



RIVER'S EDGE

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



2025-26 ANNUAL REPORT

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Dear RECA Families and Friends,

God has been so good to our school! As I reflect upon last school year and all the changes our families navigated with us, I can emphatically say that God has been very gracious. From the transition of our West campus to Parkway Baptist, to so many families receiving the Education Freedom Scholarship, to the new uniforms that make our students look neat and sharp, we have been blessed!

The key to fulfilling our school's purpose of "glorifying God by preparing students' hearts and minds for God's use in His world and His work" is hiring and retaining exceptional talent.

So, what I would like to highlight in this report is our teacher retention rate. At the end of our 2025-26 school year we have been able to **retain 91% of our teachers!** Some of that is because we have been able to pay our teachers a more competitive rate. For example, **our elementary base salary went from \$14,500 to \$24,000.** This has been a huge blessing to our amazing teachers! We were already slowly increasing the teacher salaries, but with the Education Freedom Scholarship, we were able to accelerate our plans. Although it is not yet where we desire it to be, we are thankful for God's blessings and the ability to pay our teachers better!

Another reason for the retention is the fantastic culture that our principals and staff have created. **For the second year in a row, we have received the "Flourishing Workplace" designation by Best Christian Workplaces! "Life-giving Work," and "Fantastic Teams"** are the areas where we scored the highest on our engagement survey. This has a direct correlation to the purposeful leadership of each principal. We are blessed with excellent leaders and praise God for them.

“

**AT THE END OF THE
2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR,
WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO**

RETAIN
91%

**OF OUR
TEACHERS!**

Over the past few years, there has been a lot of change at River's Edge Christian Academy. Thank you for being patient and resilient with us. Thank you for praying for us. Thanks for sticking with us through transitions.

Thanks for giving financially to our school; it is the fuel that drives us forward.

You are a blessing to us, and we thank God for the privilege of partnering with you!

May the Lord be with you and bless you,



Brian Beemer
Head of School



partnering in a *shared* mission

RECA works in **partnership with parents** to produce Christ-centered, lifelong learners by combining the best of both home and traditional Christian classroom education, infusing a biblical worldview, focusing on character, and supplying college and career-worthy academics.

We do not take the place of the home or the church—**we come alongside them.**



We are deeply grateful for the churches that partner with RECA by providing spaces where our students learn and faculty serve. **Cumberland Baptist Church, Parkway Baptist Church, Buffat Heights Baptist Church, and West Haven Baptist Church** generously open their facilities to our campuses, helping make excellent work possible each day.

Education is not isolated from discipleship—it is part of it. Home, school, and church each have distinct roles, but share a desire to see students understand the gospel, love God and people, and be equipped for His use in His world and His work.

RECA life

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

RECA students help tell the story of life at their school. Here are a few of the moments they chose to share.

THE BLESSING OF CHAPEL

Presley Ledford ('26)

“The opportunity to gather and put our focus on Jesus in the midst of a school day is such a blessing. Through chapel, we learned about the heart posture and mindset we should maintain in order to glorify the One who created us.



TALENTS WITHOUT SPEECH

Avery Anderson ('29)

“American Sign Language (ASL) and music students joined forces to create a beautiful yet voiceless performance. Keyboarding, strings, ASL I, and ASL II all worked together to glorify God through their skills. Even when an incorrect version of the song was played over the speakers, the students adapted smoothly and wowed the audience.



MORE THAN A CAMPOUT

Josiah Ashton ('27)

“The RECA Family Campout is more than just a weekend activity—it's a tradition. The word that describes it best is connection: connection with nature, each other, and most importantly, a connection with God. The meaningful memories we create and the way the campout keeps us fully present in the moment make the experience special. I always look forward to the next RECA Campout; they hold a special place in my heart.



STUDENTS FOR STUDENTS

Jackson Kirk ('28)

“Elected by the student body, the Student Council works on various projects to improve student life on campus. Through events like the Winter Formal, monthly coffee shop, and Valentine's Day paper roses, StuCo is always working to bring a spark of joy to students at RECA.

