

# ANNUAL REPORT 20|20 24|25





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I have the best job in the world. Every day, I get a front-row seat to watch God work in our nation’s public schools. And what a privilege that He allows us to do this together!

Much of the joy I experience comes from you—our members and donors. Here’s just one story that landed in my inbox today as I sat down to write this letter:

*Hi David, I just wanted you to know that we prayer-walked our school with a local church on Sunday and prayed in a classroom with one teacher for our students to rise up and be courageous in bringing their faith to school. Two days later, 18 middle schoolers showed up at lunchtime to that teacher’s room where we had prayed, and said they wanted to start a Jesus Club. They began planning a See You at the Pole event, which will take place tomorrow morning on our campus!*

See what I mean? What a joy it is to serve our amazing members and see God raising up ambassadors for Christ in our schools.

Looking back on this past school year, we celebrate the many signs of God’s favor as we:

- Reached an all-time high with over **15,000 members**.
- Served members through **657 Member Service Cases**, supported by our largest-ever team of consultants—all former superintendents from across the country.
- **Won our Title IX lawsuit** against the Biden Administration, protecting students and educators from gender ideology.
- Hosted **53 in-person events** nationwide, equipping more than **2,000 educators** who collectively impact over **3 million students**.
- Awarded **46 Turpen Grants** (up to \$500 each) to empower members to make a difference in their schools and classrooms.
- Trained nearly **100 leaders** at our Leadership Development Summit in Colorado Springs, sending them back in teams to minister in 25 states.

- Expanded the AWAKE Experience to Europe—with Africa and Australia next!
- Saw our *Teachers of Vision* magazine win five Evangelical Press Association awards, including two first-place honors.

Financially, God has again proven faithful, and we continue to steward His resources with integrity and wisdom. Even after raising an additional \$150,000 to fund our largest-ever Leadership Development Summit, we closed the year with a small surplus.

Looking ahead, I ask you to join us in praying for **God’s provision for expanding opportunities**. Doors are opening for Christian Educators extending far beyond what membership dues alone can support. Please pray that God will supply what is needed so we can boldly step through these open doors.

Thank you for your amazing partnership in this critical ministry. With nearly 50 million students in our public schools, my heart breaks for how many still lack the influence of an educator who serves as an effective ambassador for Christ. But the opportunity is before us. Let’s seize it—together.

*David Schmus*

**David Schmus**  
Executive Director



# Supporting & protecting our members every step of the way...

**657** TOTAL CASES  
JULY 2024 – JUNE 2025

## MEMBER SERVICE CENTER

Thousands of members trust Christian Educators with outstanding **liability coverage, job protection, and so much more.** When they reach out for help, we love to connect them with our **expert educational consultants** and, when needed, experienced attorneys for specialized support.

To better understand the impact of this work, we invite you to read our **2025 Member Service Report**, which shares real stories of how our consultants have guided educators through challenging times.



Visit [ChristianEducators.org/MSR](https://ChristianEducators.org/MSR) or scan this QR code to view our Member Service Report.



## VOLUNTEER REPRESENTATIVE NETWORK

**128**  
volunteer reps serving in  
**23**  
states across the U.S.

To get more information, access training resources, request materials, or get in touch with the Volunteer Rep Coordinator, visit [christianeducators.org/vrp](https://christianeducators.org/vrp).

## TITLE IX

In 2024, Christian Educators joined six states and a female high school athlete in **a lawsuit against the Biden administration’s unlawful attempt to rewrite Title IX.** And with the help of Alliance Defending Freedom, we won the case in January! This victory **protects schools, teachers, and students across the nation** from being forced to adopt radical gender identity policies, or face the loss of federal funding.

“We are thrilled that the judge saw these rules exactly for what they are: **a contradiction of Title IX’s text and purpose,**” said David Schmus, Executive Director of Christian Educators. “**Our members and other educators are free from any attempt by the federal government** to use Title IX to force them to say things about sex and gender identity that aren’t true and that violate their deeply held convictions.”

To learn more, visit [christianeducators.org/titleix](https://christianeducators.org/titleix).





# 2025 Leadership Development Summit... empowering our nation's most strategic influencers to be bold ambassadors for Christ in their schools...

