

Annual Report

January 15, 2026



His Kingdom. His Glory. His Service

Joshua 1:9



*"Have I not commanded you?
Be strong and courageous.
Do not be frightened, and do not
be dismayed, for the LORD your God
is with you wherever you go."*

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Introduction

Ascension Academy is blessed to be home of the Arrows, which is why you'll often hear the expression *Aim True*. We strive to aim our lives according to God's Word. Isaiah 49:2 says, "He made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away." While this verse speaks of Jesus, we are called to be His ambassadors, sharing His love with the world.

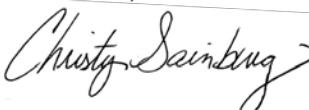
Ascension Academy is accredited by Christian Schools International (CSI) and participates in the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program, broadening access to our Christ-centered education and extending our mission to serve even more families in the region.

Our theme verse for the 2025–2026 school year is Joshua 1:9: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua had been prepared to lead Israel into the Promised Land decades earlier, but fear among the people delayed God's plan. God told Joshua three times to be strong and courageous. Joshua did not need to devise elaborate strategies or master military tactics; his task was simple yet profound, to obey God's law and meditate on it day and night. Victory would come because God was with him.

Reflecting on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for God's faithfulness and joy in the ways He continues to guide our school community. Looking ahead, we are excited about expanding our impact by opening a second campus in Rice Lake. A recent survey identified 52 potential new students, plus an additional eight children not yet school-aged, with roughly 78% expressing interest in a Rice Lake campus, affirming the need for expansion. In addition, we are planning to launch a hybrid high school model to further serve our students and families.

At Ascension Academy, we are shaping a generation of students who think critically, act with integrity, and lead with Christlike character. As we grow academically and spiritually, and as we prepare for the opportunities ahead, we do so with faith, gratitude, and confidence in all that God will accomplish through our students and our school in the year to come.

Aim True,



Christy Sainburg

Administrator



Board Members

Robert Ruppel, Board President

Robert Ruppel and his wife Angie returned to Cumberland in 2006 as they began their family, drawn by deep roots in the community and a desire to slow down and reconnect with small-town life. Though faith was part of their background, it wasn't yet central to their daily life. Over time, God worked through their experiences, community, and family to deepen their walk with Christ and reframe their priorities around the eternal.



Today, Robert and Angie are raising four children alongside Angie's mother, Carol, three cats, a dog, and a strong extended family that spans generations in the Cumberland area.

A graduate of UW-Madison in Mechanical Engineering, Robert leads engineering and product development at Ardisam, a local family business where he first learned the value of hard work, assembling equipment during summers and weekends as a teenager.

Robert grew up attending St. Paul Lutheran Church, where he was catechized and confirmed. Years later, his service as a church elder and Bible teacher awakened a conviction about the biblical formation of young people. This passion led him to help launch Ascension Academy, where he now serves as Board president.

He believes Christian education should train students not only academically, but according to a biblical worldview, equipping them to stand firm in Christ and live with purpose in a challenging world. His leadership at Ascension is rooted in a desire to make Christ-centered, Bible-based education accessible to families throughout northwest Wisconsin.

Janelle Hagen, Board Vice-President



Janelle and her husband Scott have a student at Ascension Academy. Janelle grew up in Cumberland and graduated from Cumberland Public Schools. She attended college at UW-Madison where she completed her Bachelor's degrees in International Relations and Chinese Language. After college, Janelle accepted a job with Ardisam and has been working there ever since, holding positions in the fields of supply chain management and product development. Janelle's career with Ardisam has included many interesting adventures, including a six-year stint living and working abroad as an expat in China, where she was able to foster a love for other cultures.

Some of Janelle's favorite hobbies are golf, basketball, swimming, reading, singing, and traveling.

Janelle is an active member at St. Paul's Lutheran Church and serves on the Board of Education. Janelle is excited to be a part of Ascension Academy because she believes that the message of Jesus

Christ is the best gift that you can give to all nations and people, and she wants to help inspire kids to foster a daily faith-walk that they may know the love of God and be in lifelong fellowship with him.

Janelle is inspired and hopes others will also be by Paul's letter to the Ephesians in Chapter 2, verses 8-10: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

John Peterson, Board Treasurer

John is proud to be on the Board of Ascension Academy. John and his wife of 25 years, Carie, have homeschooled/online schooled their 3 boys and have seen the wonderful benefits of a rigorous, Christian education. John would like all Christian families to have the opportunity for Christian education for their children and was thrilled when he heard about Ascension Academy.

John has worked in Finance/Accounting for all of his career and currently works for Schuman Cheese where he has developed an appreciation for great cheeses. When not working you may find the Petersons working on their hobby farm that includes a flock of sheep. Other activities they enjoy include spending time with friends, hockey, gardening, and hunting and fishing.



Peter Westendorf, Board Secretary



Peter and his wife Ruth have five children and are enjoying their new roles as grandparents. Raised in the suburbs of Waukesha, Peter attended small private Christian schools, which his father helped found and served as an administrator and teacher. After moving to Spooner, he attended public high school (where his father was again sidelined as a teacher's assistant), and was then homeschooled for his junior and senior years. Peter graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran College in 1999 with a Bachelor's in Business Administration and began work at Hospital Maintenance Consultants in Chetek, WI, where he continues to work today as the Director of Client Services.

The Westendorf family enjoys stewarding God's resources through gardening and raising animals, as well as spending time together enjoying His creation while gathering firewood, camping, kayaking, hiking, hunting, and other outdoor activities.

Peter and Ruth are firm believers that parents are called by God to be the primary influence in their children's lives and are responsible for making sure their children are raised to know and love God. It is their prayer that God would use Ascension Academy to assist families in our community to instill a Biblical worldview in the generations to come.

Deuteronomy 6:5-9 “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Bob Schauf, Board Member

Bob Schauf and his wife Karyn have four sons and eight grandchildren. Retired dairy farmers, they continue to cash-crop and work with their son Zach in their wood shavings manufacturing business.

Bob has a B.S. degree in Animal Science and Ag Mechanics. He has served on numerous boards, including his church, and was the past president of the Wisconsin Holstein Association.



He is an avid hunter and water skier and enjoys mission work. Having started three of their sons in Christian education, and has a great passion to help expose youth to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, through curriculum and education. His desire is that Ascension Academy will be a successful model of a Christian education system that can be replicated in Northwestern Wisconsin. John 3:16 is near and dear to his heart. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

Allen Ruppel, Board Member



Allen Ruppel is the Co-Founder and President of the Unity in Hope School System, Inc. He is also the founder of Unity in Motion, Inc. and served as the organization’s Executive Director for the first 20 years. He worked 15.5 years at Northwestern Mutual in various management-level positions.

Allen holds a Bachelor’s degree in Finance, graduating Summa Cum Laude. Allen is a U.S Navy veteran and navigation team member of the 5th nuclear submarine to circumnavigate the world. He is also the Treasurer of the Board of Directors for the Hope Christian Schools

Network and a member of the Board of Directors for the Center for Urban Teaching and Jacarrie's Kicks for Kids Inc. He is recognized in the Marquis Who's Who of Top Executives in the USA and abroad.

Faculty and Staff



Gina Ader
Interventionist, AVA
Proctor



Kelly Bagley Language
Arts, Art



Bridget Bartlett
Administrative
Assistant



Mary Becker
Kindergarten



Donna Kurschner
Spanish



Beth McClain Physical
Education, Health



Mariah Millerman 3rd-
4th Grade, Math,
STEAM



Barbara Oduor 1st-2nd
Grade, Art



Promise Pederson 4K-
8th Music, Private
Lessons



Ruth Westendorf
Heritage Studies,
Bible, Science, STEAM



Rylie Williams Four-
year-old Kindergarten

Mission, Vision, Portrait

Our Mission

Ascension Academy, as an extension of the Christian home, seeks to provide biblically-based instruction and encouragement so that every student may reach their full potential to the glory of God.

Our Vision

To equip a generation of godly leaders who live a life of love and service to God and others.

Portrait of a Student

Aiming our Arrows

Our Portrait of a Student exemplifies our goal of equipping students spiritually, academically, and in accordance with their God-given potential, enabling them to handle the rigors of life with courage, aiming always for the glory of God.

Faith - Aiming to live in Christ's likeness

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20

- Demonstrates a developing, personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and values the importance and benefit of belonging to and being involved in a local church body
- Commits to engage in God's Word in a way that trains their minds and transforms their hearts, studying with purpose, patience, prayer, and humility
- Able to articulate and apply a biblical worldview to daily life and decision-making
- Participates in mission opportunities to share the knowledge and love of God with others

Character - Aiming to communicate Christ's message

"The wise of heart is called discerning, and sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness. The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips."

Proverbs 16:21, 23

- Thinks critically and analytically from a faithful Biblical perspective
- Can explain what it means to be, and the significance of being, an image-bearer of God
- Listens first to understand and so is able to connect to others with empathy, thoughtfulness, and confidence
- Understands, respects, and values the different cultures represented by God's image-bearers around the world
- Able to articulate and stand firm in their Christian faith, applying their acquired knowledge wherever God leads

Knowledge - Aiming to grow in Godly wisdom

“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.”

James 3:17

- Recognizes their God-given gifts and abilities, and eagerly pursues their studies with growing excellence
- Takes initiative to analyze, evaluate, and interpret information using creative thought to form a response or solve a problem, even in the absence of explicit, external guidance or direction
- Employs technology effectively and responsibly to gain knowledge, solve problems, and communicate solutions
- Able to adapt to the ever-changing challenges of the times in which God has placed them

Community - Aiming to lead with a servant’s heart

“For even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45

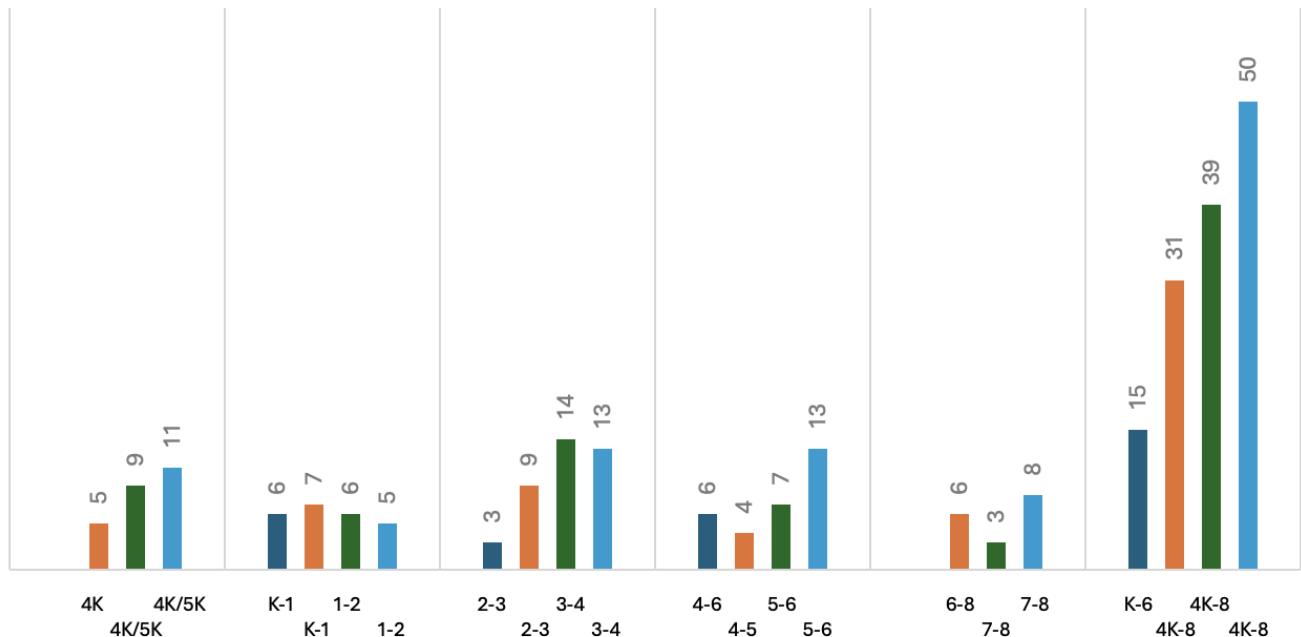
- Loves and serves their families, friends, communities, and the world, living in accordance with biblical standards in family and personal relationships
- Gives generously of their time and talents, demonstrating a servant leader mindset and seeking to emulate Jesus Christ
- Exhibits grace and humility when relating to those who do not share the same worldview, knowing how to listen, confident in the grace they have received and eager to extend that grace to others
- Shows perseverance, tenacity, and resilience in the face of difficult tasks and adversity, aiming to faithfully accomplish the good works God has prepared for them to do
- Works together with others, valuing the diversity of gifts entrusted to members of the Body, seeking together to greater glorify God in the world



