

Christian
Educators

Annual Report

— 2023 - 2024 —





Protecting & Serving

Equipping & Encouraging

Stewarding God's Resources



From the Executive Director

Thank you to our faithful members and donors! I am proud to submit this annual report to you, demonstrating how your resources have been stewarded by Christian Educators to extend God's Kingdom into the lives of educators and our schools.

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 was an amazing year! The Kingdom advanced through ministry initiatives like AWAKE (pg. 10) and LIFT (9), both seeing significant growth in impact and number of events. We took a huge risk by doubling the size of our 2024 Leadership Development Summit (11) in Colorado Springs and committing to raise \$150,000 above and beyond membership dues to pay for it. God was faithful! The money was raised and the summit was wildly successful, with **130 leaders from 23 states leaving equipped and inspired to carry the Christian Educators ministry back to their communities.**

Our membership grew by over 5% in 2023-24 (6), and we successfully navigated the first membership dues increase in 10 years. Our overall **revenue increased by 14%**, while we decreased expenses by 3%, resulting in a reversal of last year's intentional deficit spending (21).

We continued to encourage and protect our members serving mostly in public schools with nearly 700 member service cases throughout the year. Additionally, **we took the bold step of partnering with Alliance Defending Freedom to sue the Biden administration over their illegal rewrite of Title IX (7).** Our Volunteer Representative Network (12) has grown to reach 21 states. We also launched a new column called "Free to Teach (14)," which keeps our members informed about public policy issues related to Christians serving in education.



Attendees from an AWAKE Experience at Biola University in March of 2024.

The Rise Up Summit (13) continues to be a blessing to about 10,000 educators yearly. *Teachers of Vision* (15) magazine just keeps getting better, winning six awards from the Evangelical Press Association this year, and inspiring educators all over the nation. Our Daily Devotionals (14) have seen a significant increase in both the quality and diversity of authors (including many of you!) and remains one of our most popular resources.

The best part is that all of these efforts are bearing fruit and changing lives. I love this testimony from one of our members in Kentucky:

I am so blessed to be a part of Christian Educators and to have been transformed by the truths as relayed through your direction to members. My life is completely different because my faith is so completely different. The Lord has used you all to anchor my foundation even stronger to Himself and to help me cast off what is not of Him. Through your efforts, especially AWAKE and the Summit, the Lord has made me unrecognizable to the person I was just years ago. And the biggest blessing is that He has completely changed my workplace and my relationship with my principal...I now have twenty colleagues who have identified themselves as believers and gather with me monthly for fellowship and encouragement. If you had asked me before if I even thought this was possible, I would have said, "No way!"

I can't thank you enough for your critical partnership in what God is doing through Christian Educators! As you read this annual report, I pray that His joy grows in your heart as you celebrate His faithfulness with us. And if He speaks to you about increased partnership with us in 2024-25, let's talk!