TRADITIONS THAT BRING US TOGETHER



Spirit Week



Pancake Breakfast



Family Game Night



Grandparents Day

“I always look forward to spirit week because it lets us get creative and draws people together.

— Adelyn Stock ('28)

GROWING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE



A NEW LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

RECA launched its High School Honors Program in 2025-26 with an inaugural class of freshmen in Honors Humanities. The two-hour integrated course combined English and history for dual academic credit, inviting students to engage challenging literature and historical texts through a Christ-centered lens.

Students will continue this journey in 2026-27 with sophomore-level Honors English and Biblical Worldview, deepening their ability to think critically and view the world from a distinctly biblical perspective.

MORE THAN A GAME

a year of firsts

RECA hosted its **first-ever** home athletic games with 4 MS boys basketball games.

MS varsity boys basketball won the **first** basketball game in school history, **first** home game, and **first** tournament game.

MS JV boys basketball won the KISL JV Division 2 Tournament Championship.

Elementary girls basketball finished the regular season undefeated.

Elementary boys basketball Green Team reached the championship game of their bracket.



“EVERY STUDENT IS WORTHY OF OUR VERY BEST.”

“ We believe every student is worthy of our very best. Every student, regardless of ability level or learning needs, will be challenged, supported, and held to high academic and character standards. Our goal is to provide the instruction, encouragement, and accountability each student needs to grow in wisdom, pursue excellence, and faithfully use their God given gifts for His glory.

— Zach Wishart, MS/HS Principal

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

looking to the 2026-27 school year

GROWING TOGETHER

Cumberland Elem. will add new K5 and 3rd grade classes, with additional classes in 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th grades coming soon.



FINE ARTS EXPANDS

All elementary students will benefit from dedicated Art, Music, and PE teachers as we build a more robust Fine Arts program.



NEW WAYS TO LEARN

MS will add Christian Literature class to the 5th period core rotation. A new Academic Intervention class will provide targeted support for students.



LIBRARIES AT BUFFAT & WEST

Buffat and West elementary students will visit new libraries weekly to enjoy stories and check out books.



Your Generosity at Work

Your generosity is part of God's provision at River's Edge Christian Academy.

In 2025 we launched a five-year development plan with a goal of \$750,000 to strengthen student programs, learning environments, and long-term sustainability.

Through the generosity of our community, **\$202,800** has already been given toward that goal in support of our students, faculty, and campuses.

We are deeply grateful for a community that believes in Christ-centered education and invests in the next generation.

2025-30 FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

GOAL

\$750,000

\$202,800

RECEIVED TO DATE

to strengthen student programs and learning environments

WHAT YOUR GENEROSITY IS MAKING POSSIBLE

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS & ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Investments in our learning spaces and technology are supporting students and excellence in the classroom.

- West Campus moved to Parkway Baptist Church where we upgraded the fire system and outfitted classrooms with new doors, furniture, and equipment.
- New iPads were purchased for teacher use. Existing iPads are now used for MAP Growth testing (3rd - 8th grades).

FACULTY SUPPORT

In June 2026, RECA hosted three other schools for Summit Ministries Biblical Worldview Training sponsored by the Herzog Foundation. RECA provided stipends for teachers to attend and grow in integrating a biblical worldview in their classrooms.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Protecting our students is a top priority. In 2025-26 we:

- Installed security cameras at our new West Campus location.
- Hired security officers so that each campus has dedicated security staff.

In the 2026-27 school year we have already established security at our new Cumberland Elementary Campus, including new security cameras and the Raptor check-in system. At our Buffat Campus, a new walkway and stairs provide a safer route for evacuation and reunification.

“We are so grateful for our new security cameras. They have been such a blessing to our campus by allowing us to keep a close eye on our campus grounds and all of our students. We are also so thankful for our security guard and all he does to keep us safe.”

- Christy Allison, West Campus Principal



LOOKING AHEAD

Momentum continues into the 2026-27 school year with the relocation of Cumberland Elementary to West Haven Baptist Church and plans to expand the HS science lab, purchase Chromebooks, further strengthen security, upgrade elementary playgrounds, and enhance MS Village facilities.

