

An International Member Connection, April 2024

**Rooted: Educator Worldview Summit Speaker,
Dr. Christopher Yuan**



Dr. Christopher Yuan
Keynote Speaker

Watch the video above to hear Dr. Christopher Yuan share the importance of biblical foundations. We hope you and other teachers from your school will join us on June 24–27 at Ridgecrest in beautiful Black Mountain, NC, for the [Rooted: Educator Worldview Summit](#) hosted by ACSI and the Colson Center for Christian Worldview. Fabulous speakers, including Dr. Christopher Yuan, will help you develop a Christlike culture, facilitate healthy faith formation, and engage secular ideology.

Fellow International Christian Educator,

Do you know the saying, “Things are not always as they seem”? It turns out there is a reason why Jesus said, “Stop judging according to outward appearances; rather judge according to righteous judgment” (John 7:24 CSB).

I’ll never forget the day our H.S. principal got my attention with, “Hey Tim, three students are missing.” He then explained that phone calls were being made, the hallways, bathrooms, and common areas were being searched, and further steps to widen the search were in the works if needed. The alert level and prayers were rising.



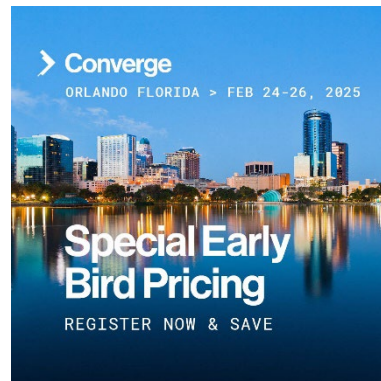
When you read the paragraph above, where does your mind go? For our team, every scenario we could think of at that moment was mostly not good, and it was vital that we find those three girls as soon as possible.

About 90 minutes later, the missing students suddenly appeared almost out of nowhere, and what we found out was NOT what we expected. The three had been in a little-used maintenance area that we forgot to check (noted for next time), but the reason for their absence really caught us off guard. As two of the three passionately explained, "But Mr. Shuman! Anna (not her real name) asked us to pray with her to receive Jesus into her heart. We HAD to stop and pray with her!"

It took us a humorous moment to reorder the plans that had been brewing in our minds (a possible stern lecture, a detention, all the usual things) because, as noted, "things are not always as they seem". After reassuring the girls that they had done the right thing to pray with Anna, we also reminded them how important it is to let us know where they are so we can support them. **More importantly, it was a good reminder to us that our prayers and plans need to also include space for God to work beyond our limited understanding** ([Proverbs 16:1-4](#)). How about you?

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

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



[2024 Events](#)

Public Policy and Advocacy Summit 2024

Join us in Washington, D.C., September 16–18, for our annual Public Policy and Advocacy Summit. This year's special professional development summit will include panel discussions on important legislative issues, special guest speakers such as Dr. Ben Carson, and much more. Receive special Early Bird pricing when you [register now!](#)

Upcoming International Events

- We are back from ICEC Europe, and what an amazing time it was! **Please mark your calendars for ICEC Asia 2025 at 26–29 November 2025, to be held in Malaysia!** Details will be forthcoming.
- [Rooted Educator Worldview Summit '24](#). 24–27 June 2024, Black Mountain, NC, USA. All are invited.
- The dates for our [2024 Job Fair Tour](#) and [Virtual Job Fair day](#) are now available. Are you planning to come?
- What are you doing to prepare your new hires for the world of international schooling? [PreField Orientation to Go](#), our online course for new hires at international schools, is open right now for your newest staff. If PFO2Go is new to you, please [check out our FAQs](#).
- **Leaders, you can mark your calendars for the International School Leaders Conference (ISLC) Europe, coming up on 27–30 April 2025.**
- Check out the next [Converge conference](#) for leaders on 24–25 February 2025.
- Have you considered sending your student leaders to ACSI Europe's [Student Leadership Conference 2024](#) in Budapest?