In July 2025, approximately **90 educators from 25 states** gathered at the Glen Eyrie Conference Center in Colorado Springs for the fourth annual Summer Leadership Development Summit. United by a shared calling, they came to hear from the Lord, grow in their faith, and discover how Christian Educators equips believers to make a lasting impact in schools nationwide. Summiteers returned in teams to multiply themselves in extraordinary ways, including:

- hosting AWAKE and LIFT events
- starting teacher prayer groups or Christian clubs
- serving as CE Volunteer Representatives
- publishing uplifting articles and devotionals

This time of renewal has encouraged me to step fully into what God has called me to do in my school community and beyond. After taking time to pause, reflect, and allow God to pour into me, I feel refreshed, refilled, and more grounded in His purpose. After stripping away another layer of fear this week, I have a greater sense of faith, focus, and expectation as I begin planning events and creating spaces for community for this upcoming school year.

– Angela, member from Connecticut

To learn more about attending or supporting the 2026 Leadership Development Summit, visit [christianeducators.org/summit2026](https://christianeducators.org/summit2026).





# DON'T LEAVE JESUS IN THE PARKING LOT

LIFT (Lasting Impact Fellowship for Teachers) is an outreach ministry of Christian Educators designed to inspire Christians working in public schools through LIFT Gatherings and LIFT Groups.

LIFT Gatherings are dinner programs that connect Christian educators with other like-minded Christian educators in their area, serving as catalysts for ongoing LIFT Groups in schools that connect educators with the Lord and with each other.

Learn more at [christianeducators.org/liftamerica](https://christianeducators.org/liftamerica).

Just a few years ago, I never would have imagined hosting a LIFT Gathering. Why? Because I was one of the teachers against bringing God into public schools... But God, in His grace and humor, transformed my heart, connected me with CE, and gave me the boldness to follow His calling. He faithfully created a CE leadership team to launch a local group and host the first-ever Western PA LIFT Gathering, where 125 educators came together to be equipped and encouraged! That night revealed the beginning of an army God is raising up—one that refuses to walk in fear or isolation. If He's nudging you, too, don't hesitate. Beauty and purpose are waiting on the other side of your "yes."

– Shanna, member from Pennsylvania

## 2024 – 2025 school year

**22**  
LIFT  
Gatherings

**1,300**  
Attendees  
impacted

## 2025 – 2026 school year plans & goals

**14**  
LIFT Gatherings  
planned and **11**  
in the works

**30**  
total  
LIFT Gatherings

### 2025–26 LIFT Gathering Theme:

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

(Ephesians 2:10, ESV)



# awake<sup>✦</sup> (Ambassadors Working as Kingdom Educators)

We are overflowing with excitement and gratitude as we witness the extraordinary ways God is moving through the AWAKE Experience—a one-day, transformational event designed to reconnect and awaken Christian educators to their callings as ambassadors for Christ. This year has been nothing short of remarkable, marking a pivotal chapter in our journey as AWAKE expands its reach across the globe.

CE leaders ministered to 109 educators from 18 different countries during our first international AWAKE Experience at the EurECA conference in Albania. Hearts and minds were transformed, and 30 educators from 12 nations stayed to receive facilitator training.

