keynote address by Senator Elliot Shapleigh of El Paso who is carrying a bill in the Senate for increased funding for Communities In Schools of Texas. The keynote address was followed by *I Will Always Love You* sung by a High School Sophomore from Bell-Coryell County. An alumna from the CIS program in Central Texas concluded the rally with a testimony of how CIS was instrumental in helping her stay in school and eventually graduate from a four-year college.

Also in attendance for the day were Bill Milliken, Dan Cardinali and Carolyn Spaht, key leaders and executives of Communities In Schools – National, that operates out of Alexandria, Va. Former First Lady of Texas Linda Gail White also showed her support for CIS by participating in the days events that included a meeting with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor to help convince the legislature to increase funding to CIS of Texas by \$14.3 million per year.

Other events included a reading of a proclamation in the Senate in support of CIS, recognition by Myra Crownover in the House of Representatives and a leadership workshop for students led by Eric Metcalf from CIS – Central Texas located in Austin. The day concluded with a reception for all State Senators and Representatives that was underwritten by AT&T of Texas and the Communities In Schools National Office.

“The day was a grand show of support for students who are at risk of dropping out of school,” said Peter Wuenschel, Executive Director of Communities In Schools - Bay Area and President of CIS of Texas, the Texas Association of CIS Executive Directors.

Communities In Schools (CIS) works on school campuses to organize community resources and volunteers to support students’ success in school and parents’ involvement in education. CIS connects kids from pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade with the help they need so kids can learn and teachers can teach and leverages millions of dollars in private contributions onto campuses. CIS staff work for private non-profit organizations not the state or school districts. In Texas, Communities In Schools provided services to over 78,000 students in 2007-2008.

Communities In Schools – Bay Area is the local chapter of CIS that operates in Clear Creek and Dickinson ISDs. CIS – Bay Area provided services to over 1400 students last year. For more information on CIS – Bay Area visit [www.cisba.org](http://www.cisba.org) or contact them at (281) 486-6698.

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Representing CIS-bay Area in Austin are from left to right Janet Summers, Viola Sanchez, Peter Wuenschel, Debbie Schoppe, Magdalena Sanchez, Frieda Shafer & Linda Deckert

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Dr. Peter Wuenschel (Executive Director of CIS – Bay Area) and Janet Summers (CIS – Bay Area Program Coordinator) stop to speak with Bill Milliken (Founder of Communities In Schools) during the CIS Day at the Capitol Event in Austin