

*Cheers to
50 Years!*



A Message from CUES Leadership

Dear CUES Community,

Fifty years ago, CUES began with a simple promise: school should be the place where potential meets opportunity. That's still the work. Across All Saints, Holy Name, and Sacred Heart, we pair strong academics with the support families need to keep kids learning. The welcome is universal; the standard is high; and the day-to-day is practical—great teaching, steady routines, and help that shows up when it matters.

Our model is straightforward: excellent instruction, backed by whole-family support. Teachers focus on reading, math, and the habits that make learning stick. Counselors and partners help families navigate housing, health care, and behavior so kids arrive ready to learn.

This year brought a moment worth celebrating. The Gathering, our premier annual fundraising event, shattered all previous records. Proof of how this community shows up. It raised the bar for what we can do together, just as our students raise the bar for themselves in the classroom. Your generosity turns into very ordinary miracles: a calmer classroom, a counselor at the right time, a high school acceptance that changes a path, and parents whose dream of a better life for their children come to fruition before their eyes.

An anniversary invites both gratitude and resolve. We're strengthening how we track and coordinate family support so help lands faster and nothing slips through the cracks. We're growing a teacher pipeline that reflects our neighborhoods. We're making our buildings safer and more welcoming. None of this is flashy. It's the quiet, disciplined work that lasts: teach well, notice early, respond quickly, tell the truth about results, and keep faith with the families who trust us.

Thank you for standing with CUES, for the first fifty years and the next fifty. We'll keep showing up for kids and doing the work, one focused classroom and one steady step at a time.

Marzia Puccioni Shields

Fr. David Korth



Fr. Dave Korth
President of CUES
School System



Marzia Puccioni Shields
CEO/Executive Director
of CUES Fund

*Cheers to
50 Years!*

CUES Fund

Board of Directors

Founder: John C. Kenefick (1921–2011)

Chair: Ann Schumacher

Vice Chair: John Reed

Secretary: George Achola

Treasurer: Ralph Castner

CEO/Executive Director: Marzia Puccioni Shields

Board Members

Dave Audino

Bob Carlisle

Terry Connealy

Pam Finn

Tate Fitzgerald

Brian Harr

Jacob Idra*

Jeanie Jones

Joel Jensen

Kerry Kelley

Matt Kizer

Fr. Dave Korth

Daniel Lindstrom

Kevin O'Malley

Angie Quinn

John Schuele

Thomas Sudyka

Britt Thedinger, MD

Matt Tondl

Tony Veland

Justin Vossen

Based on fiscal year 2024–2025

**All Saints Alum*

CUES School System

Board of Governors

Rev. George Lucas

Fr. Dave Korth, *President*

Carin Appleget, Ph.D.

Rick Bettger

Vira Brooks

Jody–Ann Coore

Jean Hearn, Ed.D.

Tracey Kovar

Jade LaPointe

Candace Moore

Mary Ritzdorf, Ed.D.

CUES Fund Staff

CEO/Executive Director

Marzia Puccioni Shields

Chief Development Officer

Chris Bauer (as of August 2025)

Cindi Horning (until June 2025)

Chief Operating Officer

Kent Carson (retired, April 2025)

Mitch McCartney (as of April 2025)

Controller

Lisa Schnackel

Accountant

Tim Adams

Senior Director of Projects & Special Events

Trish Walz

Executive Administrator

Christina Siegel

Marketing & Development Associate

Silvia Rodriguez (as of September 2025)

Katie Jones (until February 2025)



CUES FUND

CUES Fund Mission

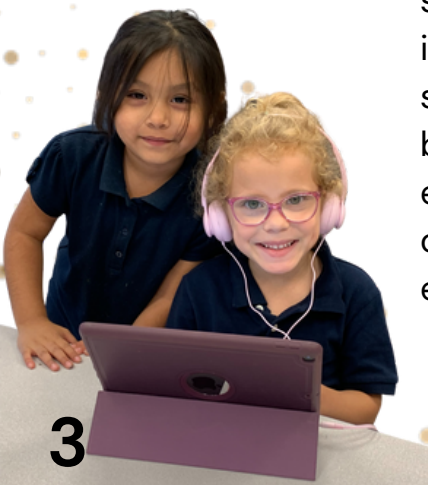
The CUES Fund secures financial support through private donations to fully fund the CUES School System. The school system provides centralized leadership and governance to three urban grade schools. The CUES Fund is a non-religious, non-profit organization overseen by a Board of Directors.



