



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Contact:** Kristin Eaves  
[keaves@cislosangeles.org](mailto:keaves@cislosangeles.org)  
(310) 874-9490

## **Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott Makes Historic Gift to Communities In Schools of Los Angeles (CISLA)**

**LOS ANGELES, CA., February 3, 2022** - Communities In Schools of Los Angeles (CISLA), the local affiliate of the national organization, Communities In Schools (CIS), today announced it has received a gift of **\$2.25 million** from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. This is the largest single gift in CISLA's 14-year history.

Ms. Scott's investment will help CISLA carry out its vision to break down systemic barriers that stand in the way of opportunity and success for underserved students across Los Angeles. The contribution comes at a time when the global pandemic continues to create extraordinary challenges for CISLA's students and families, including experiences of social isolation, economic crisis, stress, and trauma. It is tremendous fuel for CISLA's dedicated teams of youth development professionals, who have been tirelessly working inside schools and homes, as the sector navigates the delicate transition from responding to emergencies of the pandemic to addressing endemic issues it exacerbated.

"The pandemic has been devastating to low- and middle-income families while those at the top continue to amass historic levels of wealth. Ms. Scott's effort to redistribute her fortune sets a tremendous example and precedent for others whose abundance has the power to change the course of injustice and inequity in America," said Elmer G. Roldan, Executive Director of CISLA. "Ms. Scott's generous contribution will empower CISLA to serve more students and make sustained change in historically proud communities across Los Angeles."

Since 2007, CISLA has worked to ensure every student has what they need to succeed, regardless of race, zip code, or history of marginalization and has consistently demonstrated measurable success in student outcomes. Today, CISLA works in 14 Title I schools, primarily in

and with communities that continue to be disproportionately impacted by historical redlining, including: Boyle Heights, Pico-Union/Westlake, South LA, Watts, and areas of the Westside. In 2020-2021, CISLA served over 12,500 students, supporting 800 students and their families with intensive case management. CISLA case-managed students achieved a 100% high school graduation rate, with 80% of graduates attending college.

“We are grateful to Ms. Scott for making this tremendous gift,” said Damián Mazzotta, Board Chair of CISLA. “This highly-coveted gift reassures us that our important work is being recognized for its meaningful impact on the lives of students. We can’t wait to grow our imprint and reach in Los Angeles.”

The gift will be applied toward the efforts of CISLA’s recently completed strategic plan, supporting initiatives that were developed from lessons learned during the pandemic. The initiatives include: deepening current school partnerships, expanding services to more schools, investing in our team’s expertise, and building out capacity to advocate for sustained change on the conditions that impact our students’ access to their education. The contribution will also provide the capital for CISLA’s initiatives to strengthen operational processes, data infrastructure, and internal culture, which are driven by principles of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

This gift is part of a transformative \$133.5 million donation from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott to the Communities In Schools Network and National Office. In addition to the CIS National Office, 40 of the 110 affiliates in the CIS Network were also direct recipients of the MacKenzie Scott donation. CISLA is the only CIS affiliate in California and, as such, is the only CIS recipient of Ms. Scott’s gift in the state.

###

### **About Communities in Schools of Los Angeles (CISLA)**

*Communities In Schools of Los Angeles is an affiliate of [Communities In Schools](#), the nation's leading dropout prevention organization proven to keep students in school and on the path to graduation. Working directly inside 14 schools across Los Angeles, we connect 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, we build a powerful change movement made up of peers, students, and alumni committed to building an equitable path to education for future generations. [CISLosangeles.org](#)*