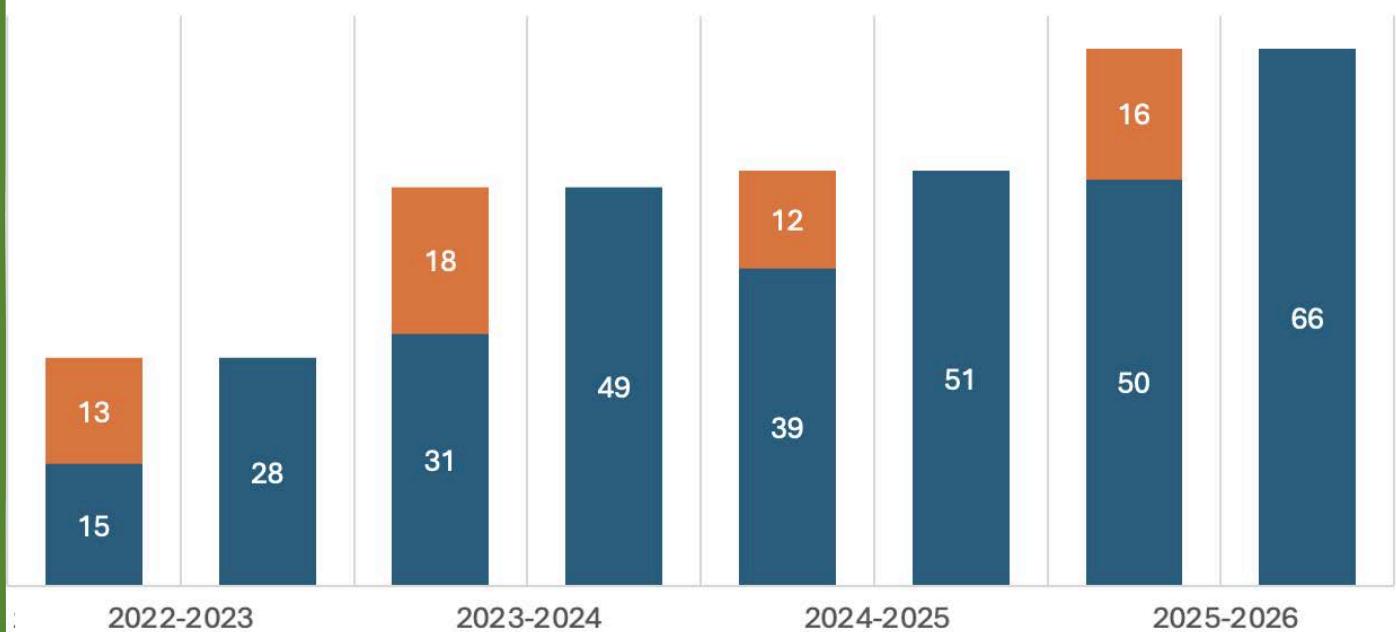
Enrollment Information

FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT

■ 2022-23 ■ 2023-24 ■ 2024-25 ■ 2025-26



■ Full-Time ■ Part-Time ■ Total

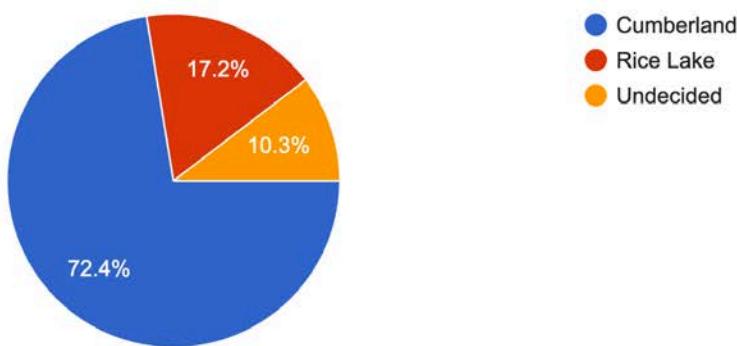


Expansion Surveys

Current Ascension Academy families received a brief survey. Ascension Academy currently has 27 full-time families and 8 part-time families. Since the survey was anonymous, it is unknown how many of the 29 responses were from families with full-time students or part-time students.

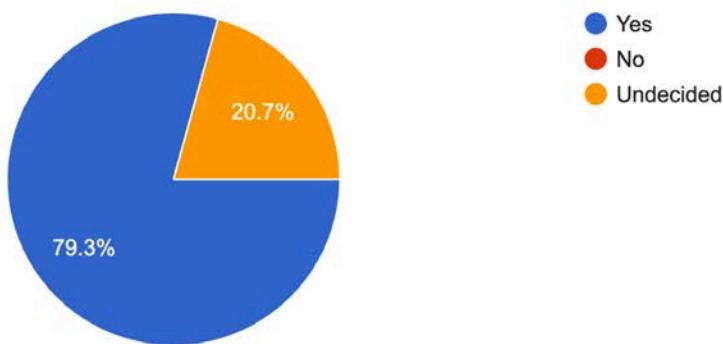
If Ascension Academy opened a second campus in Rice Lake, which location would you send your child(ren) to next fall?

29 responses



Are you interested in Ascension Academy expanding to high school?

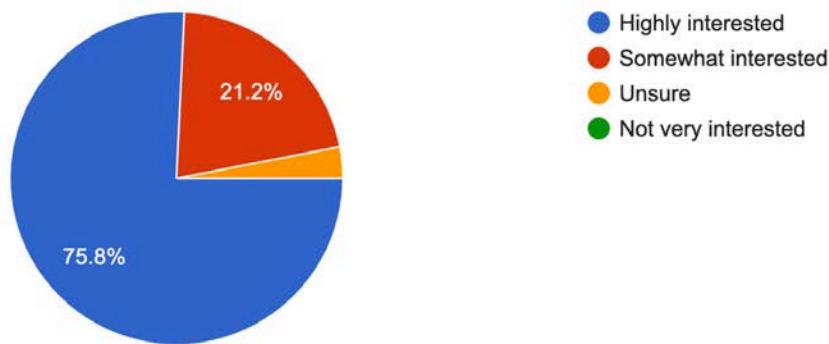
29 responses



A survey was sent to the general public via Facebook and targeted emails concerning a second campus. Here are the preliminary results:

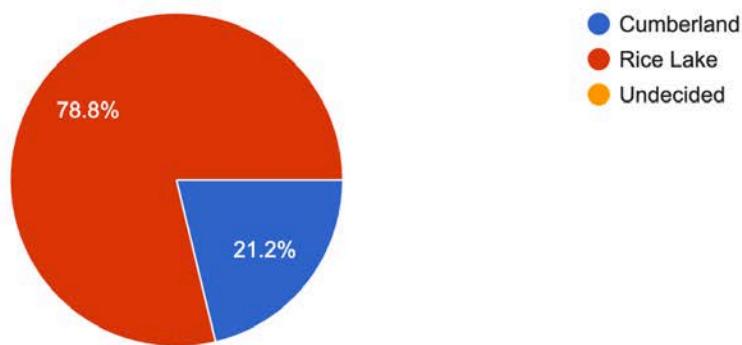
How interested would you be in sending your child(ren) to a Christian school?

33 responses



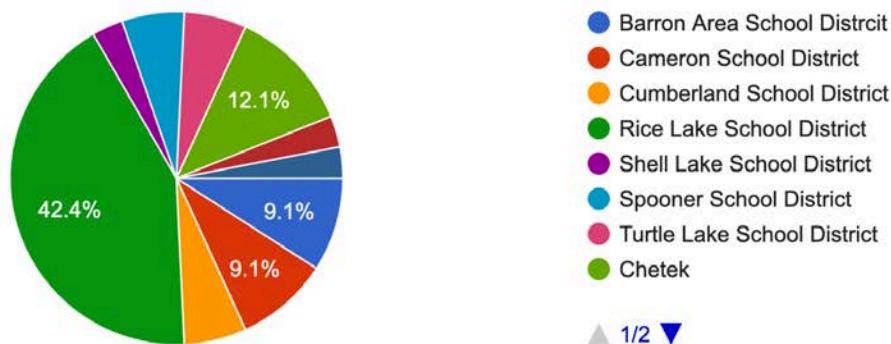
Ascension Academy is exploring the option of opening a second campus in Rice Lake. If you were to consider enrolling your child(ren), which location would be more convenient for you?

33 responses



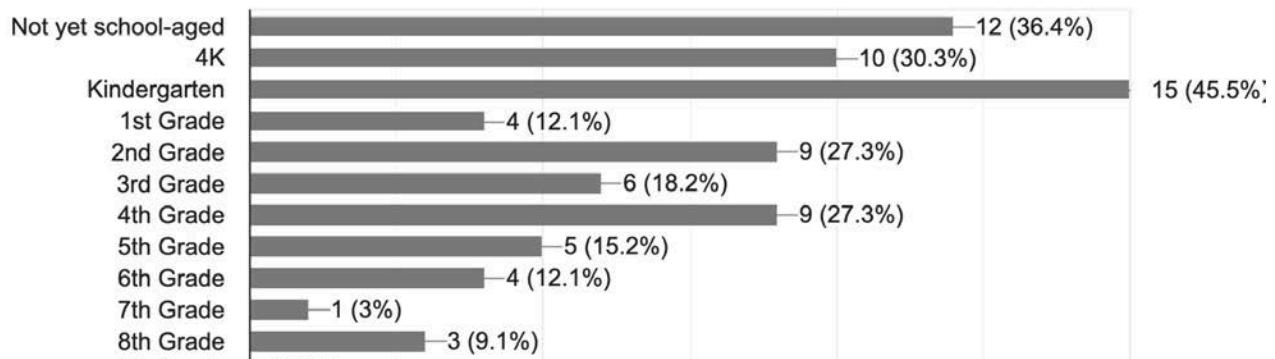
What is the school district in which you reside?

33 responses



What grades are your children? Check all that apply.

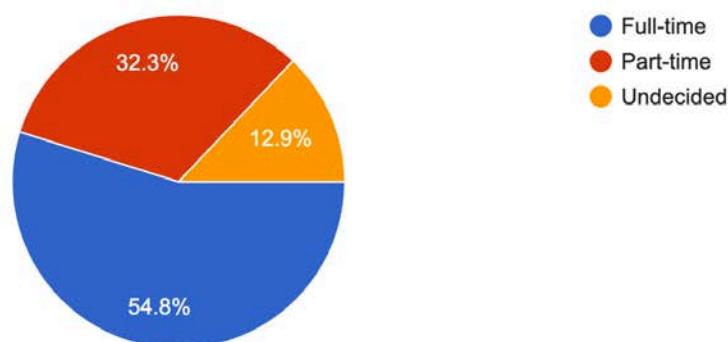
33 responses



The total number of potential students from this survey equals 66 students, with an additional 12 potential children not yet school-aged. Approximately 80% of these students are interested in attending the Rice Lake campus.

Are you interested in our full-time option or our part-time option for homeschool students (enrichment classes)?

31 responses



Demographics

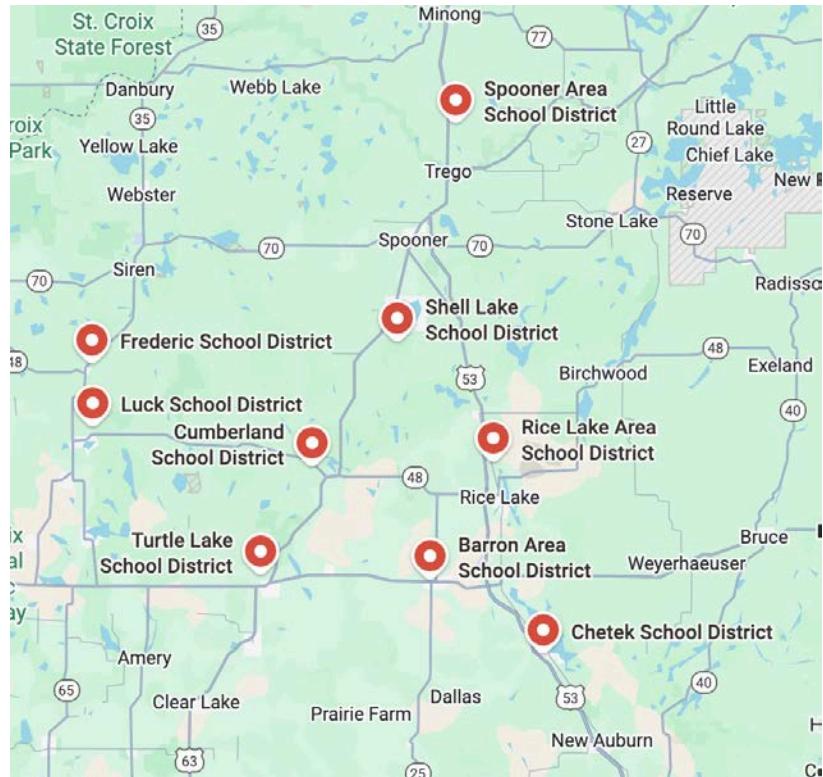
Ascension Academy currently has one campus in Cumberland, Wisconsin and serves students in nine different districts in three counties.

Districts:

Barron Area School District
Chetek School District
Cumberland School District
Frederic School District
Luck School District
Rice Lake Area School District
Shell Lake School District
Spooner Area School District
Turtle Lake School District

Counties:

Barron County
Polk County
Washburn County



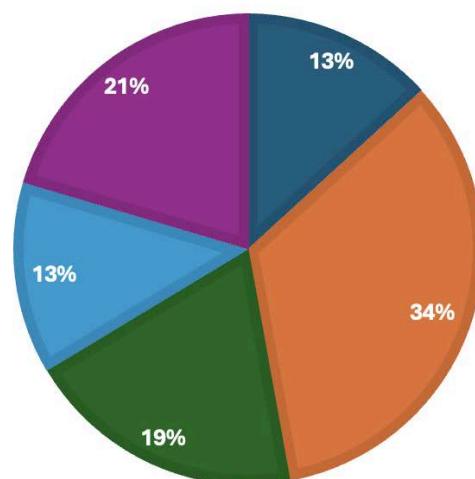
Our students reside in twelve different cities within the nine districts:

This includes Barronett, Cumberland, Almena, Barron, Rice Lake, Spooner, Turtle Lake, Frederic, Luck, Sarona, Shell Lake, and Chetek. (The numbers below represent where the parents live, and in a couple of cases, the Dad and Mom live in different cities.)

Adding a second campus in Rice Lake will reach a larger portion of the population. This graph represents the district populations.

POPULATION

■ Cumberland ■ Rice Lake ■ Barron ■ Cameron ■ Other



To assess interest and need, Ascension Academy surveyed the general public about the possibility of opening a second campus. Of the 23 families who have responded so far, 73% expressed strong interest in Christian education, and 82% indicated they would be interested in the new location in Rice Lake. These findings, combined with Ascension's current numbers, retention rate, and strong community reputation, clearly demonstrate unmet demand for Christ-centered education in the region.