CUES SCHOOL SYSTEM | SACRED HEART
ALL SAINTS
HOLY NAME

CUES School System Mission

The CUES School System is a bold educational initiative providing centralized leadership and governance to three urban elementary schools in Omaha, NE – All Saints, Holy Name and Sacred Heart – serving a majority of low-income students and families. We combine innovative instructional methods with comprehensive student and family support in a Catholic faith-based environment to create and sustain excellent and measurable outcomes that not only impact the students we serve but also the entire community.





1955
Established

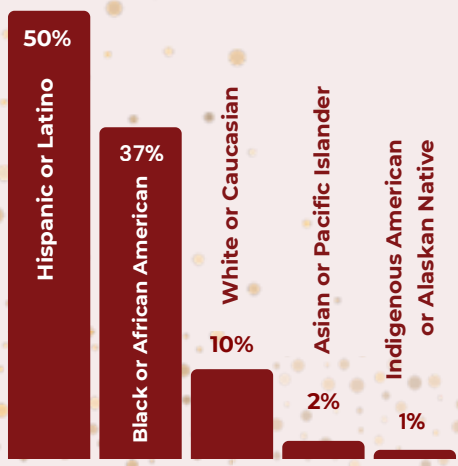
Angie Whitfield
Principal

166 **17:1**
Students Average Class Size

55%
of Students are Catholic

100%
*of Students Receive
Free/Reduced Meals*

100%
*of Families Qualify for Financial
Education Assistance*



Student Enrollment



1917
Established

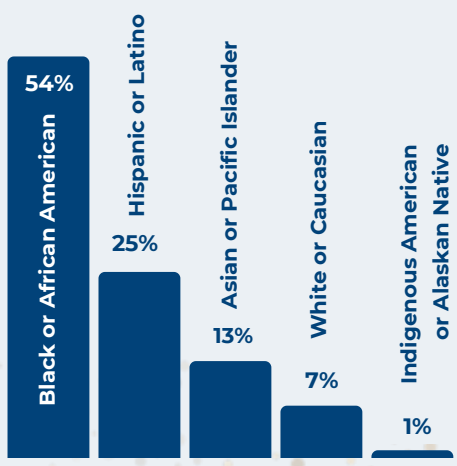
Dr. Kimberlyn Oliver
Principal

301 **17:1**
Students Average Class Size

32%
of Students are Catholic

100%
*of Students Receive
Free/Reduced Meals*

100%
*of Families Qualify for Financial
Education Assistance*



Student Enrollment



1904
Established

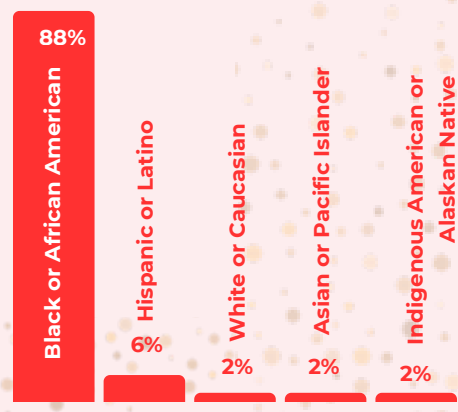
Mike Jensen
Principal

129 **13:1**
Students Average Class Size

7%
of Students are Catholic

100%
*of Students Receive
Free/Reduced Meals*

100%
*of Families Qualify for Financial
Education Assistance*



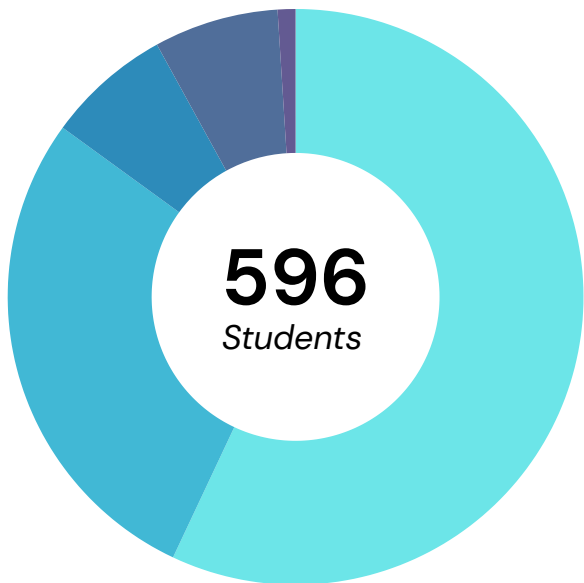
Student Enrollment

Our Vision

CUES will be recognized as a world-class model for providing transformative education through a faith-based culture, documented academic success, and community engagement and support.

