

Heartland Christian School

Year In Review

2026 Edition

Vol. 3

Praising.
Praying.
Persevering.

Including the 2025-26 Financial Report



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Heartland Christian School

Leadership & Governance

PRESIDENT

Jason Norbo

LEADERSHIP

David James
Director of Operations

Betsy LaRiccia
K1 Principal

Ami Lightly
2nd-6th Grade Principal

Dr. Nicole Muckridge
Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Elijah Stambaugh
Chief Academic Officer

SCHOOL BOARD

Bethany Beck
Secretary

Jonathan Drokin
Vice President

Pastor Matt Flegal
Member

Jason Norbo
School President

Pastor Steven Rhodes
Member

Dr. Peter VandeKappelle
President

Bob Wilson
Member

Heartland Christian School is fully accredited through the Ohio Department of Education.



Heartland Christian School

Our Purpose



Mission

Heartland Christian School exists to assist parents in the training and equipping of their children to achieve the fulfillment that God intends for their lives.

Vision

The vision of Heartland Christian School is to develop graduates who are:

- Biblically grounded
- Academically qualified
- Thoroughly equipped

to fulfill Christ's calling upon their lives by providing a unified team that facilitates a comprehensive program of excellence within a nurturing environment.

Assisting Parents

6th-7th Grade Transition Meetings

We continue to build stronger partnerships with families by creating new avenues for engagement throughout the secondary years.

Conversations with families during the transition from 6th to 7th grade have proven especially meaningful, creating space to deepen relationships and invite renewed commitment to the mission we share.



Heartland Christian School

Portrait of a Graduate

OUR SIX C'S



Christ-Centered



Collaboration



Creativity



Character



Communication



Critical Thinking

OUR CHRISTIAN COLLEGE PARTNERS



Heartland Christian School

Career Compass Day



Far more than a traditional career day, this hands-on event engaged every student, K–12, in exploring career pathways through interactive booths led by local professionals, parents, and alumni. Students didn't simply listen—they researched, presented, taught younger grades, and completed a Career Passport documenting their interests and next steps. Along the way, they gained clarity about educational pathways, meaningful exposure to real-world vocations, and a deeper understanding of how faith and the 6 C's shape their future work. Career Compass Day reflects Heartland's commitment to equipping students with both vision and practical direction for the road ahead.

Summer STEM



At Heartland Christian School, we are continually seeking ways to enrich our students' educational experience. One important area of growth is expanding STEM opportunities, giving students more hands-on exposure to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Hosting our first STEM Summer Camp marks an exciting milestone—an important step forward in cultivating critical thinking skills, curiosity, innovation, and future-ready learners within our school community.

Teachers and leaders are engaged with the Ohio STEM Learning Network (OSLN) through Teacher's Academy, Fostering STEM, and Bridge to STEM - statewide programs hosted by Battelle in Columbus. They are weaving hands-on science, engineering, and design thinking into everyday lessons. Camp Invention extends that same curiosity into the summer.

Camp Invention®

June 22-26, 2026

Heartland Christian School

Presidential AI Challenge



Heartland Christian School is celebrating an extraordinary achievement as Evan Stambaugh and Brody Conaway, under the leadership of Chief Academic Officer Elijah Stambaugh, were named Ohio State Champions in the 2026 Presidential AI Challenge—a prestigious national competition sponsored by the White House, U.S. Department of Education, and National Science Foundation. Competing in the Technical Solution track, they designed and built an innovative AI-powered system to strengthen communication between classrooms and families, demonstrating not only technical excellence but a deep understanding of the science behind their work. Their months of dedication, collaborative spirit, and willingness to engage the broader school community—from presenting to faculty to sharpening their project with peers—reflect the very best of Heartland. As they advance to regional competition, this accomplishment stands as a powerful testimony to our commitment to developing students who think deeply, solve meaningful problems, and use their God-given gifts with purpose.