With Grateful Hearts

We gratefully recognize those whose generosity supported the mission of RECA during the 2025-26 school year. Thank you for investing in Christ-centered education and partnering with us to prepare students' hearts and minds for God's use in His world and His work. *Your generosity makes a lasting impact.*

A Alexander, Stephen and Carrie Anderson, Michael and Shawna Andrews, Scott and Ashley Arms, Raymond and Sherry	C (continued) Crossen, Harlen and Katie	M Mangrum, Kenneth and Nancy McDonald, Greg and Kristen Miranda, Anthony and Danelle Mollenhour, Michael Murdock, Joshua and Hailey	S (continued) Sherrod, Ruth Slack, Adam and Ellen Sterie, Chris and Liz Stevens, Doug and Christine Stocksett, Christopher and Jennifer The Sugar Queen Creamery
B Baso, Mars and Remy Beaman, David and Laura Bearden, Stacey and Janine Beemer, Brian and Jessica Berkley, Darin and Betsy Berry, Bryan and Becky Bledsoe, Kelyn and Rebecca Blewett, Nathan and Jill Bodenheimer, Marc and Lisa Bolin, Jason and Paige Butt, Logan and Stephanie	D Dalton, Sandra Daughtry, Steven and Erika Dean, Josh and Lisa Dunlap, Don and Nancy Dykes, Jody and Megan	P Parrott, Donny and Heidi Payne, Jason and Meredith Roedel Perry, Christopher and Erica Peters, Carey and Beth Phelan, Jim and Andrea Poore, Ed and Susan Price, Nick and Ariel	T Thies, Peter and Jennifer Reth Thriving Foundations Ministries
C Callis, Kevin and Julie Cho, Tae and Lindsey Clifton, Michael and Amber Courtney, Bryan and Alyssa Craig, Matthew and Tara Creasey, Justin and Kelly Creative Management	F Feliz, Juan and Laura Mollenhour- Feliz Furlong, Phillip and Jinny	R Rabell, Jared and Amanda Raby, Jared and Sara Rains, Dave and Amber Rector, Chris Ross, Richard and Shirley	V van der Noord, Richard and Lynn van Wingerden, Chatham and Kayley
	G Guerguis, Maged and Rania Rizk	S Sadler, Paul Schollaert, Chad and Elizabeth Scholtens, Brian and Tricia Scotto, Lao-Tan and Kim	W Wilch, Adam and Sara Wolcott, Jeremy and Nicole
	H Haire, Daniel and Emily Hedger, Peter Hodges, Tom and Heidi Hoover, Cody and Katie House, Brady and Ciara		Z Zeise, Christopher and Meghan
	K Kraemer, John and Tara		

To report an error or omission in this listing, please accept our apologies and contact development@riversedgeca.com.

Serving Students in a New Role

The 2025–26 school year marked the first year of RECA’s Middle and High School Assistant Principal role, with RECA teacher Nate Sherrod stepping into the new position. As Assistant Principal, Nate considers it a privilege to build relationships with students, encourage them, and speak truth into their lives. Whether supporting teachers, praying with students, or walking alongside them through difficult situations, he seeks to point students to the hope, joy, and forgiveness found in Jesus.

A graduate of Carson-Newman University, Nate earned a degree in Business in 2015 and later completed his MBA and teaching licensure there. Shortly before becoming a Christian at age 23, he felt called to teach—a calling that has shaped nearly a decade in education. Before stepping into administration, Nate spent two years teaching at RECA, where he taught 7th grade math, Life of Christ in both middle and high school, and the high school courses Apologetics and Triumph of Christ.

Nate and his wife, Jessica, have been married for nine years and have four children: Andy (12), Sam (6), Eli (4), and Matthew (2). As a family, they especially enjoy spending time outdoors, including camping and hiking.

For Nate, serving at RECA is ultimately about partnering with the Lord in His work in the lives of young people. He is grateful for the opportunity to support teachers, invest in students, and help point them toward Christ throughout their middle and high school years.