Our Culture Statement

The CUES School System is rooted in Catholic faith and values. We share God’s love, kindness, and excellence.



- 57% Black/African American
- 28% Hispanic/Latino
- 7% White/Caucasian
- 7% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 1% Indigenous American/Alaskan Native



67%

of our Students
are not Catholic



93%

Students of Color



84%

CUES Teacher
Retention Rate



89%

of Class of 2025 is
Attending a Private High
School
9% public high school



100%

Student Attendance &
Parent Participation in
Parent/Teacher
Conferences



37%

of our Students
Received On-Site
Mental Health Therapy



39%

of our Students Received
On-Site Behavioral
Health Therapy



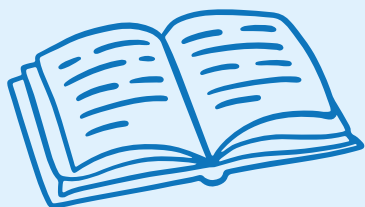
96%

CUES Alum Graduated
High School
8th grade class of 2021

Our Academics

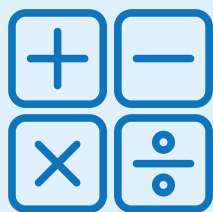


Our classrooms are seeing measurable progress. 65% of students improved in reading (3% growth from previous school year), and 59.3% improved in math (3.3% growth from previous year). Every percentage point reflects hours of practice, questions asked, and revision that builds skill—supported by teachers' clear goals, high expectations, and caring, targeted teaching.



3%

Growth in STARS Reading

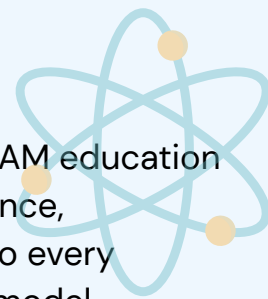


3.3%

Growth in STARS Math

**Compared to previous year*

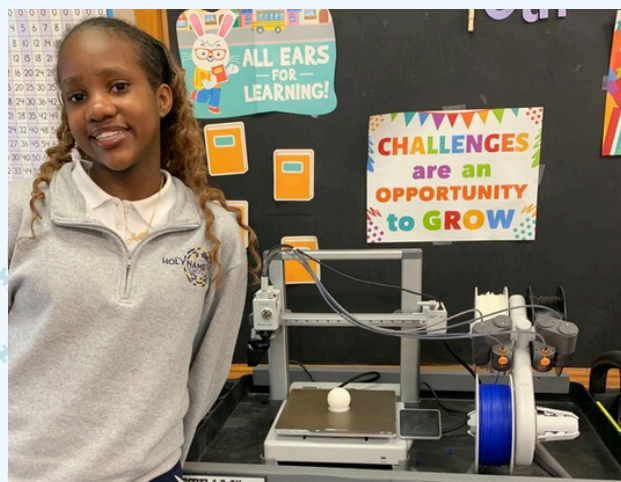
STEAM



CUES students now have access to STEAM education at their schools, bringing hands-on science, technology, engineering, art, and math to every campus and strengthening our holistic model.