Our New School Crest



Historically, a crest is an identity marker—something carried into battle, displayed with honor, and passed down across generations. It represents shared convictions, shared commitments, and a shared mission. This emblem is designed to do exactly that for our school family. It gives us a common language for excellence under the Lordship of Christ.

When students wear the crest, families display it, and faculty and staff represent it, we are declaring something profound:

- We belong to Christ.
- We pursue truth.
- We cultivate courage.
- We strive for excellence.
- We equip leaders.
- We serve others.

Heartland Christian School

Not Just a Logo

THE CROSS

The cross occupies a primary quadrant of the shield because Christ occupies the center of our life and learning. Everything we do flows from the finished work of Jesus. He is not an accessory to education; He is its foundation. The cross reminds us that our ultimate aim is not merely academic achievement, but redeemed hearts and Christlike character.

THE BIBLE

The open Bible represents the authority and sufficiency of God's Word. Scripture is our standard for truth, wisdom, and discernment. In every classroom and in every discipline, we approach learning through a distinctly Christian worldview, seeking to see all truth through the lens of Scripture.

THE WORLD

The globe symbolizes both mission and stewardship. We educate students not simply for personal success, but for faithful influence. Our graduates are called to engage the world with conviction, competence, and compassion. This image reminds us that we are preparing ambassadors for Christ who will serve locally and globally.

THE LION

The lion represents strength, courage, and leadership. It reflects our school mascot and calls our students to boldness rooted in biblical conviction. Scripture frequently uses the lion as a symbol of strength and royal authority. We desire graduates who stand firm in truth, lead with integrity, and walk confidently in their identity in Christ.

THE LAUREL LEAVES

Historically, laurel leaves symbolized honor, victory, and excellence. In our context, they signify the pursuit of excellence for the glory of God. We are not driven by worldly comparison, but by faithfulness. The laurel wreath reminds us that discipline, diligence, and perseverance matter because they reflect the character of our Creator.

THE MOTTO

“Educating and Discipling.” These two words define our calling. Education shapes the mind; discipleship shapes the heart. Academic rigor without spiritual formation is incomplete, and spiritual enthusiasm without intellectual depth is insufficient. Our mission is holistic formation—developing students who love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Teacher Spotlight



Dominic Mariano
5th and 6th Grade Teacher

Bringing enthusiasm and a heart for discipleship to the classroom, Mr. Mariano finds great joy in cultivating perseverance and humility in his students. “Yes, we are growing in our knowledge and understanding of math and history,” he says, “but even more importantly, we are growing in our character and maturity.” His love for Heartland and his delight in celebrating student successes are evident in all he does.



Amy Reed
Secondary Math and Bible Teacher

Mrs. Reed initially planned to pursue a career in public education but found her true purpose at Heartland, where she has dedicated nearly 30 years of service. She treasures the opportunity to weave faith into everyday instruction and is particularly grateful for moments when she can openly pray with students who are facing challenges. Passionate about developing responsible and respectful learners, Mrs. Reed emphasizes that a genuine relationship with Christ is the foundation that gives these qualities their true value.

Teacher Spotlight



Kristin Shope
Kindergarten Teacher

Mrs. Shope is known for her warm, supportive spirit and intentional, Christ-centered teaching. She fosters a culture of gratitude in her classroom, helping students recognize and give thanks for God’s work in their lives through daily practices like gratitude journaling, and a creative gratitude tree. Her love for music also brings joy to her students as they sing and worship together. Mrs. Shope’s faithful work is shaping students into both eager learners and grateful followers of Christ.



David Suarez
Secondary Bible Teacher

Mr. Suarez is passionate about helping his students grow—not only in their deeper understanding of Scripture, but in their confidence to recall and share it boldly. “I want to make sure everyone is forced to confront challenges such that they know what they believe and why they believe it,” he says. Through debates and evangelism skits, Mr. Suarez’s energy, purpose, and commitment make a lasting impact, and we are so grateful for the way he pours into our students each day.