BY THE NUMBERS



RIVER'S EDGE
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



741

STUDENTS



450

FAMILIES



138

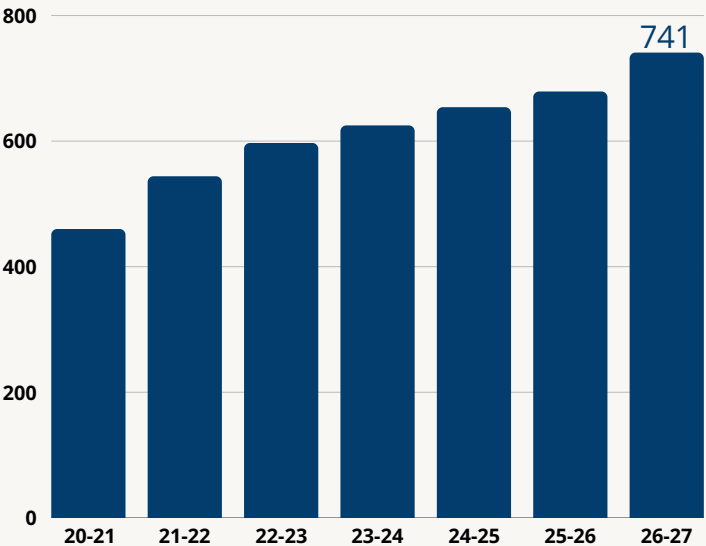
CHURCHES



132

**FACULTY &
STAFF**

ENROLLMENT GROWTH



Each number tells part of our story—our growth, our commitment, and our impact in preparing students for God's use in His world and His work.

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE



12 ELEMENTARY

18 MIDDLE SCHOOL

17 HIGH SCHOOL



43%

OF SENIORS GRADUATE
WITH HONORS OR HIGH
HONORS



91%

TEACHER RETENTION
RATE



29 YEARS

OF PARTNERING WITH
PARENTS TO RAISE UP
CHRIST-CENTERED,
LIFELONG LEARNERS

RECA Welcomes New Board Members

Adam Slack has served on the RECA Board of Directors since October 2025. After prayerfully considering the opportunity to serve, he felt God leading him to say yes. Grateful for the impact RECA has had on his family, Adam is honored to give back by supporting the school's mission and future.

A lifelong Knoxville, Adam graduated from Bearden High School before earning a degree in Logistics and Transportation from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Today, he is the founder and CEO of Two Roads, a Knoxville-based financial services firm that provides bookkeeping, CFO, tax, and advisory services to businesses across the country.

Adam and his wife, Ellen, have been married for 25 years and are blessed with four children and a son-in-law: Eliza and David Holley, David, MJ (12th grade), and Josh (10th grade). Whether gathered around the table for a family meal, traveling together, or enjoying a board game at home, they value spending meaningful time together.

The Slack family first came to River's Edge Christian Academy during the COVID-19 pandemic, expecting it to be a one-year solution. Instead, they quickly fell in love with the classes, community, and university model, which has helped their children thrive. What began as a temporary plan soon became a lasting commitment to the RECA community.

Julie Callis joined the RECA Board of Directors in September 2025. Over the past several years, she has developed a deep desire to help strengthen a biblical worldview and positively influence the culture, especially where her own children are involved. Grateful for the opportunity to serve, Julie considers it a joy to help preserve RECA's vision and mission for future generations.



A graduate of Clemson University with a degree in English and Communications, Julie met her husband in Clemson's Tiger Band—Kevin was in the drumline and Julie was a majorette. She has spent the past 12 years working in natural wellness through education and sales with Young Living Essential Oils, helping families find healthier alternatives for their homes and overall wellness.

Julie and Kevin celebrated 20 years of marriage this spring and are the proud parents of Harper (9th grade) and Cullen (6th grade). The Callis family joined RECA in 2022, seeking a school where they could partner in their children's education and know they were learning from a biblical worldview each day. Introduced to RECA through friends, they quickly discovered it was a wonderful fit for their family.



