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Communities in Schools Names Dr. Lori Rodgers Recipient of Education Partner Award for Outstanding Leadership and Student Advocacy in Bibb Schools

Macon, Ga. – October 18, 2022 – Communities In Schools® (CIS™), the national organization that works inside schools empowering all students to achieve in school and succeed in life, announced the recipients of its 16th annual *All In for Students Awards*. Bibb County School District Assistant Superintendent Dr. Lori Rodgers has been chosen as this year's *Education Partner Award* recipient for her 11 years of partnership with Communities in Schools of Central Georgia and her two decades of leadership and advocacy for students in Georgia schools.

“Dr. Lori Rodgers has led collaboration with the federal GEAR Up initiative in Bibb County School District to provide increased college and career readiness opportunities for students who had no prior awareness and access. Through her leadership and advocacy, graduation rates lifted by 26 percentage points and more than 1,000 of those students continued to be served in college,” said Taryn Collinsworth, Chief Executive Officer of Communities in Schools of Central Georgia. “She coordinated a successful return to school after COVID-19 school closures and facilitated the committed \$1.2 million for school years 2022 and 2023 in support of the work of CIS of Central Georgia. This includes: providing positive behavior supports; attendance programming; academic support; clothing for students and families; stocking school supply closets; and making referrals for eyeglasses, food housing, employment, family mental health support, and counseling with parenting teens to continue their education.”

The *All In for Students Awards*, created in 2007, honor the exemplary dedication of CIS staff, educators, community partners and CIS alumni, who go all in for students, empowering them to stay in school, graduate and go on to brighter futures. The awards ceremony will be held in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the annual Communities in Schools' annual Leadership Town Hall on October 18, 2022.

“It is an honor to receive the All In for Students Award from Communities in Schools,” Dr. Rodgers said. “The award's name exemplifies our daily goal of advocating for all students every day. The path to success may look different for each student; however, supports like those provided in partnership with Communities in Schools ensure that all students can graduate and be college or career ready.”

Dr. Lori Rodgers

Dr. Lori Rodgers serves as the Assistant Superintendent of District Effectiveness and Federal Programs for Bibb County School District. Dr. Rodgers has established that the primary goal of her division is to align the District's support systems and determine innovative programming and initiatives to maximize student growth and achievement. Her scope of work consists of leading a division comprised of more than 20 district-wide programs, including Title I; School Improvement; Family Engagement; Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE); W.S. Hutchings College and Career Academy; and Before and After School Programs. Under Dr. Rodgers' leadership, the division also provides professional development to district and school-based leaders to lead and support their school improvement goals effectively. This work has led to several national and state historical recognitions, including two schools being named National Title I Distinguished Schools and receiving commendation by the United States Department of Education for developing a model for student engagement.

As an instructional leader, she guides the District in building a high-performance culture for students and staff through the development and facilitation of the Bibb County School District Continuous Improvement Process (CIP), which involves all 38 schools, programs, and District departments. In addition, Dr. Rodgers leads the Bibb County School District - School Administration Management Project, which helps district and school administrators, along with academic coaches, in utilizing data to reflect on their practice and become more effective instructional leaders.

After the unprecedented 2019-2020 school year, Dr. Rodgers was appointed to the Georgia Governor and State School Superintendent's K-12 Restart Working Groups, which assisted Georgia's K-12 schools in planning for a safe 2020-2021 school year. With the knowledge she gained as a member, Dr. Rodgers was able to organize the District's COVID-19 reopening plan. In an effort to continue ensuring students and staff remain safe and healthy, Dr. Rodgers partnered with the Bibb County Health Department to organize COVID-19 staff vaccinations. She also led a district team coordinating with the Georgia Department of Public Health to provide COVID-19 testing in schools.

In addition to overseeing multi-million-dollar federal Title grants, Dr. Rodgers serves as the District's manager for the United States Department of Education - American Rescue Plan funds, which total more than \$160 million. Dr. Rodgers is deeply rooted in the success of Bibb County students. Her enthusiasm for the 3E (Enrolled, Enlisted, Employed) Initiative resulted in founding a first-in-the-state partnership with Macon-Bibb WorkSource Georgia's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for Youth Program Georgia. This opportunity ensures career coaches in Bibb have the knowledge and understanding to expose high school students to career pathways and occupational skills. As a result, students gain stackable credentials and are equipped with three career-ready tools upon graduation: academic skills, employability skills and technical skills.

Increasing CTAE enrollment, establishing long-lasting community partnerships, and focusing on strategies for student leadership has been paramount for Dr. Rodgers. In 2021, the Georgia Department of Education recognized the Bibb County School District for having a CTAE graduation rate of 99.21 percent, which was higher than the state's CTAE graduation rate. This accomplishment was made possible by providing students with internal and external real-world work experiences, such as students working within the District's student-led credit union. With less than 10 student-led financial institutions in Georgia, Dr. Rodgers and the CTAE leadership partnered with MidSouth Community Federal Credit Union to open a student-led credit union within the college and career academy.

Dr. Rodgers has been a panelist for the Brustein & Manasevit Washington, D.C., Spring Forum regarding federal grants management. She has presented at the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) Summer Conference on continuous improvement, the Georgia Cognia (AdvancED) Conference sharing Bibb's accreditation process, and the Georgia Federal Programs Conference regarding student performance and academic growth. She has keynoted for Renaissance Learning, Inc., global professional learning forums centered around accelerated learning. In addition, Dr. Rodgers has served as a Cognia External Review team member for several school districts seeking reaccreditation and as an Associate Lead Evaluator.

As the President of the Bibb County Education Foundation and the organizer of the Bibb County Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (REACH) Scholarship Program, a needs-based mentorship and scholarship program, Dr. Rodgers has led the effort in raising nearly \$100,000 for student scholarships and school-based projects. Her civic and educational affiliations include serving as a board member for Communities in Schools of Central Georgia, Keep Macon-Bibb Beautiful Commission, Macon Area Habitat for Humanity, Renaissance Learning Advisory Board, and Vice Chair of the Girls Coordinating Council. She is a Governance Board Member for W.S. Hutchings College and Career Academy and a member of the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce - One Macon Talent and Education Committee. She serves on the Board of Directors' Nominating Committee for the Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia. Dr. Rodgers is currently serving on the Mayor's Literacy Alliance to establish a Certified Literate Community Program in Macon-Bibb.

Dr. Rodgers is a 25-year veteran in education with 16 years of central office administrative leadership. Her PreK-12 and higher education experiences include being an elementary teacher, college admissions representative, college instructor, director of assessment, gifted education, human resources, Pre-K, professional learning, policy, and federal programs, as well as the Executive Director of Special Programs and Title I. She has completed the District Office Professional Development Program and the Superintendent Professional Development Program with the Georgia Association School Superintendents Association. She is also a member of Leadership Macon Class of 2004 and has earned the Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt certification.

Dr. Rodgers holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from the University of Georgia, a Master of Science in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. in Educational Policy Studies from Georgia State University. Dr. Rodgers and her husband, Ronald, are the parents of two children, Ryan, 15, and Londyn, 13.

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About Communities In Schools

Communities In Schools® (CIS™) is a national organization that ensures every student, regardless of race, ZIP code, or socioeconomic background has what they need to realize their potential in school and beyond. Working directly inside more than 2,900 schools across the country, CIS connects students to caring adults and community resources that help them see, confront, and overcome the barriers that stand between them and a brighter future. Together, CIS and partners build a powerful change movement made up of peers, students, and alumni committed to building an equitable path to education for future generations. Follow CIS of Central Georgia on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CISofCentralGA or on social media platforms with the hashtag #AllInForKids.