Counselor Spotlight



Sydney Tuggle
K-8 Counselor

This year, Sydney faithfully supported student development by strengthening transitions through parent meetings for incoming 7th graders, building executive functioning through Habits classes and professional development, and fostering a positive school culture through social-emotional support and conflict resolution. She contributed to student success through her work with IEPs and AEPs, NHS involvement, and coordination of the upcoming graduation ceremony, while also investing beyond the classroom by coaching girls basketball and leading student activities.



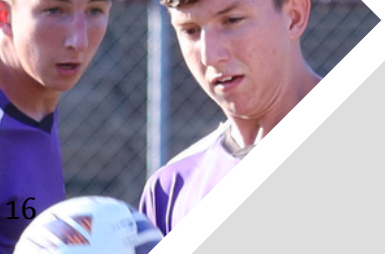
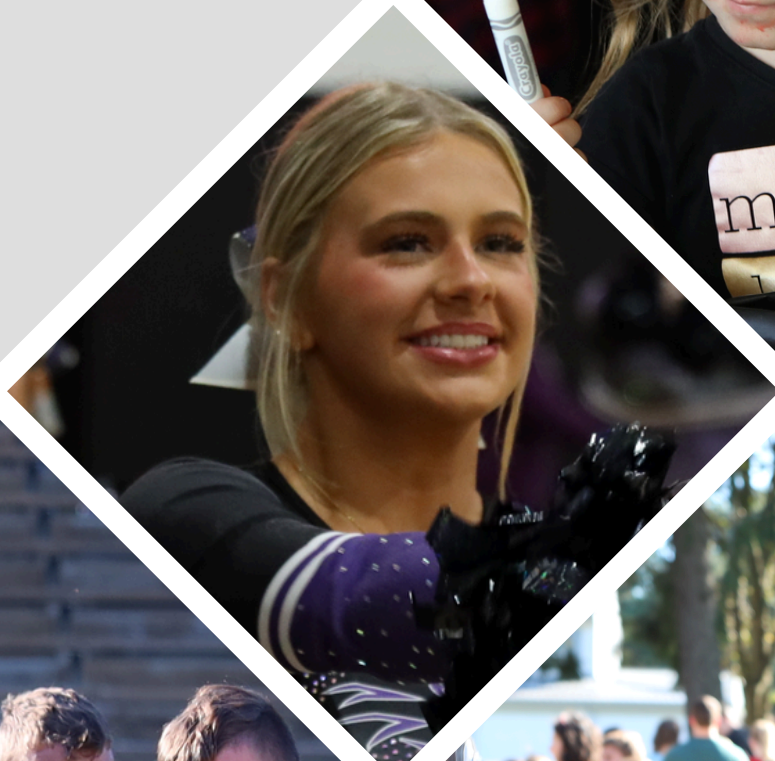
Rasheeda Williams
9-12 Counselor

This year, Rasheeda faithfully embraced the essential work of high school counseling—expanding college access through CCP information, college visits, career fairs, and PSAT/ACT coordination; strengthening student transition through Freshman Orientation; and cultivating leadership through NHS service and upcoming induction and graduation ceremonies. Committed to ongoing professional growth and holistic student development, she also invested in students beyond the classroom as a Junior High Volleyball assistant coach.

Campus Highlights



Campus Highlights



Campus Highlights



Campus Highlights





United in Support

Throughout Ariana's battle with Ewing's Sarcoma, the Heartland Christian School community has sought to love her and her family not only in word, but in deed and in truth. Through bake sales, raffles, benefit games, and creative student-led fundraisers, the school has raised over \$8,000 to help ease financial burdens and demonstrate that Ariana does not fight alone. When treatments kept her from the classroom, HCS provided specialized instruction so she could continue learning from home or the hospital. Above all, Heartland has faithfully lifted her up in prayer, entrusting her to God's sustaining grace and embodying the love of Christ every step of the way. In April, we joyfully celebrated with Ariana—she has been declared cancer-free!