ALUMNI UPDATES

Kate Shugart, Class of 2017



Kate graduated from the University of Tennessee in 2022 with a bachelor's degree in chemistry and a minor in forensic anthropology. While in college, she interned at UT's Forensic Anthropology Center (the "Body Farm") and

participated in ROTC, commissioning as an officer in the U.S. Air Force after graduation. Kate was competitively selected to become a Special Agent with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and graduated from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. Her first assignment took her to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Arizona, where she conducted criminal investigations throughout southern Arizona and Central America. Recently promoted to Captain, Kate is now stationed at Robins Air Force Base in Georgia, where she runs multimillion-dollar fraud investigations for the Air Force.

Audrey Randall, Class of 2019



Audrey earned her bachelor's degree in music education from Lee University in 2023. After receiving her K-12 music teaching license, she taught elementary music in Bradley County before feeling led to teach abroad. Audrey

began serving with TeachBeyond, teaching elementary and middle school music at the Christian International School of Prague in the Czech Republic in December 2024. She looks forward to also teaching a high school music theory class this fall. Through TeachBeyond, Audrey continues the mission that shaped her time at RECA: providing transformational education that produces Christ-centered, lifelong learners.

Zachary Lassiter, Class of 2020



After graduating from the University of Tennessee, Zachary joined the U.S. Air Force and is currently in pilot training.

Addison Baldy, Class of 2021



Addison has received his bachelor's degree in biblical studies from Moody Bible Institute. Last July he married Beth, whom he met while at Moody. In August, Addison and Beth moved to Sheffield, England, where they are serving at

a church in the city center while pursuing a Master of Theology at Union School of Theology in Bridgend, Wales. They are excited to see how the Lord will use them to advance His kingdom.

Ashtyn Stock, Class of 2022

Ashtyn is entering her senior year at Lee University, pursuing a degree in biology with a minor in chemistry. She serves as president of Lee's Kairos Honors Program and enjoys investing in students there. At Lee, Ashtyn conducted research and discovered bacteriophage Annapurna in a soil sample. The virus's genome has been annotated and added to a national database with potential future applications in treating antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Since RECA graduation, Ashtyn has served in medical missions in South Asia, Ethiopia, and the Middle East. This summer she served with an international organization in Knoxville to operate a free health clinic. Ashtyn continues to be led by the Lord toward long-term missions. She plans to continue her education at the master's level by attending Physician Associate school next fall.

Sarah Allison, Class of 2024

After graduating from RECA, Sarah completed two years at Pellissippi State Community College pursuing a career in elementary education. She is currently taking a year off from school and has the opportunity to serve at River's Edge with preschool students. "It is such a full-circle moment for me!"

Bryson Bodenheimer, Class of 2024

Since graduating from River's Edge, Bryson has pursued his passion for music while studying audio engineering and bluegrass music at Pellissippi State Community College. He has spent time in Nashville writing and recording original music. This summer, Bryson organized the Clinch River Bluegrass Festival. Grateful for the foundation he received at RECA, he looks forward to continuing a career that allows him to share music, faith, and meaningful stories with others.

Baker McKechnie, Class of 2025

Baker recently completed his second summer on staff at Camp Ridgecrest for Boys and is entering his sophomore year at Lee University where he is majoring in secondary mathematics education.



First annual alumni breakfast, May 2026

THE RECA DIFFERENCE

From classrooms and churches to laboratories, military service, and mission fields around the world, our alumni are making an impact in countless ways. Here are a few reflections on the role River's Edge played in their journey.

"I am thankful for the wonderful teachers I had at River's Edge who set a great example for me and grateful to God for organizing my story and steps for his honor and glory."

- Audrey Randall

"I am so blessed to be able to pour into these kiddos the way my teachers poured into me!"

- Sarah Allison

"Through every opportunity, I've remained grateful for the foundation my high school experience provided"

- Bryson Bodenheimer

"RECA really sets their students up to be eternally minded and to really encompass the Portrait of a Graduate.

Thank you, RECA!"

- Baker McKechnie

Send alumni life updates to
development@riversedgeca.com



Partnership, Not a Co-Op:

understanding the RECA DIFFERENCE

By Faith Pinkerton, Admissions Director

At River's Edge Christian Academy, one of our greatest joys is watching families thrive within our unique educational community. However, a common trend has emerged over the years: many families still tend to view RECA as a homeschool co-op or an informal support program.

