

December 2023

Strengthening, Growing, and Advocating for Christian Schools in Iowa!

New School & Accreditation Services

IACS' Outreach Division has created a space for new school startups to receive training and support from experienced administrators. We walk school start-up teams through the process from start to finish, providing mentoring, legal and insurance resources, and the opportunity to be a part of the IACS School Leader cohort.

In addition to working with new school start-up teams across the state of Iowa, we also provide accreditation support



to existing schools seeking accreditation. One of the requirements for schools to be able to accept ESA funding from parents is that the school must be accredited. IACS wanted to meet this need through creating a series of modules. IACS is serving as the "boots on the ground" for the accrediting agencies, and schools are benefiting from an "only in Iowa" process! We have officially partnered with three independent accrediting bodies, overseeing the initial accreditation process for Christian schools in Iowa. Currently, IACS is working with 19 schools total, 13 brand-new school start-ups and 6 existing schools seeking accreditation.

The Lord has opened many doors and provided resources for our organization to grow and help meet the need to provide more choices in Christian education for families and students to access across the state. Questions about starting a new school or pursuing accreditation in the state of Iowa? We have answers! Email our Outreach Director Dr. Josh Bowar at josh@iowachristianschools.org.



[Learn more about our New School Services at our website!](#)

Survey Says....

Yes, that is indeed a classic game show reference in case you were wondering, bonus points if you remember the name! Starting last fall, the Iowa Association of Christian Schools (IACS) started an annual cycle of surveying our schools to get year-over-year data on the state of our membership and insight into the successes and challenges they are facing. This year, we sent surveys to 74 schools with 40 responding.

There have been significant changes in the educational environment for our schools this year. With the passing of the "Students First Act" in January 2023, the year was spent shifting gears as schools sought to implement Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) with fidelity and to navigate a quick turnaround on rules and changes in their business offices. We have summarized a few key takeaways for purposes of this newsletter. A more comprehensive summary can be found on our website.

School Facts and Demographics:

- The smallest school completing the survey enrolled 23 students this year and the largest enrolled 1,165.
- Average enrollment was 208.
- Average enrollment growth this year was 12.8% vs 4.5% last year.
- 30% of schools report having a waiting list for one or more grade levels.
- 35% of schools report plans to add grade levels or sections over the next 1-2 school years.



We believe that Iowa's Christian schools are similarly positioned with our Catholic and nonsectarian school counterparts in seeing increased stability with ESAs and increased demand based on both ESAs and factors that have contributed to enrollment growth since 2020. It's an exciting time for education in the state of Iowa. Thank you for being a huge part of this movement!

Read more about our survey results [here](#).

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LOOKING FOR SCHOOL OPTIONS FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

- Come and learn about PK-12 education alternatives around Des Moines and the surrounding communities. There will be information on private schools, homeschooling, and other options.

Activities For The Kids:

- Super heroes
- Scavenger Hunt
- Photo Booth
- Snacks and drinks
- Face painting



Sponsors and Partners

Thank you to the following organizations who financially support IACS. We are grateful for meaningful partnerships as we continue our mission to strengthen, grow, and advocate for Christian schools in Iowa.

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