CENTRAL MINNESOTA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

IMPACT REPORT

2026



The Impact of Everyday Faithfulness

Dear Bluejay Nation,

A lot of people ask me, “How is the school year going?” I am now halfway through my seventh year at Central, and from my perspective, this has been the best year so far. Many of the initiatives we have been working on and implementing over the past several years are beginning to bear fruit.

One of the greatest areas of celebration came early this fall through conversations with our teachers. About six weeks into the school year, Principal Stier asked the teachers to share how the start of the year was going on a scale of 1–10. Almost everyone shared an 8, 9, or 10! Happy teachers make for healthy classrooms, and knowing that our teachers are experiencing a strong sense of satisfaction and purpose is invaluable to the experience of our students. Our teachers are a living curriculum. Through their example, conviction, wisdom, and care for students, more is caught than taught.

Perhaps the most meaningful affirmation, however, came through my senior interviews this fall. As I sat down with our seniors and asked them to reflect on their time at Central, one of my questions was to identify a teacher or two who stood out as an exceptional educator or someone who had made a difference in their lives. I heard so many beautiful stories about the ways teachers made learning come alive, invested personally in students, and demonstrated genuine care. When asked if there were any teachers they would remember negatively, the response was remarkably consistent: “No. All the teachers here are pretty good. I can't think of one I don't like or who isn't doing a good job.”

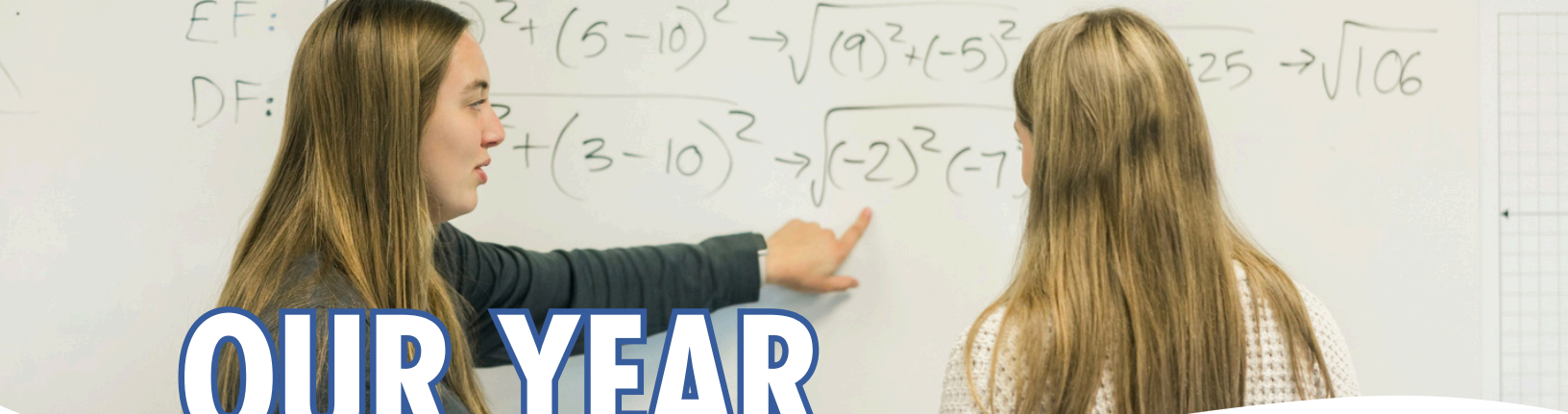
Friends, I can't think of better advertising than those testimonies.

Of course, we know that no school, teacher, or administrator is perfect. There is always room to grow, and the work of providing a Christ-centered, quality education is never finished. But when our teachers find joy and purpose in their work, and our students can look back on their experience with gratitude for the community of believers who have invested in them, we have much to celebrate.

Thank you for investing in Central. Your generosity helps make this kind of experience possible. We are grateful for the opportunity to continue equipping students for a life of service, and we look forward with great anticipation to what God has in store for these students!



Jon De Groot
Superintendent



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

371

4K-12th grade students enrolled in the 2026-2027 school year

177

families investing in Christian education for their child(ren)

32

churches attended by Central families

OUR FOUNDATION

115 years of providing Christ-centered education & equipping students for a life of service

59 full-time teachers and staff

18 average classroom size

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

9 daily transportation routes

82% of 7-12th grade students involved in at least one activity

13 Academic All-Conference Athletes

INVESTING IN OUR STUDENTS

$391,094 total financial aid received by families in 2026-2027

28% of the cost of educating our students is covered by generous donors

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

$5.3M total budgeted for 2026-2027

$9,878 tuition for students in 9-12th grade

$496,880 CMCS Foundation distribution expected in 2026-2027

Our Mission:

To provide a Christ-centered, quality education to equip students for a life of service.