While we share a deep commitment to family-centered education with the homeschooling community, RECA is fundamentally different. We are a fully accredited, university-structured private Christian academy. Understanding this distinction is key to realizing the full value of a RECA education.



WHAT IS A UNIVERSITY-STRUCTURED SCHOOL?

Often referred to as a hybrid model, a university-structured school blends the best elements of a traditional private school with the intentionality of home education. Our students spend three days a week on campus in a professional classroom setting and two "satellite days" learning at home. This rhythm mirrors a college schedule, intentionally building time-management, independence, and strong study habits long before graduation.





“ *We aren't just supporting a homeschool journey; we are partnering with you to cultivate Christ-centered, lifelong learners.* ”



RECA VS. A HOMESCHOOL CO-OP

The differences between a co-op and RECA's university structure come down to a few key areas:

	CO-OP	RECA
 Curriculum and Grading	In a co-op, parents typically choose their own curriculum and grade their own students' work.	At RECA, we provide a unified, rigorous curriculum overseen by the administration and curriculum board. Our professional teachers assign all grades, maintain academic records, and issue official report cards and transcripts.
 Instruction	Co-ops generally rely on parent volunteers to take turns teaching workshops or activities.	RECA employs qualified, dedicated instructors who design the lesson plans for both on-campus days and home satellite days.
 Accreditation	Co-ops are typically not accredited.	RECA is a fully accredited academy. This ensures our courses meet high educational standards, making college admissions and transcripts a seamless process for our graduates.



WHAT MAKES RECA UNIQUE?

Even within the world of hybrid education, RECA stands out because of our commitment to a true Parent Partnership.

We do not simply hand parents a syllabus and expect them to navigate the material alone. Instead, our teachers provide a structured, guided plan for satellite days, ensuring parents are equipped to act as co-instructors without the burden of curriculum planning.

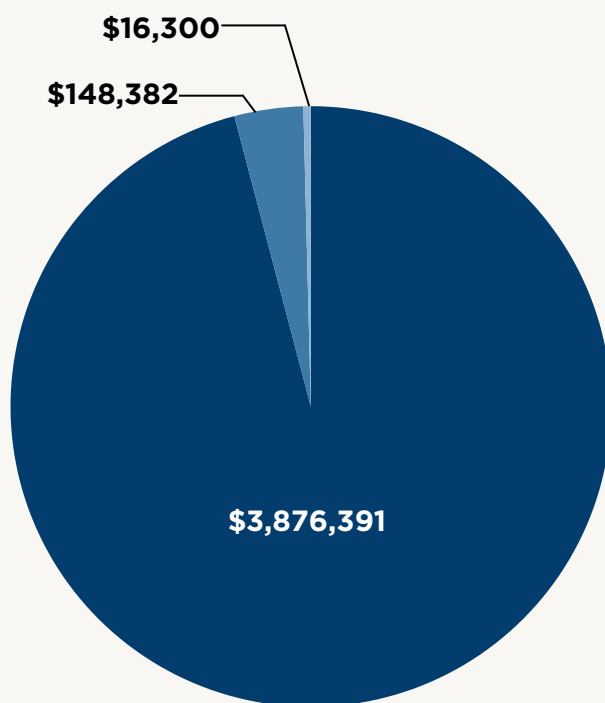
Combined with our small class sizes, an unwavering Biblical worldview, and a fun campus life—including retreats, field trips, sports, and student events—RECA offers a complete academy experience.

We aren't just supporting a homeschool journey; we are partnering with you to cultivate Christ-centered, lifelong learners.

Financial Accountability

Education Freedom Scholarships (EFS) provided meaningful financial support to many RECA families during their inaugural year. We are grateful for the patience and flexibility of our families as we navigated this new program together and look forward to an even smoother process in the years ahead. In addition to EFS, RECA provided \$30,757 in tuition assistance to 19 students during the 2025–26 school year. For the 2026–27 school year, 563 students are benefiting from EFS, and RECA's Eagle Access Fund will provide an additional \$57,142 in tuition assistance to 36 students. In the 2025-26 school year we saw a 7% increase in donations made to the school. Thank you for your support!