Community and church partnerships further strengthen this potential. Ascension Academy's student body and the staff attend the following congregations:

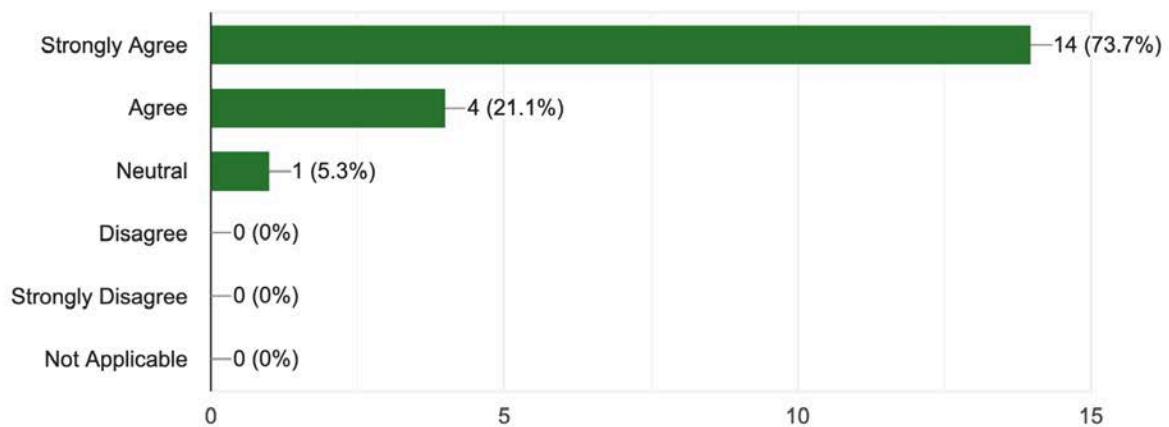
Cumberland	Rice Lake	Barron	Turtle Lake	Other Community (Cameron, Clear Lake, Luck, Sarona, Shell Lake, Siren, Spooner)
Cumberland Baptist Church	Maranatha Evangelical Free Church	Barron Foursquare	Grace Community Church	Adventure Church
Hermitage of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph	Providence Reformed Baptist Church	Calvary Baptist Church	Parkview Methodist Church	Cornerstone Christian Church
Hope Community Church	Red Cedar Church	First Baptist Church		Luck Lutheran Church
Northern Lakes Community Church	Rice Lake Assembly of God Church			Remnant Church
St. Paul Lutheran Church	Trinity Fellowship			St. John Lutheran Church
Trinity Lutheran Church	World Harvest Church			United Covenant Church
				Woodland Family Church

Local pastors regularly lead chapel services, providing visible and multi-denominational support for our mission. Family engagement is a hallmark of our culture. As Ascension Academy prepares to expand, the opportunity in Rice Lake is both clear and compelling: a strong demand for Christian education, measurable local support, and a community ready to partner in shaping students who think critically, act with integrity, and lead with Christlike character.

Parent Survey Results

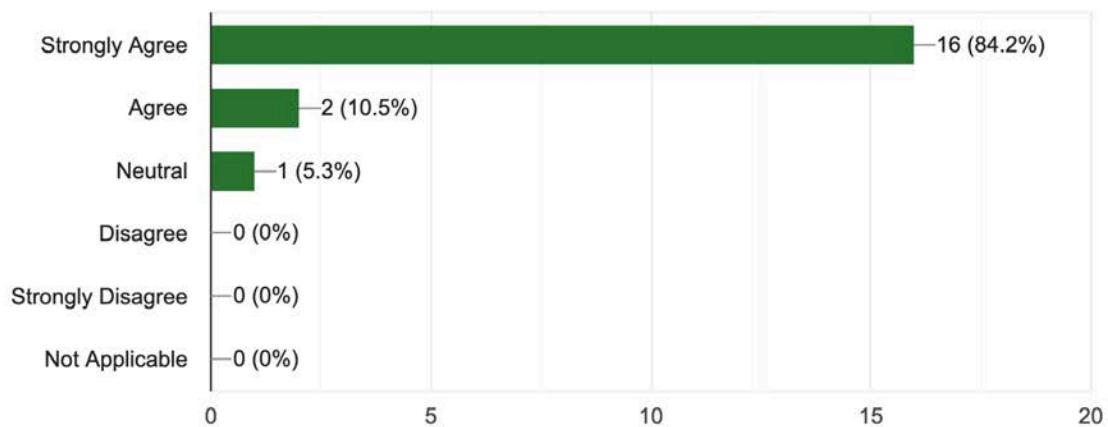
Ascension Academy has clear goals for what it wants our students to accomplish.

19 responses



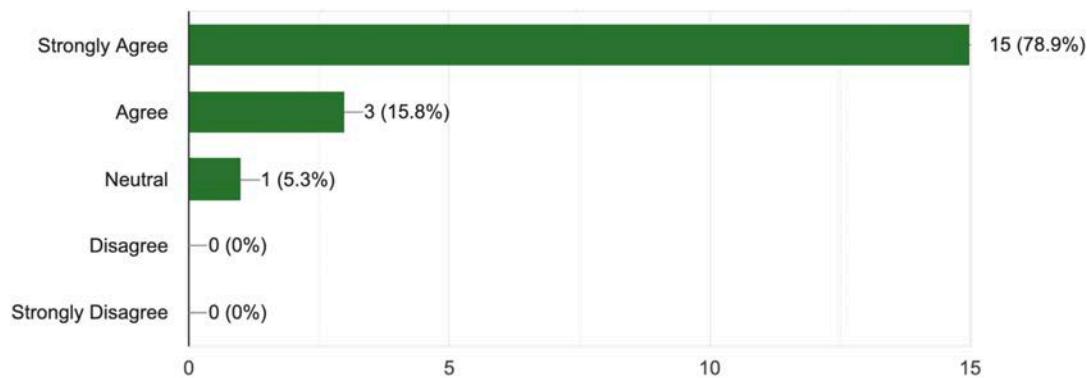
Ascension Academy's vision is clearly Christian.

19 responses



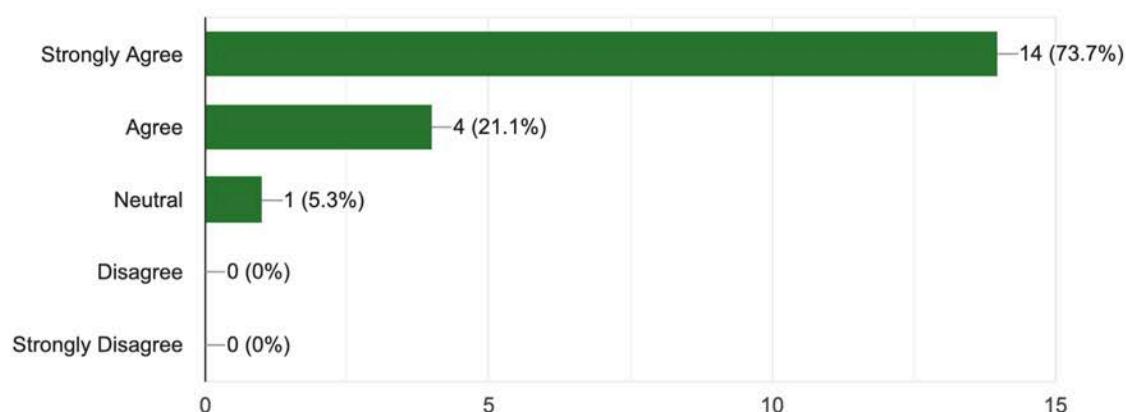
The Ascension Academy Board of Education offers well-defined leadership and maintains strong operational effectiveness.

19 responses



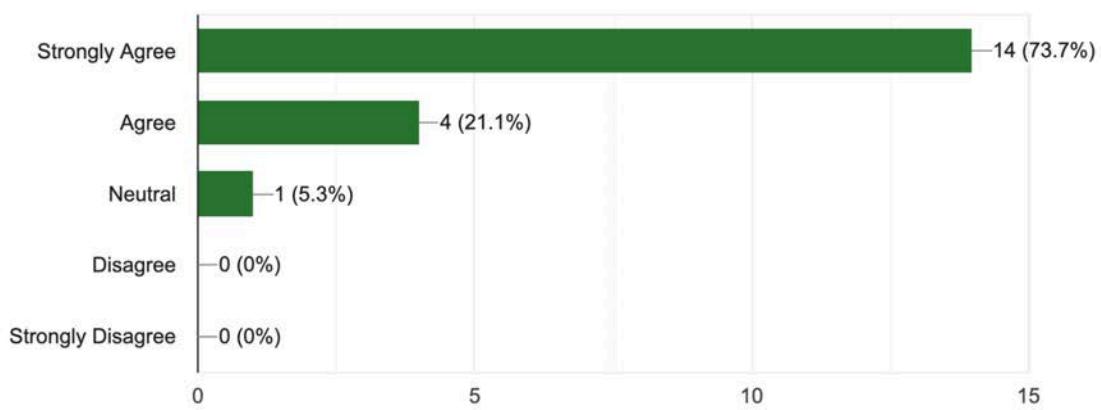
The Board of Education and administrator work well together for the benefit of Ascension Academy.

19 responses



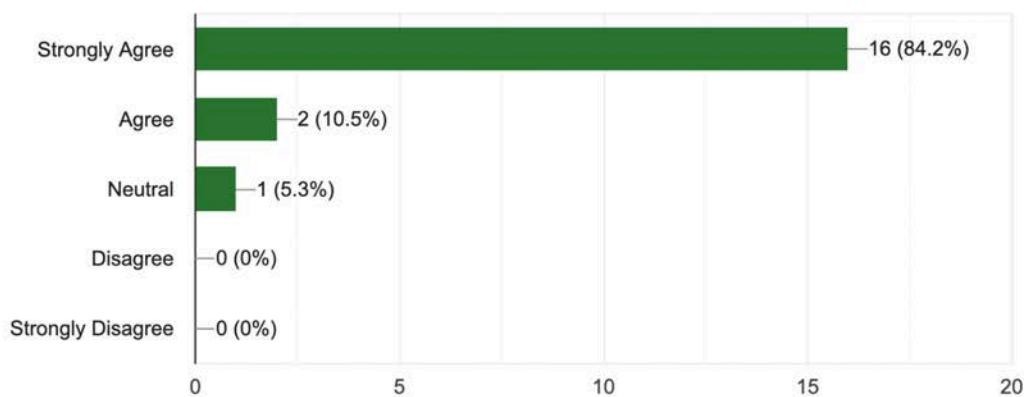
I believe that Ascension Academy provides good stewardship of its financial resources.

19 responses



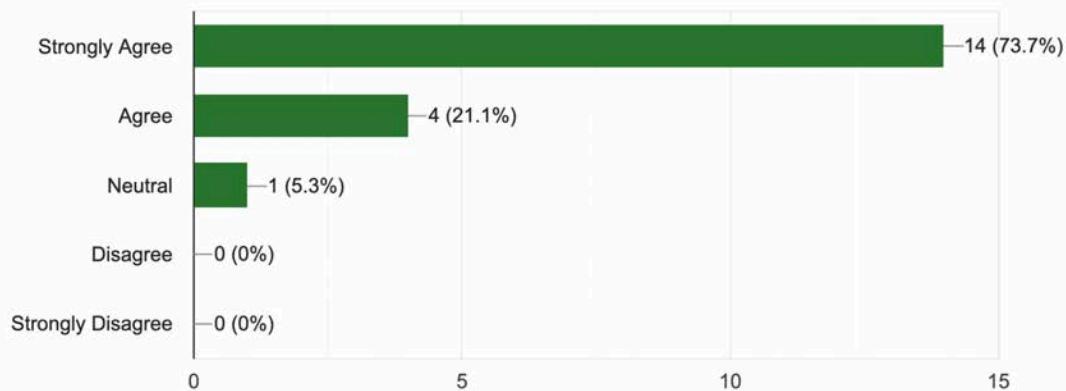
I trust that Ascension Academy's administrator is leading the staff to provide our children with a high quality, Christ-centered education.

19 responses



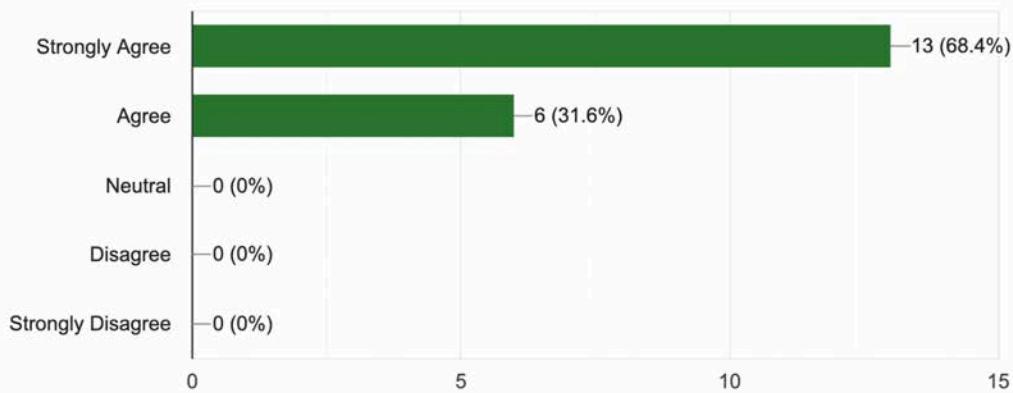
Our students know their teachers care about them, even when correction is needed.

