

You are receiving this email as a member of ACSI and/or your subscription preferences.



An International Division Member Connection, July 2025

Fellow International Educator,

It's summertime, which means most international educators on a Northern Hemisphere calendar are enjoying a bit of time in the sun.

Sandee and I recently made a cross-country move. The city where we used to live sat at 6,600 feet (2,010 meters) above sea level, which, among other things, gave us an average of 247 days of sunshine per year. Things are not as sunny where we live now. It has a significantly lower elevation of only 1,156 feet (352 meters) and an average of just 167 days of sunshine per year. The difference, of course, is due to several factors, including altitude, humidity levels, and cloud cover. However, one thing is sure: our powerful sun. Even on days when we can't see it, we know the sun is there doing its ordained task day after day. This also means that when we do experience direct sun, whether it's in Colorado, Ohio, Nairobi, or Jakarta, the effect is the same—more heat and a higher potential for sunburn.

Where am I going with this? David in Psalm 121:5 reminds us, "The Lord watches over you—the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night." Of course, David was not saying that God is our literal shade (or our SPF 100 sunscreen); instead, he is saying that our Lord often acts as a protective relief against harm of all kinds. Take a moment and put the word "shade" or "shadow" into your Bible app; many wonderful verses will



pop up, equating shade with God's care and goodness. This would make an excellent word-study for you and your small group.

I will close with just one more related passage, this time using the word shadow. "Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. Your righteousness is like the highest mountains, your justice like the great deep. You, Lord, preserve both people and animals. How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of your wings." (Psalm 36:5-7)

I wish you moments of refreshment this summer in the shadow of God's care.

Blessings to you wherever you are in the world,

Tim, for the [international school team](#)

[Tim Shuman, Senior Director, International Division](#)

[Chealsea Allen, International Schools Activity & Events Coordinator](#)

[Michael McNabb, Director of Accreditation, International Division](#)

[Kimberly Park, Accreditation Specialist, International Division](#)

[Caitlin Taylor, Administrative Assistant, International Division](#)



Upcoming International Events

- The 2025 [Job Fair Tour](#) registration is open. This is your invitation to join a teacher recruitment fair. We look forward to seeing you at Liberty University, Grand Canyon University, and Dallas Baptist University from 28 October to 4 November. *
- The [2025 Online Job Fair registration](#) is now open for recruiters.
- Teachers and Leaders in Latin America, take a look at the exciting plans for the [ABI Conference](#) coming up on 12-15 November in the Dominican Republic. You do not want to miss this first-of-its-kind gathering of national, international, and American teachers and leaders from Accredited, Bilingual, and International schools. [Dr. Jon Eckert](#), of Baylor University, is our featured speaker, be sure to check out the list of other presenters. *
- Registration is now open for [ICEC Asia 2025](#). We expect 500 to join us, from 26 to 29 November, on the oceanside campus of Dalat International School. We've secured special conference rates at the beautiful [Flamingo By the Beach Penang](#) hotel, just a short walk from Dalat. We are delighted to announce [Dr. David I. Smith](#) from Calvin University as our featured keynote speaker. Our pre-conference courses will enhance your experience. Please consider sharing your passion with fellow educators in a workshop setting. Workshop submissions are being accepted [here](#). *
- [PFO2Go](#) is in full swing, with many new staff at international schools signing up before the school year starts. Sign up your incoming staff now to ensure a smooth start. Read some of the course [reviews](#).
- FUTURE Conference dates
 - 26-29 April 2026. International School Leader Conference Europe. Tentative: Dubrovnik, Croatia
 - 17-20 March 2027. International Christian Educator Conference Europe. Prague, CZ
 - 17-20 November 2027. International Christian Educator Conference Asia. Tentative: Chiang Mai, Thailand

**Come and meet Dr. Angela Patterson, Incoming Senior Director of the International School Division.*

News, Articles & Other Ideas

- ACSI's most recent posts and resources:
 - [Failure Is an Important Aspect of Learning](#) with Pam Culbreth
 - [Blueprint for Students' Faith: Key findings from the ACSI Bible Program \(Part 1\)](#) with Dr. Rian Djita.
 - [Juneteenth: A Journey Toward Biblical Unity](#) with Deon Parker.
 - [Trusted Leadership: Why Being Intentional With Relationships Is Critical to a Christ-Centered Culture](#) with Mike Allen.
 - See the complete catalog of free videos at ACSI's [YOUTUBE channel](#).
- [Michael and Kim Essenburg](#) care for international Christian schools and love to share flourishing tips and ideas with you.
 - [To what extent are you flourishing?](#)
 - [How aligned are your expected student outcomes with "holistic flourishing in Jesus"? How aligned do you want them to be?](#)
 - [International Christian school leaders, what five conditions would help you holistically flourish in Jesus?](#)
- Did you know that there is an [Association of Christian Librarians](#)? Is your school's librarian a member?
- Have you considered unplugging from your screens this summer? How about a [Screen Time Sabbatical](#)? For a deeper dive, check out [Summer Slowdown](#) from Practicing the Way.
- The Big Mac Index was handy when our sons were applying for college scholarships from our overseas location. [Check out the 2025 Index](#). How much does a Big Mac cost where you live?

