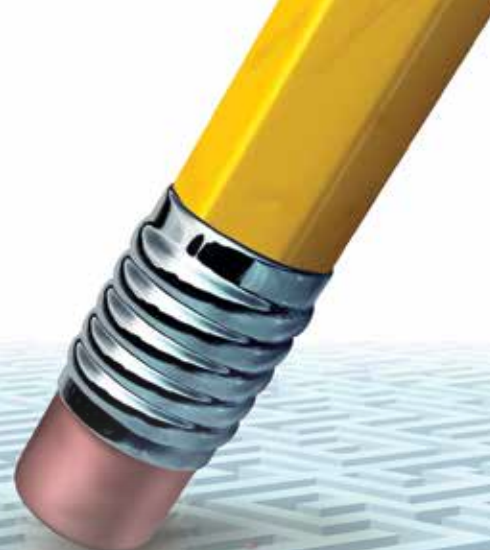


# There Must Be An Easier Way!

## GETTING KIDS THE SUPPORTS THEY NEED



**Rick Anderson**

*Communities In Schools of Washington (CISWA)*

### PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

*Improving Instruction, Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap*

It's well-known many principals spend the majority of their time on a relatively small percentage of kids. In most cases, what lands students in the principal's office is a mix of academic and behavior issues. Nonacademic needs are often at the root of these issues. Accessing the supports these students need usually entails a maze-like journey of unfamiliar laws, agencies, and community organizations far outside the educational realm. All too often, this journey is an exercise in futility, causing frustration for the student, the family or guardian, and the school.

Increasingly, education leaders are reaching out to individual community partners for help. This can be a highly rewarding experience, but also a time consuming one, as the problems kids face don't fit into a one-size-fits-all

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package. The school leader often has to learn a new set of rules, new governmental agencies, and a new set of community organizations for each student who comes through the door.

In 2016, the Legislature directed OSPI to develop a protocol to integrate academic and nonacademic supports for students as part of a broader strategy to close the education opportunity gap. The Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol (WISSP) was published in October, 2017. The WISSP is essentially a system marrying school academic supports with community

nonacademic supports. Its guiding light is an educational vision where teachers teach, students learn, and community supports allow both to occur unimpeded.

*Communities In Schools of Washington (CISWA)* has been delivering services through this system for over 25 years in Washington state and 40 years nationally. Last year, CISWA provided services to nearly 74,000 students using its evidence-based model. CISWA currently operates in 27 school districts through the work of our 14 local affiliates across the state. Our affiliates provide whole

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school supports referred to as Tier 1 supports, available to all students, and Tier 2 and 3 supports for “case-managed” individual students. The key to this service delivery model is a network of community partners organized by our school based site coordinator. For the principal, this means the maze-like journey is transformed into a toolbox of clearly defined pathways. Our affiliates are always refining the network and identifying new partners to meet emerging needs of the school and the students, in partnership with school leaders.

Our Tier 1 supports complement the efforts of school leaders to create a safe and positive learning environment. Delivered in partnership with school leaders, these supports can cover a wide range of activities from school attendance initiatives, college readiness events, to back-to-school gatherings for all new students and their parents.

Our Tier 2 and 3 case managed wrap around supports are provided by our school based site coordinators. School staff refer students to our site coordinators who work with them to identify barriers, connect needed supports, monitor progress and track outcomes. Site coordinators work in close partnership with school administrators and staff to ensure alignment with school efforts.

### 3 WAYS PRINCIPALS CAN USE CASE-MANAGEMENT

There are three ways principals can use CISWA’s resources in their schools:

#### 1.Improving Student Outcomes

Based on a school’s goals, case-management is used to improve attendance, behavior, coursework, graduation rates, and college-career readiness for students facing significant non-academic barriers to academic success.

#### 2.Addressing Disproportionalities in Student Populations

Case-management is also used to provide support on issues facing specific student populations such as those facing poverty, homelessness, limited English skills, foster care, incarceration as well as other risk factors.

#### 3.Responding to RCW Requirements

Finally, case-management is used to meet certain requirements in the RCW. For example, it provides an individualized reengagement plan for suspended or expelled students (RCW 28A.600.022), academic and/or nonacademic supports to students failing a statewide ELA or mathematics assessment (RCW 28A.655.061), and a customized plan to address chronic absenteeism for students referred to a community truancy board RCW (28A.225.020).

### WHAT PRINCIPALS SAY ABOUT CIS AND INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORTS

“At our school, students come to us with a vast array of needs. Communities In Schools helps us identify and deliver the repertoire of interventions needed much more quickly and effectively than we could do on our own.”

#### **Brian Teppner**

*Principal, McKnight Middle School  
Renton School District*

“CIS provides both Tier 1 and case managed Tier 2 and 3 supports in our elementary school. I see the benefits to our kids or hear about

them from our teaching staff every single day.”

#### **Lisa McNamara**

*Principal, Sunrise Elementary  
Puyallup School District*

### THE FUTURE OF INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORTS

The WISSP is now part of state law as one of several core strategies for closing the education opportunity gap. Given the heightened state and federal emphasis on district accountability for student outcomes, school leaders should evaluate whether or not a system for integrating academic and nonacademic support is more effective and efficient than current practices. Legislation has been introduced in both 2017 and the current legislative session to expand funding for integrated student supports.

*Communities In Schools* of Washington recently established a goal of providing access to Integrated Student Supports (ISS) to 75 percent of the state’s K-12 population in the next 10 years. We continue to partner with community organizations and local efforts to focus community resources to support school goals and ensure more students received all the supports they need. To meet this goal, we are expanding our professional development capacity, community partnership model and data systems to rapidly deploy ISS into new communities. To learn more about our work and others across the state, please contact us. ■

#### LINKS:

Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol (WISSP)  
[k12.wa.us/CISL/ISS/default.aspx](http://k12.wa.us/CISL/ISS/default.aspx)

Communities In Schools of Washington  
[ciswa.org](http://ciswa.org)