

November 17, 2015



Dear Friends,

I am proud to share that the U.S. Department of Education (USED) has announced the Center for Supportive Schools as a highest-rated **Investing in Innovation (i3)** applicant for the 2015 grant competition. USED expects to formalize our award as an i3 grantee next month. With this funding, CSS will evaluate the effectiveness of **Peer Group Connection** (PGC) in improving students' non-cognitive abilities and engagement to support academic outcomes. This five-year project will expand PGC into six low-income rural North Carolina high schools and will enable CSS to partner with **The Policy & Research Group** to conduct a large-scale rigorous evaluation, including a randomized control trial, of PGC to validate previous findings on the program's positive impact. We are extremely grateful to our partners at the **Einhorn Family Charitable Trust** for providing the private-sector match funds required under i3.

This exciting project, along with the noteworthy progress described below, brings us closer to reaching our goal that EVERY school develop all their students into leaders who make their schools safer, more supportive, engaging, and inspiring:

Karen Valencia Wright joins CSS Board of Trustees. We are so happy to welcome Karen Valencia Wright, Director of Finance and Operations for Citi Foundation, as the newest member of the CSS Board of Trustees. Karen brings to our board deep passion and front-line experience with education reform, as well as extraordinary talent in the areas of finance, operations, and philanthropy. See [here](#) for the bios of Karen and all CSS board members.

CSS welcomes Catherine Nti as new Executive Director for New Jersey. Catherine Nti brings over 15 years of experience in education with The College Board, ETS, and other esteemed organizations. Catherine was drawn to CSS because of her commitment to improving education opportunities for all students. She shared with me, "As a first generation college graduate, I believe that education transforms lives and that all students have the right to a quality education. As a result, I have dedicated my career to providing educators and schools with the tools and resources needed to provide a quality education to *all* students." We are thrilled to be working with Catherine! See [here](#) for the bios of Catherine and all CSS staff and [here](#) for details on other openings at CSS.

Camden (NJ) GradNation Community Summit to be held in 2016. Our partners at America's Promise Alliance are working with

community organizations to convene 100 **[GradNation Community Summits](#)** across the country to help meet the GradNation goal of a 90 percent high school graduation rate by 2020. Community Summits bring together leaders from all sectors to examine local data, identify what's working and where there are challenges, and explore promising practices and proven solutions to support young people in and out of school. CSS is proud to partner with the Alliance and New Jersey Health Initiatives, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, to convene the 2016 Camden (NJ) GradNation Community Summit. We will share more details about this exciting event in the coming months.



CSS webinar features Teen PEP. Please **[join us](#)** on Thursday, November 19 from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. as we continue our ***Lunch & Learn Webinar Series*** with a close look at the **[Teen Prevention Education Program](#)** (Teen PEP), an evidence-based, school-based comprehensive sexual health program that utilizes peer-to-peer education to increase students' knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors associated with healthy decision-making. You will hear directly from educators and students who have been impacted by Teen PEP and learn how to bring Teen PEP to your own school. See **[here](#)** for a lively video made by Franklin High School (NJ) students featuring Teen PEP at their school.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel".

Daniel F. Oscar
CEO

P.S. As always, if you'd like additional information about anything you've read, simply hit reply and let me know. I look forward to hearing from you!