STEAM connects learning to life. Students investigate real problems, test ideas, and build and create through design thinking, robotics basics, digital media, and tools like 3D printers. They work in a hands-on structure that invites curiosity and persistence while strengthening problem-solving, collaboration, and communication—and they apply reading and math in real-world projects that make skills concrete and memorable.

For CUES students, STEAM also widens horizons. By seeing how technology and creativity work together, they develop career awareness—from healthcare and construction to energy, design, and tech—so each student can recognize pathways that match their interests and strengths. The result is confidence, belonging, and measurable growth grounded in authentic practice. It's learning that reduces barriers and opens pathways—where potential meets opportunity.



LIFT with Boys Town



At CUES, our model begins with the whole family, and students thrive when schools coordinate with the adults who shape their daily lives. That's why the CUES School System partners with Boys Town's LIFT program to address behavioral challenges with care and expertise.

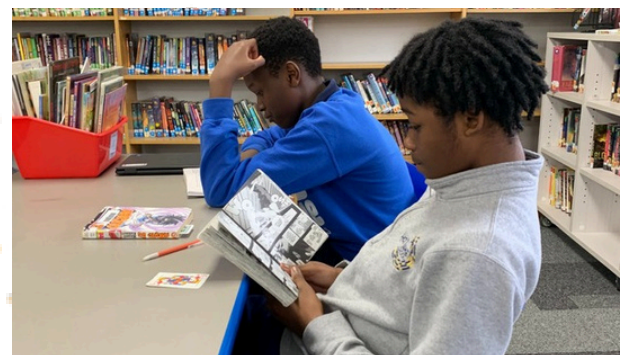
Through LIFT, licensed professionals provide prevention and early identification, evidence-based counseling, teacher trainings, in-home family services, and parent education. Support is coordinated with caregivers so strategies used at school carry over at home, strengthening consistency and trust.

When behaviors require a response, we prioritize restorative practices over punitive discipline, repairing relationships, teaching skills that last, and keeping students connected to learning. At CUES, no student falls through the cracks: every child has access to the academic, social, emotional, and wraparound services they need to succeed.

Mental Health Therapy

CUES students and families have access to counseling and therapy at all three schools—All Saints, Holy Name, and Sacred Heart. This support enhances students' mental health, sustains their academic progress, and equips them with lifelong tools to care for their well-being.

When mental health needs are addressed, students focus, participate, and learn. Counseling helps stabilize attendance, strengthen self-regulation, and support the skills that lead to growth in reading, math, and beyond. The outcome we're working toward is clear: students who thrive academically and personally, and families who feel supported as their children grow into strong, caring leaders in our community.



Student & Family Support Services

Our model begins with the whole family. Because many obstacles lie beyond the classroom, CUES invests in family case management that meets each household with dignity and practical support. The CUES School System launched the Student and Family Support Services Program in 2018 to connect families with concrete resources: benefits enrollment, financial coaching, housing and utility assistance, transportation, legal assistance, and trusted health partners.

Working alongside caregivers, our staff builds actionable plans and coordinates services so students can arrive ready to learn. We stay in regular communication with the adults who shape each child's daily life, helping to solve problems early and reduce barriers that interrupt learning.

Support doesn't end at graduation. We stay in touch through high school and college/trade school, offering guidance and referrals as students navigate new systems and set long-term goals. The result is not only academic progress, but the formation of strong, caring leaders who contribute to their families and our community.



