



An International Member Connection, February 2024

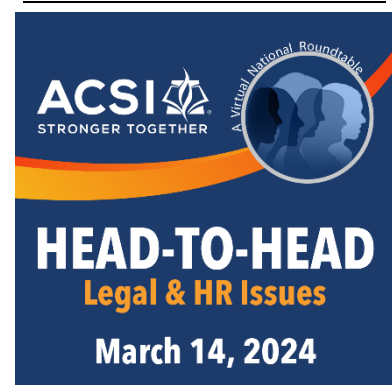


Fellow International Christian Educator,

I will never forget my mother's oft-repeated question when I was in high school, "Did you read your Bible this morning?" In earlier years breakfast at our house always included mom reading a short devotional and passage of Scripture to my siblings and me, concluding with prayer for the day ahead. As we hit our later teens Mom encouraged us to get into the Word for ourselves and kept us accountable by asking the dreaded question. As a teen, I didn't always appreciate Mom's question.

The good news is that I did start reading the Bible, at first to get my mother "off my back" – haha. But then, when I did, I discovered to my surprise that God was there to speak to me, a normal high school kid. And low and behold, I also learned that what Paul wrote was also true: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Today I'm thankful that my mom pushed me to what became a life-long practice.

A month ago, my eight siblings and I gathered in our hometown to celebrate the life of our mom who loved Jesus with all her heart, definitely loved God's Word, and also pointed her children, and her many grands and great-grands, to follow Jesus while modeling a vibrant and joyful faith every single day of her life. We in the Shuman tribe have been blessed indeed.



So, allow me to repeat mom's question and ask you, dear friends, have you been in the Word this morning? And then, who in your life needs to hear the same question?

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



[2024 Events](#)

Have You Heard?

The ACSI podcasts will help sharpen your leadership and explore ways to cultivate a flourishing school community, all through a biblical worldview framework.



In the second episode of [Sharpening Kingdom Leaders](#), ACSI President & CEO Dr. Larry Taylor talks with Dr. Don Davis, the Head of School at Second Baptist School in Houston, TX, on leadership qualities and preparing students for their God-given calling.

Other [podcasts](#) include ***Student Leadership & Learning*** with Emily Pigott, ***The Flourishing Journey*** with Dr. Edward Bunn, and ***Grafted Together*** with Chief Ministry Officer Jerry Nelson.

Watch or listen to part two of Dr. Taylor's conversation with Dr. Don Davis [here](#).

UPCOMING
INTERNATIONAL EVENTS



ACSI
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COUNCIL
ICEC
2024-2025
Prague, Czechia on 29-30 March 2024



ACSI 2024
Leadership & Scholarship
for Life & Faith Leaders



ACSI
FALL VIRTUAL INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS
JOB FAIR

- **REGISTRATION WILL CLOSE SOON** for [ICEC Europe, 20-23 March 2024](#) in Prague, CZ. Book your rooms **NOW** at [Vienna House by Wyndham](#) and PLEASE submit your [workshop proposal](#) today.
- We are working diligently to set up dates and locations for our 2024 Job Fair Tour and Virtual Job Fair day. [Look for updates here.](#)
- [PFO2Go](#), our online course for new hires at international schools remains open for your participation year-round. If PFO2Go is new to you, please [check out our FAQs](#).
- **Leaders, 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 the ACSI Europe's [Student Leadership Conference 2024](#) in Budapest?



- ACSI's most recent posts and resources:
 - [What We're Reading in 2024](#) with Becki Rust
 - [\(Re\)Kindle Wonder](#) with Todd Marrah
 - This discussion in ACSI's Community may be helpful to you. [AI and ChatGPT – Changing Writing Practices?](#) You will need to sign into your free community account to participate.
- Congratulations! Four of our international member schools were recognized for [Excellence as Certified Best Christian Workplaces for 2023](#) in the Christian Schools (K-12) category. ACSI also achieved the same award in the Products and Services category.
- This report from Christian Network Europe is encouraging. [The Times are "Dark", but Christian Schools in Europe are Growing](#). George Tryfiatis, ACSI VP for Public Policy and Legal Affairs, can be seen on the right side seated among other leaders.
- [Michael and Kim Essenburg](#) love international Christian schools and want to see them flourish.
 - [How can you get your students to ask and discuss difficult faith-related questions?](#)
 - [We can flourish without experiencing passionate purpose, right?](#)
 - [Leaders, how can you model passionate purpose for us staff?](#)
- I'm sure this question has crossed your minds. [What Happens When a School Bans Smart Phones? A Complete Transformation](#).