Blessings,



David Schmus
Executive Director



Protecting & *Serving*

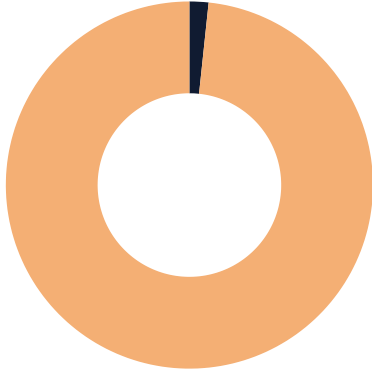
■ HOW WE SERVE OUR MEMBERS ■



Membership Growth Report 2023-24

PAYING MEMBERS

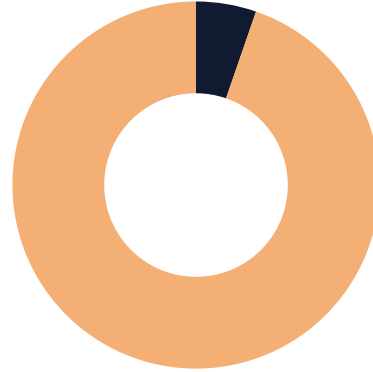
7,795 | **7,933**
2022-23 | 2023-24



*includes all paid memberships

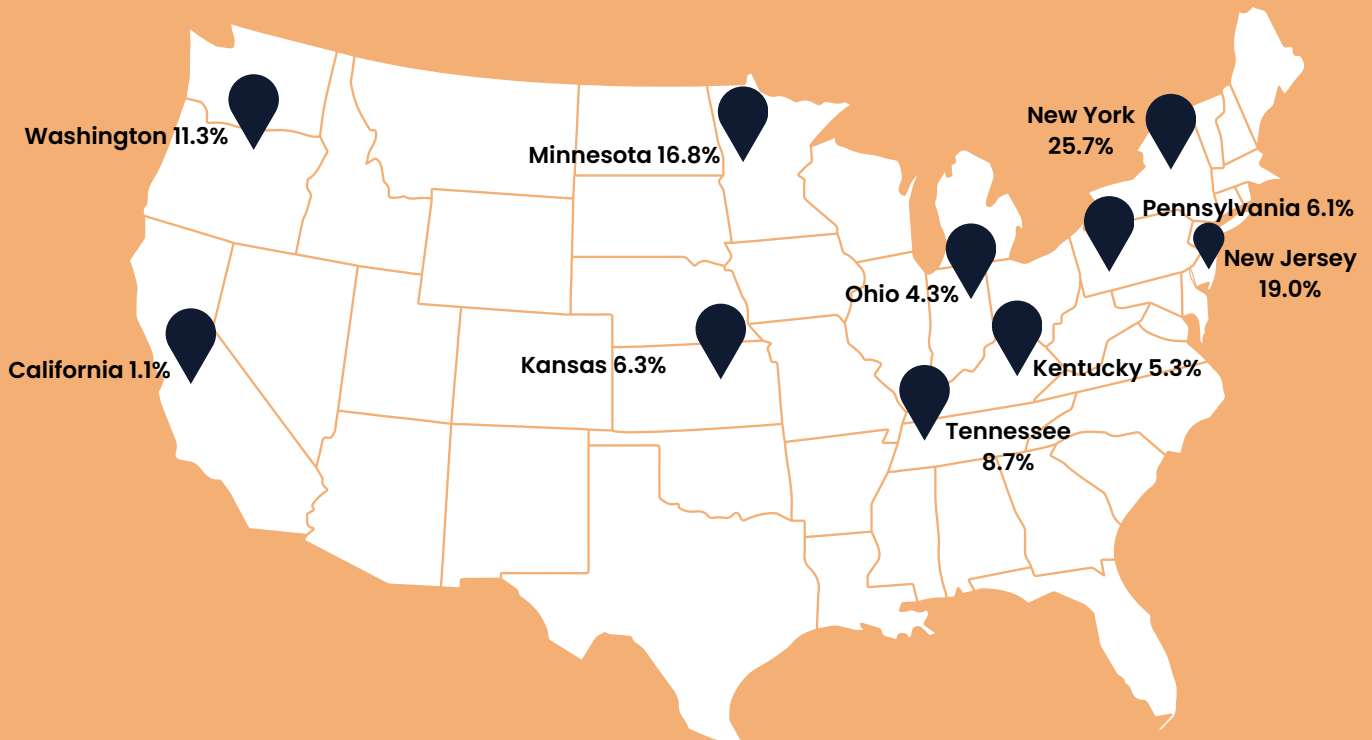
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

14,012 | **14,799**
2022-23 | 2023-24



*includes Movement Members

HIGHEST INCREASE OF INSURED MEMBERS BY STATE





TITLE IX

This year, we believe God is inviting Christian Educators to extend our efforts to protect our members and educators nationwide through a critical legal challenge.

Since 1972, Title IX has protected women and girls from discrimination in both K-12 and higher education. For most of those 52 years, there has been no confusion about what it means to be a woman or girl.

However, the Biden administration published rules in April establishing a new interpretation of Title IX, scheduled to go into effect on August 1. The new rules require public schools across the country to implement policies recognizing fluid “gender identity,” or risk losing federal funding. This means that students who express a gender identity inconsistent with their sex must be given access to sex-specific private places like restrooms and locker rooms and must be addressed by names and pronouns inconsistent with their sex. Males who identify as female would also be allowed to compete on women’s sports teams. Educators who have sincerely held philosophical and religious objections to these policies may be forced to violate their consciences or lose their jobs.

