

# BUILDING & Battling

A quarterly publication of the



BUCKEYE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

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## BCSO Annual Basketball Tournaments

FEBRUARY 23-24

Licking County  
Christian Academy

## BCSO Debate Tournament

FEBRUARY 27

Lima Christian Academy

## BCSO Athletic Director's Mtg

MARCH 1

Peniel Bible Camp

## AACS National Bible Quizzing

MARCH 5

Heritage Christian School  
Findlay, OH

## BCSO Fine Arts Competition

MARCH 8-9

Heritage Christian School  
Brooklyn, OH

A full, downloadable 2-year calendar of events is available on our website.

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[www.bcsoschools.org](http://www.bcsoschools.org)

## Legislative Landscape

By Izaak VanderSchel,  
BCSO Legislative Director

As we all stay busy in our particular areas of ministry and as we see national headlines concerning controversies and political issues, it is easy to lose sight of the struggles that are closer to home. The battle for religious liberty and morality is being fought both near and far. Yes, there are high-profile stories that are interesting and sensational, but there are situations in our state and counties and towns that require our attention as well. The freedoms that we enjoy and the very moral fabric of our society are being threatened, but there are also those that are working on our behalf to preserve and

expand those ideals that are precious to us. With that in mind, we need to remain vigilant – praying always and taking action when needed. The following information then gives you an idea how to pray for our legislators and other efforts at the state level while also providing you a view of where your energies could be invested in the future.

There are actually some initiatives in the state legislature right now that are promoting the pro-life agenda. Whether it be by banning specific gruesome abortion procedures (SB 145, Sens. Huffman and Wilson) or outlawing the disposal of bodies

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**“If we work upon marble, it will perish; if we work upon brass, time will efface it; if we rear temples, they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds and instill into them just principles, we are then engraving that upon tablets which no time will efface, but will brighten and brighten to all eternity.”**

~ Daniel Webster

in landfills by Planned Parenthood (SB 28, Sen. Uecker), it is encouraging to see some of our lawmakers standing up for the sanctity of life. Additionally, there are other endeavors that are attempting to protect our freedoms as citizens. The Ohio Student Religious Liberties Act, introduced by Reps. Ginter and Latourette, would protect the free speech and exercise of religion by students in whatever school they might attend. There is even the likelihood of the introduction of a Campus Free Speech Protection Act that would offer similar protections on college campuses across the state. We need to be thankful for the men and women who have the courage to seek what is right regardless of the pressures of our culture.

On the other hand, there are certainly efforts that would undermine the foundation of those religious liberties. One bill that was introduced a while ago (HB 160, Rep. Antonio) has finally begun hearings. Ironically named the Ohio Fairness Act, it would actually force those who believe in a biblical definition of gender and marriage to compromise their businesses and

ministries under the guise of that supposed fairness. HB 160 essentially elevates sexual orientation and gender identity to a protected class status and would have ramifications like the following: requiring public accommodations (including ministries) to allow men in women's restrooms and locker rooms, requiring businesses to participate in same sex marriages, requiring domestic violence shelters to allow men to bunk with women, requiring public schools to allow boys in girls' locker rooms and in girls' athletics. This is all in the interest of how people identify themselves regardless of how they are identified in Scripture. There is certainly much to take to our sovereign God in prayer.

All the while, we do continue to press forward in our efforts to expand school choice to include financial relief for parents of students in non-chartered, non-tax supported schools. Meetings have been attended (and more are scheduled) to discuss legitimate options that would accomplish this very thing. We are exploring any avenue that would alleviate these

financial burdens while fitting our philosophy of the church-home-state relationship and protecting the status of our non-chartered schools. Even the federal government recently passed legislation that might provide another path to financial assistance. College savings plans known as 529 plans were expanded to include expenses for K-12 education. At this point, the details of how extensive this would actually help are a little unclear, and Ohio has not yet made changes in state law to allow this locally. However, we are in the process of encouraging our state to reflect federal law, studying the best ways to utilize this tool, and possibly even expanding its effectiveness for our specific situation.

As is evident, there is much to consider even in our small circle of influence and ministry, but we serve a great God who is in control of everything. May we be granted the grace to serve Him faithfully and honor Him fittingly.