- TCK Training has a lot of excellent free materials. Check out their [Services for International Schools](#).
- Check out this virtual [School Finance Equipper](#) by our friends at Resolve. This would make for an excellent PD opportunity for your business/finance team. Highly recommended.
- Finally!, someone has the answer, well, maybe. [What's the Correct Pronunciation of February?](#)

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](#).
- Hillcrest School, Jos, Nigeria. [Learn more here](#).
- Inter-American School, Guatemala. [Learn more here](#).
- International Academy of St. Petersburg, RU. [Learn more here](#).
- International Christian School, Uijeongbu, South Korea. [Learn more here](#).
- Kigali International Community School, Rwanda. [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](#). You can get your important job openings to feature in the next ACSI [Job Flash](#), learn how you can get your need posted to thousands [here](#), and look for Job Flash.

Maximize Your Membership



This month's [Maximize Your Membership webinar](#) features ACSI's Chief Ministry Officer Jerry Nelson on Spiritual Formation. The ACSI Ministry Team is preparing a [4-part informational webinar series](#) in February and March which will unpack the Spiritual Formation principles. Previously recorded **Maximize Your Membership** webinars are available at our [website](#).

ACSI Europe Celebrates 25th Anniversary of Student Leadership Conferences

By Rebecca Ewing

25 years ago, a tiny seed was sown that has had a monumental impact for Christ and His kingdom on earth. In 1998, Bill Stevens, the Student Leadership Conference (SLC) Coordinator for the former ACSI Northeast Region, introduced the idea of creating SLCs in Europe to Laci Demeter, who was an educational consultant for the ACSI Europe Office.

The purpose of the SLCs was to train high school students for leadership roles within their schools, empowering

Spring Assessments

By The ACSI Student Assessments Team

Standardized testing can offer valuable insights into your students' academic achievement and is one piece of a broader educational assessment landscape that may include formative assessments, teacher observations, and student portfolios. Since spring testing is just around the corner for many Christian schools, it is a good time to review the benefits of administering achievement tests at the end of a school year.

Comparative Analysis: Standardized tests provide an objective view of your students' achievement. Your Christian school can gauge its performance not only

What is Spiritual Formation?

By The ACSI Ministry Team

Christian educators around the globe recognize the importance of spiritual growth and formation in students, but there is a wide variance of definitions and perceptions of what exactly 'spiritual formation' means. In the newly released, *Spiritual Formation, Biblical Worldview Development, and Integration* statement, ACSI has identified four main principles that characterize spiritual formation.

First and foremost, Spiritual formation is a work of the Holy Spirit. As co-workers with God (1 Cor 3:9), we must labor much like a farmer who faithfully breaks up the ground, builds support

them to become agents of change for the gospel message. The initiative was successful in the Northeast region of the U.S. and the hope was to replicate it for ACSI member schools in Europe.

Demeter, who would become the ACSI Europe Director a few years later, immediately got to work, and he and his team held the European Student Leadership Conference later that year. At their first event, the conference had 50 attendees.