At Christian Educators, we believe that God has made us male and female and that these rules are a violation of our God-given identities as His creations. Additionally, the emerging research clearly demonstrates that mental health outcomes are better when individuals are reconciled to their biological sex. As a result, we actively encouraged our members to submit public comments opposing the rules last year.

Once the rules were published, with the help of Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), Christian Educators joined a lawsuit by six states in May to overturn the new Title IX rules. Thankfully, we won an injunction against the rules going into effect in those six states in June, and the US Supreme Court upheld that injunction in August. Five other similar cases have also won injunctions, meaning that the rules are now blocked in 26 states!

Those cases will now proceed in federal district court, and we anticipate a final victory that will block these rules in all 50 states, protecting our members and educators nationwide from being required to participate in the gender confusion of students. (Unfortunately, state laws requiring these policies will not be affected.)

Please join us in praying for these legal cases, but also for the many students who are struggling with identity confusion, and the educators called to love them with compassion and truth.

To stay up to date on our efforts to stop the Biden administration’s Title IX rewrite, visit christianeducators.org/titleix.

Equipping & *Encouraging*

■ HOW WE EQUIP CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS ■



LIFT (Lasting Impact Fellowship for Teachers) America 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.

A LIFT Gathering Testimony

After one of our friends received an invitation to a LIFT Gathering, a group of faith-filled colleagues and I drove about 30 miles together to see what it was all about. At the event, we worshipped, listened to an impactful message from LIFT America Director, Mike Hicks, and we cried! The whole evening was so validating and encouraging. We quickly realized that our area desperately needed the community and resources of Christian Educators! Less than 4 months after that first LIFT Gathering, we held one of our very own and had over 50 educators attend—what a beautiful night it was!



In the days following the event, so many teachers reached out to express that the event was just what they needed to be refreshed! Since our LIFT Gathering, two LIFT Groups have started to meet in our area and more are still in the works. There is so much power in knowing that you are not alone; that taking God with you into your classroom is powerful; and that there is an organization supporting you. — Jill, member from Texas

2023-2024 school year:

16 | **LIFT Gatherings** impacting
an estimated: **928 attendees**

Looking ahead to 2024-2025:

12 | **LIFT Gatherings** planned and
10 more in the works

Click here to learn more about the 2024-25 theme, **“Following the Shepherd of my Soul,”** inspired by John 10:3-4 & Psalm 23.

AWAKE (Ambassadors Working as Kingdom Educators) Experience—a one-day, transformational event designed to reconnect and awaken Christian educators to their callings as ambassadors for Christ. Learn more at christianeducators.org/awake.

An AWAKE Experience Testimony

Before I attended an AWAKE Experience, I was in a deep depression about work. I felt like my whole world was collapsing professionally. Every time I would step into the school building, my blood pressure would skyrocket to the point that I needed to be put on blood pressure medication. The school year ended and I prayed about what to do for the following year. I didn't feel like I could go back and face the same circumstances. Meanwhile, I was receiving texts and emails about an AWAKE Experience happening in Ohio. So, I signed up to go because I knew I needed something to change.

*At AWAKE, God revealed many things to me. First, He revealed that **I am an ambassador** of Christ in my school and that if I had changed jobs, I would not interact with students as much as I do in my current job. He convicted me to repent of my anger and prideful feelings, rest in the arms of Jesus, and let the Holy Spirit work within me to create a person who walks as an ambassador for Christ—especially for those students who may never otherwise hear about Him. He encouraged me that in my present position, I have the ability to create an environment of hope and encouragement for the entire district.*

*Since attending AWAKE, I have felt the overwhelming power of the Holy Spirit guiding me each day. He has kept me driven and thriving in my position. I am off the blood pressure medication and my blood pressure and overall health have been normal. I am eager to start the day and be the ambassador of Christ I know I was created to be. In the last 15 years of teaching, this has been my favorite year. Even my students have noticed a huge difference in me. AWAKE helped me see that **I can shine brightly when I stay in the presence of God** and I will continue on this path to encourage others and bring hope to students and staff alike.*

— Kristyn, member from Ohio

2023–2024 school year:

730 | educators **27** | AWAKE Experiences

17 different states—plus the Czech Republic!