CUES Graduates at Marian High School
Follow Up with CUES Staff



Amou Jurjariar & Sons
Financial Success Program & Financial
Hope Collaborative



Family Partner Program: Yuek Family & Sully Family

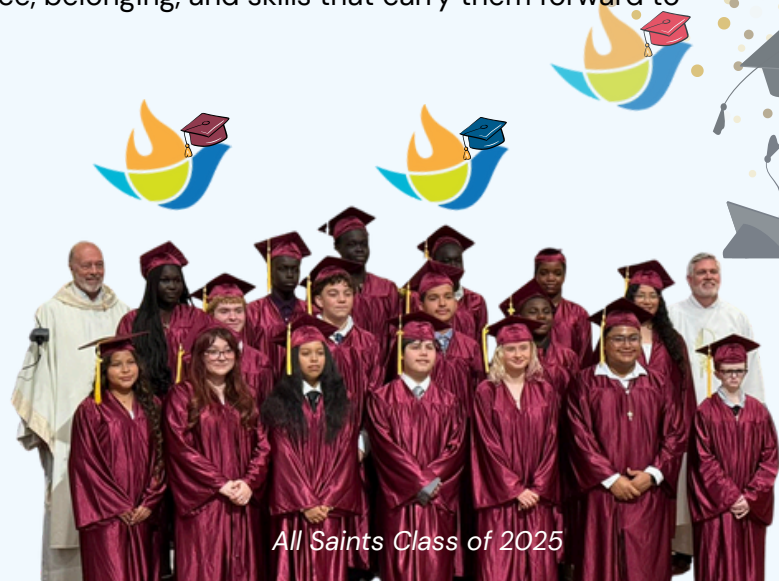


Leadership Academy

Cheers to the CUES Class of 2025

We're excited and proud to celebrate where our eighth-grade graduates are now. The CUES Class of 2025 is attending high school: **89% at private high schools, 9% at public high schools, and 2% homeschooled.** Each path reflects students' hard work, family support, and the strong academic and wraparound foundation they built at CUES—confidence, belonging, and skills that carry them forward to thrive in what's next academically and personally.

And as they take flight, CUES helps nurture and connect their potential with opportunity so they can imagine a bright future, soar, and achieve. We're thrilled to see them enrolled in outstanding high schools. Even after they leave our nest, CUES stays close: celebrating wins, standing with them through challenges, and connecting them to the resources they need to succeed so they can fly even higher.



All Saints Class of 2025

A Family's Path: From Dreams to Real Opportunity

When Oliva Pliego moved her family to North Omaha in 2012, she wondered if she'd made the right choice. Then she found Sacred Heart School and the CUES School System. In classrooms where rigorous academics meet a culture of belonging, her children flourished. Beyond the classroom, CUES built relationships with Oliva and her family—consistent check-ins, case management, and resources—so that support at school was reinforced at home.

Today, three of Oliva's children are in college, and her youngest is in 8th grade, preparing for high school. Oliva also graduated from the Financial Support Program & Financial Hope Collaborative, strengthening her family's financial stability and widening the runway for her children's goals. Now, she serves as the Kitchen Manager at Sacred Heart School, a role that reflects her commitment to the CUES community.

The CUES School System made my dreams possible by sending my children to college and ensuring a strong high school education. CUES brought stability to my family by connecting us to resources we needed. Because of those relationships and supports, the dreams I had for my children—and for our family as a whole—are becoming real.



Oliva and her Family

Hearts of CUES Guild

The Hearts of CUES Guild is a membership community that stands with CUES students and families at All Saints, Holy Name, and Sacred Heart. Guild members support educational enrichment through theater, help fund school libraries, organize fundraising, and lead volunteer activities that strengthen our holistic model—rigorous instruction, a caring culture, and practical wraparound services that reduce barriers to learning. Aligned with the CUES School System’s mission to serve low-income families in Omaha through a comprehensive, whole-child approach, the Guild helps students thrive and break the cycle of poverty in our community.



Hearts of CUES Officers:

President, Terri Laughlin
Treasurer, Ania Gilgenast
Advisor, Liz Crosson



Join the Hearts of CUES Guild



SCAN HERE



Join CUES Young Professionals Network

Young Professionals

CUES Young Professionals is a membership network for rising leaders who advance the CUES mission through advocacy, volunteering, and giving. Members support students and families at All Saints, Holy Name, and Sacred Heart—and enjoy networking with like-minded peers along the way.



Ways YP make an impact

Volunteer: Host supply/book drives at your workplace, faith community, alumni groups, neighborhood associations, or clubs to raise awareness and make sure every child has what they need to learn.

Build awareness: Serve as ambassadors—expand our digital footprint, champion CUES on social media, and share stories of impact across your networks.