[Continue reading here.](#)

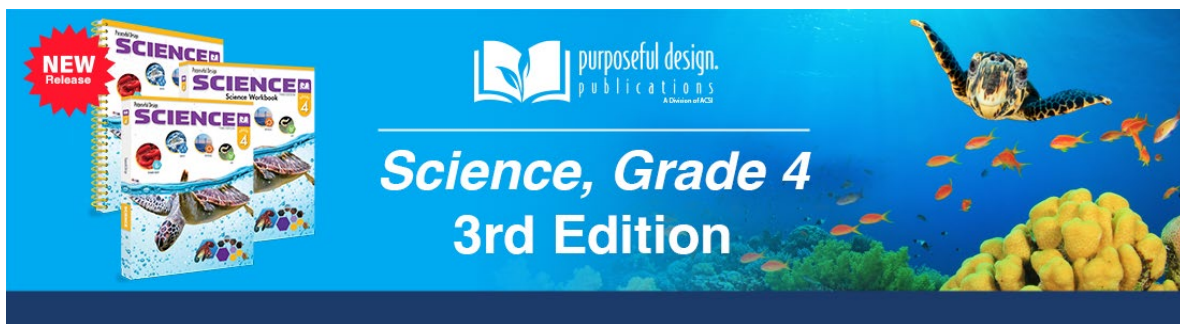
against internal benchmarks but also in comparison to public and other Christian schools. Also, standardized tests reflect a consensus curriculum of a broader standards landscape.

Measuring Yearly Progress: Spring testing results provide valuable information about your individual student and group development. Comparing results from spring to spring provides longitudinal data to assist in identifying trends.

[Continue reading here.](#)

structures, plants seeds, weeds, and waters his crop. In our schools and communities, we do this by breaking up intellectual, emotional, and spiritual ground, planting the seed of the Gospel, providing a framework through a defined discipleship process and plan, then constantly watering those seeds through our life examples and interactions. However, it is truly only God who can provide the growth and ultimate harvest.

[Continue reading here.](#)



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ACSI Europe Celebrates 25th Anniversary of Student Leadership Conferences Continued

In the fall of 2023, Demeter and his team held their 25th annual SLC at a beautiful event center outside of Budapest. More than 400 students from 40 schools in 21 different European countries attended. The event has become so popular that two back-to-back conferences are held on consecutive weeks to accommodate everyone.

In September and October of 2023, students, chaperones, and team members gathered in and around a gorgeous, pillared building surrounded by open space, gardens, and lushly treed countryside. With plenty of room to both gather and disperse for breakout sessions and free time, students bunked in shared rooms in a dorm-like setting, which provided ample opportunity to get to know one another. They bonded during the week over traditional Hungarian cuisine.

ACSI Director of Student Leadership & Learning Emily Pigott was the keynote speaker during the first week of the SLC, with Duane Beach, pastor at High Point Baptist Church in Germany, stepping in the second week. Pigott opened the conference by laying the foundation that “we serve a God Who is trustworthy.” As she explained it, “And then we had to show students that trust in God is what determines the effectiveness of their leadership.”

Expanding on this idea, Pigott invited students to explore how they can become trustworthy leaders like Jesus was and is. Pigott clarified the importance of servant leadership versus power-fueled leadership. She told the attendees, “Now that you’re trustworthy, because you trust in this amazing God, others are going to trust you as a leader and your impact is going to be far greater than you ever thought.”

Looking back on a week filled with many memorable experiences, Pigott exclaimed, “I’ll never forget that last night. I’ve talked at a lot of conferences and been to a lot of countries, but I’ve never been in a room where 11 countries were represented. That’s the magic of SLC. There were students from 11 countries, and as the conference was coming to a close that evening, they spontaneously broke out in prayer for one another.” Pigott said they were not asked to do it, but the students huddled together to pray, knowing they would soon leave for home.

Pigott described the Spirit-filled scene: “The worship band came up to close and they just kept playing and playing, and in the middle of that, two young ladies came up, separately, and professed their faith in Christ for the first time.”

Demeter described that same scene as “beautiful” and was delighted when, during the second week, some students told him that their time at SLC was the best thing that had happened in their lives thus far. “I don’t know how 12th graders can say that,” he said, “but I heard it more than once.”

Another high school senior admitted to Demeter that she had arrived with many doubts and concerns about her life and future, but she felt that God had met her at SLC and answered the questions on her heart. “It’s wonderful to hear that,” said Demeter. He said that he regularly meets people from all walks of life who joyfully recall attending an SLC at some point in the past 25 years. Encouraging testimonies like these motivate Demeter and his team to continue to produce the SLCs as long as the Lord allows.