Looking ahead to 2024–2025:

800+ | educators **30** | AWAKE Experiences

18 different states—and additional countries in Europe



Leadership Development Summit

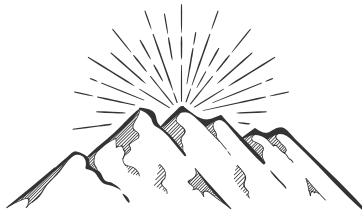
empowering our nation's most strategic influencers...

In July 2024, over **130 educators from 23 states** gathered to hear from the Lord and learn more about Christian Educators at the third annual summer Leadership Development Summit at Glen Eyrie Conference Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.



Summiteers:

- learned to overcome fear
- received spiritual renewal
- discovered rich community
- experienced a perspective shift



And left as leaders empowered to:

- be bold ambassadors for Christ
- lead local events such as AWAKE and LIFT
- start prayer groups
- become Volunteer Representatives

"My life has been changed. The time at the summit was the most transformational experience of my life outside of the day I invited Jesus to be the Lord of my life. I felt as though I was wearing one set of glasses before the summit, but was handed a new pair of glasses with a different prescription while at the summit—and now I can see the whole world and all aspects of my life, including my role as educator, and God so much clearer."

— Rhapsody, member and 2024 summiteer from NC

To learn more about attending or supporting the 2025 Leadership Development Summit, visit christianeducators.org/summit2025.

Volunteer Representative Network

partnering with members to spread the word...

I joined Christian Educators about five years ago after I felt the Lord nudging me to search for an association that supports Christians in education while also providing professional liability insurance and job protection. I quickly realized that other educators in my district who didn't know about CE were missing out on a huge blessing. After connecting with CE leadership, I was introduced to the Volunteer Representative Network and began sharing the mission of CE with my colleagues. My district now has 16 CE members and a CE Volunteer Representative in all five of our elementary schools, our middle school, and our high school. I can't wait to see how God is going to continue moving in my school community through CE! — Jennifer, member from KY

Just two years after its inception, the CE Volunteer Representative Network has grown to **114 Volunteer Reps serving in 21 states...**

Getting started is simple—and Christian Educators Volunteer Representatives can choose the level of involvement that best fits their availability and passion, including:

- Distributing membership flyers and information to colleagues or newly hired teachers on an individual basis
- Setting up information tables at new teacher orientations or district meetings
- Forming a team to host a LIFT Gathering or AWAKE Experience
- Sharing our Church Resource Kit with their church's pastoral staff

Regardless of the level of involvement, Christian Educators provides the prayer, support, and resources needed along the way. Visit christianeducators.org/vr.



In 2023, nearly **10,000 educators** engaged with the Rise Up Summit—a free, annual online conference for Christian educators serving in both public and private schools presented by Teach 4 the Heart and Christian Educators. The 2023 theme, “Rise Up and Shine,” encouraged educators to boldly represent Christ in their schools and classrooms.

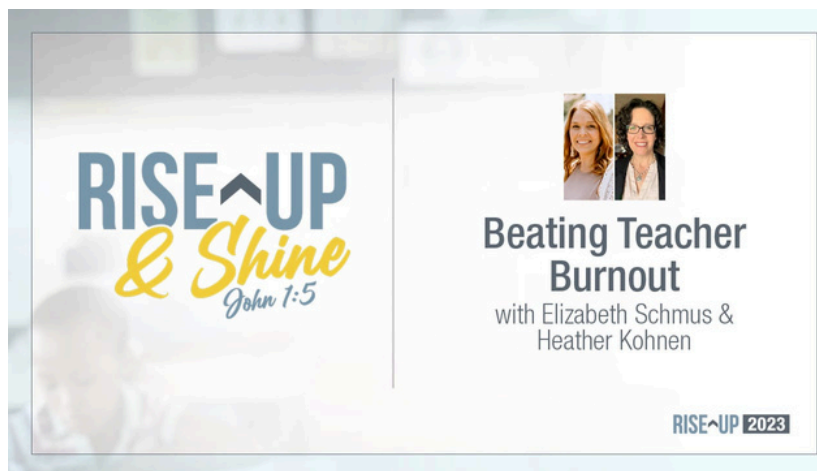
“The highlight for me was renewing my love for teaching and refocusing on the high calling of being a teacher in a public school. It’s easy to get discouraged in teaching, but when we remember that God is calling us to do this and will empower us to do it—it really renews my purpose!”
— Sheila, 2023 Rise Up attendee