Our Vision:

Surrounded by our community of believers where God's presence is evident, our students will find their calling in God's world through an exceptional education, delivered from a Biblical worldview. Students will be **known personally**, **discipled intentionally**, and **challenged academically**.

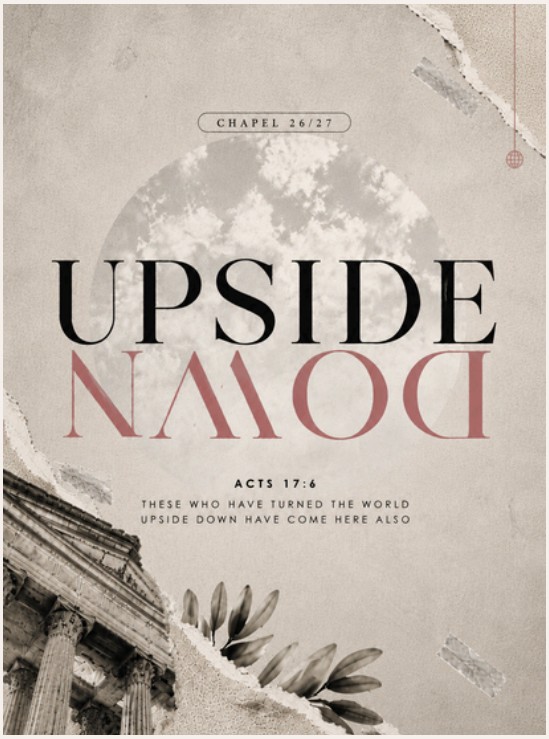
Our Values:

Bridging the Gap: Through service, we identify needs and address them. We see God-possibilities and obediently follow the Spirit to make them our reality. In humility, we give of ourselves, investing in the cause of Christian education and thus, the future. (I Peter 4:10; Col 3:23; Isa 58:10)

Building Trust: We strive for excellence in our character and proven-ness in our work. We do our best to earn respect by exceeding expectations, maintaining high standards, challenging complacency, and aiming for full potential. (Matt 13:12; Titus 2:7; Phil 1:9-10)

Better Together: God created us in His image to live in community. Therefore, we honor and care for the well-being and success of all. We value encouragement and helpful communications while speaking the truth in love. We celebrate the individual gifts and character of each member and provide an environment for them to struggle and grow. (Rom 12:4-5; Gen 1:27; Col 3:12-14)

Being Transformed: We value whole-person growth and practice continuous improvement through learning, personal reflection, and Christian development. We are open to new ideas and seek God's kingdom dream for our lives and the world. (Rom 12:2; II Cor 5:17; Ps 51:10)



"Be in the world, not of the world." It's a phrase I (Jimmy) heard countless times growing up in church. By the time I reached high school, it often seemed to mean little more than avoiding the wrong movies and music that was "too secular." While these conversations were well-intentioned, they often caused me to spend more time avoiding the world than allowing the narrative of the Bible and the beauty of the Gospel truly capture my imagination.

In Acts 17, Paul and his companions are called those who "have turned the world upside down." It wasn't a compliment, but an accusation. What was so unique about these Christians that people saw them as those who were changing the world?
Our students are bombarded with competing visions for what life should look like. Every day they are told how to spend their time and money, what success looks like, who they should become, who they should date and marry, what they should value, and even what kind of socks they should wear with their sandals (if you know, you know). Every voice is inviting them into a different story.

THIS YEAR'S CHAPEL THEME:
UPSIDE DOWN

"THESE WHO HAVE TURNED THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN HAVE COME HERE ALSO"
ACTS 17:6

At Central, our mission is to equip students for a life of service. Through this year's chapel theme, Upside Down, the middle and high school students are exploring eight Biblical ideas: Kingdom, Riches, Justice, Worship, Relationships, Service, Power, and Mission. Each month we will see how Jesus overturns worldly values and calls us to a better way. Our hope is that these themes not only teach our students how to think, but also shape the ways they live in the halls of Central and beyond. Our elementary students will apply the theme Upside Down to discussions of four of our Teaching for Transformation throughlines: Community Builders, Servant Workers, Image Reflectors, and Earth Keepers. Through learning about these throughlines and discussing Biblical stories, we hope our students will end the year with a better picture of what it means to be a part of the Kingdom of God.

We are excited to have a team of great people working together on student discipleship this year. Mr. De Groot and I (Jimmy) have planned out the middle and high school chapels and squads. Mrs. Berry continues to plan the elementary chapels and small groups, while Katy Vogel, our new Faith Formation Coordinator, assists the team in keeping details organized and planning out special events like service projects and Flock days, as well as building connections with students throughout the school.

As the gospel spread in the book of Acts, it changed lives in a very real sense. This is our hope and prayer for our students. Not only do we want them to be equipped for lives of service, but also to be the kind of people who, by God's grace, turn the world Upside Down.