“...let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”

Heartland Christian School

Mini-Term 2026

Heartland students stepped outside the classroom through Mini-Term experiences designed to deepen learning, strengthen community, and serve others—all to the glory of God.

8TH GRADE – DAYTON & KENTUCKY

Students explored God’s creation and American innovation through visits to the Creation Museum, Ark Encounter, and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, along with a memorable team-building experience at Dave & Buster’s.



9TH GRADE – WASHINGTON, D.C.

In our nation’s capital, students engaged history firsthand at Arlington National Cemetery, the Museum of the Bible, and Mount Vernon. They toured the U.S. Capitol, met with Congressman Michael Rulli, and served the local Latino population at “Casa Chirilagua.”



GUATEMALA MISSION TRIP

Eighteen students served at Shadow of His Wings Children’s Home in Monjas, Jalapa, investing in meaningful ministry and experiencing lasting spiritual impact.



LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Students discovered regional history and culture through visits to the Louisville Slugger Museum, Frazier Museum, and Kentucky Derby Museum, explored underground at Sunset Dome, and served at Harbor House.



LOCAL

Students participated in a dynamic week of local exploration and life-skill development, including visits to the Cleveland Aquarium, Zoo, and Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, alongside hands-on training in financial literacy, car care, CPR, home repair, fitness, evangelism, and STEM activities.





Heartland Christian School

Lions Have a Historic Season

Boys Varsity Basketball
Head Basketball Coach, Josh Scott



Heartland Christian School's Boys Varsity Basketball team delivered a historic and inspiring season, defined by teamwork, perseverance, and a shared commitment to excellence.

Concluding the most successful three-year run for the program, the Lions reached new heights this season by capturing the school's first-ever district championship. Building on that milestone, they advanced with a regional semifinal victory, continuing a postseason run that reflected both their talent and determination.

The team's journey culminated in a Division VII Regional Final appearance, where they battled to the final moments in a hard-fought, one-point contest. Finishing with an impressive 22–5 record, the Lions demonstrated resilience, unity, and a competitive spirit that carried them further than any team in program history.

More than the milestones, this season was marked by a collective dedication to growth—on the court, in the classroom, and in their faith. With a focus on discipline, teamwork, and making the most of every opportunity, the Lions have set a new standard for Heartland Christian athletics and built a legacy that will inspire future teams.



Heartland Christian School

Music

Heartland Christian School's music program demonstrated exceptional excellence this year, highlighted by both elite ensemble achievements and outstanding individual honors. After earning straight Superior ratings—the highest possible distinction—at the OMEA District Band Contest, the Concert Band advanced to the State Band Contest, where they again received Superior ratings, confirming their performance at the highest level of adjudication.

Students consistently distinguished themselves at the highest levels. At All-County auditions, multiple musicians earned first-chair placements, ranking among the top performers in the region. Three junior high students were selected to the prestigious District 8 Honor Band, representing the finest musicians from over 30 schools. Additionally, several students were selected through rigorous audition to the Youngstown State University Youth Orchestra.

In adjudicated competitions, Heartland musicians achieved remarkable results. Junior high students earned 20 Superior and 2 Excellent ratings across 22 events at Solo and Ensemble, while high school musicians also secured multiple Superior ratings. Pianists further added to this success with Superior and Excellent ratings at the NFMC Piano Festival, a respected national program.

Together, these accomplishments reflect a program marked by consistent excellence, rigorous training, and students who perform with both technical skill and expressive artistry.