We partnered with organizations like Colorado Christian University, Gateways to Better Education, and Alliance Defending Freedom to offer a variety of high-quality, engaging sessions.

Most Popular Sessions:

- Rise Up Kickoff with Mark Batterson: **3 Powerful Words to Build Relationships & Shine for Christ**
- Dave Stuart Jr: **Motivating Students to Care about Learning**
- Jill Miller: **The Discouragement Antidote: Finding Our Worth in Christ**
- Linda Kardamis: **Strategies to Save Time & Find Balance**
- Elizabeth Schmus and Heather Kohlen: **Beating Teacher Burnout**

Click here to watch
“Beating Teacher
Burnout.”



Your support and generosity make it possible for us to offer the Rise Up Summit for free to any and all educators. It is one of the many ways we “pay it forward” and seek to extend our reach far beyond just our members.

To learn more about Rise Up, visit riseupchristianeducators.com.

Uplifting Content

"This was exactly what I needed to hear. Our first day for staff is tomorrow and I was already dreading the start. The other night at church, I asked for special prayer for strength and guidance to help me get through each day and week. I know that God will get me through no matter what happens. Thank you for confirming this!" – Kathy, daily devotional subscriber and member from WV

Daily Devotionals

If you are not already one of our **6,547 daily devotional subscribers**, visit christianeducators.org/dailydevotionals to subscribe and receive them daily via email!

Are you looking for an opportunity to share your testimony or a truth God has revealed to you with other educators? Check out our [writer's guidelines](#) and [submit devotionals](#) at any time to devotionals@christianeducators.org.

Read this year's most popular Daily Devotional, **"Kindness And Truth"** by Jere Vandewalle.

SavED by Grace blog

Our bimonthly SavED by Grace blog, authored by Christian Educators member and secondary-level principal Jessica Cabeen, encourages educators to live out their faith through inspiring stories, helpful tips, and powerful biblical insights.

Visit christianeducators.org/savedbygrace or contact jcabeen@christianeducators.org.

Read this year's most popular post, **"It Came out of Nowhere"** by Jessica Cabeen.

Free to Teach

For over a decade, former CE writer Jonathan Mitchell faithfully guided our members through a biblical perspective on public policy issues related to education. His "Washington Watch" column sadly ended with his retirement in 2021. However, **beginning in the Fall of 2023, CE launched a new monthly column, "Free to Teach,"** that seeks to fulfill this critical need. "Free to Teach" is typically written by Christian Educators Executive Director, David Schmus, but also includes occasional guest authors. Be sure to check it out at christianeducators.org/blog/free-to-teach.

Read this year's most popular post, **"The Jesus Way"** by David Schmus.

Teachers of Vision

Christian Educators' award winning print and digital magazine



Total Print Subscribers: **4,038**
Total Digital Subscribers: **14,801**
(Increase of about 800 subscribers)

We want to hear from our members...

If you have an inspiring testimony, biblical truth, or practical tips you would like to share to encourage or equip other educators, contact us at tov@christianeducators.org.

Christian Educators member and author of this year's most popular article, **Julio Vega**, shares how **publishing his testimony in TOV has impacted his school community**:

"I actually shared the magazine and article with my principal. He ended up scanning the magazine cover and article and emailing it out to all the staff. I'm praying our staff members look up Teachers of Vision and Christian Educators, and that interest is sparked and a conversation starts."