One of the defining characteristics of SLC—and an ingredient that has led to how successful the conferences have been over the years—is that nearly everything is student-led. Pigott described the set-up as “brilliant—the SLC team is really intentional.” They prayerfully select students ahead of time to be trained in facilitating the breakout sessions, and in doing so, they exemplify the reality that God uses people from any age, race, economic status, and background to lead if

they are willing.

This focus on student-led discussions and planning provokes the most positive feedback from attendees, according to Demeter. Teens are inspired and encouraged by one another that they can—at this very time—make a difference in their schools, families, and communities.

“One common area of feedback we receive is that the attendees find it so uplifting to come together with colleagues from other countries, you know, different nations, and they realize that their basic life goals are the same. They take great courage from the boldness of other groups and encourage each other in living out their faith,” said Demeter.

Another aspect of the SLC that extends its life and impact beyond the week-long gathering is that students create an action plan to take back to their schools. The plans include items such as committing to begin student-led Bible studies, becoming involved in Chapel planning committees, and even strategizing ways to engage the community through outreach and service.

After returning home, students have an opportunity to stay in touch with Demeter’s team for follow-up encouragement and guidance. These are God-inspired, student-initiated, and adult-supported action plans, and the youth involved are rising to the challenge and running with them.

ACSI is now looking at how to expand SLCs into Asia and other parts of the world. “Demeter is doing extraordinarily well,” said Pigott. “How can the Student Leadership & Learning team come alongside all the other global regions?” Demeter’s program is being used as a prototype due to its success, and ACSI’s prayer is that God will continue to make a way for the conferences to expand across the globe.

Spring Assessments Continued

Informing Instructional Planning: Test results can provide your teachers and administrators with insights into your students’ strengths and weaknesses in specific subjects. This information can guide instructional planning for the upcoming school year, helping your staff tailor teaching strategies to address areas where students may need additional support or challenge.

Assessing Curriculum Effectiveness: You can use the spring test results to evaluate the effectiveness of your school’s curriculum and instructional methods. If certain teaching approaches or materials consistently yield positive results, they can be reinforced and expanded.

Meeting Accountability Requirements: Standardized tests are often used as part of state scholarship and voucher accountability systems. Administering standardized achievement tests in the spring may allow your school to fulfill assessment requirements and demonstrate compliance with educational standards.

Providing Feedback to Stakeholders: Standardized test results can be shared with your students’ parents, providing them with insights into their child’s academic performance and areas for improvement. This fosters communication between your parents and teachers and encourages collaborative efforts to support students’ learning.

Highlighting Academic Excellence: By effectively communicating program strengths through achievement test data, your Christian school can enhance its reputation, build trust within the community, and attract prospective students and families who share its educational and spiritual

values. If achievement test results compare favorably to national, state, or Christian school-wide averages, your school can make this information visible.

With the advantages of conducting year-end achievement tests in mind, the testing period approaches for numerous Christian schools. Best wishes for a successful testing season!

What is Spiritual Formation? Continued

Second, spiritual formation is born out of an intentional community endeavor. From the beginning, God designed human beings to exist within community (Gen 2:18). Although our relationships now struggle through brokenness and heartache, when our communities function according to God's design, flourishing emerges. The height of that flourishing can be achieved when the church, home, and school all work together towards that common goal.

Third, spiritual formation is a process of making disciples. 'Make Disciples' is the main verb and commandment of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. This imperative constitutes not only the intentional and categorical presentation of the Gospel, but also includes spurring on greater obedience and transformation into Christ's likeness.

Finally, spiritual formation creates the conditions for ambassadors of Christ to emerge. Our programs and processes cannot guarantee that our students will continually grow in their relationships with God. However, we can create the most favorable conditions possible by saturating our environments with the Gospel message through love, speech, and example. The Holy Spirit will do the rest.

ACSI is pleased to announce a new webinar series on Spiritual Formation. These webinars will be based on the four key principles of ACSI's Spiritual Formation, Biblical Worldview Development, and Integration document. The first webinar in this series is on February 13. For more information, you can click [here](#).