19 responses



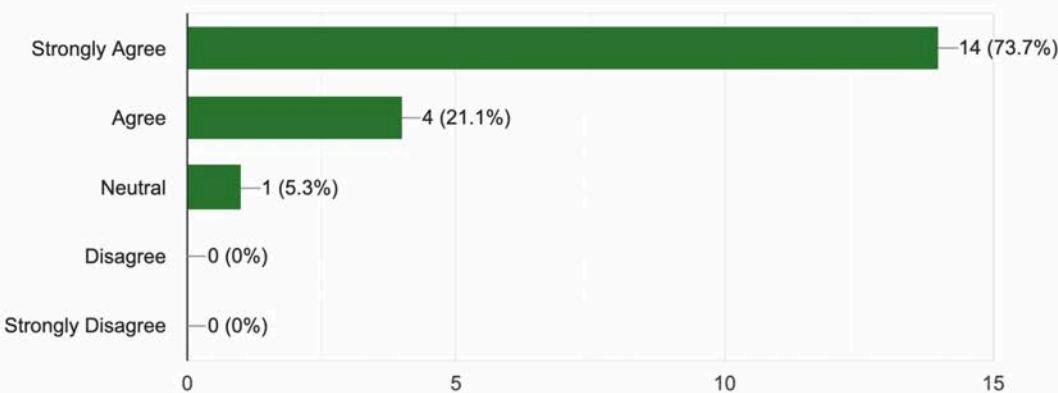
Ascension Academy provides a safe and secure environment for my children.

19 responses



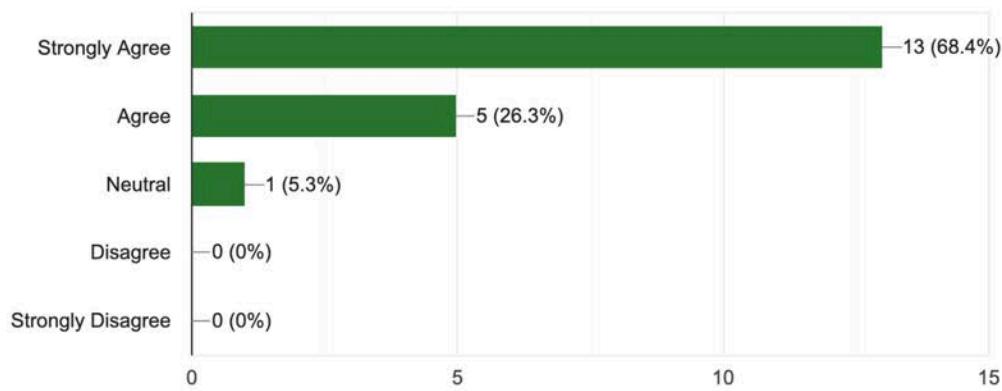
The culture of Ascension Academy is God honoring.

19 responses



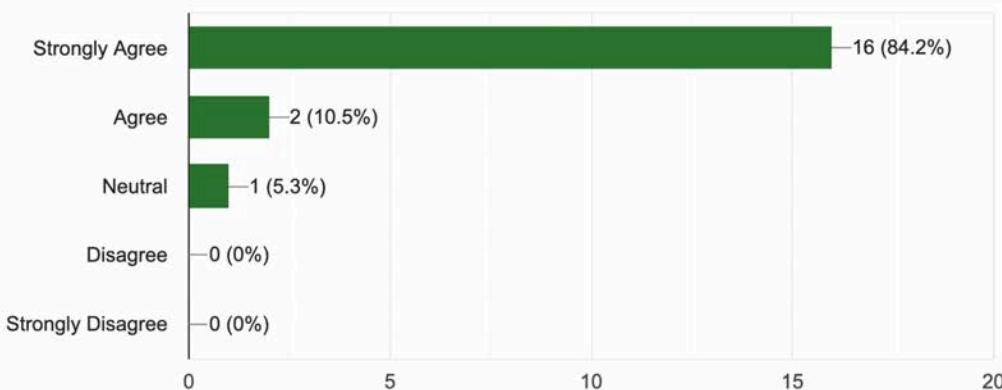
Discipline issues are handled appropriately and in a Christ like manner with clear and open communication between the school personnel and parents.

19 responses



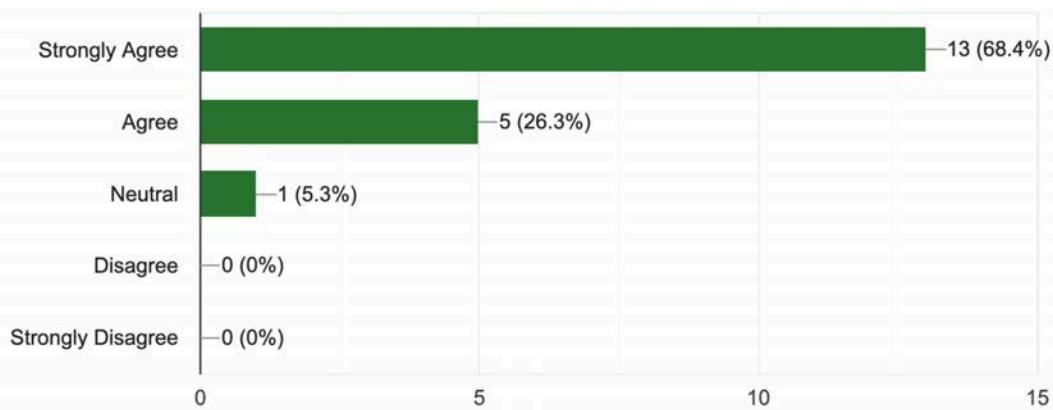
Ascension Academy's curriculum reflects a biblical worldview.

19 responses



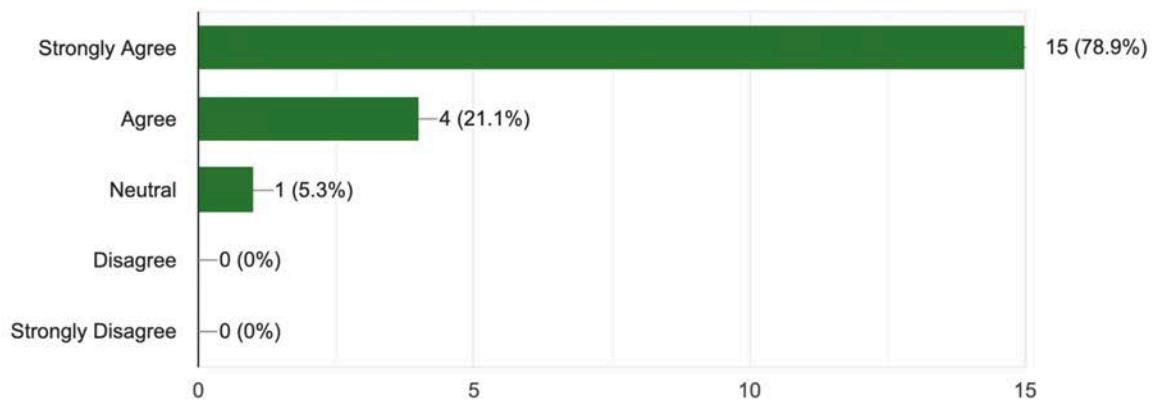
I believe Ascension Academy meets the unique learning needs of my children.

19 responses



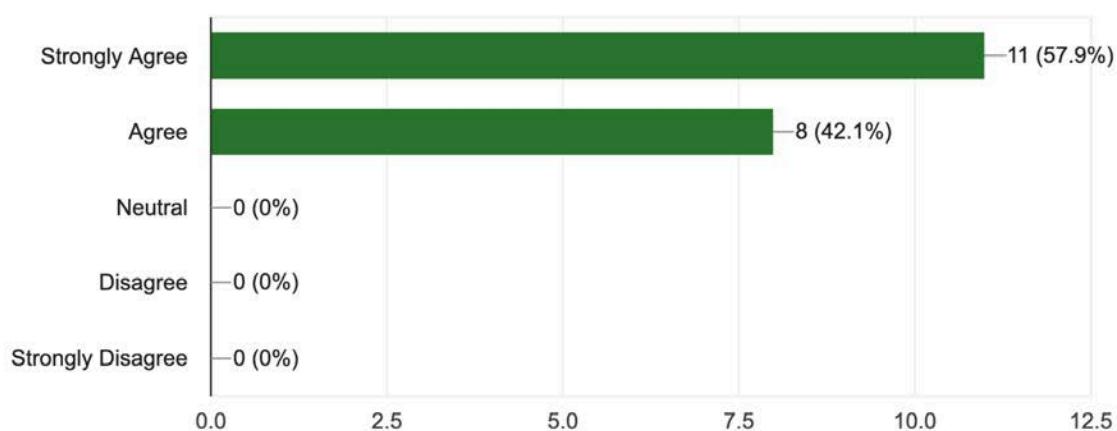
Ascension Academy keeps me informed about my children's academic progress.

19 responses



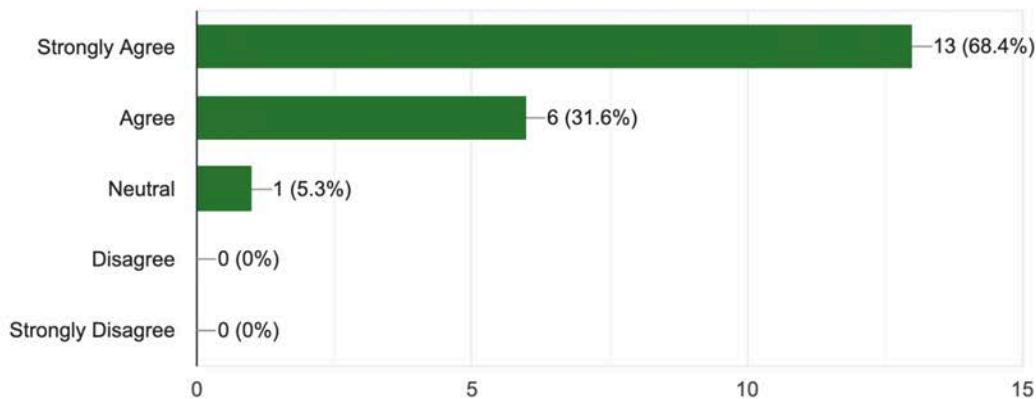
My children seem to be engaged with what they are learning at school.

19 responses



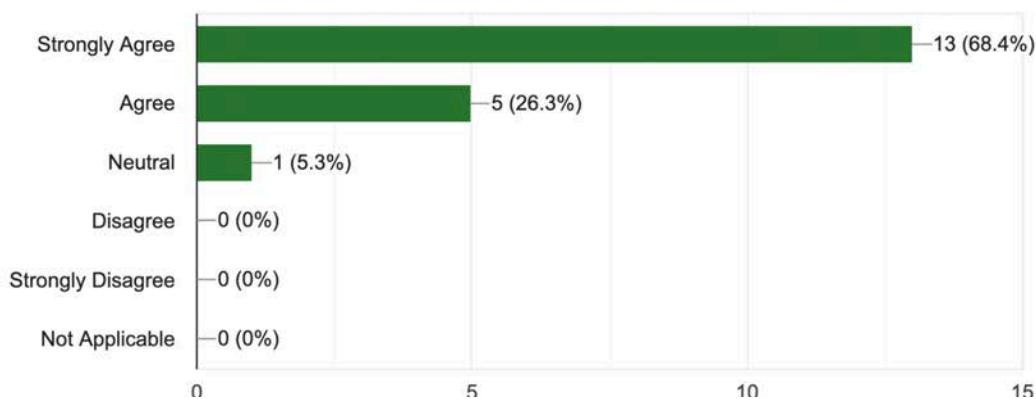
Technology is used well as a tool to educate the children of Ascension Academy.

19 responses



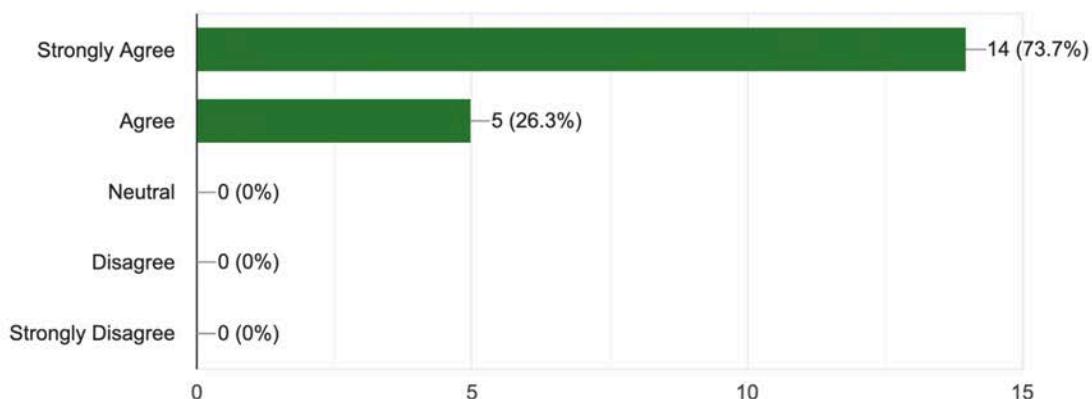
Ascension Academy's teachers model Christlike behavior to our children.