Headship Openings Only

- Christian English School of Torino, Italy. [Learn more here](#).
- First Baptist Christian School, Cayman Islands. [Learn more here](#).
- Grace International School, Bangladesh. [Learn more here](#).
- Hillcrest International School, Indonesia. [Learn more here](#).

- Hope Academy, Central Asia. [Learn more here.](#)
- International Academy of St. Petersburg, Russia. [Learn more here.](#)
- Lighthouse Primary and Secondary School, Mauritius. [Learn more here.](#)
- Mountainview Christian School, Indonesia. [Learn more here.](#)
- Oaxaca Christian School, Mexico. [Learn more here.](#)

If you have an opening for a head of school position, please let me know. Check our [member school vacancy page](#) and the [ACSI Career Center](#). If you are interested in a position at an international school, check out the latest non-USA opportunities [here](#). If you need help and ideas for how to use your Career Center benefit, check out our [ACSI Career Center Employer Manual](#).

ACSI Inspire Accreditation

ACSI *Inspire* provides schools with a research-based accreditation protocol whereby schools implement a holistic process of organizational appraisal and improvement. Rather than a 'one-and-done' event, ACSI accreditation is an ongoing process, providing a structured plan in which schools complete a comprehensive self-assessment, establish prioritized goals for improvement, host a team of peer Christian educators to collaborate around those goals, and create an Accreditation

The Blessings of Budgeting

By Susan Verheul, VP of Executive Initiatives

"Budgeting...a blessing? What? That is a joke!"

"Budgeting is just one of those requirements from the Board!"

"Our budget never balances so we just plug it."

"How can we build a reliable budget, when there are so many unknowns?"

"Budgeting is a waste of time because the budget-to-actual-results are always significant."

If you can relate to any of those responses, you are

Rooted Educator Worldview Summit 2025 Recap



ISLC Mallorca 2025 Recap



Watch the video above for a recap of the 2025 International School Leader Conference. Thank you to all who participated!

Stronger Together Podcast: Updates from the IELC, and the upcoming Public Policy & Advocacy Summit

Action Plan that will drive the improvement process over the course of the accreditation term. Additionally, this academic year, ACSI will launch our digital platform that will help manage the entire accreditation process, including the application, self-study, site visit, and annual reporting.

There are both internal and external benefits to the ACSI accreditation process. Internally, it allows for a wide group of stakeholders to work together to truly know and understand their own school's strengths and areas for improvement. This can create buy-in among these stakeholders who can celebrate the school's strengths among the community and contribute to improving the areas for growth. Externally, ACSI accreditation serves as an indicator that your school is committed to excellence, provides collaboration opportunities with other institutions, and supports recognition of

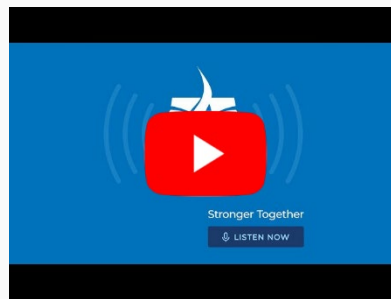
not alone. However, there is hope. When you view budgeting from the way it is intended, it can be a blessing to you and your stakeholders.

Building a reliable budget takes time and hard work, but the investment can help protect your school's mission, bring financial stability, and years of blessings.

Blessing #1

A budget should be a reflection of your school's mission. Your mission is a significant reason why your parents enroll their children and why your teachers are willing to serve. Your board is entrusted with ensuring the mission is protected. Therefore, a well-planned board board-approved budget can help protect your school's mission. Key factors to consider:

- **Invite God to Take His Rightful Place.** This is the most important step. Everything in heaven and earth is His (1Chronicles 29:11). He is the reason your school exists, the reason you have quality facilities and employees,



Hear from Dr. Larry Taylor at the International Educator Leadership Conference in Budapest, and from Phil Hills, Executive Regional Director of ACSI Western Canada, ahead of this September's Public Policy & Advocacy Summit.

Find more on Teaching Redemptively at your.acsi.org/teachingredemptively.

Register for the PPA Summit at acsi.org/summit.

The ACSI Podcast highlights member schools, educators, and important happenings in a 15-minute news magazine style format.

graduates by colleges and employers. ACSI accreditation offers schools the following opportunities:

The option to obtain joint accreditation with a regional accreditor (Cognia, NEASC, MSA, WASC) wherein ACSI can function as the lead agency.