Fundraise: Host a fundraising event or peer-to-peer campaign to help underwrite the cost to educate a student.

The Gathering 2025

Cheers to 50 Years!

With the theme, “Cheers to 50 Years,” The Gathering 2025 honored five decades of commitment to CUES students and the communities we serve.

Led by event chairs **Julie & Matt Kizer** and **Torey & John Reed** with honorary chair, **Nancy Abboud**. The night set a new benchmark for generosity, surpassing \$1 million in support for CUES Schools for the first time in the event’s history. The record-breaking result reflects the conviction of our partners and friends who believe that every child deserves access to a high-quality, faith-centered education. We are deeply grateful to all who attended and contributed to an unforgettable milestone year.



Steelhouse Omaha was the backdrop for The Gathering 2025 as over 500 guests joined to celebrate CUES “Cheers to 50 Years.”



The Gathering

Total Revenue

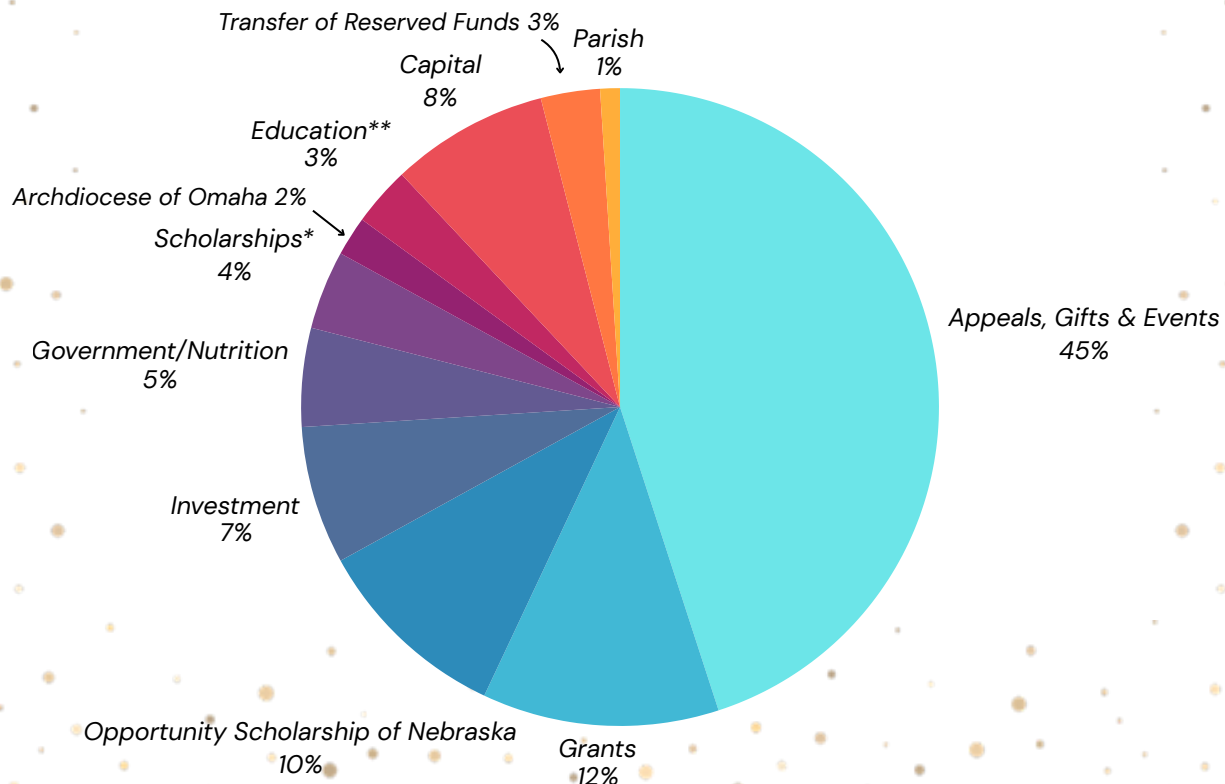
July 1, 2024 – June 30th, 2025

Appeals, Gifts, & Events	45%	\$4,533,857
Grants	12%	\$1,233,964
Opportunity Scholarship of Nebraska	10%	\$997,702
Investments	7%	\$740,437
Government/Nutrition	5%	\$474,217
Scholarships *	4%	\$447,894
Archdiocese of Omaha	2%	\$240,000
Education**	3%	\$339,460
Capital	8%	\$789,168
Transfer of Reserved Funds	3%	\$270,217
Parish	1%	\$133,598
TOTAL REVENUE	100%	\$10,200,514

