

NEWS

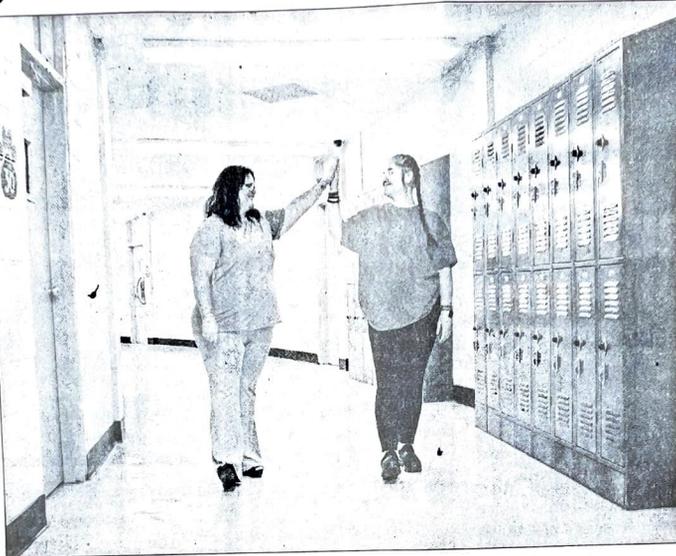
Mentoring at the heart of County CIS Site Coordinators

McNairy County Schools has two Community In Schools Site Coordinators at the Adamsville and McNairy Central High Schools. Terrell Beene; AHS, and Amy Rhymer; MCHS, have been CIS Site Coordinators for the last two school years. As a part of Communities In Schools of Tennessee (CIS of Tennessee), both Beene and Rhymer spend their time working to make a positive impact in the lives of the students they serve.

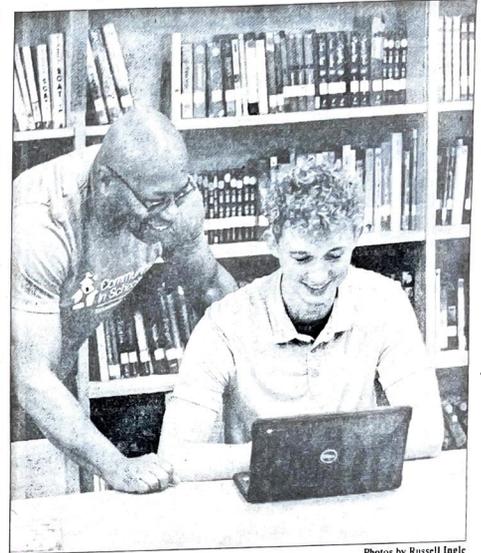
For the last decade, Communities In Schools of Tennessee (CIS of Tennessee), has demonstrated measurable success in student outcomes and today serves more than 19,000 students in 40 schools. In the 2020-2021 school year, 77 percent of students enrolled in CIS of Tennessee's programs improved their attendance, 95 percent of K-11 students were promoted to the next grade, and 93 percent of seniors graduated from high school. Beene and Rhymer's role though often goes beyond the scope of their job description, and that's okay as long as it helps the students at their respective campuses.

"The importance of a Site Coordinator in the school is honestly immeasurable," said Tiffany Gilliam, CIS Tennessee West Tennessee Program Manager. "CIS Site Coordinators are more than just student support. They provide an infinite amount of wrap-around services that include school staff, administration, parents/guardians and the community. Having everyone working toward the same goal, student success is always a good thing."

"The Site Coordinator also brings with them a level of compassion and empathy," Gilliam continued. "CIS Site Coordinator's work towards removing barriers that students, families, and school staff face that hinders the student from being successful. I am honored to have Amy and Terrell as Site Coordinators in the McNairy County School System. We have made great strides towards student's success through being a new



Communities In Schools of Tennessee (CIS of Tennessee) has two Site Coordinators in the McNairy County School System; Amy Rhymer; McNairy Central High School, and Terrell Beene; Adamsville High School. Both are working to make a difference in the lives of students.



Photos by Russell Ingle

program three years ago and then working through the pandemic. During COVID Amy and Terrell were crucial to the schools operations. They stayed in contact with families, delivered meals, and provided families with sanitation and basic needs supplies."

"Now that we are back in school, the Site Coordinator's are hard at work keeping students and staff engaged, monitoring attendance, providing basic needs items such as food and clothing to ensure students have everything they need to come to school and be successful," Gilliam added. "Josh Shipp said, 'Every Kid is ONE Caring Adult Away from Being a Success Story.' We discuss often how the CIS Site Coordinators role in the schools reflects that for some students. The Site Coordinator becomes the 'ONE' trusting and caring adult for some of their case managed students. Site Coordinators are daily making a positive impact in the schools with their work. Their

roles are more than just important, there necessary."

"Obviously, we hope to build relationships with them so that they feel comfortable around us, but for someone else to notice it, surely makes me feel good," said MCHS CIS Site Coordinator Amy Rhymer. "I think that especially since COVID, since our roles have transitioned more towards basic needs and Social-Emotional learning, the relationships that we have made with students have strengthened. For some students, it's hard to sit in class and learn when they are worrying about whether or not they will have enough food to eat or whether or not they will have time to study for a test when they have to go home and help repair their roof so that the water doesn't leak through and they will have a warm, dry place to sleep."

"If we look back at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, both food and shelter are at the foundation," Rhymer continued. "If those needs

aren't met, then the student can't attend to needs higher up on the pyramid. By helping with those needs, we are able to build strong, lasting relationships with our students. We also have the availability to meet with students throughout the day as their schedule allows to work on some of their social-emotional needs. We are able to spend that extra time with students that the teachers would love to get to spend with them if their schedules would allow for it. We also check up on students after they have graduated to see if they are on track with the goals that they have set for themselves and offer any assistance if they need it. We also check in on them just to say hello because after all, Communities in Schools is just a big family, and we want make sure that our family is doing well and succeeding."

AHS CIS Site Coordinator Terrell Beene loves his work with students and being a positive role

in their lives.

"I don't see working as a Site Coordinator a job," said Beene. "Helping kids to be successful is a passion for me. I am blessed and honored CIS chose me for this position."

"A student knows who cares about them," Beene added. "It's our job to gain their trust and a relationship before we can try to solve any of their problems. There are many students that walk the hallways with smiles on their face, but deep inside they are hurting with pain. The type of pain that consists of no food, heat or lights in their home, some are the head of the household. They are working long hours, taking care of their brothers and sisters and going to school. Some student lives at home without any parent or with grandparents. There is no way a student can be focused at school."

"As a CIS I have the availability to meet with students throughout the day as their schedule allows,

to help with any needs they may have," said Beene. "We are able to spend time with students that teachers would love to get, but are unable to spend with them. We also keep in touch with the students after graduation to help them stay on course with their goals."

"I want to thank my support team; Principal Steve Killingsworth, Administration staff, counselors, school nurse, teachers, cafeteria staff and custodian staff for helping me to identify those students that's need our support," said Beene. "This program couldn't be successful without the help of Principal Steve Killingsworth and my support team. My goal is to help every student I can to graduate from high school and be a successful citizens in this world."

For more information about Communities In Schools of Tennessee, visit www.cistn.org.