— Jimmy Buehler (High School Bible), Becky Berry (Elementary Student Discipleship Coordinator), Jon De Groot (Superintendent), and Katy Vogel (Faith Formation Coordinator)

BEYOND *the* TEXTBOOK

Discovering God's Design Through Science



Step inside Mrs. Sarah Brouwer's middle school science classroom, and you'll quickly discover that learning goes far beyond the pages of a textbook.

Natural light pours through a curved wall of windows, illuminating a classroom filled with plants, test tubes, and experiments in progress. On any given day, students might be peering through microscopes to compare onion and animal cells, tackling a STEM water purification challenge, or watching balloons inflate as yeast and sugar produce carbon dioxide.

For Mrs. Brouwer, these hands-on experiences aren't simply a way to make science fun. They're an essential part of helping students understand, apply, and remember what they've learned.

"If I can trigger their memory by an activity, they will remember the science behind it," she explains.

That connection between experience and understanding is at the heart of academic excellence in her classroom. Rather than simply memorizing facts for a test, students are challenged to put scientific concepts into practice, observe the results, and apply their knowledge in meaningful ways.

But for Mrs. Brouwer, teaching science goes beyond academic achievement. Her deep hope is "that students will see the beauty and order of God's creation."

It's a perspective woven into nearly every experiment and lesson.

As students work through labs, they follow the scientific process, developing a question, forming a hypothesis, outlining procedures, collecting data, and drawing conclusions. But their lab reports include one additional step that sets their learning apart: reflecting on what they've discovered through a Christian worldview.



Each report challenges students to complete the statement, "I saw the beauty and order of God's creation in this because…"

Through this simple reflection, students are encouraged to become order discoverers, recognizing the intricate details, patterns, and purpose woven throughout God's creation. Science becomes more than a subject to study. It becomes another opportunity to stand in awe of the Creator.

And the learning doesn't stop at the classroom door.

Throughout the year, Mrs. Brouwer takes her students beyond the school walls to learn firsthand from professionals working in scientific fields. While each experience offers something unique, one of her favorite field trips might come as a surprise: a visit to the landfill and wastewater treatment facilities.

For Mrs. Brouwer, the trip is personal. As a third grader in Canada, she visited a wastewater treatment facility with her teacher, Mr. Marly Breems, who also served at Central, including as principal, from 1986 to 2001. The experience left a lasting impression, one she now hopes to pass along to her own students.

“I believe that you can’t be a good citizen unless you learn to take care of your waste,” she shares.

What might seem like an unusual field trip becomes a valuable lesson in environmental stewardship, helping students understand their responsibility to care for the world God has entrusted to them.

Whether they're examining cells under a microscope, testing a scientific theory, or discovering what happens to waste after it leaves their homes, Mrs. Brouwer is helping students connect classroom lessons to the world around them.

In doing so, she's nurturing more than future scientists. She's equipping students to think critically, ask thoughtful questions, care for creation, and recognize God's handiwork in even the smallest details.

Because in Mrs. Brouwer's classroom, academic excellence isn't just about knowing how something works. It's about discovering the beauty and order of the One who created it.



A LIFE OF SERVICE

Central graduates put their faith into action halfway around the world.



At Central, students are encouraged to live a life of service. While that calling looks different for everyone, the heart behind it remains the same: using the gifts God has given us to serve others and share His love.

For Central graduates Landon Groen ('22) and Ashlyn Brouwer ('24), that calling recently took them halfway around the world to Dunedin, New Zealand, where they spent their summer building relationships, sharing the Gospel, and serving college students.

Both involved with Campus Outreach, a college ministry at the University of Northwestern, Landon and Ashlyn joined a team of students working alongside long-term Campus Outreach staff in New Zealand. Their goal was to build relationships with college students, welcome those who hadn't yet connected with the ministry, and create opportunities to share the hope of Jesus Christ.

Their days were filled with opportunities to connect with students, whether striking up conversations in campus cafeterias, hosting larger gatherings, sharing meals, or spending time together over coffee or on a hike. While the activities varied, the purpose remained the same: building genuine relationships that could lead to meaningful conversations about faith.

For Ashlyn, one of those conversations became a moment she won't soon forget.

Throughout the summer, she had been getting to know a student from India who practiced Hinduism and knew very little about Christianity. After attending several Campus Outreach events, the student began asking questions about Jesus, sin, and the meaning of His death on the cross.

As Ashlyn listened, her ministry partner and another team member walked the student through the Gospel, explaining Christ's sacrifice and how Jesus bridged the separation between us and God.



The student's response was a question that stayed with Ashlyn.

"But why do we deserve that?"

Later, when asked how hearing the Gospel made her feel, the student described it as feeling "really warm."