**Children's Scholarship Fund*

***Revenue collected from families*

Source: CUES Fund audit, June 30, 2025

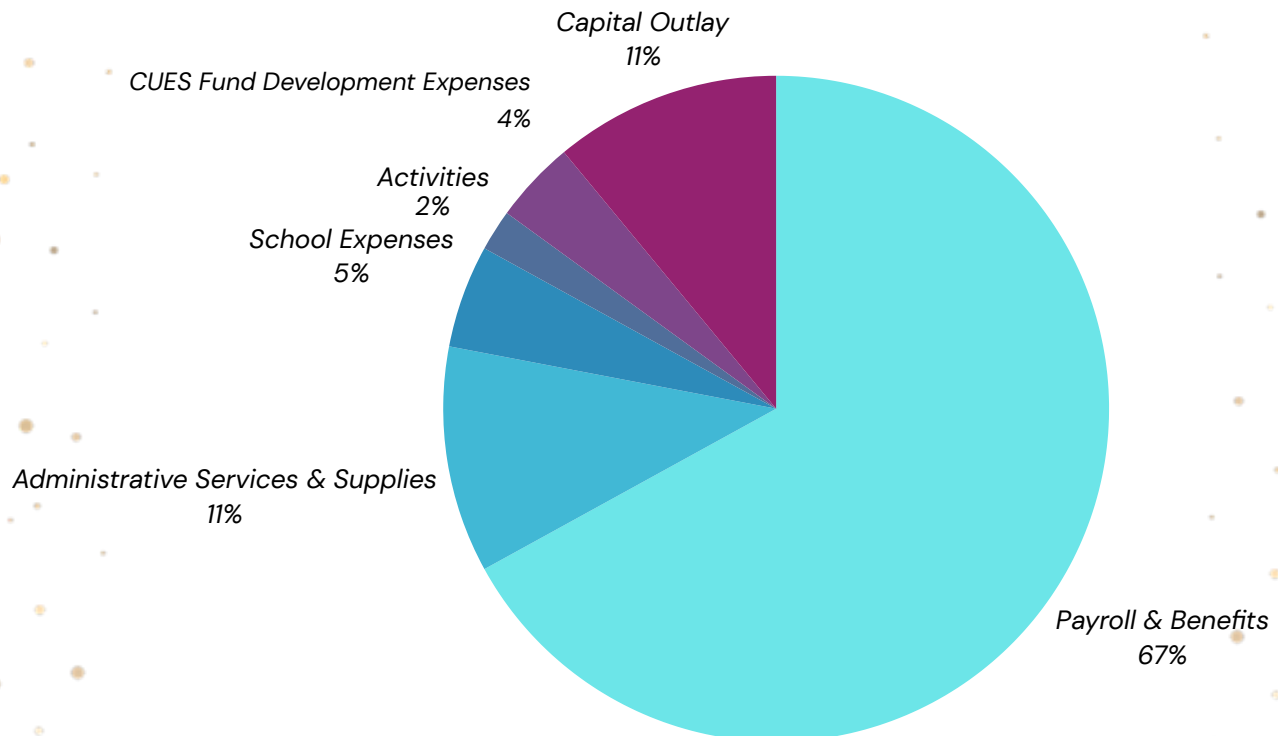


Total Expenses

July 1, 2024 - June 30th, 2025

Payroll & Benefits	67%	\$6,804,676
Administrative Services & Supplies	11%	\$1,104,958
School Expenses	5%	\$577,945
Activities	2%	\$172,360
CUES Fund Development Expenses	4%	\$396,420
Capital Outlay	11%	\$1,144,155
TOTAL EXPENSES	100%	\$10,200,514

