

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 26, 2017

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CSIU Announces Center for Schools and Communities Director

Camp Hill, Pa. — The Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) is pleased to announce the appointment of Shileste Overton Morris as director of the Center for Schools and Communities. A longtime leader of the Center's youth development programs, Overton Morris was appointed by the CSIU board in July.

Administered by the CSIU, the Center for Schools and Communities plays a critical role in helping education and community-based organizations serve children, youth and families across the commonwealth. Its work focuses on a continuum of efforts around early childhood care and development, social and emotional learning, positive youth development, family support and community service integration, school safety and youth violence prevention.

“Having led diverse and innovative programs in public and private institutions, Shileste has extensive expertise and experience in education leadership,” said CSIU Executive Director Dr. Kevin Singer. “Recognized as the first African-American woman to serve as a CSIU program director, Shileste also brings valuable perspective and experience to the CSIU and the Center.”

In its nearly 30 years of operation, the Center has had just two previous directors. Overton Morris succeeds Lynn Cromley, who held the position for 22 years and was instrumental in the development and exponential growth of the Center.

“Shileste will provide a seamless transition of leadership for the Center, building on its strong foundation as a statewide training and consulting organization,” said Cromley, assistant executive director and chief administrative officer at CSIU. “Her extensive relationships with partners across the state and her strong background in parent engagement, marginalized populations and issues focused on cultural competence and equity make her a great asset to the CSIU and the Center.”

“Our work helps agencies maximize their potential to impact the academic and social emotional well-being of students across Pennsylvania and the nation. I'm very proud of what we have accomplished and look forward to expanding our footprint geographically and programmatically,” Overton Morris said.

During the course of her career, Overton Morris has been recognized for her commitment to education, service and community, and serves on national, state and local boards. She is pursuing her doctorate in educational leadership at Shippensburg University. She has a master's degree in public administration and a certificate in nonprofit administration from Pennsylvania State University, as well as a bachelor's degree in communications from Temple University. She is a graduate of the education policy leadership fellow program sponsored by the Institute for Educational Leadership and possesses multiple training certifications.