## 2024–2025 school year

- 31 | AWAKE Experiences
- 880 | Educators
- 20 | Different states

## Goals for the 2025–2026 school year

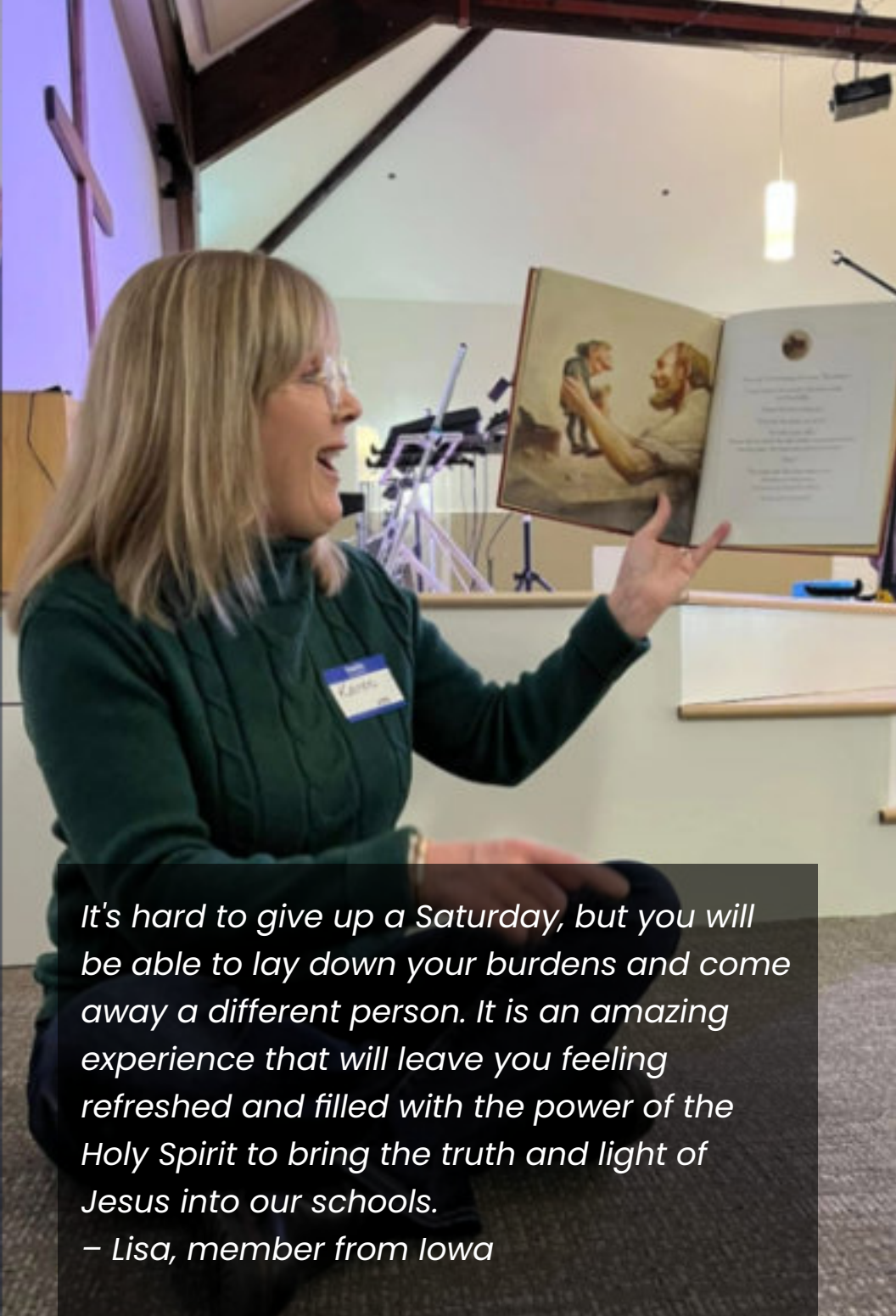
- 36 | AWAKE Experiences
- 1,000 | Educators
- 27 | Different states



While every AWAKE Experience leaves a powerful imprint on those who attend, we’ve realized that the greatest “fruit” often blossoms in the facilitators themselves—leaders who can confidently guide and launch teams in their own states and beyond.

**164 trained AWAKE Facilitators**  
(including international facilitators)  
as of June 1, 2025.

Learn more at [christianeducators.org/awake](https://christianeducators.org/awake).



*It's hard to give up a Saturday, but you will be able to lay down your burdens and come away a different person. It is an amazing experience that will leave you feeling refreshed and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit to bring the truth and light of Jesus into our schools.*  
– Lisa, member from Iowa

# RISE^UP

In October of 2024, more than **13,000 Christian educators** from both public and private schools attended the Rise Up Summit—a free, online conference designed to equip, encourage, and empower teachers to live out their faith in the classroom. Presented by Teach 4 the Heart and Christian Educators, the Rise Up Summit continues to be a vital source of inspiration and professional development.

*The summit has reminded me to see my teaching job as an opportunity to serve Christ and show Him to my students through my words and actions.*  
– Victor, 2024 attendee

Thanks to generous support and strategic partnerships with organizations like Liberty University, RightNow Media, and the Herzog Foundation, we delivered engaging content, including:

- Rise Up Kickoff with Brant Hansen: [How to Be Unoffendable in a Culture of Offense](#)
- Leslie Rob: Cultivating Connection: [Bridging the Gap Between Teachers and Students](#)
- Lee Strobel: The Case for Christ in Education: [Planting Seeds in Students' Lives](#)

The Rise Up Summit is just one way we invest in educators beyond our membership. Your generous support allows us to offer this event at no cost—impacting thousands and expanding our reach far beyond expectations.