News, Articles & Other Ideas

- ACSI's most recent posts and resources:
 - In this video, ACSI President [Dr. Larry Taylor interviews our friend Kylie Barker](#) who leads an international school in northern Iraq.
 - In this video, ACSI President [Dr. Larry Taylor interviews our friend Maggie](#) who leads a Christian national school in Ukraine.
 - [Cultivating Christians Toward Engagement in the Church](#) with Douglas Campbell
 - [They Will Lead Anyway](#) with Emily Pigott
 - [Are You on the Starting Line](#) (or how to start a Christian school) with Cindy Dodds
 - [Unveiling the Hidden Curriculum](#) with Kellie Tuten
 - See MORE video content from ACSI [right here](#).
- The March 2024 issue of EuroTCK's [Educare Newsletter](#) takes a helpful look at the Korean family and the counseling needs of Korean MK teenagers and children. Written by two Korean guest writers.
- Here's a great question worthy of some discussion at your school: [Why are Christian Workers So Often Workaholics?](#)
- Do you read slowly, or do you just skim (or "scan") the words? This article from CNE (Christian Network Europe) should be of interest to all of us. [Jesus could read but very slowly; scanning did not yet exist.](#)
- Michael and Kim Essenburg love international Christian schools and love to give you tips, ideas, and things to think about.
 - [Leaders, how healthy is your relationship with your international Christian school board?](#)
 - [Staff, what are 6 characteristics of healthy relationships with colleagues?](#)
 - [What are 4 characteristics of healthy relationships between students?](#)
- Belhaven University and Dallas Baptist University have new scholarships for graduates and teachers at ACSI member international schools. BU's can be seen [here](#), and DBU's [here](#) and [here](#).
- Did you know that there are [2,484 endangered languages in the world?](#) Indonesia tops the list of countries with the most languages in danger of dying out.
- Does anyone else wonder how the [spaghetti harvest of Southern Switzerland](#) is going, or is it just me? ([Learn more about the spaghetti harvest here.](#))

Headship Openings Only

- Cairo Covenant School (starting June 2025), Egypt. [Learn more here.](#)
- Carachipampa Christian School – Bolivia. [Learn more here.](#)
- Christian Academy of Guatemala. [Learn more here.](#)
- Christian English School, Italy. [Learn more here.](#)
- Faith International Academy, Philippines. [Learn more here.](#)
- Inter-American School, Guatemala. [Learn more here.](#)
- International Academy of St. Petersburg, Russia. [Learn more here.](#)
- International Christian School, Uijeongbu, South Korea. [Learn more here.](#)
- Mountainview Christian School, Indonesia. [Learn more here.](#)
- Rain Forest International School, Cameroon. [Learn more here.](#)
- Sahel Academy, Niger. [Learn more here.](#)
- Sekolah Pelita Harapan, Lippo Village, Indonesia. [Learn more here.](#)

If you have a head of school opening coming up, please let me know. Be sure to check our [member school vacancy page](#) as well as the [ACSI Job Board](#). If you are interested in a position at an international school, check out the latest non-USA opportunities [here](#). Check out the latest ACSI [Job Flash](#) and learn how you can get your needs posted to thousands [here](#). Look for Job Flash.

**Praying “The Education Reformation”
Inspires 47,000 Pastors Through the
North American Mission Board (NAMB)**
ACSI News Update

The ACSI team is hard at work developing the Vision 2030 global action plan, strategic financial and development plans, and key performance indicators that will advance the four growth initiatives of new fields of

ministry, missional partnerships, educational resources, and addressing the global shortage of teachers and leaders.

Dr. Larry Taylor, ACSI President & CEO, says that natural indicators are emerging. "We are excited about the progress we are making as we craft this God-sized vision into tangible tactics. We have surrounded ourselves with a multitude of counselors and are committed to prayer and yielding to the Lord."

Some wonderful fruit is already forming. ACSI is working with the North American Mission Board (NAMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention to encourage and inspire 47,000 pastors to consider Christ-centered education as part of their outreach strategy through a monograph being released this spring called "The Education Reformation," written by Jimmy Scroggins and Trevin Wax. Jimmy Scroggins is the lead pastor at Family Church in South Florida. Trevin Wax serves as Vice President for Resources and Marketing at the North American Mission Board (NAMB). Through this missional collaboration, ACSI is highlighting its "How to Start a Christian School" training.

Continue reading [here](#).



Watch this month's Maximize Your Membership to hear Evie Piedt, Textbook Training Senior Coordinator, share the latest in ELA and Science curriculum standards." Previously recorded **Maximize Your Membership** webinars are available on our [website](#).

Leadership U Culminates with Graduation Week in Texas

By Josh Worden

After 14 months of mentoring, studying, and sharpening leadership skills, the 2023–2024 [Leadership U](#) cohort met in Plano, Texas, the week of March 18 to share lessons learned and enjoy a graduation celebration.