Heartland Christian School

The Class of 2026

ELISE ALLMOND
ADELINE BARRETT
MATTHEW BUSHLING
TYLER FARMWALD
MADELYN FLEGAL
ISAIAH GARNES
REBECCA GEISS
HALEIGH HENDERSHOTT
TIMOTHY HERRICK
CADEN JONES
MAXWELL KLING
ISAIAH MATTHEWS
KAELYN MCLLOUD
HANNAH MCPEEK
BENJAMIN METZGER
LOGAN MILLER
AUBREY MORGAN
MADDIE NEVILLE
BRAYDEN PRISLIPSKY
CARLY REIGSTAD
CORBAN SEUTIA
CARLY SHEVOCK
KALLEIGH SHODD
KAYLEE TRICKER
LYDIA TURNER
BENJAMIN UEHLINGER
MEGAN WITTENMYER

CLASS OF 2026 BY THE NUMBERS

1,065+ service hours earned by the class

25 participated in at least one sport

18 seniors will attend college

7 seniors will work in a trade

2 seniors will pursue vocational ministry

13 earned college credit while at HCS

17 made Principal's Honor Roll this year

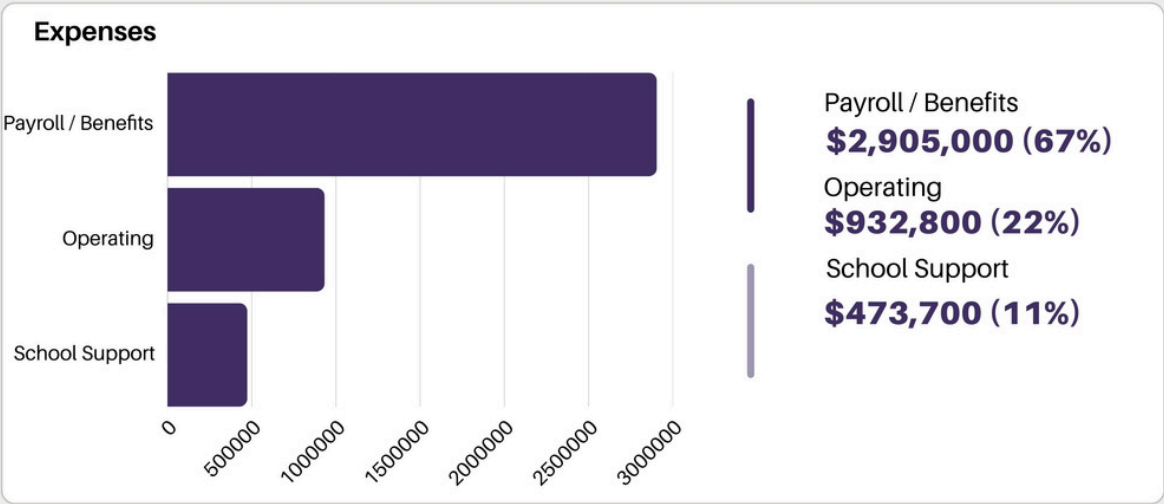
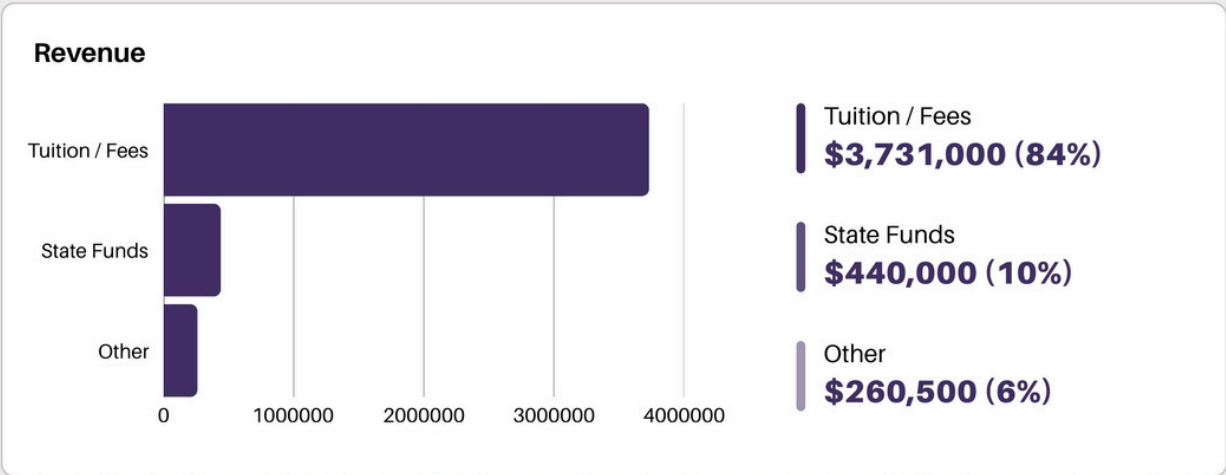
10 made Honor Roll this year