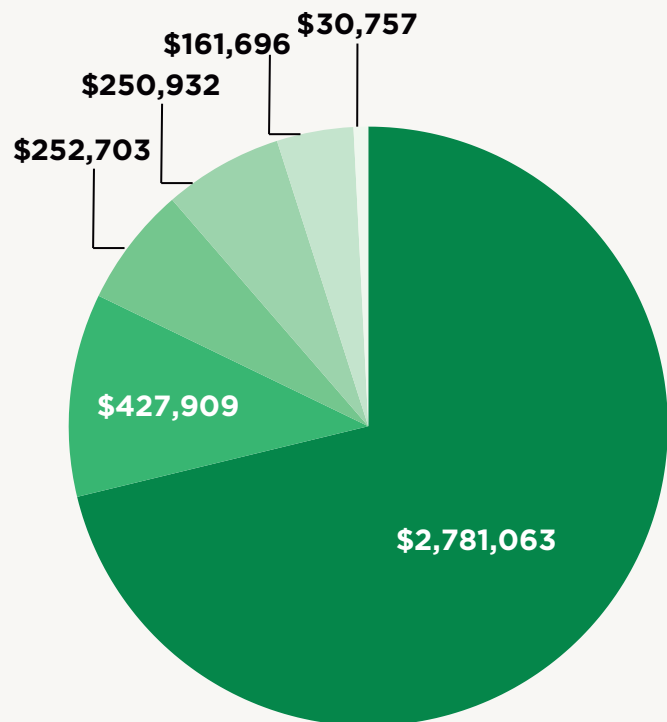
Income



TOTAL: \$4,041,073

- **95.9% Tuition & Fees**
- **3.7% Fundraising & Contributions**
- **0.4% Grants**

Expenses



TOTAL: \$3,905,060

- **71.2% Payroll**
- **11.0% Operating Expenses**
- **6.5% School Activity Expenses**
- **6.4% Teacher & Classroom Expenses**
- **4.1% Rent & Utilities**
- **0.8% Tuition Assistance**

RECA is committed to the highest levels of accountability in all aspects of financial stewardship. This financial information is based on preliminary, unaudited financial statements and is subject to change.

Admissions Dates & Information

Registration Dates

Registration for ALL grades opens to the public on November 4th while closed registration for our current families begins on October 21st.

Information Meetings

As part of the admissions process, we invite families to attend one of our upcoming Prospective Parent Information Meetings. These sessions give families the opportunity to learn more about our unique educational model, meet our staff, and ask any questions. Registration is free and can be completed at riversedgeca.com/admissions.

Prospective Parent Information Meetings will be held at 7pm at our Cumberland Campus on the following dates:

- October 19, 2026
- January 25, 2027
- February 22, 2027
- March 22, 2027



Why RECA?

River's Edge Christian Academy is committed to preparing Christ-centered lifelong learners. Our dedicated faculty, university-structured model, and faith-integrated curriculum create an environment where students thrive academically, socially, and spiritually.

Earn Rewards Through Referrals

Earn \$25 for each new family you refer that attends a Prospective Parent Information Meeting, and earn \$100 for each new family you refer that enrolls in River's Edge Christian Academy!

Find additional details and eligibility requirements on the myRECA resource board.





2025-26 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Scott Andrews, Chairman
 Cody Hoover, Vice Chairman
 Julie Callis, Secretary
 Laura Beaman
 Megan Davis
 Tom Hodges
 Adam Slack

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Zach Wishart, Middle & High School Principal
 Nate Sherrod, Assistant Middle & High School Principal
 Christy Allison, West Elementary Principal
 Christie Miller, Buffat Elementary Principal
 Faith Pinkerton, Cumberland Elementary Principal

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Brian Beemer, Head of School
 Lisa Dean, Development Director

JOIN THE MISSION OF PREPARING

*Christ-Centered
Lifelong Learners*

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