Visit christianeducators.org/tov to read "Kidney Brothers," by Julio Vega, and other encouraging TOV content.

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

2024 Awards

Evangelical Press Association



Department
"Director's Letter"
by David Schmus



Christian Ministry
Digital Publication



2-Page Spread Design
"Trauma-Sensitive
Schools: Environments
that Support Healing and
Success" designed by
Dan Stelzer



Titles

- A Masterpiece with a Purpose
- "I Want a Transgender Support Plan."
- Lost and Found



Cartoon

"Homework Hack"
by Steve Delmonte

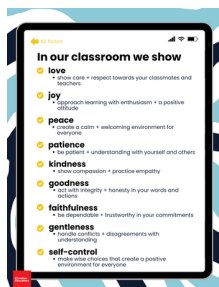


Award of Merit

Christian Ministry Print
Publication

Christian Educators Merch

sharing the message through apparel and accessories...



To view more products, visit merch.christianeducators.org.

Stewarding *God's Resources*

CELEBRATING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS



Student Engagement

Christian Educators supports & protects approximately **1,500** student members nationwide.

CE's Goal: encourage future educators to intentionally consider their **mission and purpose** as a Christian and an educator as they enter their professional careers.

Student Engagement Specialist, Michelle Keso, communicates the valuable spiritual support and legal coverage offered through **full-time membership** in the following ways:

- Monthly text messages highlighting the benefits and blessings of CE membership
- Our new Student Center webpage, christianeducators.org/student, offering:
 - An insightful video exposing the truth about unions
 - A CE/NEA comparison flyer
 - A student member testimonial video

Our 30 affiliated universities experience a host of benefits, including eligibility for their students to apply for our annual Thiesen Scholarship.

Ray Gene and Joanne Thiesen Scholarship for Educators

Hear from one of our 2024 scholarship recipients:

*I chose to apply for the 2024 Christian Educators Ray and Joanne Thiesen Scholarship because I know the importance of my role as a future Christian educator. As Christian educators working in a fallen world, **we may be the only glimpse of Christ** that our students or coworkers ever see in their lifetime. This reinforces the utmost importance of our role as educators in the public school system, as we have been given the chance to expose those who may never hear the gospel to the saving grace and love of Jesus Christ.*
— Michala Crooks, 2024 Thiesen Scholarship winner



Visit christianeducators.org/thiesen to learn more.

**Interested in becoming a CE Affiliated University?
Contact Michelle Keso at mkeso@christianeducators.org.**

Forrest Turpen Legacy Grant

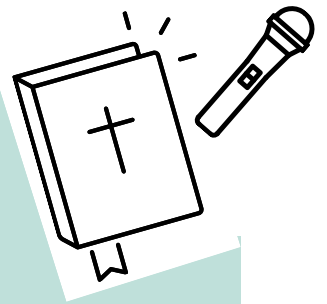
shining the light of Jesus in schools...

Christian Educators Members with Coverage are invited to apply for a grant of up to \$500 that can be used in a variety of ways to share the love of Jesus in their K-12 school. Visit christianeducators.org/turpengrant.

CE awarded **54** grants in 2023, totaling **\$23,958.84**

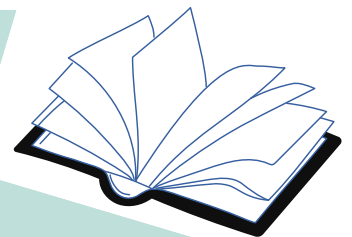
Hear from a few 2023-2024 grant recipients...

*Thank you again for your generous support! This grant helped us purchase a sound system, microphone, and speakers to help run our high school Faith Club more efficiently at both on and off-campus events. Additionally, our club purchased lanyards and wristbands which have helped our student members promote our club on our high school campus. We began the school year averaging about 25 students per meeting and **now we are averaging around 45 students every Friday. We are looking forward to seeing our club continue to grow!** – Lori, member from California*