Defining Success Through Discipleship

By Elizabeth Hunter

Defining success can sometimes be even more difficult than achieving it. Since 1965, Heritage Christian School in Indianapolis has built a legacy of academic, athletic, and artistic excellence rooted in biblical truth. Now, thanks to the school leadership's willingness to make changes based on a recent ACSI

CPoE Requirement: Which Path to Choose?

By Jennifer Bollinger

Traditionally, the CPoE Checklist has been the primary path for fulfilling ACSI's Christian Philosophy of Education Requirement. Now, new content on ACSI's online platform provides another option. So, which path should educators take?

During the program, each of the 22 scholars was paired with a mentor they met with regularly over the 14 months. The scholars aimed to implement lessons and strategies in their school in three distinct projects, each connected to a domain from the [Flourishing School Culture Model](#). The scholars presented on one of those projects at the graduation week to the rest of the cohort.

Debbie Hammett, the Lower School Principal at Hilton Head Christian Academy (HHCA) in South Carolina, focused her project on stabilizing culture within her school, which had endured plenty of recent change. In the past nine years, HHCA has gone through seven different leaders in its lower school.

“My goal has been to improve the school culture, mostly focusing on trust this year,” Hammett said. “I want to help teachers know I have their back and are empowered to make changes in our school they need to make.”

Hammett focused on supportive leadership under the Relationship Domain in the Flourishing Culture Model.

[Continue reading here.](#)

accreditation renewal process, their success includes a renewed emphasis on discipleship and deeper integration of a biblical worldview into the curriculum.

“We want to have high excellence in academics, but not at the risk of letting go of the biblical worldview,” said Dr. Angela Ruiz, the Academic Director at Heritage. “Shaping that discipleship piece is the most important thing that we will bring to any family who comes to our campus.”

Dr. Ruiz has been involved in all points of the review process and resulting efforts to strengthen a God-focused and Bible-anchored educational journey for the students at Heritage. Throughout her own journey to this role, she has seen God’s hand and provision over the years. “I am blessed to have [been] in many different school settings that would allow me to be equipped for such a time as this,” she shared.

Heritage is the largest Christian school in Indiana, with almost 1,600 students enrolled from preschool through 12th grade, and a lengthy waiting list. The school offers competitive pay and continuing education for teachers, an expansive campus, a strong STEM program, extensive fine arts, competitive athletics, and a new robotics facility in development.

[Continue reading here.](#)

If you have already started on the [CPoE Checklist](#), it is best to continue that path. You might also prefer the Checklist if you like a self-disciplined approach to learning or book and video options. Keep in mind that the Checklist is being phased out in May 2026.

The [new three-part CPoE course series](#) is hosted on ACSI PD, so an ACSI Online PD Subscription is currently required for this path.

This series features the following:

- Fresh, new content from a variety of experts divided into short video, audio, and reading segments
- All required resources provided (no additional books needed)
- Formative assessment activities to help you check your understanding
- Options for completing each course’s final assignment (now including an administrator option as well!)

Visit [ACSI’s Certification page](#) for details and even more options for completing this requirement.

Which CPoE path is best for you? Whichever you choose, we pray it transforms your view of life and education to a truly biblical perspective.





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ACSI News Update Continued

“As the largest protestant Christian school association, we are eager to help pastors discover the various Christ-centered education options that will fit any church size or demographic,” says Dr. Taylor.

Just as churches must take a step of faith to carry out the Great Commission by opening their doors Monday through Friday to train up the next generation to know, love, and follow Jesus, ACSI is ready to unite the church, home, and school so that more boys and girls have strong academic discipleship and a firm foundation to stand against secular ideology. “Great days are ahead,” Dr. Taylor encourages. “With our eyes fixed on Jesus, we are expectant as we anticipate the mighty works He will do.”

For ongoing updates and prayer points, visit acsi.org/Vision2030

Leadership U Graduation Continued

This week, the presentations have been very thoughtful and professionally shared,” said Debbie Schindler, Head of School at Pacific Christian Academy in Washington and an LU mentor. “Each one, we really had the impression that the leader grew and will be a better leader because of the project they completed.”

During the four days in Texas, time was set aside for fun activities and fellowship, as well as times of prayer and encouragement.

“During the prayer time, I saw hands open, I saw tears, I saw hugs,” said ACSI’s Director of Professional Development Dr. Edward Bunn. “To me, that shows deep relationships, which God has called us to.”