3.6255 mean GPA for the graduating class

2025-26 Financial Report

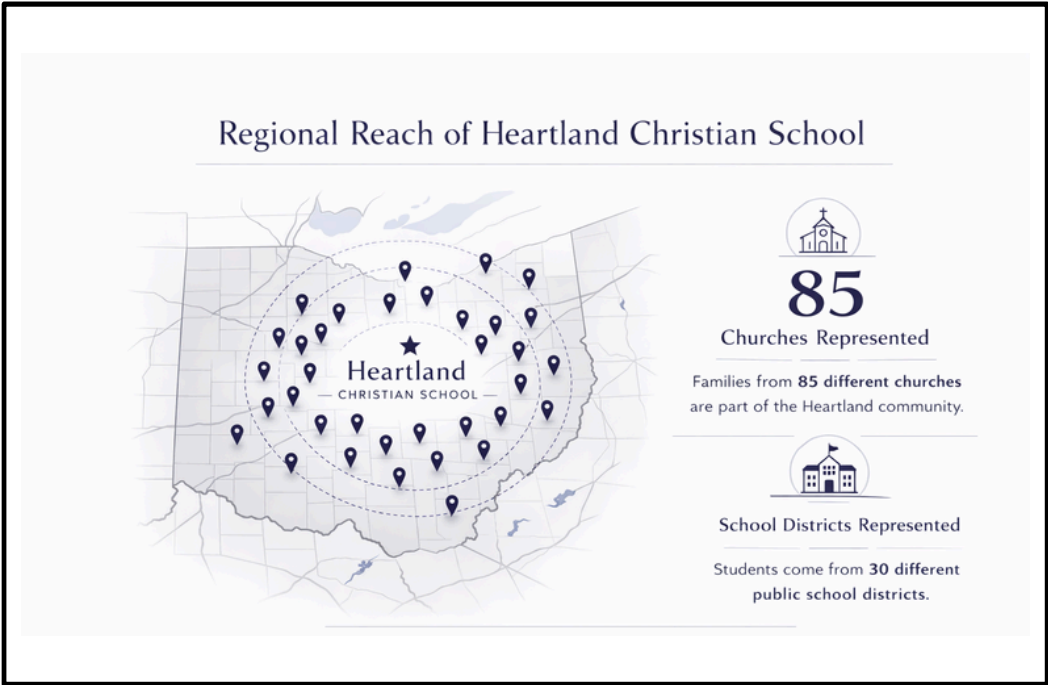
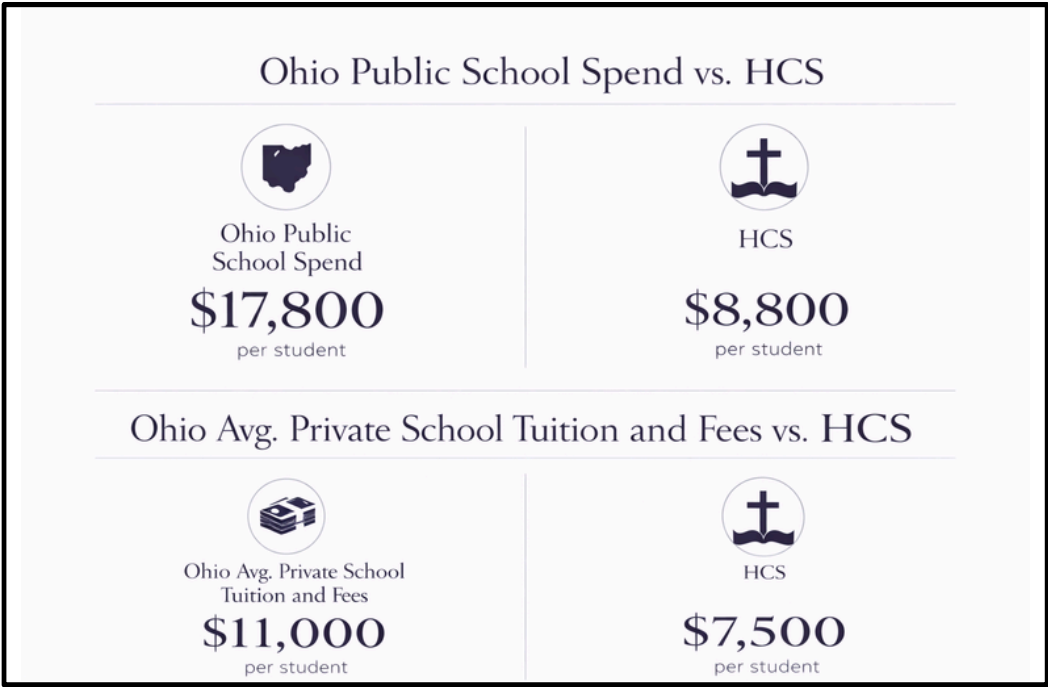
Executive Summary