*I am so incredibly thankful for the Turpen Grant. I used the funds to help enhance my monthly LIFT group at my school by decorating, providing food, and doing some kind of activity or devotion. I also purchased a statue of a praying woman for everyone in my group to keep in their classrooms to remind them that Jesus is with them. I also sponsored an event for our entire staff on Valentine's Day with cupcakes and a display letting them know they were loved and appreciated by Christian Educators. There were many smiles throughout the day! **The staff felt appreciated, encouraged, and remembered.** – Trish, member from Florida*

*I want to express my gratitude for the generous grant! Your contribution allowed me to acquire a valuable collection of children's books for my K-2 special education classroom. All of the books focus on building social and life skills and **will help me teach friendship, empathy, communication, organization, and problem-solving skills to my little learners!** Thank you for all you do to support and champion Christian educators! – Abbey, member from Nebraska*



Financial Report

Board of Directors as of June 2024

Dr. June Hetzel Board Chair

Dean of School of Education at Biola University
from Yorba Linda, CA

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. Joe Gillentine Treasurer

Former Superintendent of Schools
from Yorba Linda, CA

Dr. Clint Elliott

Attorney, Pastor
from Crestwood, KY

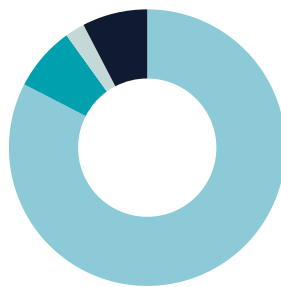
Richard Nicholson

Retired Educational Consultant
from Rogersville, MO

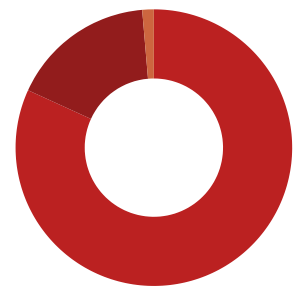
When people consider joining Christian Educators, they often ask: **Where do my membership dues go?** We love this question because the answer is that it all goes toward the ministry of protecting, serving, and supporting educators in their mission! And as you can see from this report, your investment is bearing fruit. As a faithful contributor, we hope you see yourself not only as a member or donor but also as an investor and partner in this important kingdom-building work.

We are happy to report that this work was accomplished on budget for Fiscal Year 2024, both in revenue and expenses. It was a year of steady growth in membership and ministry and we are so grateful. But most of all, **we are grateful for the opportunity to partner with you as you serve in your ministry** in our nation's public schools. It is our delight to come alongside and support you.

Revenue



Expenses



Membership Fees	\$1,516,835	Program	\$1,502,507
Contributions	\$138,153	Management & General	\$309,241
Seminars & Meetings	\$42,211	Fundraising	\$24,813
Other Revenues	\$139,999	Total	\$1,836,561
Total	\$1,837,198		



Closing Notes

Dear Christian Educators members and donors,

Looking back at the 2023–2024 school year in review, I am amazed at the kindness and provision of the Lord. As a board member, I am encouraged by the integrity and fiscally sound operations of Christian Educators and grateful for those who are leading so well. Furthermore, it is both a privilege and a delight to have a front-row seat to watch the empowerment of countless Christian educators as they fulfill the mission of spreading God’s love and truth in our schools in the United States and abroad.

Over the last year, I have attended and facilitated AWAKE events, participated in the week-long summer Leadership Development Summit, and served with Christian Educators in Europe. Coming alongside these educators has helped me see the power of God at work through Christian Educators. **Through the AWAKE events, I have witnessed God provide educators with a better understanding of their identities in Christ. The Leadership Development Summit offered a glimpse into the explosion of educators embracing their callings and believing that God will use them to further His Kingdom.** I have also had the opportunity to serve on behalf of Christian Educators in Czechia, Poland, and Portugal. Through these experiences, I have learned that the challenges in education are universal, but so is the passion to serve!

Serving as an ambassador for Christ at school requires wisdom that can only be gained from walking daily with the Lord. For this reason, I hope you will take advantage of the many rich resources highlighted throughout this annual report as you embody the work the Lord is sharing with us.

As we look ahead to the 2024–2025 school year, I encourage you to take risks and lead well, supporting each other and your students with God’s love and grace. May we continue to learn and grow together, as we are equipped to live out the Great Commission in our schools (Matthew 28: 19–20).