19 responses



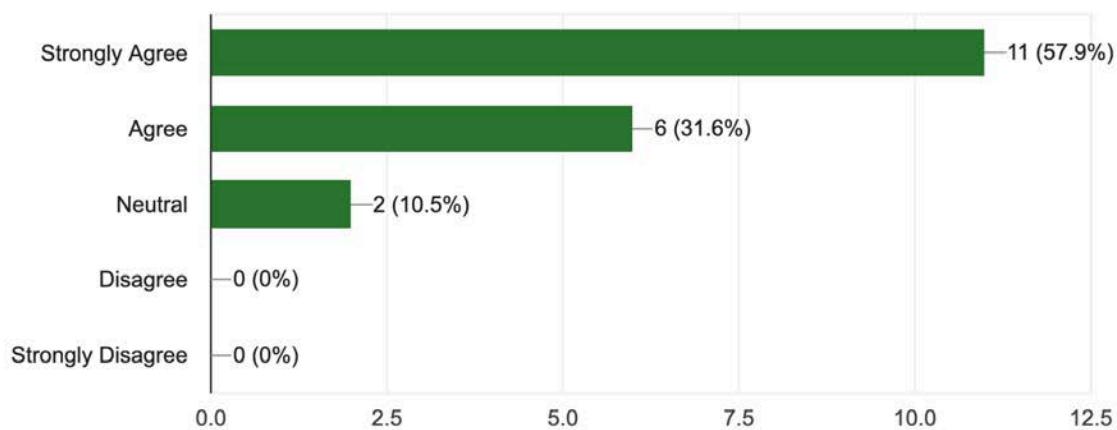
Ascension Academy provides opportunities for parents to engage in school activities and events.

19 responses



I have witnessed positive spiritual growth in my children.

19 responses



Parents were asked... What do you like best about Ascension Academy?

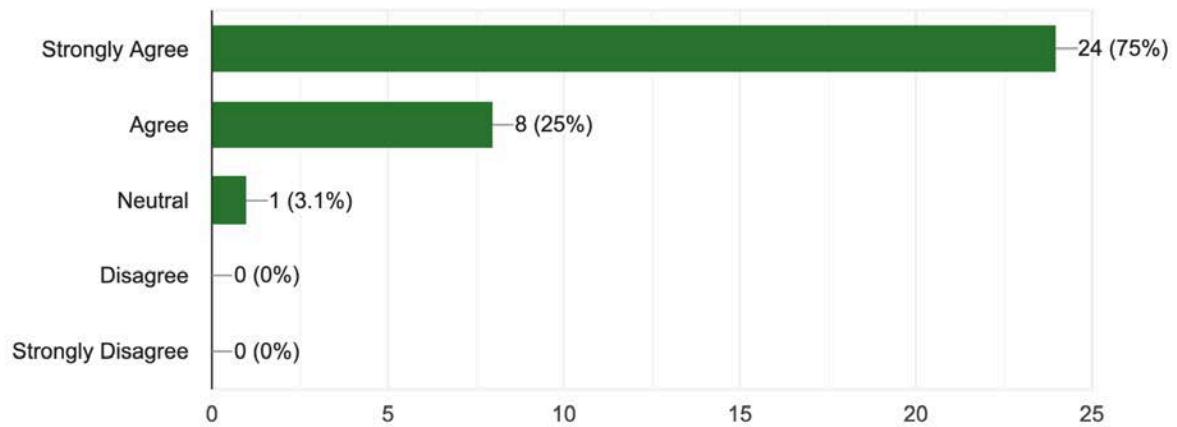
Here are the responses:

- I appreciate the Biblical world view, smaller class sizes and better overall environment for my children to learn in.
- How each teacher or faculty member points my child toward Christ.
- Christ centered environment where the teachers really care about our children!
- The Christian environment.
- Christian school
- That its Biblically focused
- Wonderful teachers, staff, and volunteers
- The Christian atmosphere
- The small class sizes for more individualized needs.
- Kids learning about the Bible
- Self paced option
- God centered!! Family oriented!! Kind caring facility
- The culture and community of the school is warm and inviting.
- Christ-centered education, great leadership, excellent teachers who are constantly trying to improve and set a Godly example.
- Teaching about Christ
- The clear love for the word of God and to teach the students about how it applies to schooling and outside of school life.
- Christ-centered education by Christ-loving educators and administration.
- Everything!

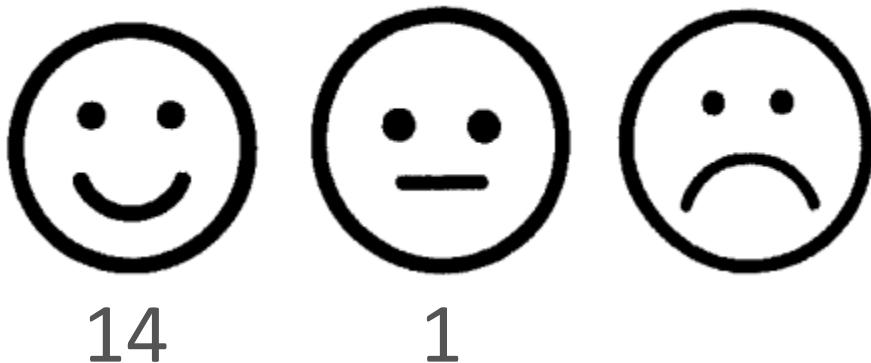
Student Survey Results

At school, I learn about Jesus.

32 responses



Younger Students were asked the same question on a paper survey. Their responses were as follows:

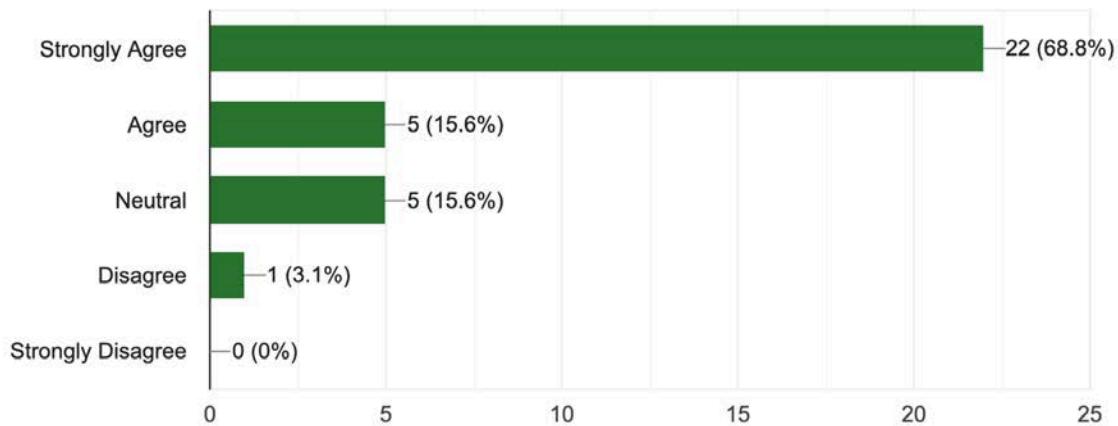


Student comments:

- I like learning the Bible.
- Even in Language Arts, we talk about God!
- We have a Bible class.
- My teacher explains the Word of God very well.
- We read the Bible every day and science class has a biblical worldview.
- I learned a lot about Jesus here at school.
- Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins.
- In chapel, the pastors talk about Jesus and other people in the Bible.
- Some classes move at a slow pace. Some students do not take responsibility for their homework, and it doesn't seem like they have a consequence for not doing the work.
- I learn about Jesus in all classes and even at lunch when we pray.
- The Bible class is absolutely amazing this year!
- I am learning a lot of facts about the Bible.
- I learn about Jesus every day.
- We learn and have good talks about Jesus in Bible class.

My teachers help me learn and are kind.

32 responses



Younger Students were asked the same question on a paper survey. Their responses were as follows:

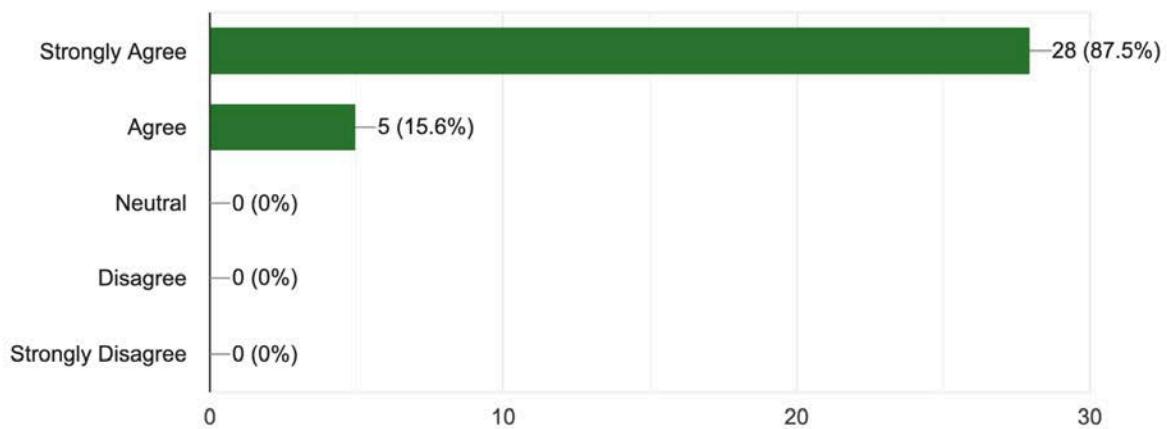


Student comments on why they like Ascension Academy:

- Recess, math, STEAM
- I like that we learn what we need to and more for our grade, we also have a Bible class.
- Our class is small, so we can all learn well.
- I like to learn about god and there are no bullies
- The teachers are very nice to the students and each other.
- I like my friends.
- We learn about Jesus.
- I like learning about math the most at Ascension Academy.
- Recess and English
- The teachers are so nice.
- I like the conversations we have in Bible. I also really like STEAM.
- The kids are kind.
- Music class
- It is a great school! I love this school! I love all the teachers. They are so kind to all the students. This is the best school ever!
- I really like the students and teachers at Ascension, and I like the variety of the classes.
- All the teachers are kind, and I am thankful we learn about Jesus every day.
- I love that my friends and everyone else like me for who I am.
- Art, STEAM, my friends

Jesus is important to my teachers.

32 responses



Younger Students were asked the same question on a paper survey. Their responses were as follows:



Student comments on how the school can be improved:

- I think we should have more after school clubs.
- Let us go outside when it's below ten degrees because it's Wisconsin.
- Study better for every test.
- Have a longer Bible class.
- I would like school to be longer to have more time in math, PE, and recess.
- Bigger lunch portions
- Bigger library and music room
- Have more time in music and Spanish classes.
- Add a high school
- Add shop class or cooking class
- I want to see all kids be kind to each other and the teachers.
- Add a morning recess
- More study hall time to work
- Help the boys not pick on the girls.
- Nothing. I love Ascension Academy the way it is.
-

Expansion Plans

Ascension will expand from 4K–8 to 4K–12 and are also working toward opening a Rice Lake campus in 2026–27. The Rice Lake campus would start with grades in 4K - 4th grade.

Risk	Description	Mitigation
Enrollment Shortfall	Rural demographics limit growth	Strengthen church partnerships; reach more homeschool and part-time students; maintain 90% retention
Funding Dependence	47% of FY24 budget from philanthropy	Increase voucher and tuition revenue; maintain reserves (2% expenses); multi-year pledges; work toward a max of 15% of our operational budget coming from philanthropy in five years
Staffing Needs	Recruiting qualified Christian educators	Seek out area Christian universities, offer competitive salaries; early hiring (Jan 2026); mentorship culture
Facility Growth	Rice Lake and high school expansion require space	Church leases; phased renovation; pursue low-interest financing
Compliance & Reporting	Choice/CSI administrative complexity	Use MAP assessment and CSI reporting templates
Mission Cohesion	Two-campus operation may dilute identity	Unified chapel themes; shared PTF initiatives; regular cross-campus events
Staff Burnout	No custodian, teacher aides, development director, or other	Work on filling some of these needs with additional volunteers or part-time staff

Strategic Plan

Communications and Community Engagement

- Build a thriving, growing community from a diverse Christian denominational background, centered on the basic truths of Scripture
- Maintain positive relationships within the larger community, focusing on adding educational opportunities for the benefit of all, including weekly student and quarterly parent chapels

Facilities and Operations

- Exemplify good stewardship of the time, treasures, and talents God has given us, especially in the area of financial stability, so that parents can trust that the school will continue to be able to provide the level of education they are willing to support

Teaching and Learning

- Teach students to think critically and analytically from a biblical perspective
- Provide students with opportunities to explore with hands-on learning, collaborative projects, and discovery opportunities to prepare them for life inside and outside the classroom

Technology

- Assist parents in keeping their children safe in both the physical and virtual worlds, teaching and applying appropriate use of the technological tools available today

Progress Toward Strategic Goals

Key Accomplishments

- Successfully completed the Accreditation Site Visit (September 2024)
- Launched a Parent Prayer Ministry (January 2024)
- Achieved Full Accreditation in January, 2025.
- Expanded learning opportunities through a high school homeschool co-op
- Participate in Wisconsin School Choice

Areas of Continued Growth

- Development of an endowment fund
- Creation of a board and staffing succession plan
- Exploration of transportation pick-up locations in neighboring communities
- Expanded academic and spiritual growth measures, including a biblical worldview assessment beginning in 2025–26
- Continued efforts toward enrollment growth
- Launch a high school
- Open a second campus in Rice Lake



School Improvement Focus Areas

Our School Improvement Plan prioritizes the following areas:

- Instructional leadership and planned results
- Clear communication of student learning
- Educational support services and intervention
- Curriculum alignment and articulation
- A strong climate and culture of faith

Highlights of Progress

- Established a School Improvement Plan and expanded methods for analyzing educational outcomes
- Strengthened communication through weekly school newsletters, regular teacher updates, progress reports, and more intentional parent notifications
- Implemented academic growth tools and recognition programs, including IXL Growth Updates and student awards
- Continued development of intervention services and curriculum mapping
- Expanded intentional faith-building initiatives, including service projects, chapel experiences, and community events