Continue reading [here](#).

the reason you have students, and the reason your school will have resources for the next year.

Continue reading [here](#).



[ACSI](#) | [Association of Christian Schools International](#)

Post Office Box 62249, Colorado Springs, CO, 80962

Connect with us on [social media](#) and fellow Christian educators through the [ACSI Community](#)!

We respect your privacy. We do not rent, sell, or abuse our customer email list.

We strive to send valuable, timely emails to our members and friends.

[Manage Subscription Preferences](#)

ACSI Inspire Accreditation Continued

- Streamlined approval process by the U.S. Department of Education for the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), I-20 and I-17 forms
- Various U.S. state and several national recognitions for credits/athletics
- Eligibility to register to administer College Board/ACT exams on the school site
- Recognition of early education accreditation status in several states, allowing the program to receive higher reimbursement rates for subsidized children

Every step in our accreditation process is designed to be useful for driving improvement in Christian schools. If you are striving for excellence based on a solid Christian philosophy of education, consider exploring our program.

The Blessings of Budgeting Continued

- **(Cont.)** Pray over your budget, recognizing God's involvement in your school. We need His power, direction, leadership, vision, correction, grace, and mercy. We need His Spirit to fill the walls of our school and the hearts of EVERY employee as they all play a key role in training our students to be followers of Jesus Christ
- **Involve Key Leaders.** Your school's key leaders who will be carrying out the initiatives should develop their portion of the budget (i.e. Head of School, Admissions Director, Human Resources Director, Chief Advancement Officer, Divisional Principals, Department Heads, Athletics Director, Fine Arts Director, Special Programs Director, etc.). As you work with your key leaders, you are building relationships and empowering them to own their part of the budget.
- **Make Reasonable Budget Assumptions.** Having a balanced budget is a priority; however, just plugging numbers to make the budget balance is not a fruitful exercise. The estimates should be based on current information (i.e. estimated enrollment, tuition rates, financial aid needs, planned fund raising/ development activities/events, expected staffing along with their salaries and benefits, curriculum needs, technology needs, capital initiatives, capital repairs, debt payments, reserve allocations, etc.).
- **Communicate the Approved Budget.** After compiling the input from the key leaders, adjustments will likely be needed to balance the budget. Adjustments should be made based on key leaders' input and current circumstances. It will be vital to ensure the key leaders know the board approved budget and the factors that caused the adjustments.

Blessing #2

A budget **provides a roadmap toward achieving financial stability**. A well-planned budget provides valuable information, which leads to informed decisions, which can lead to achieving financial stability. When developing a budget, ratios can help evaluate reasonableness:

- Hard Income (tuition and fees) as a % of Total Income (>95%)
- Soft Income (donations) as a % Total Income (<5%)
- Financial Aid as a % of Gross Tuition (~5-10%)
- Wages and Benefits as a % of Total Income (~70-80%)
- Benefits (health insurance, retirement, taxes, tuition benefits) as a % of Wages (~20-30%)
- Operating Expenses as a % of Hard Income (~20%)
- Debt Service as a % of Total Income (<4-6%)
- Capital Purchases (new and replacements) as a % of Total Income (<4%-6%)
- Reserves as a % of Total Income (<20%)

Adhering to ratio ranges can help protect and guide your school's resources, enabling you to be good stewards (1 Peter 10:4) of the resources you have been entrusted. If your current year's ratios are out of range, the ratios can influence the direction of future budget planning to achieve optimal goals.

Blessing #3

Once the budget is developed and reviewed, the results can be overwhelming. We need to ask our provider for His wisdom and direction (James 1:5) and serve Him by following His guidance (Colossians 3:23). As the year proceeds, we have the opportunity to **watch how God intercedes and blesses our obedience (Psalm 121:1-2)**, which will glorify Him and strengthen our faith.

Key Takeaway

Well-planned budgeting ensures the mission is protected while achieving financial stability and strengthening our faith in Him. As you and your team lead your school in protecting and fulfilling its mission, may God bless your efforts as you train the next generation according to Psalm 78:4. "We will not hide them from their descendants; we

will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders He has done.”

Read more pieces like this in [ACSI's Christian School Strategist](#).

About the Author

Susan Verheul serves as the Vice President of Executive Initiatives at the Association of Christian Schools International. She is a Certified Public Accountant and began the first seven years of her career as an auditor in a Big Four accounting firm. She subsequently served for 14 years as the Sr. Director of Business Administration for a large Christian school in Plano, Texas, where she served a multi-location campus with enrollment of over 2,000 students in grades PreK-12 and assisted in the formation of a Christian inner-city school in South Dallas serving students of the community in grades PreK-5. She and her husband have three grown children and a daughter-in-law.