 Budgeted Revenue \$4,431,500	 Budgeted Expenses \$4,311,500	 Savings Goal \$120,000
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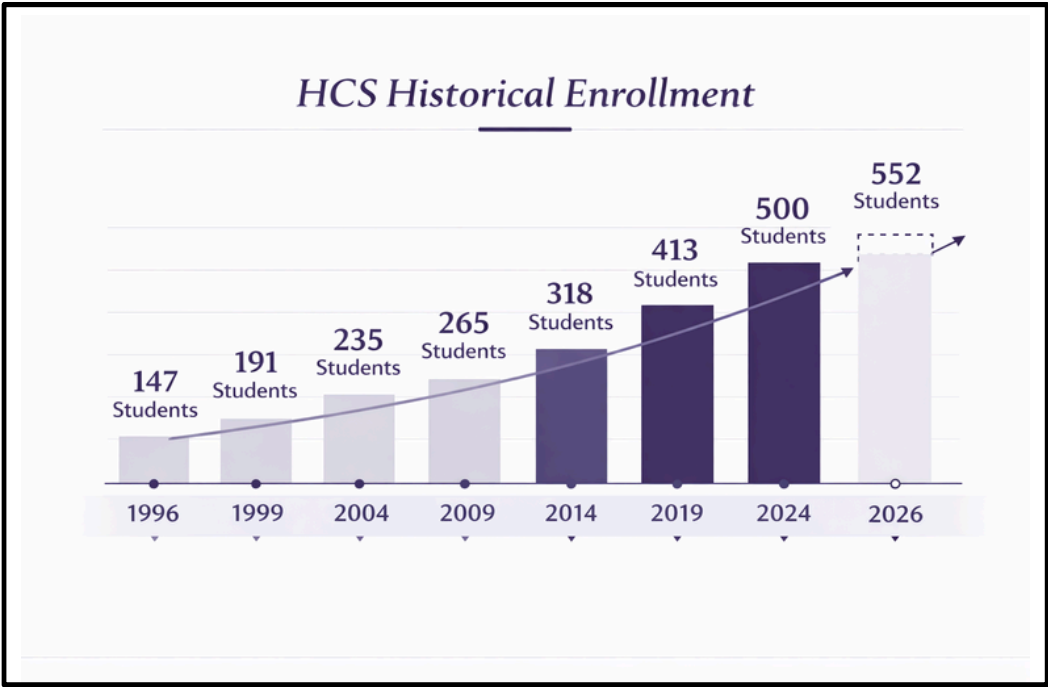
Heartland Christian School

