



Utilizing Student Supports and Alternative Settings for Dropout Prevention: Georgia's Performance Learning Centers

April 22, 2009 ♦ 9:30 am – 11:30 am
Hyatt Regency Hotel, Columbia Ballroom
400 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001

Speaker Bios

Reginald Beaty

Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Communities in Schools of Georgia

Reginald Beaty is a retired U.S. Army colonel, currently serves as the executive vice president and chief operating officer of Communities In Schools (CIS) of Georgia, and has spent much of his adult life working with at-risk kids. As an at-risk teen himself, Col. Beaty was expelled from school at age fourteen, stayed out of school for two years, and made poor decisions as he ran with gang-oriented crowds. Thanks to the help of mentors, he received a bachelor's and master's degree, and had a twenty-year military career during which he received numerous honors, including being named National Instructor of the Year for all colleges and universities in the country and receiving the Civic Man of the Year award for his work with youth in Oklahoma. Wanting to give something back to society in recognition of the caring individuals who had helped him succeed, Col. Beaty chose to give back after his military career with an organization that had helped him in the past, CIS. He served as the executive director of the Performance Learning Centers[®] (PLCs) for CIS of Georgia, developing and overseeing twenty-seven PLCs. Currently, as the chief operating officer, he helps lead CIS of Georgia and the fifty local network affiliates in the state. Additionally, he oversees the national expansion of the PLCs.

Gary Chapman

Deputy Vice President of Field Operations, Communities in Schools

Gary Chapman is the deputy vice president for field operations at Communities In Schools' (CIS) national office. Mr. Chapman oversees operations for the network of fourteen state offices and nearly 200 local affiliates throughout the country serving more than 1.2 million students annually. He has spent twelve years with CIS serving as an executive director of a thriving local affiliate, principal of a small-schools model, and nationally overseeing the expansion of Performance Learning Centers[®] across the CIS network to increase on-time graduation and college-readiness for at-risk high school students. His experience includes education, non-profit administration, mental health, domestic violence intervention, family therapy, and sexual abuse counseling. Mr. Chapman holds a master's degree in social work (MSW) as well as an educational specialist degree (EdS).

Donita Cullen

Academic Coordinator, Douglas County Performance Learning Center (GA)

Donita Cullen is currently in her second year as the academic coordinator at the Douglas County Performance Learning Center. Prior to leading the Douglas County Performance Learning Center, Ms. Cullen served as an educator and administrator for ten years. She earned her bachelor's degree in English education from Clark Atlanta University, a master's degree in administration and supervision from the University of Phoenix, and a specialist degree in educational leadership from Jacksonville State University. She will complete the requirements for her doctor of philosophy degree in August 2009.

Kami Hunt

2008 Graduate, Douglas County Performance Learning Center (GA)

Kami Hunt is a December 2008 graduate from the Douglas County Performance Learning Center. Ms. Hunt earned a dual-seal diploma which certifies both college and technical preparation and is an accomplishment for the highest achieving students in Georgia. She was also recognized as having the most outstanding senior project for the fall semester. Ms. Hunt has been accepted to West Central Technical College and will begin classes in the summer of 2009. She plans to major in criminal justice and pursue a career as a police officer.

Phillip Lovell

Vice President for Education, Housing, and Youth Policy, First Focus

Phillip Lovell is the vice president for education, housing, and youth policy at First Focus. For the past decade, Mr. Lovell has worked on issues such as youth development, education, and housing. He led the effort to pass the Federal Youth Coordination Act, and has written publications on children in the budget and the impact of the recession on children and youth. Mr. Lovell's work has been referenced by *USA Today*, the *Washington Post*, *Time* magazine, CNN, and others. He chairs the public policy arm of the National Collaboration for Youth, a coalition of the nation's leading youth development providers. Previously, Mr. Lovell served as director of public policy for Camp Fire USA and policy coordinator at the National Crime Prevention Council. He is a graduate of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service.

Elizabeth Schneider

Vice President, State Advocacy and Outreach; Interim Vice President, Policy, Alliance for Excellent Education

Elizabeth Schneider joined the Alliance in the Spring of 2005 as vice president of state advocacy and outreach. In that position, she has worked to help deepen the Alliance's understanding of state and local high school reform, expand relationships with state and local reform leaders, and connect local, state and federal policy conversations around secondary school improvement. Since March 2009, she has served as the Alliance's interim vice president for policy. Prior to joining the Alliance, Ms. Schneider served as executive director of the Southern Governors' Association for ten years where she guided the development and advocacy of regional policy recommendations on federal issues, multi-state efforts to address regional challenges, and an active leadership forum for the governors of sixteen states and two U.S. territories. Previously, she worked as a senior legislative assistant to Senator Howell Heflin (AL). Ms. Schneider graduated Phi Beta Kappa from

Birmingham Southern College with a BA in English and has done graduate work in English at Georgetown University. She is an active member of the George Mason Elementary and George Washington Middle School Parent Teacher Associations in Alexandria, Virginia.

Bob Wise

President, Alliance for Excellent Education

Bob Wise, author of the book *Raising the Grade: How High School Reform Can Save Our Youth and Our Nation*, became president of the Alliance for Excellent Education in February 2005. Since joining the Alliance, Governor Wise has become a sought-after speaker and advisor on education issues. He has advised the U.S. Department of Education and frequently testifies before the U.S. Congress. As governor of West Virginia from 2001 to 2005, he fought for and signed legislation to fund the PROMISE Scholarship Program and created the Governor's Helpline for Safer Schools. During his administration, West Virginia saw a significant increase in the number of students completing high school and entering college. From 1983 to 2001, Governor Wise served in the U.S. House of Representatives representing the 2nd District of West Virginia. During his tenure, he worked aggressively to preserve federal financial aid for students to attend college. Governor Wise also serves on the Public Education Network's board of directors and is an advisory committee member for a number of organizations including the Campaign for Educational Equity, Editorial Projects in Education, the National High School Center, and the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools. Governor Wise earned a bachelor's degree from Duke University and a JD from Tulane University College of Law.