Learn more at [riseupchristianeducators.com](https://riseupchristianeducators.com).

The theme, “**Rise Up For Such a Time as This,**” encouraged and equipped educators to courageously embrace their God-given callings in a challenging cultural landscape.

FOR SUCH A TIME  
*as this*

## Uplifting Content

encouragement and inspiration, rooted in biblical truth...

### Free to Teach

Free to Teach is a monthly column, written by Christian Educators Executive Director, David Schmus, that guides readers through current public policy issues related to education from a biblical perspective.

To subscribe or read past columns, visit [christianeducators.org/blog/free-to-teach](https://christianeducators.org/blog/free-to-teach).

## Daily Devotionals

Written by our members for our members, our Daily Devotionals are delivered via email every Monday through Friday morning throughout the school year.

To learn more about how to subscribe or submit a devotional for publication consideration, visit [christianeducators.org/dailydevotionals](https://christianeducators.org/dailydevotionals).

Total subscribers: 8,148 subscribers  
(20% increase from last year)

NEW

## Ask A Principal Anything

Our NEW, bimonthly Ask A Principal Anything blog, authored by Christian Educators member and secondary-level principal Jessica Cabeen, answers teachers' tough and unfiltered questions about administration with honesty, transparency, and a heart for unity.

To subscribe or submit your burning (anonymous) questions, visit [christianeducators.org/askapincipal](https://christianeducators.org/askapincipal).





# Teachers of Vision

## Christian Educators' award winning print and digital magazine

Every issue of our magazine is fueled by a passion for sharing our members' stories, offering powerful glimpses of the many ways God is working through them. **Do you have a story to tell?** We'd love to share it! We love being the megaphone for your ministry!

Here's a look at some of our members' inspiring stories we featured this past year:

1. "Trusting God for a 152" by Elaine Coleman
2. "Redeeming Public School Curriculum" by Emma Johnson
3. "The Beauty of Teaching" by Rhapsody Jordan-Parisi
4. "A Beautiful Moment" by Cat Guerra
5. "Love Your Neighbor...Even the Difficult Ones" by Jenni Lou Jackson
6. "How Should I Respond?" by Lesley Blake
7. "Kingdom Perspective" by Jesica Glover

To learn more, visit [christianeducators.org/tov](https://christianeducators.org/tov).

**Total print subscribers:** 4,192

**Total digital subscribers:** 16,579

## 2025 EPA Awards



### Awards of Excellence



Christian Ministry  
Digital Publication



Christian Ministry  
Print Publication



### Higher Goals



Standing Column:  
"Teaching with Purpose"  
by Dave Stuart Jr.



General Article: Long  
"Open Your Books to Page 37"  
by Mike Hicks



First Person Article:  
"Trusting God for a 152"  
by Elaine Coleman

Christian Educators Members with Coverage can receive a print version in the mail upon request. The digital version is available free of charge to everyone.





## Forrest Turpen Legacy Grant

Christian Educators Members with Coverage are invited to apply for a grant of up to \$500, which can be used in various ways to share the love of Jesus in their K-12 school. To learn more, visit [christianeducators.org/turpengrant](https://christianeducators.org/turpengrant).



