SPC and Communities In Schools of the South Plains Launch Partnership to Support Higher Ed Students

SOUTH PLAINS COLLEGE
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
806.716.2212
1401 S. College Ave.
Levelland, Texas 79336

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Nov. 23, 2026

South Plains College and Communities In Schools of the South Plains Launch Partnership to Support Higher Ed Students

CIS Goes to College will help SPC students successfully transition to college.

LEVELLAND – South Plains College (SPC) and Communities In Schools of the South Plains (CIS-SP) have formed a new partnership to provide individualized services that will help SPC students through the transition from high school to postsecondary education. The CIS Goes to College initiative will connect participating students with campus and community resources that help them enroll and succeed at SPC.

With generous two-year grant funding from the CH Foundation, CIS Goes to College is adapting its Communities In Schools integrated student support model for a postsecondary setting.

CIS-SP has welcomed Rick Saldaña as the full-time site coordinator available at designated SPC locations. Saldaña will provide the same individualized support CIS-SP offers through its elementary, middle and high school case management services. That support includes checking in with students and helping them address barriers to staying in school, such as academic, behavioral and attendance barriers.

For students who already receive CIS-SP support in high school, the initiative offers a personal handoff. Their high school site coordinator can introduce them directly to the site coordinator at SPC, providing a familiar point of contact as they transition.

Prior to joining CIS-SP, Saldaña spent 27 years with Lubbock-Cooper ISD, serving as the LCISD chief of police for 15 years.

“I’ve appreciated the opportunity to connect with SPC students this semester and look forward to supporting their success,” Saldaña said.

Part of CIS-SP’s mission statement is to empower students to “achieve in life,” as earning a high school diploma is an important milestone but not the finish line. As they take their next steps, many students face challenges from completing applications to obtaining financial aid. For students from under-resourced backgrounds, these challenges are often amplified.

“Through CIS Goes to College, we're committed to helping students overcome barriers and pursue the futures they envision for themselves,” CIS-SP CEO Kenna West said. “We're incredibly thankful for South Plains College's partnership and shared commitment to ensuring every student has the support needed to succeed after high school.”

SPC’s collaboration with CIS-SP will assess students’ unique needs and connect them with the support necessary to stay on track toward their goals.

“SPC is excited about this partnership with Communities In Schools of the South Plains,” Dr. Stan DeMerritt, SPC vice president for student affairs, said. “CIS-SP has significantly assisted students in the K-12 environment and is now able to guide and mentor them through college and career training initiatives.”

About Communities In Schools of the South Plains

Communities In Schools of the South Plains surrounds students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. CIS-SP places full-time site coordinators directly on school campuses in Lubbock and surrounding West Texas communities to help students overcome barriers to learning and connect families with school and community resources. CIS-SP has earned Candid’s Platinum Seal of Transparency by publicly sharing information about its mission, finances and results. Learn more at cissouthplains.org.

-###-

Direct media inquiries to Adán Rubio, SPC public relations specialist, at 806-716-2212 or arubio@southplainscollege.edu.