Looking Ahead

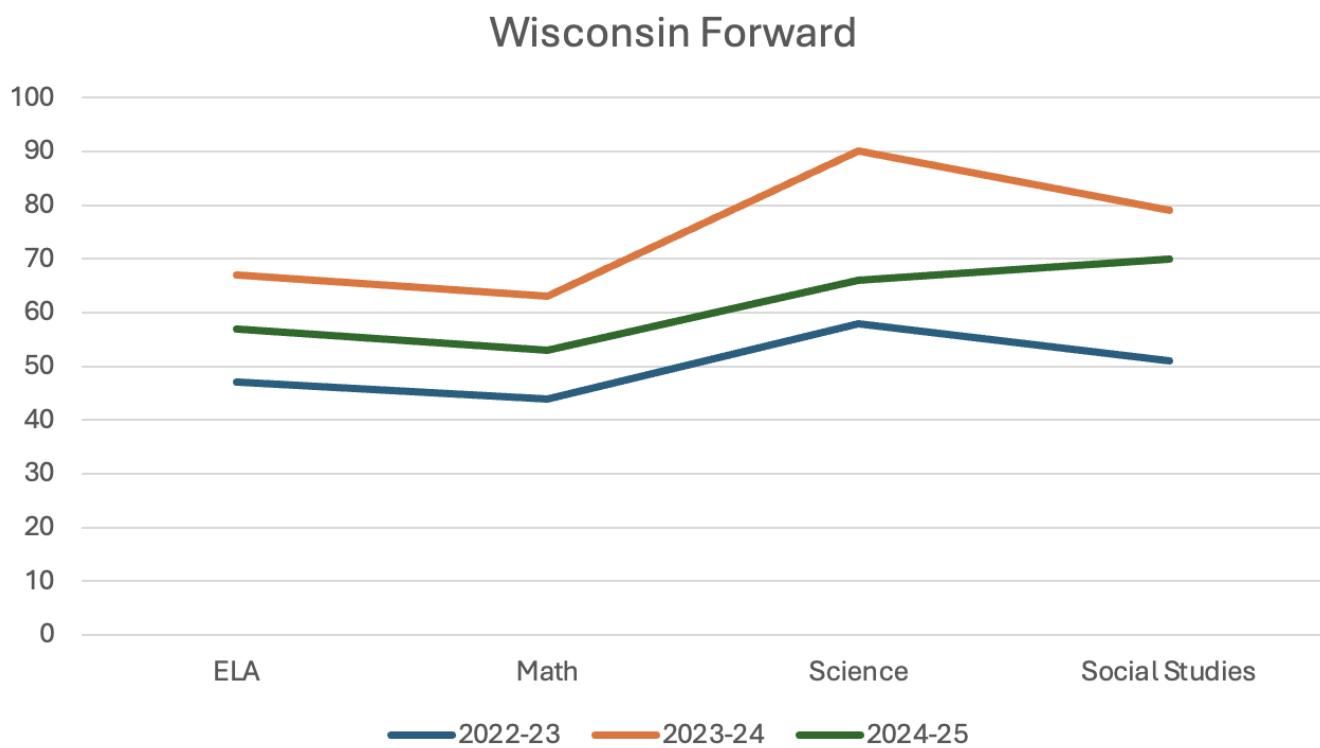
As we move forward, we remain committed to reviewing our Strategic Plan and School Improvement Plan annually, using stakeholder feedback and data to guide decision-making. Through God's provision and the partnership of our families, staff, and supporters, we will continue to grow in excellence, faith, and service.



Past Academic Performance

Students in grades 3–8 take the Wisconsin Forward Exam each spring. The data below reflects school-wide performance over the past three years. Because the 2024–25 3rd grade scores lowered the overall average, removing them would make that year's results nearly identical to 2023–24. With MAP testing now in place, we anticipate improved outcomes in 2025–26.

	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
English Language Arts	47	67	57
Mathematics	44	63	53
Science	58	90	66
Social Studies	51	79	70



MAP Testing began in the fall of 2025, and we look forward to seeing how the data from these assessments will improve learning outcomes.

2024-2025 IXL Assessments

	Reading		English Language Arts	
	Beginning	End-Of-Year	Beginning	End-Of-Year
Below Level	26.1%	8.7%	30.4%	21.7%
On Level	13.0%	30.4%	13.0%	4.3%
Above Level	60.9%	60.9%	56.5%	73.9%

BOY = Beginning-Of-Year

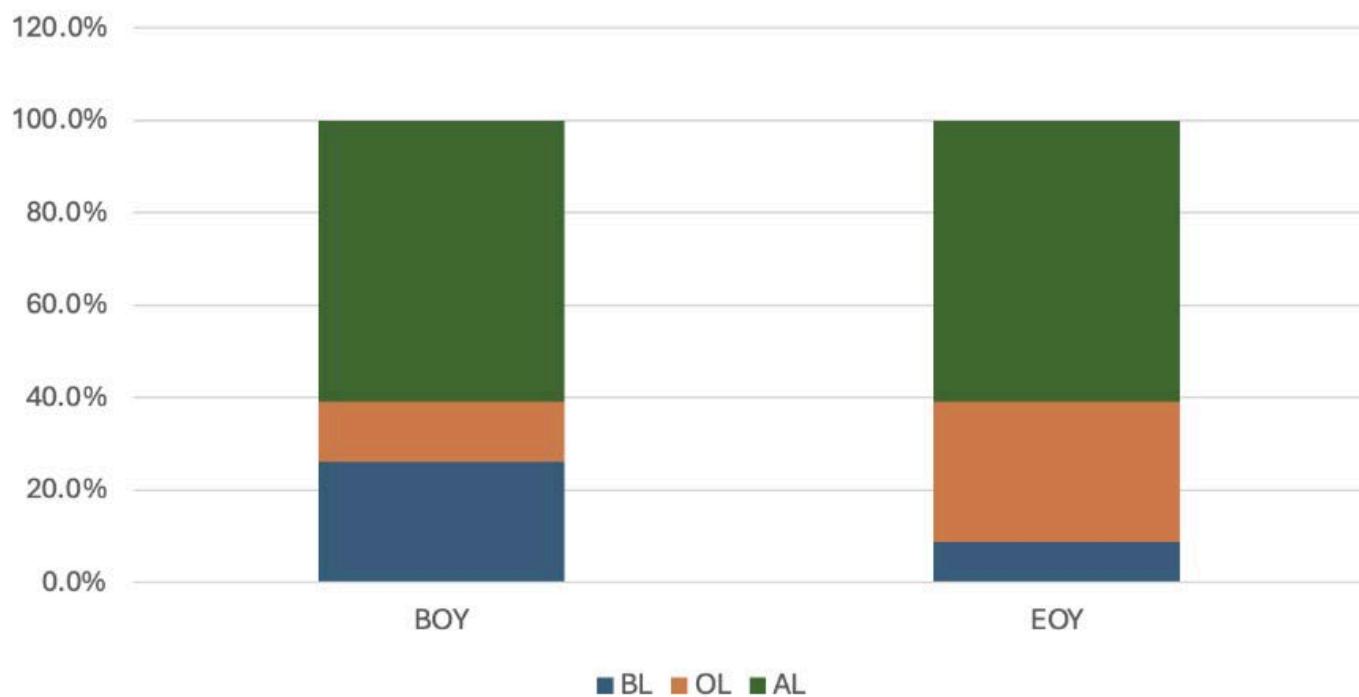
EOY = End-Of-Year

BL = Below Level

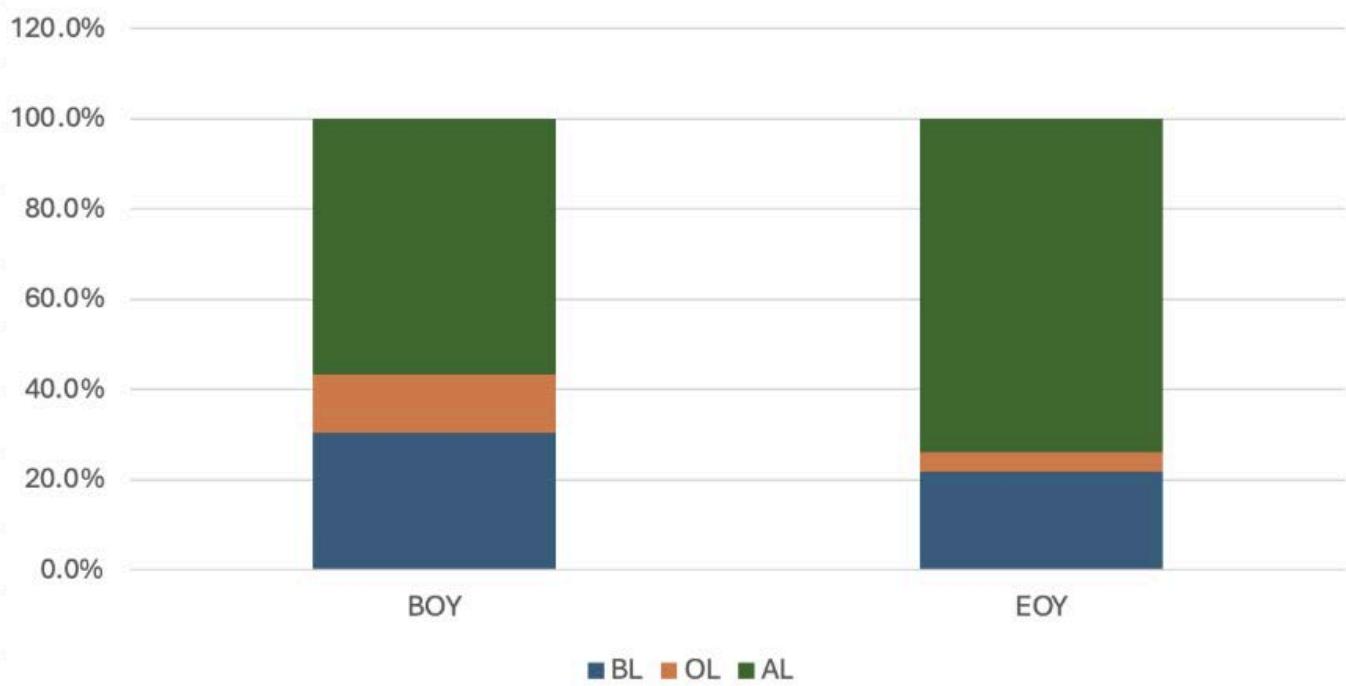
OL = On Level

AL = Above Level

2024-2025 - Reading



2024-2025 - English Language Arts



Academic Model/School Culture

Academic Model and School Culture

Ascension Academy's academic model integrates rigorous academics with intentional spiritual formation, equipping students to think critically, act with integrity, and lead with Christlike character. Every grade level and subject has a clearly defined curriculum map and scope and sequence, ensuring vertical alignment and consistent academic progression across the school. Instruction blends traditional classroom methods with hands-on, inquiry-based learning experiences, particularly in enrichment courses such as STEAM, art, and music.

Instruction at Ascension is both structured and responsive, rooted in the educational principle of scaffolding, building new learning upon what students already know. Teachers provide the necessary supports for each student to achieve success and then gradually remove those supports as students grow in mastery and independence. This process creates natural opportunities for individualization, allowing students to progress at a pace appropriate to their development while still engaging deeply with grade-level expectations. We also employ a half-time interventionist who supports students working below grade level.

Our Bible program follows a classical model that emphasizes Scripture study, logic, and articulation of a biblical worldview. Core academic subjects (ELA, math, science, and history) incorporate biblical integration and emphasize reasoning, communication, and creativity. Enrichment courses provide students with opportunities to explore God's creation through project-based and experiential learning, as reflected in our art scope and sequence, where lessons connect cultural study, artistic skill, and biblical truth.

Our part-time program includes our enrichment courses. On Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, homeschool students are able to participate in chapel, art, music, Spanish, and STEAM. Our part-time students also join us for field trips and concerts. This program fosters broader community engagement and reflects Ascension's mission to make Christian education accessible to more families.

Our Portrait of a Student—Aiming Our Arrows defines both our culture and outcomes. We aim to develop students who live out **Faith** (Christlike character and biblical literacy), **Character** (critical thinking and empathy), **Knowledge** (wisdom, academic excellence, and technological discernment), and **Community** (servant leadership and collaboration). These core values guide our teaching practices, behavioral expectations, and community partnerships.

Key Drivers of Academic Success

Our most essential driver of academic success is the quality and commitment of our teachers. Ascension Academy entrusts teachers with a balance of autonomy and support, empowering them

to use their professional judgment while providing resources and oversight to ensure continual growth. Teachers receive ongoing professional development, particularly in data-driven instruction, differentiation, and biblical worldview integration.

To support diverse learning needs, Ascension has invested in a dedicated interventionist who works with off-level students. This role has proven highly effective in closing academic gaps and providing individualized instruction. Though it stretches our budget, we view it as a vital investment in student success and long-term growth.

Assessment and Continuous Improvement

We use multiple assessment tools to ensure that instruction meets student needs and supports measurable growth. Students in grades 3–8 take the Wisconsin Forward Exam annually. Beginning in the 2025-26 school year, students in grades K–8 complete MAP testing three times per year in reading and math. These assessments provide key data points for identifying trends, setting goals, and making instructional adjustments. In addition, teachers utilize IXL for supplemental practice and progress monitoring in ELA and math. Professional development focuses on interpreting and applying this data to inform instruction and improve outcomes.

School Culture

The culture of Ascension Academy is intentionally Christ-centered and community-focused. Daily prayer, weekly chapel, and regular service opportunities shape spiritual formation and cultivate a sense of shared purpose. Teachers model discipleship in the classroom, integrating biblical truths across all content areas. Students are encouraged to see learning as God-honoring and preparation for their God-given callings.

Community engagement is central to our culture. Partnerships with more than 25 local congregations and regular chapel leadership by area pastors reinforce our commitment to a multi-denominational Christian education model.

Future Expansion and Consistency Across Campuses

As Ascension Academy expands to a second campus in Rice Lake, the same academic and cultural model will be replicated. Curriculum maps, teacher expectations, and the Portrait of a Student will remain identical across campuses to ensure continuity and shared mission. The new campus will serve grades 4K–4th grade initially, with the long-term vision of developing a unified Ascension system under consistent leadership and standards.