Former CE Exec. Dir. Forrest Turpen

**46 grants awarded in 2024**  
**Totaling \$21,752**

### 2024 grant funds supported...



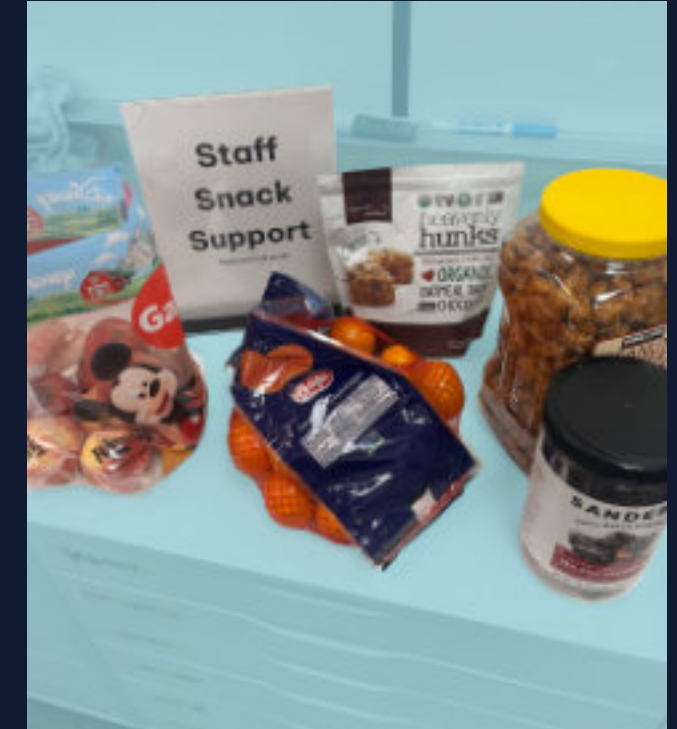
#### An FCA basketball tournament and gospel opportunity

Thank you so much for your generous grant, which made our FCA 3-on-3 basketball tournament possible. **Your support allowed us to purchase 75 shirts for participants and leaders, provide pizza for everyone who attended, and bring in a guest speaker who powerfully shared the Gospel with students and teachers,** many of whom may have never heard it before! – Kaleb, member from Oregon

#### A snack support ministry for a teacher's colleagues

Receiving the Turpen Grant has been a true blessing, especially during a year of low staff morale. I was able to start a "snack support ministry" in my classroom, stocking drawers with snacks and a mini fridge with drinks for staff to enjoy anytime throughout the day. **This simple offering has become a source of joy, connection, and encouragement, giving colleagues a reason to smile, take a break, and feel cared for** instead of complaining about the difficult circumstances.

– Emma, member from Minnesota



#### Blankets made by students for Project Linus



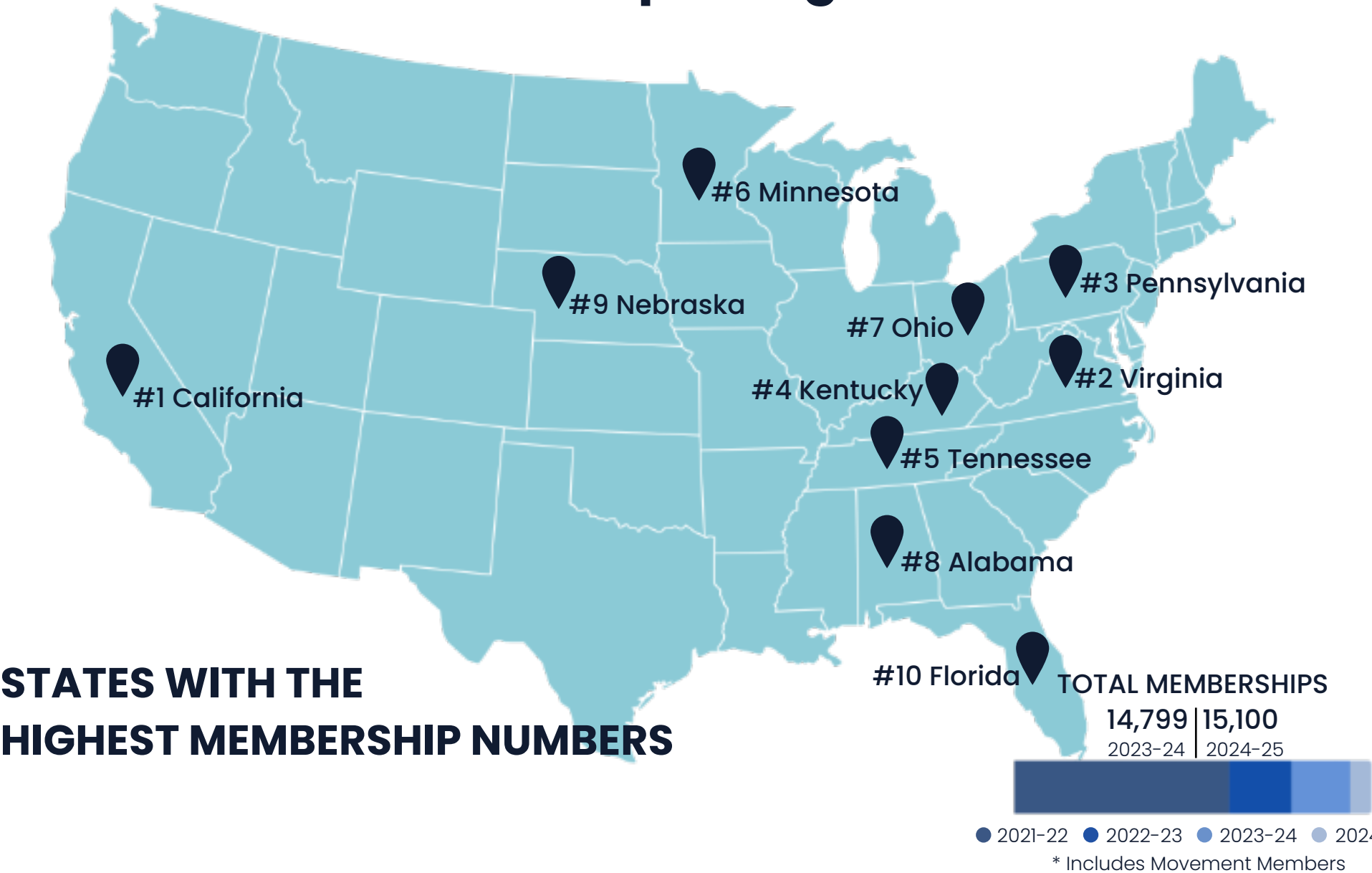
Because of your invaluable support, my 2nd and 3rd-grade service club students have been making blankets **for children in hospitals, shelters, or with incarcerated parents.** Their service has opened my students' hearts to learn the power of kindness and experience the joy of serving others. The excitement has even inspired more students to join the club!