On behalf of Christian Educators, I thank you for your involvement this past year. Whether you were a faithful member, volunteered, provided financial resources, shared your story, or prayed, you were a crucial part of this ministry. We are grateful for your partnership!

Blessings,

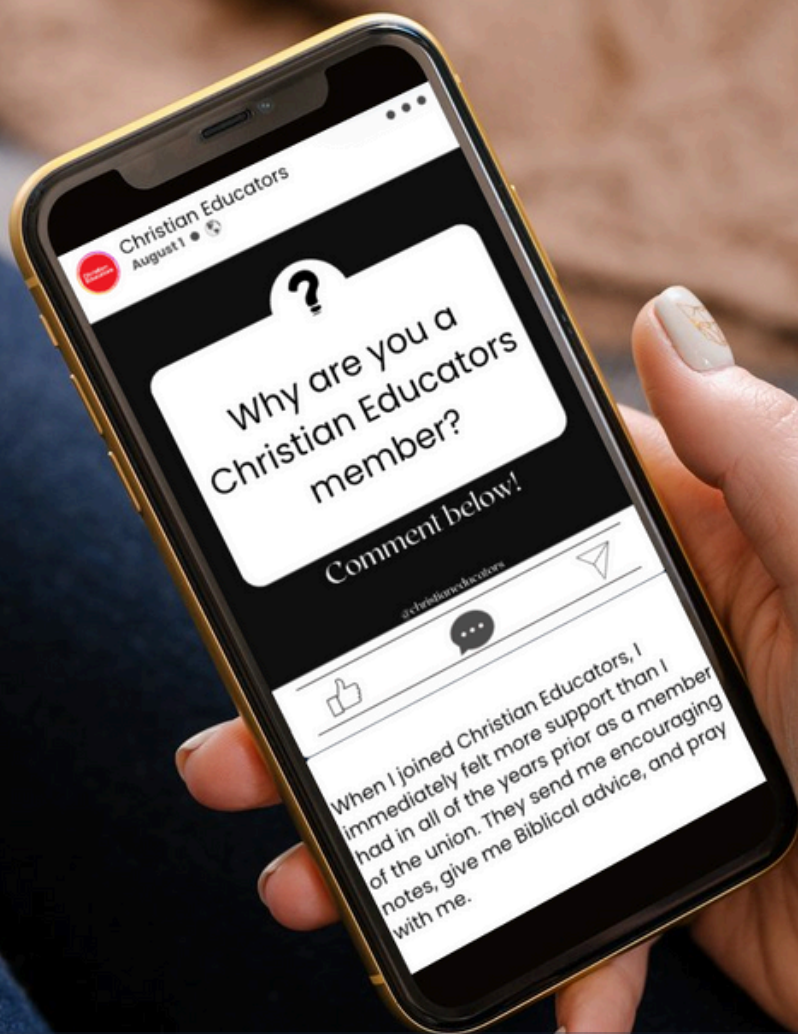
Heidi Hoefs

Christian Educators Board Vice Chair

I was about 16 years into my career when someone from my church told me about Christian Educators. The Lord gently convicted my heart that night to sever ties with the NEA. I could no longer continue with an organization that uses my money to promote a political agenda against my beliefs. The day I called Christian Educators, someone prayed with me and immediately helped me set up my membership. I wept! This is not just an association or liability coverage, it is an uplifting community in support of being the light of Christ. This is by far the best professional decision I have made. The peace and encouragement that I have gained is exponential. You are my people.

I originally joined for the liability insurance...it is 2 times the amount my state union offers for less than a quarter of the cost. But then I started attending their events like AWAKE, LIFT, book clubs, etc. These events renewed my passion for teaching and connected me to teacher-besties from across the nation! Christian Educators is so much more than liability insurance! ❤️

I joined Christian Educators as a student teacher. I knew when I was going into teaching that I would never join a union because of their liberal agendas. I thankfully became a teacher after the Janus decision, so I couldn't be forced to pay money to the union. It is important to me to be part of an organization that will back up my beliefs!



Add to the conversation by [clicking here](#)

We are
Christian
Educators.

Let them see.