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Attendance+ Has Launched!

CIS announces new initiative to increase attendance, in partnership with CMS, Bank of America, and the Charlotte Hornets

Last week on February 28, CIS launched a new initiative, "**Attendance+**", in partnership with **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools**, **Bank of America**, and the **Charlotte Hornets**. The kick-off event was held at Quail Hollow Middle School, one of the Title I schools where CIS operates. It was an exciting day for the 80+ students, teachers, and community partners in attendance, with Hugo the Hornet and NBA In-Arena Host Ohavia Phillips bringing their enthusiasm and energy (and dancing!) to get everyone all "hyped up" for this special announcement! Hornets players Gordon Hayward and Mark Williams made a special appearance as well.



Men Tchaas Ari, CIS President and CEO, described how the Attendance+ program will work and unveiled the new Attendance+ logo (with design donated by Charlotte Hornets). Bank of America Charlotte President Kieth Cockrell and Hornets Sports & Entertainment President & Vice Chairman Fred Whitfield were there to voice their support and unveil a co-branded book

vending machine that Bank of America and the Hornets have donated to Quail Hollow Middle School as part of the Attendance+ initiative, and invited other companies to follow suit and donate book vending machines to other CMS schools. Dr. Cotrane Penn, CMS Executive Director of Student Wellness & Academic Support, and Elyse Dashew, CMS Board of Education Chair, shared remarks and their appreciation for the corporate and community partners who are investing in CMS students and families through Attendance+.

What is Attendance+?

Attendance+ is a creative new initiative aimed at combatting the rise in chronic absenteeism in our schools. It is a rewards-based program that incentivizes students, families and teachers to actively engage in learning. Attendance+ is a collaborative effort between CIS and CMS, with support from Bank of America, the Charlotte Hornets, and other corporate and community partners. Community partners donate resources and incentives, such as tickets to sporting events, museums and concerts, while CIS leverages those incentives to motivate behavioral change to improve overall school attendance.

[Read More and see photos from the event here](#)

Want to learn more about becoming an Attendance+ partner? [Contact Tilden Arnold](#) or [complete this form](#).



Spotlight on Attendance: Why It Matters and How You Can Help

Q & A with CIS Program Director Kenyatta Wheeler

We recently spoke with Kenyatta Wheeler, our Director of Program Operations for Intensive Case Management and Newcomer Services, about the significant increase in chronic absenteeism among students since the COVID-19 pandemic. She shares the most recent data, why this is such a critical issue, and how the community can help support students and families to increase attendance.

Q: Most people are likely aware that school attendance fell significantly during the pandemic. But what is the most recent data showing? What are you seeing in our schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg today?

A. Let me begin by defining the term “chronic absenteeism,” which is used in our schools to identify students who have missed 10% or more of the school year, typically about 18 days. In the wake of the pandemic, chronic absenteeism has increased significantly, not just in CMS, but nationwide. CMS reports that more than 1 in 4 students (29%) were chronically absent in the 2021-22 school year, which is more than twice as high as before the pandemic. This is a great concern, as chronic absenteeism affects academic success across all grade levels. And if left unaddressed before a student enters the 6th grade, chronic absenteeism becomes the leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school and not graduate.

Interview continues... [Read More](#)



Atrium Health Highlights CIS as a Community Partner

On February 11, CIS was honored to be recognized by **Atrium Health** as a valued Community Partner. The presentation took place at the Queens University Men's Basketball Homecoming game. Atrium was the Presenting Sponsor of the game. CIS Program Director Anna

Kennington, who is a Queens University graduate, accepted the award on CIS's behalf - the Homecoming "Game Sneaker" signed by all the Queens U Mens Basketball team members! Atrium Health also provided tickets for 50 CIS students to attend the game. What a fun afternoon for all - thank you, Atrium Health and Queens University! [Read More](#)

CIS-Charlotte Named a 2022 Top Workplace

CIS is proud to announce that we've been named a **2022 Top Workplace by The Charlotte Observer!** We're

thrilled to have been selected and thankful to our employees who made this happen! All Top Workplace winners are selected based solely on employee feedback through a research-based, anonymous employee survey. Kudos to our team! [Learn more here](#)



SAVE THE DATE! Dine Out For Kids® is Tuesday, June 20

Coming soon to a restaurant near you: **Dine Out For Kids® on Tuesday, June 20!** Dine Out For Kids® is back and will be bigger and better than ever... stay tuned as we begin posting the list of fabulous participating restaurants on our website in the coming weeks! Thank you for supporting CIS and our students through this fun community-wide event!

Career Prep Workshop with Aston Carter

Nearly 60 CIS students from 8 high schools recently spent the day at **Aston Carter**, a global recruiting firm in uptown Charlotte. They rotated in groups focused on Building a Resume, Interviewing Skills, and one-on-one Career Coaching with an Aston Carter employee. The team at Aston Carter was phenomenal... they brought as much energy as the kids and provided invaluable information. Many thanks to CIS Board member Andy Kalbaugh for connecting our students to this incredible opportunity!



[Read More](#) and check out several videos of students and Aston Carter employees sharing about their experience.



"Productive Disruption" Podcast

CIS Site Coordinator **Shakaka Perry** was recently invited to be a guest on "Productive Disruption," a podcast produced by Rhodes Branding, an educational consulting company in Columbia, SC. According to Rhodes, the podcast spotlights "bold and innovative ideas that have the ability to reshape K-12

education" and features guests who are "instigating positive change in education through their work." Perry certainly fits that description! She is a veteran Site Coordinator who currently serves as a Re-Engagement Coordinator for CIS at Garinger High School. On the podcast Perry shares how crucial her role is for students at Garinger, what it takes to build strong relationships with students, and how COVID-19 has impacted absenteeism.

[View the video at this link](#) or click the thumbnail.



Park Road Books Partnership

CIS has partnered with **Park Road Books** for over 25 years to bring the joy of reading to students! The store has donated thousands of books to CIS over the years through its annual holiday "Book Tree." In December, PRB donated more than 300 books for our kids, including these students (above) from Governor's Village STEM Academy. PRB also donates SAT/ACT Prep study guides for our high school students, and arranges for children's book authors to visit schools and meet with students. CIS is grateful for this longtime partnership!

Donate With Confidence!

CIS-Charlotte was recently awarded the Candid Platinum Seal of Transparency! This is the highest level of recognition offered by Candid.org (formerly GuideStar), the world's largest source of nonprofit information. The Seal demonstrates a nonprofit organization's commitment to transparency for potential funders and donors. To earn the Platinum Seal of Transparency, organizations must also complete the Bronze, Silver, and Gold requirements. CIS-Charlotte also has the highest rating (4 Star) from Charity Navigator and the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance national charity seal.



[Donate Now](#)

Your donation supports our work to place Site Coordinators in CMS schools to provide much needed resources and services for students and families. [Donate with confidence](#) when making your gift to CIS of Charlotte-Mecklenburg!



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