"It was so cool to hear someone's first thoughts about the Gospel and to be reminded afresh just how mind-blowing and mercy-filled it is," Ashlyn reflected.

Although their journey took them thousands of miles from home, the foundation for living a life of service was shaped, in part, years earlier in the classrooms and hallways of Central.

For Ashlyn, the influence of her teachers extended well beyond academics. They created an environment where she felt comfortable asking questions, growing in her faith, and being challenged to become more Christ-like. Opportunities to serve throughout her years at Central also helped shape her understanding of what it means to put faith into action.

"Mission trips and service days showed me what practical service can look like — something as simple as raking my neighbor's leaves," Ashlyn shared. "Central provides so many opportunities for growth and provides students with so many role models for what living out a life of service looks like."

Landon echoes the importance of those formative years, particularly in developing a faith-centered perspective that continues to guide him today.

"Central prepared me by giving me a solid foundation for my Christian faith and for why I believe what I believe, and also by providing an example of what a Christ-centered community looks like in the real world," he said. "Jimmy Buehler deeply influenced my life through his classes and his continued care in my life. His classes opened my eyes to the depths of the Christian faith and he has proven that he truly cares that his students have a life-giving relationship with God at the absolute center of their life."

While their time at Central helped lay that foundation, both graduates are continuing to find ways to live out their faith beyond the classroom.

For Ashlyn, who hopes to continue pursuing ministry, living a life of service isn't limited to a particular place or calling.

"Service will continue to be a part of my life through building relationships intentionally based on my relationship with Christ and through seeking out the outsider at events and at church," she shared.

For Landon, that next chapter will take him to Monterrey, Mexico. Having recently graduated from the University of Northwestern, he plans to pursue full-time ministry through Campus Outreach's two-year LEAD Program.

From serving neighbors in Prinsburg to sharing the Gospel with college students in New Zealand, Landon and Ashlyn offer a glimpse of what it looks like to carry Central's mission beyond graduation.





Dear Bluejay Nation,

Last year in our Impact Report, we shared several goals we hoped to pursue to strengthen academic excellence, encourage spiritual growth, and build a financially sustainable future for Central. Today, I'm excited to share that we're not just talking about those goals anymore; we're seeing them take shape!

One of those goals was to strengthen faith formation throughout our school by funding a full-time Spiritual Formation position. After thoughtful evaluation, we found an even more meaningful approach by establishing a faith formation team made up of current staff, along with a part-time coordinator. Together, they're creating opportunities for students to grow in their faith through service projects, weekly Chapels, Flock Days, and personal connections.

We've also made important strides in school safety. Over the past year, we've partnered with Kandiyohi County to develop an emergency reunification plan, participated in local training, pursued grant opportunities, and invested in new emergency communication software. At the same time, we're celebrating exciting progress toward long-term financial sustainability, like New to You's expansion with the opening of a second location, and the CMCS Foundation continuing to grow, with assets expected to surpass $10 million this year as we work toward our long-term goal of $20 million.

These milestones are worth celebrating, but what excites me most is what they mean for our students and families. We're seeing students grow bolder in their faith and discover what it means to live out the Gospel in everyday life. And through the combined support of New to You, the CMCS Foundation, and gifts to our Annual Fund, we're able to help bridge the 47% of operating costs not covered by tuition. That generosity makes a difference in so many ways, including providing financial assistance, creating hands-on learning opportunities, transportation, extracurriculars, and so much more. These are the everyday impacts of a community investing in the next generation.

As I reflect on all we've accomplished, I'm reminded that none of it happens without you. Whether you've supported Central through prayer, financial gifts, volunteering, or events like the Freedom Fun Run and Harvest Festival, you've played a part in this progress. Thank you for believing in our mission and investing in the next generation. There's so much to be grateful for, and even more to look forward to. I hope you'll continue walking alongside us as we equip students to grow in their faith, discover their God-given gifts, and live lives of service wherever God leads them.

With gratitude,

Kate Link

Kate Link
Director of Advancement



WAYS *to* SUPPORT

PRAY

Pray for our students, staff, and leadership, that God's guidance and wisdom shape everything we do. May His glory be reflected in our learning, service, and community life.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Help us share Central's story! Every like, comment, and share helps reach more families and friends.

INVITE

Be an advocate for Central! Share your experience with other families and encourage them to attend an event or schedule a visit.

VOLUNTEER

Lend a hand and get involved! Every role makes a difference in our school community!

GIVE

Consider supporting our Annual Fund. Donations help keep tuition low and ensure families have access to Christian education.

INVEST

A gift to the CMCS Foundation, whether in cash, stock, land, or other assets, becomes a lasting investment in the school. These gifts are managed to provide steady, ongoing support for Central.

THANK YOU

Together, we're investing in the next generation of students who will go out and serve Christ in their communities and beyond.