Our high school program will initially operate as a hybrid model, combining in-person instruction with accredited online coursework and local proctor oversight. This structure allows for flexibility and academic rigor while enrollment grows to support a full in-person model. Students will engage both independently and collaboratively, with teachers and mentors ensuring accountability, spiritual formation, and a strong sense of community.

The program will intentionally prepare students for both college and vocational pathways, affirming that every calling, whether in the trades, technology, ministry, or higher education, can be lived out for the glory of God. By valuing both traditional and non-traditional learning paths, Ascension Academy seeks to strengthen the home and community connection, fostering lifelong learners who contribute to the flourishing of society. Through this integrated model, Ascension's high school will develop graduates who are grounded in truth, equipped for service, and prepared to engage the world with wisdom, skill, and grace.

Strategic High School Launch Model

Ascension Academy is preparing to launch a high school program to meet the immediate needs of current students while intentionally building toward a fully in-person model. At present, one student is already enrolled as a freshman through accredited online coursework while attending Ascension Academy on-site, and four current eighth-grade students are seeking to continue as freshmen. In addition, there is growing interest from families in the surrounding community, creating a timely opportunity to formally establish the program and begin marketing to the broader public. Recognizing both staffing realities and financial stewardship, Ascension's high school will initially operate as a purposeful hybrid model, not as an end goal but as a phased launch strategy. This approach allows students to begin high school within Ascension's Christ-centered environment while enrollment and funding grow to support expanded in-house instruction.

Areas and Plans for Improvement

Looking ahead, Ascension Academy is committed to:

- Expanding professional development focused on effective use of data and differentiated instruction.
- Strengthening early intervention supports for struggling learners.
- Enhancing our STEAM program.
- Refine our high school model to align college and career readiness along with biblical discipleship.

By maintaining a clear academic framework, strong teacher support, and a Christ-centered culture, Ascension Academy continues to pursue its mission: to equip students spiritually and academically to impact the world for Christ.



Faith/Character Development

Culture and Leadership

Faith formation begins with the adults who lead our students. The character and spiritual maturity of our faculty, staff, and administrators set the tone for the entire culture of the school. Staff are expected to model Christlike behavior, integrity, and good citizenship, fostering an environment that aligns with our mission and the Portrait of a Student.

Faith-Forming Practices and Shared Experiences

We believe culture is built through shared spiritual practices. Each day, week, and year includes intentional opportunities for students to engage in faith formation as a community.

Daily Practices:

- Classroom prayer
- Pledge of Allegiance and Christian Pledges (Bible and Christian Flag)
- Bible class rooted in a three-year journey through Scripture
- Biblical truth is woven into all classes

Weekly and Monthly Rhythms:

- Weekly chapel with guest pastors and Christian leaders
- Monthly Bullseye Award
- Arrows of Encouragement awards

Yearly Traditions:

- Arrows in Action Service Event
- Arrows Rising Gala
- Homestead Fair
- STEAM Fair
- Christmas Concert
- Spring Concert
- Fall Field Trip
- Spring Field Trip
- Track and Field Day
- Pastor's Appreciation Day
- Grandparents Day
- National Day of Prayer
- Operation Christmas Child participation
- Veterans Day Program
- Theme Verse of the Year
- Ongoing correspondence with Unity in Hope Christian School (Pakistan)

Integration of Faith Across the Curriculum

Faith is not a subject; it is the foundation of our entire educational framework. Every subject area is taught from a biblical worldview, showing students that all truth is God's truth.

Measurement and Accountability

We employ both internal and external assessment methods to evaluate growth in faith and character. External accreditation from Christian Schools International (CSI) ensures our curriculum and culture align with biblical principles.

Measurement Tools:

1. External Accreditation – Christian Schools International (CSI)
2. Biblical Worldview Testing
3. External Audit
4. Stakeholder Surveys – including parents, teachers, students, and volunteers

Alignment with Strategic Goals

Faith and character development are embedded across our Strategic Growth Plan, ensuring spiritual formation drives decision-making in every domain.

- Communications
- Community Engagement: Foster a thriving, diverse Christian community
- Facilities
- Operations: Steward God's resources with integrity
- Teaching
- Learning: Equip students to think critically from a biblical lens
- Technology: Teach responsible, God-honoring use of technology

Conclusion

Faith formation and character development at Ascension Academy are intentional, measurable, and deeply integrated into every aspect of school life. Every element of our program points students toward the ultimate goal, to live a life of love and service to God and others.



External Communications

Weekly newsletters and Class Dojo connect families with chapel themes and school events. Public engagement is through Grandparents' Day, Pastor's Day, and PTF service projects.

Recruitment emphasizes Choice access, affordability, and mission clarity. We reach out to any family that may have interest in our educational programming including low-income and homeschool families through church and community events.

The weekly school newsletter is sent to all parents, which includes the following:

- Summary of the week's chapel message
- Summary of what will be shared in Bible classes
- Highlights from the week with pictures
- Upcoming events
- School Lunch Options/Order Form
- School news/announcements

Quarterly Investor Newsletter

All teachers send an email (at minimum) every Friday with the following:

- Upcoming tests
- Information on events/assignments
- Classroom news

We share information with the general public using the following communication tools:

- School Website
- Facebook
- Radio Ads
- Instagram
- YouTube
- Newspaper Ads

Aim True

October 31

Chapel

This week, Pastor Jared Andrea from Cumberland Baptist Church focused on Isaiah's vision of God's holiness from Isaiah 6:1–5. We were reminded of the majesty and glory of the Lord. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" (Isaiah 6:3)



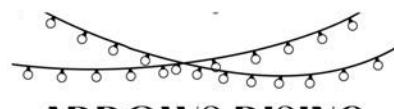
Pastor Jared encouraged us to put on "Son glasses" when reading Scripture, to look for how every part of the Bible points to Jesus. We learned that this passage in Isaiah is referring to Jesus Himself, as confirmed by references to it in the New Testament. The whole Bible tells one story, the story of God's redemption through His Son.

You are invited to join us for our next chapel on Tuesday, November 4, at 2:15 p.m. Our chapel will be in the lobby of the main building, as we will be packaging boxes for Operation Christmas Child with John and Nan Hendry.

The Arrow

October 2025 Ascension Academy Investor Newsletter

Arrows Rising – Evening at the Barn



ARROWS RISING EVENING AT THE BARN



You are invited to a casual dinner fundraiser and fellowship event benefiting:
Ascension Academy Christian School Community

SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 8TH, 2025
5 - 9 PM

Financial Plan

Ascension Academy Financial Growth Plan

Ascension Academy's financial development follows a deliberate, multi-year path that moves the school from donor dependence toward stable, diversified funding. Each phase builds upon the last, strengthening financial resilience and expanding the mission to reach more families. The model emphasizes stewardship, disciplined growth, and responsiveness to community demand as the foundation for long-term sustainability.

Phase 1: Foundational Investment, Church Partnerships, and Part-Time Programs (Years 1–2)

The first two years were sustained by faithful donors and early investors who believed in the mission before it could be proven. Their generosity allowed Ascension to launch debt free and to establish the Cumberland campus through a partnership with a local church. This partnership not only provided needed classroom space but also benefited the congregation by supplying rental income for facilities that would otherwise sit unused during the week.

These church-based arrangements remain a defining feature of Ascension's model. These partnerships reduce fixed costs, eliminate debt obligations, and build unity between congregations and the school community.

From the beginning, Ascension also welcomed part-time students, primarily homeschool families attending on Tuesdays and Thursdays. These programs created a vibrant midweek community that introduced families to the staff, students, and parent network. The part-time model has served as both outreach and a natural bridge into full-time Christian education. During this period, Ascension began using Aplos donor management software to record giving and investment activity. While the system was in place early, limited staffing prevented full use until later years.

Phase 2: Tuition Participation and CSI Accreditation (Years 2–3)

As enrollment grew, tuition became an important part of the financial structure. Families demonstrated their commitment to Christian education, and tuition revenue combined with continued donor support to strengthen teacher compensation, academic resources, and administrative systems.

During this same period, Ascension applied for membership and accreditation with Christian Schools International (CSI). Accreditation not only affirmed the school's commitment to Christ-centered academic excellence but also provided access to CSI's group health benefits. This plan stabilizes benefit costs, supports staff retention, and reduces volatility that often challenges small independent schools.

Phase 3: School Choice Integration (Years 3–4)

Joining the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program provided dependable, enrollment-based funding and expanded access for families across income levels. State vouchers of \$10,877 for grades K–8 and \$13,371 for grades 9–12 in 2025–26 stabilized operations and allowed fundraising efforts to focus on growth and program development rather than annual expenses.

Phase 4: Organized Fundraising, In-Kind Time, and Market Expansion (Current Phase, 2025–2028)

Ascension Academy is now in a phase of structured fundraising and community engagement. The Arrows Rising campaign, launching November 8, 2025, represents a new level of organization and purpose. Scheduled ahead of the tax year, it aligns with donor giving cycles and integrates seamlessly with Aplos systems. The first-year goal is \$50,000, with a target of \$150,000 by 2028.

Administrative staff now use Aplos for segmented donor communication and automated reporting along with JMC Student Information System, replacing one-on-one outreach with data-informed campaigns and events.

This year also marks the expansion of in-kind tracking to include volunteer and Board time in addition to donated services and materials. Recording these hours as both revenue and offsetting expenses captures the full impact of community participation and lowers the administrative overhead ratio presented in reports.

Ascension's growth strategy continues to follow family demand, prioritizing early grade levels in Rice Lake and the development of a hybrid high school model to accept the current middle school cohort in Cumberland.

Phase 5: Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) Leadership and Readiness (Years 6–10)

Although SGOs are not yet active in Wisconsin, Ascension is preparing now to help lead when implementation begins. SGOs are expected to expand educational access across most income levels through tax-advantaged scholarships that supplement tuition and operate alongside the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program.

Federal authorization and state adoption are expected around 2027 based on current advocacy efforts. Ascension's readiness reflects its proactive approach: administrative systems, Aplos integration, and the Arrows Rising structure already form the foundation for SGO reporting and management.

Summary

Ascension Academy's financial plan reflects a school that is steady, resourceful, and faithful in mission. It has progressed from donor and church partnerships to organized fundraising, from startup dependence to a balanced structure built on tuition, vouchers, and community support. Even under slower enrollment growth, efficiencies from shared administration, CSI health benefits, and church facility partnerships provide stability. At higher enrollment levels, Ascension will maintain capacity to reserve more than \$200,000 annually for scholarships, staff development, and future expansion.

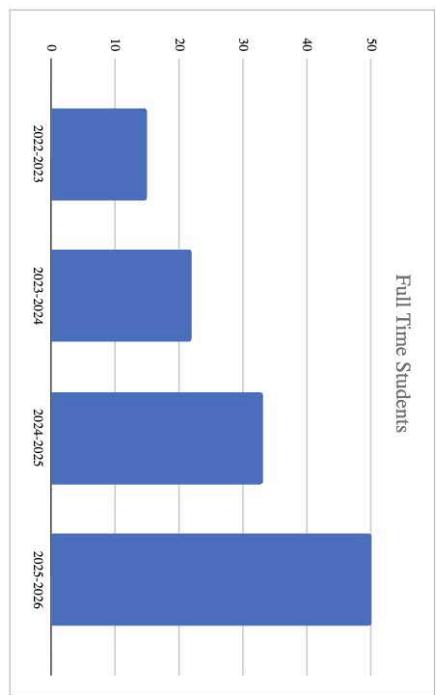
Ascension Academy, Inc.
Financial Statements for the Periods 7/1/2023 to 6/30/2024 and 7/1/2024 to 6/30/2025

	7/1/24 to 6/30/25	7/1/23 to 6/30/24	as of 6/30/2025	as of 6/30/2024
INCOME			ASSETS	
Donations	269,114	296,839	Current Assets	124,327
School Tuition and Fees	101,211	120,386	Fixed Assets	- 9,981
Other Income	211,487	3,215	Other Assets	- -
In-Kind Donations	128,107	-	Total Assets	124,327 74,267
Total Income	709,918	420,440		
EXPENSE			LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Salary and Benefits	453,897	355,267	Total Payables and other Current Liabilities	40,890 3,346
Administrative Expenses	50,422	25,740	Total Long Term Liabilities	- -
Development	5,295	6,880	Total Equity	83,838 70,922
Classroom Expenses	16,830	22,662	Total Liabilities and Equity	124,727 74,267
Information Technology	10,097	13,307		
Athletics/Extracurricular	3,864	1,552		
Facility	152,007	24,306		
Total Expense	692,413	449,713		
School Capital Expenditures	-	-		
Operational Reserves	17,506	(29,273)		

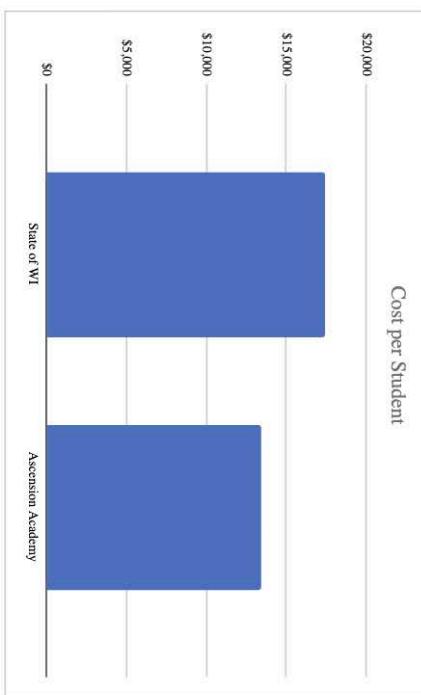
Ascension Academy, Inc.
Interim Financial Statements for the Periods of 7/1/2024 to 12/31/2024 and 7/1/2025 to 12/31/2025