Source: CUES Fund audit, June 30, 2025



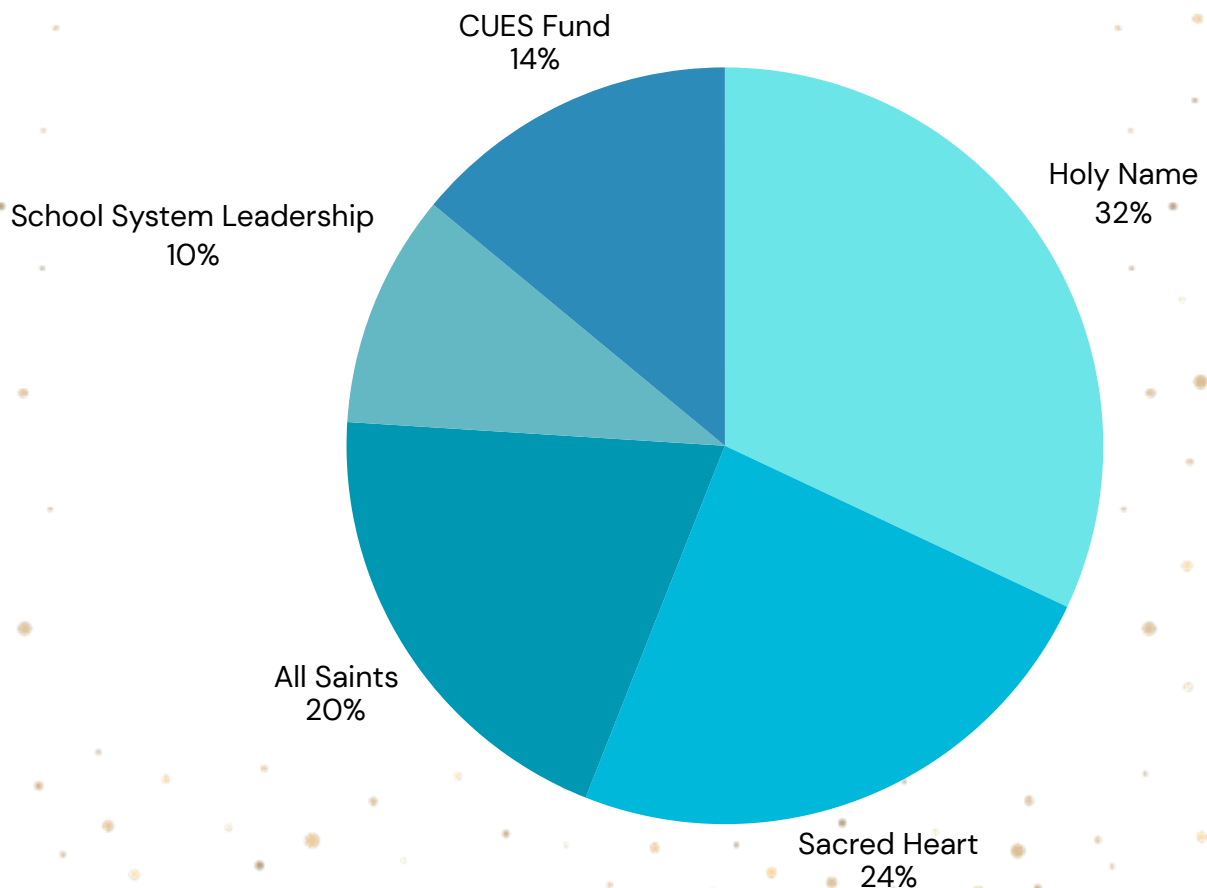
CUES Education: Breaking Barriers to Learning

The underwriting cost to educate a child is our greatest need. All of our CUES families qualify for financial assistance.

\$15,170

is the cost to educate a child for one year at the CUES School System.

Program Expenses





Founder John Kenefick surrounded by Sacred Heart students.

Thank you!

for helping us celebrate 50 years of CUES!