– Jennifer, member from Illinois

**...and so much more!**



# 2024-2025 Membership at a glance...



## Board of Directors as of June 2025

**Dr. Joe Gillentine**  
**Board Chair**  
Former Superintendent of Schools  
from Yorba Linda, CA

**Dr. Heidi Hoefs**  
**Vice Chair**  
Education Program Director  
& Adjunct Faculty at University  
of Northwestern  
from Roseville, MN

**Jenn Meng**  
**Secretary**  
Elementary School Teacher  
from Elyria, OH

**Dr. June Hetzel**  
**Treasurer**  
Faculty Emerita (former Dean) of  
School of Education at Biola  
University  
from Yorba Linda, CA

**Dr. Clint Elliott**  
**Attorney, Pastor**  
from Crestwood, KY

**Richard Nicholson**  
Retired Educational Consultant  
from Rogersville, MO



## Financial Report

As you can tell from this report, the power of **God is moving mightily in public schools, and we get to be a part of it** through His people who are at work there. They teach, counsel, coach, clean, and lead while carrying Jesus into school with them every day. As evidence, our “Educator Encouragement Tour” of live events continues to spread across the nation. The annual leadership development summit activates a new class of engaged volunteer leaders every year. AWAKE International has burst onto the world stage, including three continents and counting! As you have just seen in this report, the Lord has not only done this, but so much more!

Of course, what this has to do with finances is that He has been faithfully providing for all of this as well through membership dues and through the generosity of donors. **A healthy tension between the growth of ministry opportunities and funding sometimes exists. As a result, we are realizing a greater opportunity to lean into fundraising.** In this next season, we plan to get better at sharing the vision and inviting people to join through giving into this amazing work of serving those who serve Jesus in public schools.

Thank you for your continued support, prayers, and partnership in this Kingdom work.

**The best is yet to come!**

*Jere Vandewalle*

**Jere Vandewalle**  
Director of Operations



**Revenue**

Membership Fees	\$1,558,967
Contributions	\$187,704
Seminars & Meetings	\$78,767
Other Revenues	\$191,987
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,015,635</b>



**Expenses**

Program	\$1,579,795
Management & General	\$385,422
Fundraising	\$31,567
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,996,784</b>



## Inspired by the mission of Christian Educators?

We invite you to join us in empowering educators to thrive as ambassadors for Christ in public schools.

### Ways to support the ministry:

#### 1 Give Today

Make a **one-time donation** or become a **monthly supporter**.

You can even designate your gift to specific aspects of our ministry, such as LIFT Gatherings, AWAKE Experiences, or the annual Leadership Development Summit.