## BCSO represented at 2018 LEAD Conference

Submitted by Rick Ash, Administrator, Temple Christian Academy

Executive Director Keith Hamblen and Rick Ash

represented the Buckeye Christian School Organization at the American Association of Christian Schools' 2018 LEAD Conference in Atlanta, Georgia on February 6-7. The keynote speaker was Jeff Redlin,

pastor of the Front Range Baptist Church and Academy and vice president of the AACS Board of Directors. He opened the conference with "Broken Cistern Service," a challenging message from Jeremiah 2:13 on the dangers of serving people before God. We all have a heart to serve the people represented by our ministries, but we must serve our Lord first which

will allow us to properly serve others.

The majority of the conference is set up in a discussion format. The individual state association leaders and administrators attending the conference were asked to submit discussion questions that they were interested in hearing input

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on from other schools and associations. The discussions ranged from school growth and extracurricular activities to school choice and legislative topics.

Has your school ever had a problem with content from a student's online media account? During the discussion, one school mentioned a service that is relatively new called Safe Students Online ([safestudentsonline.com](http://safestudentsonline.com)) that helps parents monitor these accounts. The service is intended to be a tool for parents to monitor their student's online media. It is not monitored by the school, but it is billed through the school. This school has added the cost (\$25 a year per family) to their tech fee. With the parents receiving weekly updates of activity on the accounts and notification when something inappropriate is posted on or to the account, the school hopes to see fewer issues in their school and to keep their students safer.

The topic of same-sex marriage and gender identity had a lengthy discussion. Many AACCS schools are already facing these issues. Steve Cummings, AACCS legal counsel, says that the more religious you are on this topic the better. Each school should have Scripture on this topic in their handbook or should directly state that they hold to the doctrinal statement of their church (which should have Scripture on the topic). That way it is laid out as a religious belief, not something personal.

There was quite a bit of discussion on school/parent choice. Several states have already seen laws enacted that open up options for vouchers, scholarship organizations, and tax credits. But the majority of the conversation focused on the federal expansion of the 529 educational savings accounts. These accounts are tax-advantaged savings plans used for saving for college

expenses. Recent legislation though has broadened these to include usage for K-12th grades. It is still unknown how this will directly affect BCSO schools, but this is a step in the right direction.

The AACCS LEAD conference is an excellent time of fellowship with other people who have a heart for Christian education. It also opens up opportunities to network with others for more ideas to make our schools more effective. Continue to pray for Izaak VanderSchel and Keith Hamblen as they work with our legislators here in Ohio to pass a school choice bill. Pray for growth and protection for the schools represented by BCSO. And pray for the students in our schools that God would raise up in them the next generation of educators and ministry workers.



## 2017 BCSO Music Festival

By Brad Wiggs, BCSO Music Festival Coordinator

*"Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." – Martin Luther*

Here at the BCSO, we get a chance to cultivate the art of music, and many other skills, in the lives of our students. The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual BCSO Music Festival was held on Nov. 17, 2017, where 136 students converged on Mansfield, OH at Temple Christian School for an entire day of singing, playing, and having fun. The festival band and choir, consisting of students from 6 schools, spent the entire day working on 10 pieces of music with special guest clinicians. Dr. Russell Shelley worked with the choir, while Dr.

Richard Nichols led the band. The day culminated in an evening concert where friends and family could come and enjoy the fruits of a lot of musical labor. With a choir of 100 students and a band of 36 students, the festival afforded students the chance to collaborate and make friends with other students from around the state. The festival also gave students a great opportunity to learn from talented directors. A big "Thank You!" to all who played a role in making the festival a reality. May the Lord use these experiences in the lives of our young people to cultivate "the noble art of music" for the glory of God.

The *Building & Battling* newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Buckeye Christian School Organization. Its purpose is to disseminate information pertinent to our member schools in efforts to "build" a good work, as well as to serve as a tool for "battling" the secular world view that our culture impresses upon our students. Articles may be submitted for publication, but they will be subject to editing and approval. All submissions can be sent in MS Word (.doc) or PDF format to: [keithhamblen@gmail.com](mailto:keithhamblen@gmail.com).