



October 31, 2011

Dear Friend of CIS of Miami:

**A critical problem** – Too many young people are failing in our public schools. Most students who drop-out of school are headed for a life of sporadic employment and low wages. For them, establishing a stable family can be problematic. Yet, every year, 1.2 million students drop out of school. **That means every nine seconds a student in America loses his or her path to a better future.**

**An effective solution** – Schools alone cannot solve the complex and diverse problems faced by today's youth. Communities In Schools (CIS) is the nation's leading organization dedicated to helping students achieve in school. **The CIS Model is the only nationally proven program to decrease drop-out rates, increase on-time graduation rates, and improve math and reading performance in 4th grade students.** Thanks to our program, ninety-eight percent of students monitored by CIS as potential dropouts remained in school at the end of the 2009-2010 school year.

**Working specifically in our neighborhood schools, CIS of Miami helps thousands of students from our local communities.** Let me share the story of Jessie. Jessie, a senior at Miami Edison Senior High, had given up on any dreams of graduating high school. She was constantly late or absent from school. She was failing too many classes. She was struggling at home where there was no encouragement or value placed on the importance of education. Our Site Coordinator reached out to her and began to befriend her, gaining her trust. Every week they met. "I started with trying to identify her interests, but Jessie stated she didn't have any." Jessie did not see the point of dreaming of a future since she didn't see college as an option for her. With a lot of nurturing, facts, and assistance, the Site Coordinator began to instill a vision of the possibility of graduating and going to college. A fire was ignited in Jessie who began to hustle to change her grades, to come to school on time, to focus and try hard. To her happy surprise, she graduated and is now attending Miami Dade College thanks to the guidance of a CIS of Miami Site Coordinator who never lost faith in Jessie. "She needed permission to dream."

**You are part of the answer – Individuals receiving this letter are known for their generosity and commitment to helping those in need.** You are receiving this letter today as a result of your past philanthropic efforts, which have identified you as a potential donor. Your contribution can change the life of the kids that we serve. Please consider making your donation today to ensure that we are keeping students in school and succeeding in life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Mejia".

Elizabeth Mejia  
Executive Director

*"Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly."  
~ Langston Hughes*