By the Numbers




Heartland Christian School

By the Numbers



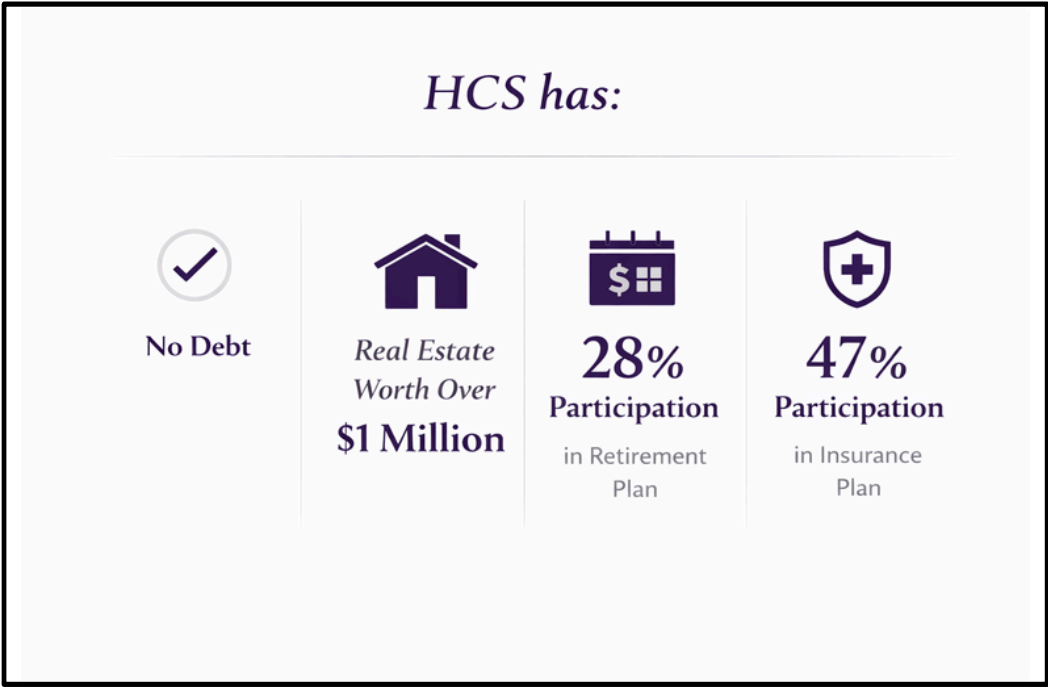
Current Enrollment



552 Students

	Total	7-12	2-6	K-1	Preschool
Students	552	198	205	86	63
Students Per Class		33	41	43	

By the Numbers



Heartland Christian School

Grandparents Club

OUR GOLD LEVEL PARTNERS

Dave & Lisa Coldwell

Mike & Brandy Gaffney

Lee & Judy Hopper

Frank & Cindy Russo



Heartland Christian School

Ways to Support HCS

Firm Foundation Fund

Since it began 30 years ago, Heartland has stood on the firm foundation of faith and Christ-centered education. Giving to the Firm Foundation fund helps us build both literal and spiritual strength into our school.

Throughout the year, we gather on these days to take part in meaningful, intentional acts of giving:

- Heartland Auction — November 7, 2026
- Spring Appeal — April 7, 2026
- Giving Tuesday — December 1, 2026
- End-of-Year — by June 30, 2026

Grandparents Club

Through their generous giving, encouragement, and prayers, these special grandparents come alongside us to create a Christ-centered environment where truth is taught, faith is nurtured, and students are prepared to lead and serve in today's world.

Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO)

You can use your taxes to help students attend Heartland Christian School! When you donate to the Ohio Christian Education Network Scholarship Granting Organization (OCEN SGO) for HCS student scholarships, Ohio gives you a dollar-for-dollar credit toward what you owe in taxes (up to \$750/person).

Visit www.heartlandschool.org/ocen-donation to learn more.



www.heartlandschool.org/make-a-donation

Heartland Christian School

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