On the final day, ACSI Chief Operating Officer John Klingstedt exhorted the cohort on the power of ongoing relationships.

“It is easy for lone leaders to be picked off,” Klingstedt said. “We pray you continue to link arms with people you have met in this cohort.”

The mentor-scholar relationships proved fruitful this year for both those being mentored and those offering guidance.

“My mentor, Dr. Keith Curlee, has become a lifelong friend,” said Dr. Jack Farmer, Superintendent at Berean Baptist Academy in North Carolina and an LU Scholar. “The program taught me a lot about myself. It has slowed me down immensely in my decision-making process and matured me as a leader.”

“I am really blessed to have been a mentor to Juliette Chien,” Schindler said. “She loves God and is passionate about the call on her life. To come alongside and mentor her has been a delight for me, and I’ve learned a lot from her, as well.”

The program, designed especially for individuals who have recently stepped into leadership roles, encourages scholars to not only discuss philosophies of leadership, but also directly address in-the-moment decisions they have at their school.

“My mentor, Tom Hughes, and I have talked through emerging issues,” said Brandon Kline, Middle School Principal at Evansville Christian School in Indiana, and an LU Scholar. “This year, I’ve had to walk through a lot of difficult conversations with families and students as students are making decisions that have severe impact. To respond intelligently, thoughtfully, and in a Christlike manner really took a lot of guidance as I worked with Tom.”

The 2024-2025 Leadership U cohort is set to begin in October, and applications for both scholars and mentors [is already open](#).

Defining Success Through Discipleship Continued

“God has truly blessed us with a great responsibility,” said Dr. Ruiz, emphasizing that opportunities to influence the faith of students and their families are the biggest responsibility of all. While this strongly held belief is shared by her colleagues, Dr. Ruiz said it is not unusual for schools to get distracted when they grow too quickly and focus on worldly success.

It was during the most recent accreditation renewal process that an ACSI review team noticed a lack of intentional discipleship across the school. “ACSI brought us amazing educators that were great in their craft,” said Dr. Ruiz, adding that the team of five each had unique viewpoints based on their own expertise. Their honest evaluation concluded that Heritage was outwardly very successful but was running the risk of operating like a school that is Christian in name only.

“That’s the power behind ACSI coming in and being a loving partner to say, ‘Hey, you look really great on paper, but let us tell you what we really see when we’re in classrooms ... and when we’re talking with teachers and students,’” Dr. Ruiz said. “That’s where iron sharpens iron.”

The feedback was difficult to hear at first, but the school’s leadership spent the summer studying God’s Word and examining their priorities. “The accreditation process only works as well as the team that is receiving it will allow it to,” said Dr. Ruiz.

Dr. Ruiz shared that one of the first changes the school made was to hire a Director of Biblical Worldview Integration, who now works closely with her in developing all aspects of the curriculum. “Every time we talk about academics, we are also talking about biblical worldview shaping.”

Heritage also rearranged their academic calendar so that one day every month would be available for bringing in speakers to discuss how to better shape the lives of students, faculty, and staff from a biblical worldview. In the next few years, these conferences will expand to include parents and other nearby schools.

Part of the challenge of discipleship is keeping up with how the world is changing and being ready to answer the hard questions facing today's students. In response, Heritage made the intentional step of creating Koinonia Groups—discipleship groups of six to eight students that meet for weekly small group discussions during the school day. Currently, the program is for eleventh and twelfth graders but will expand to include younger students over time.

Students are encouraged to sign up with their friends so they are more comfortable having honest conversations. Groups are led by a teacher, staff member, or a pastor from a local church who prepares through a summer training program. Kids get the opportunity to ask challenging questions, and leaders are tasked with providing biblical guidance based on truth and thoughtful application.

Koinonia groups are optional, but almost every eligible student has opted in. Dr. Ruiz believes God has truly blessed this initiative as a way to reach students by showing them how to use God's word as they navigate through life. "When we put our eyes on Him, He aligns everything else for us in ways that we can't even imagine," she said.

As Heritage Christian School continues to grow and evolve, there is a renewed focus on knowing Christ, in addition to developing students who are emotionally sound, spiritually rich, and academically prepared.

"We talk about how ACSI has helped impact our school and how we are better because of the accreditation process," Dr. Ruiz said. "One of the things that I would always caution a Christian school on is to make sure that you are growing at a rate in which you can still disciple. If our students leave us and don't know Christ, we've missed it all."



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