	7/1/25 to 12/31/25	7/1/24 to 12/31/24	as of 12/31/2022	as of 12/31/2024
INCOME			ASSETS	
Donations	66,903	157,689	Current Assets	166,191 112,221
School Tuition and Fees	63,954	61,660	Fixed Assets	- 9,981
School Choice	157,717	112,607	Other Assets	- -
Other Income	104,401	4,091	Total Assets	166,191 122,202
In-Kind Donations	58,420	-		
Total Income	451,395	336,047		
EXPENSE			LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Salary and Benefits	252,238	232,083	Total Payables and other Current Liabilities	35,934 11,682
Administrative Expenses	37,618	16,889	Total Long Term Liabilities	- -
Fundraising Expenses	791	898	Total Equity	130,257 110,520
Development	5,303	573	Total Liabilities and Equity	166,191 122,202
Admission and Family Ministry	-	-		
Classroom Expenses	25,355	19,449		
Information Technology	5,964	5,854		
Athletics/Extracurricular	1,350	497		
Facility	74,014	20,273		
Total Expense	402,633	296,516		
School Capital Expenditures	-	-		
Operational Reserves	48,761	39,532		

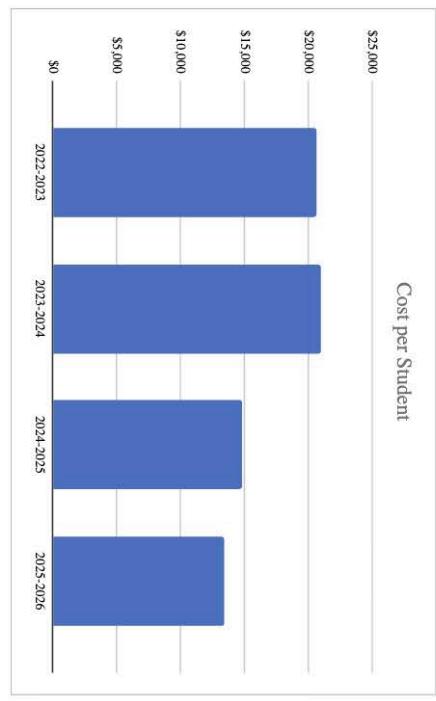
We have been growing!



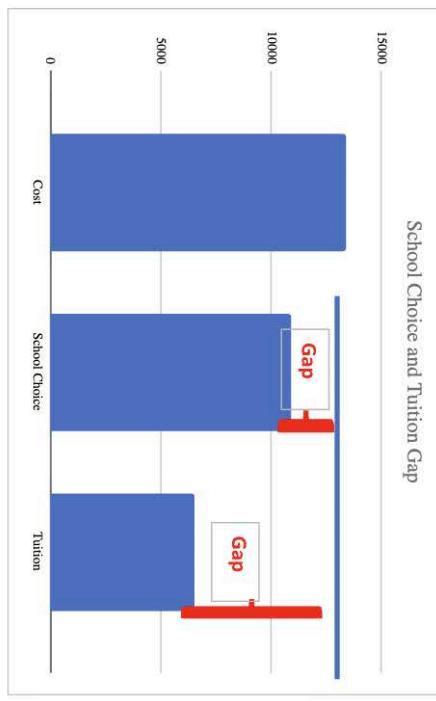
Your Investment is well spent



As we have grown, our cost per student has declined



Your Investment is still crucial to Ascension Academy



	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Full Time Students	15	22	33	50
Cost per Student	\$17,400	\$13,374	\$13,374	\$13,374
Cost vs Voucher vs Tuition	Cost \$13,374	School Choice \$10,877	Tuition \$6,500	

Giving

Total Received:

2021-2022	\$89,367
2022-2023	\$297,596
2023-2024	\$296,839
2024-2025	\$269,114

July 1 - Dec 31 \$66,903 (half a fiscal year)

Arrows Rising \$99,541

Total this fiscal year \$166,444 (half a fiscal year)

Investor Tier

Visionary	\$40,000
Founder	\$20,000
Partner	\$10,000
Sustainer	\$5,000
Supporter	\$3,000
Friend	\$1,200
Neighbor	\$600

Many have given of their time, talent, and treasures! Thank you to our faithful donors who have invested in Ascension Academy this calendar last year:

Larry & Linda Anderson	Bruce Johnson	Michael & Christy Sainburg
Mark Anderson	Jeff Koepf	Lisa Schroeder
Pamela Anderson	Adam & Brenda Kibola	Karen Schroeder
Kelly Bagley	Tom & Dianne Koser	Michael & Susan Schroeder
Ryan & Bridget Bartlett	John & Jackie Kurkowski	Brian Sheehan
Larry Batten	Barb Landstrom	Peggy Shofner
Harland Becker	Dareld & Susan Lundgren	Barb Siverling
Randy & Nancy Brant	Deborah Maynes	Kathryn Stahl
James & Frances Braun	Regan Myers	Curt & Lorraine Swanson
Dale Degerman	Steven & Glenda Nelli	Josh & Amy Swanson
Walter den Hoed	Christine Nickell	Lacey Thornwall
Matthew & Michelle Earls	Chad & Stacy Owens	Craig & Jennifer Turcott
Kari Eklund	Amanda Penberthy	Joy Walker
Travis & Rebecca Erickson	Donald & Sandra Peterson	Peter & Ruth Westendorf
Larry and Marlene Fornell	John & Carie Peterson	Bradley Wiggins
Mark & Cheryl Forehand	Darryl Pree	Colten and Courtney Wilson
Mark & Barb Fuller	James and Janie Price	Barron Ecumenical Men's Club
Jay & Gayle Gilbertson	Jeff & Jennifer Reese	Becker's Trucking, Inc.
Amy Griffin	Donna Roark	CDR Farms
Robert & Dorothy Groshong	Betty Ritchie	Midwest Machinery Co.
Scott & Janelle Hagen	Allen & Judi Ruppel	Spare Time Bowl Bar & Grill
Sue Hagen	Robert & Angie Ruppel	St. John Lutheran Church
Andreas & Sue Heer	Ron Ruppel	St. Paul Lutheran Church
Carol Heideman	Bob & Karyn Schauf	Turcott Construction
Jeffrey & Diane Hoffman	Zach & Brooke Schauf	
James & Mary Holmes	Claire Saffert	

Volunteers

We are deeply grateful for the many volunteers who generously give their time, talents, and hearts in service to our school. Your faithful support strengthens our community and blesses our students in countless ways.

Special Recognition

A special thank you to **Rita Sellers**, who faithfully volunteers each day to lead our lunch program. Thank you to **Roger Dutilly** for warmly greeting our families, directing traffic, and offering help each morning. We are also grateful to **Angela Nelli**, who leads our Parent-Teacher Fellowship (PTF) and serves as our Yearbook Advisor. Thank you to **Jill Maas** for overseeing the RaiseRight program and supporting our school through volunteering on Fridays.

Board of Directors

We extend our sincere thanks to our board members for their leadership and guidance:

- Robert Ruppel, President
- Janelle Hagen, Vice President
- John Peterson, Treasurer
- Peter Westendorf, Secretary
- Allen Ruppel
- Bob Schauf

Volunteer Community

We are thankful for the many individuals who volunteered in classrooms, events, committees, programs, and behind the scenes this calendar year, including:

Jennifer Barker	Brent Metheny	Rhown Ruppel
Sarah Brant	Melissa Meyer	Robert Ruppel
Reanna Chaplin	Jacqueline Miller	Michael Sainburg
Grant Crown	Jeremy Miller	Ashley Schauf
Ashley den Hoed	Angela Nelli	Bob Schauf
Melissa Doporcyk	Gabe Nelli	Beau Schultz
Roger Dutilly	Tiffany Offerdahl	Kelly Sellers
Rebecca Erickson	Anna Pedersen	Rita Sellers
Amy Griffin	John Peterson	Rachel Svendsen
Janelle Hagen	Jeff Reese	Peter Westendorf
Leilani Lott	Jenny Reese	RayeAnne White
Pam James	Scott Rohland	Roy White
Anna Kauffman	Heidi Richey	Colten Wilson
Jonathon Kauffman	Wayne Richey	Nicole Yeske
Alan Kurschner	Allen Ruppel	Chad Yoder
Jill Maas	Aric Ruppel	Kasey Yoder



Chapel Speakers

We are grateful for those who shared God's Word with our students during chapel this year, including:

Michelle Crumpacker
Dennis Wright
Pastor John Sahlstrom
Pastor David Smith
Otieno Oduor
Aldo & Jennifer Wajajay
Pastor Paul Poppe
Bob Holmes

Pastor John Miels
Mrs. Joleen Helbig
Mr. Justin Peterson
Pastor Matt Sheppard
Melissa Meyer
Pastor Jason Buck
Pastor Matthew Earls
Pastor Jared Andrea

John Hendry
Robert Ruppel
Doug Ripplinger
Pastor John Kauffman
Jill Maas
Pastor Paul Green



We also thank our Parent Chapel speakers, including Heather Cox and Jill Maas, for sharing with our school community.

We recognize that volunteering often happens quietly and behind the scenes. If we have unintentionally missed anyone, please know that your service is deeply appreciated and valued.

Facilities

We believe the most effective and sustainable model for Ascension Academy is to lease space from existing churches. Many churches in our region have classroom areas, playground space, and even gymnasiums that are well-suited for school use. This approach has served us well in Cumberland, and the facility we are considering in Rice Lake offers similar advantages. Looking ahead, there are additional potential locations in Siren, Turtle Lake, and Chetek should future expansions occur.



Fundraising

Philosophy and Strategic Approach

At Ascension Academy, our fundraising philosophy is built upon the concept of investment. We view every donor as an investor—someone who is invested in our mission, our students, our families, and ultimately in the Kingdom of God. While the word “donation” often conveys a short-term contribution, investment communicates long-term partnership and purpose. Education is a lifelong journey, and we believe our supporters are investing not merely in a school, but in the spiritual, academic, and character development of the next generation. Our responsibility is to ensure that each investor sees Ascension Academy as a worthy, enduring investment—one with visible, Kingdom-centered returns.

Current and Projected Funding Needs

Currently, approximately 65% of our annual budget is supported through investor contributions. As enrollment grows and tuition revenue increases, our reliance on outside funding will gradually decrease to an estimated 15% of our annual budget. To support that sustainable future, we are focused on strengthening our investor base and establishing 2–3 high-quality annual fundraising events designed to consistently meet our long-term investment goals.

Past and Ongoing Fundraising Efforts

Since our founding nearly five years ago, Ascension Academy’s primary fundraising success has come through cultivating relationships with private investors. Efforts have included:

- Individual meetings and home visits with potential investors
- Presentations to congregations and community groups
- Small, relational investor gatherings such as breakfasts and dinners
- 5K Run
- Arrows in Action Service Project
- Script Program

These efforts have been vital in laying a foundation of personal trust and mission alignment among those who share our vision for Christ-centered education.

Major Fundraising Initiatives

1. Arrows Rising: Annual Gala Event

Looking ahead, we are formalizing a flagship annual event, Arrows Rising, as a cornerstone of our fundraising calendar. This event name is inspired by our mascot, the Ascension Academy Arrows, and our guiding phrase: “Aim True”

Our inaugural Arrows Rising—An Evening at the Barn event will take place in November 2025, featuring dinner, a guest speaker, silent auction, and opportunities for fellowship among parents, teachers, students, and investors.

The evening will serve multiple purposes:

- Recognition of the generosity and impact of our investors
- Connection between our school community and our financial partners
- Inspiration to deepen long-term engagement and investment

Through ticket sales, auction proceeds, and giving opportunities throughout the evening, we expect to raise \$10,000–\$20,000 in the first year. Within five years, our goal is to grow Arrows Rising into our premier annual fundraising event, capable of generating \$100,000 or more annually.

2. Arrows in Action: Service Project and Pledge Drive

Another cornerstone initiative is Arrows in Action, a unique blend of service and fundraising. Each year, students participate in a community service project—demonstrating the heart of Christian service—while seeking pledge support from family, friends, and community members.

A sample message from this year's pledge campaign reads:

"I am writing to ask you to pledge your support toward my school's fundraiser, Arrows in Action! Our school symbol, an arrow, reminds us that our aim is to grow in character and knowledge so that we can reach our goal of being God's faithful servants. Very soon, our younger arrows will be singing and visiting a local nursing home, while our older arrows will be traveling to Coon Rapids, Minnesota to assemble meals at the Feed My Starving Children packing facility."

Funds raised through Arrows in Action support scholarships, classroom technology, playground improvements, and our international partnership with a pen-pal school in Pakistan. Our first-year goal was to raise \$5,000, and we met that goal. We have expectations of significant growth as enrollment increases and community participation expands.

3. RaiseRight Family Partnership Program

We have also established a RaiseRight partnership, a family-driven program that turns everyday purchases into giving opportunities. Through RaiseRight, families earn rebates from participating retailers, which are shared between the school and the family to offset tuition or meal costs. Though currently a smaller revenue source, this program fosters year-round engagement and encourages every family to participate in the school's financial health in a simple, sustainable way.

4. Pursuing External Partnerships and Institutional Funding

Beyond internal fundraising, Ascension Academy is actively pursuing partnerships with faith-based and education-focused grant organizations whose missions align with our own. Examples include:

We are continually identifying similar organizations, funds, and private benefactors who share our vision for advancing Christian education in our region.

Summary and Outlook

Ascension Academy's fundraising strategy is built on relationships, sustainability, and mission alignment. By treating donors as investors, nurturing personal connections, and developing high-quality annual events and programs, we are creating a diversified and enduring funding base. Our vision is clear: to ensure that Ascension Academy continues to equip students to rise and make a lasting impact for the Kingdom of God.





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