To learn more,  
visit [ChristianEducators.org/Donate](https://ChristianEducators.org/Donate).

#### 2 Leave a Legacy

Already a supporter? Thank you!

Have you considered remembering Christian Educators in your estate plan as well? It may be the most transformative gift you'll ever make to this extraordinary ministry.



To learn more,  
visit [ChristianEducators.org/EstatePlan](https://ChristianEducators.org/EstatePlan).

## Closing Notes

Thank you for taking the time to read this year's Annual Report. Like me, I'm sure you are in awe of the incredible work God is doing through the Christian Educators ministry. As this year's Board Chair, I've had the privilege of witnessing firsthand how clearly the Lord is guiding and blessing our efforts. We hold fast to the belief that **God has a divine purpose for every Christian teacher**, and we remain steadfast in our mission to help them flourish as ambassadors for Christ in schools across the United States and beyond.

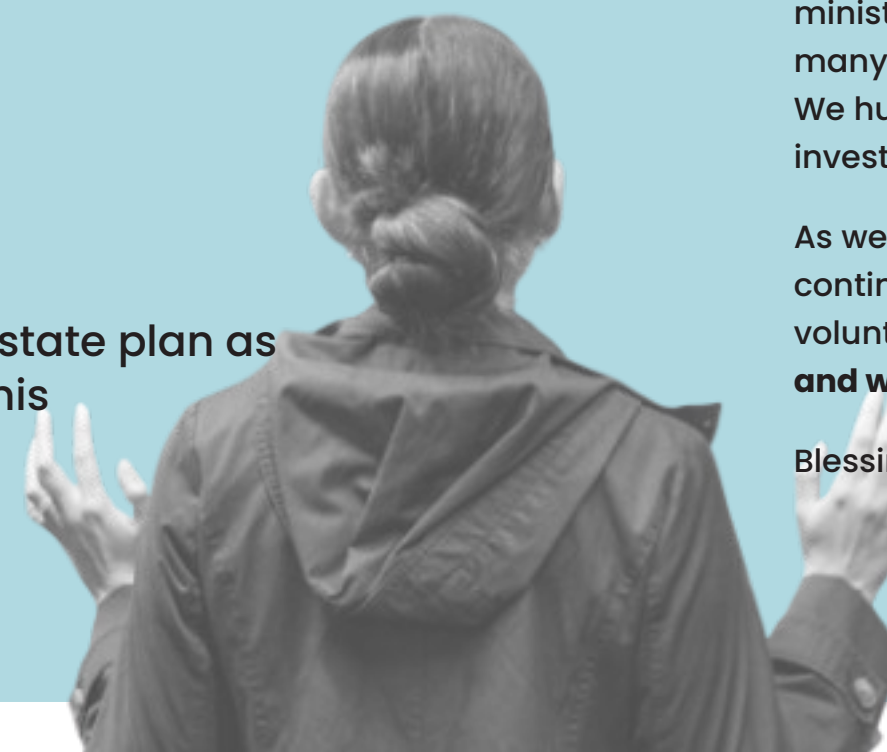
**To our members:** You are the "salt and light" (Matthew 5:13-14) in your schools and communities. In today's world, the need for Christian educators is greater than ever. The harvest is plentiful, and your presence may be the only stability some students experience. May each day in the classroom be an act of worship as you shine Christ's love and truth. Stay anchored in Him, and remember, your faithfulness is making an eternal impact. It is our honor to walk alongside you, providing prayer support, daily encouragement, legal counsel, training, and community.

**To our donors:** Thank you for generously supporting this mission. Your gifts support the many aspects of our ministry, including Turpen Grants, LIFT and AWAKE events, our annual summer Leadership Summit, and so many more. Christian Educators is truly a frontline ministry, and your contributions make a tangible difference. We humbly ask you to continue praying and giving, individually or with your church, and watch your investment multiply the number of educators and students impacted for Christ.

As we look to the 2025-2026 school year, I encourage educators to lead with courage, grace, and love. Let's continue growing together as we live out the Great Commission in our schools (Matthew 28:19-20). To all who volunteered, provided financial resources, prayed, or shared their story—**thank you. Your partnership is vital, and we are deeply grateful.**

Blessings,

**Dr. Joe Gillentine**  
Board Chair





We are  
**Christian**  
Educators.

*Let them see.*