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ANNUAL
REPORT

Our Story

Founded by Pastors Marcio and Tia Sierra, Lighthouse Christian School was established in response to deep educational inequities in Dane County. Wisconsin has the largest racial achievement gap in the nation. While over 70% of white students in Madison are proficient in reading and math, fewer than 30% of Hispanic students and fewer than 20% of Black students meet those benchmarks.

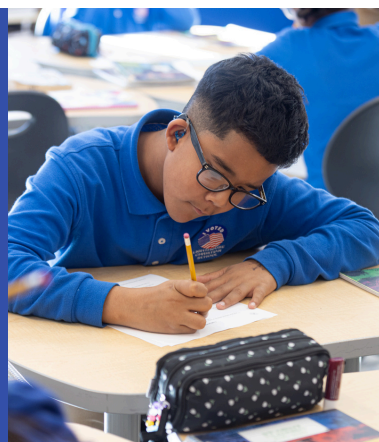
After moving to Madison from Honduras more than 30 years ago, Pastor Marcio Sierra, Jr. experienced these challenges firsthand — but with a father who advocated for his education. Today, Pastors Marcio and Tia Sierra are committed to providing that same advocacy and support to Madison's most vulnerable children.

Lighthouse Christian School offers a high-quality, faith-based 4K–8 education for students facing adversity. As Madison's only bilingual voucher school, Lighthouse removes barriers to learning and equips students to achieve lasting academic success.



Mission

Lighthouse Christian School exists to teach and inspire all students to become devoted disciples of Jesus and to enthusiastically pursue their God-given potential in the classroom, home, neighborhood, and world.



Vision

We envision a future where every child — regardless of background or circumstance — has access to a high-quality, Christ-centered education that equips them academically, spiritually, and emotionally to thrive.

“We are so thrilled to finally be part of a team that cares so deeply about the wellbeing of our son. I am excited to learn from each of you and transfer all the skills that he is working on there, to home. Thank you again for everything.”

— Parent of a student with autism who is non-verbal and uses a tablet for communication (9/11/25)



Dear Lighthouse Family,

As we reflect on 2025, our hearts are filled with gratitude — for God’s faithfulness and for the incredible community that surrounds Lighthouse Christian School.

This year was marked by growth, perseverance, and renewed purpose. Our students continued to make meaningful progress, overcoming academic gaps with determination. Our teachers poured into their classrooms with excellence and compassion, and our families remained steadfast partners in their children’s education. With rising costs and increasing student needs, God’s provision was clear through the generosity of our donors, churches, and community partners.



We are especially grateful for the new blessings of 2025. Our campus expansion provided much-needed space for teachers, art instruction, middle school students, and a multi-purpose room — allowing us to better serve our growing school community. We also have a growing vision for how we can support families more holistically, along with new partnerships and dedicated staff members who share our heart for this mission. Through every season, we are reminded that we serve the same loving God who faithfully provides for all our needs.

Because of your support, Lighthouse remains a place where children are known, loved, and challenged to grow — academically, spiritually, and personally. As we look ahead, we do so with hope and confidence, trusting God to continue guiding this work and the lives of the students and families we serve.

With heartfelt thanks,

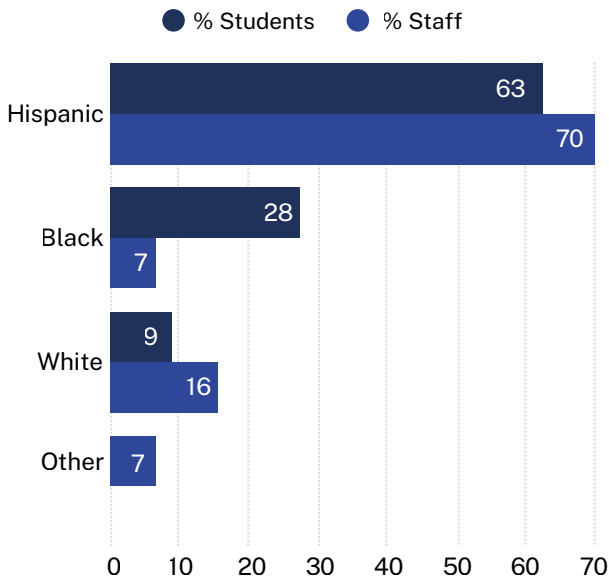
Pastor Marcio Sierra Jr., M.Div.
President, Lighthouse Christian School

Pastor Tia Sierra, M.Ed
Principal, Lighthouse Christian School

"I had a new student who started in the second quarter of the year. When she came to LCS, she lacked a great deal of self-confidence. She would ask others to do almost everything for her. I would talk her through how to pack her backpack at the end of each day, but I would not do it for her. One day, after several months of trying, she came to me filled with excitement saying that she was able to use my advice and pack her backpack alone. I asked her what advice worked for her, thinking it would be an organizational tool, but she told me something much more heartwarming. She said, "I took a deep breath, and told myself I can do it!" It turns out, she didn't need tools, as much as she needed to have people believe in her God-given abilities." — **Ms. Shentel, 1st Grade Teacher**

Impact by the Numbers

Demographics



Student Enrollment

- 350 + students served, birth through 8th grade
- 98 teachers and staff
- 16 students per class; 2 classes per grade

Economically Disadvantaged	97%	ELL Students	63%
Students with Disabilities	10%	Teacher Retention Rate	99%
K-8 Students on Voucher	81%	Students on scholarship or paying discounted tuition	19%
Board Members of Color	50%	Female Board Members	60%

Academic Performance Highlights (2024–2025)

- All LCS graduates to date have a **100% high school graduation rate**.
- The **LCS Kindergarten class achieved 100% proficiency in early literacy** at the mid-year assessment.
- **African-American LCS students achieved a Growth Score of 73.6**, compared to 43.2 for non-African-American students, demonstrating accelerated academic growth year over year.
- **English Language Learner (ELL) students are outperforming** their English-speaking peers in Dane County in both Reading and Math.
- Lighthouse **third graders outperformed the Wisconsin statewide reading average**, with 57.1% reading at or above grade level compared to 50.3% statewide, while serving a student population that is 92% Hispanic and Black. (Statewide, 33% of Hispanic students, 18% of Black students, and 61% of White students achieve reading proficiency.)
- **Lighthouse Christian school is closing the achievement gap!**

*Data sources: Star360, Wisconsin DPI Report Card 2024–2025, and internal academic tracking.

Wrap-Around Support

- On-site food pantry (Extended Hands): serving 26,000 households yearly
- Bilingual instruction for 100% of students
- 91% of students attend after-school programs
- 41% of students attend our Summer Camp Program

“Whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.” — **Proverbs 11:25**



Guiding Light Scholarship Program

The Guiding Light Scholarship Fund is a comprehensive tuition assistance program designed to ensure that financial barriers never prevent a child from experiencing academically excellent, safe, structured and Christ-centered education at Lighthouse School. **The fund helps cover Tuition Assistance, Enrollment Fees, Athletic Fees, After-school and Summer Program Fees, and Bad-Debt Forgiveness.** No child is turned away for inability to pay.

Special Needs Program

With over 10% of our students having special needs, **LCS serves the highest percentage of special needs students at private voucher schools in the state of Wisconsin.** With loving one-on-one care combined with resources to serve disabilities of all kinds, our children experience growth and improvements every day. Our inclusive approach allows ALL students to participate in all subjects including PE, art, music, performances, sports and healthy habits for lifelong wellness.

Trauma-Informed Care Program

Students at LCS are supported by a strong, research-based Trauma-Informed Care Program (TIC Program). We are blessed to have Dr. Belinda implement a TIC Program that works with teachers, parents and students to implement practices that regulate a child's behavior, create a safe environment, and make sure every child is greeted daily by name. Dr. Belinda explains co-regulation as a brain-based strategy where an adult is calm, predictable, and helps a dysregulated student return to a state where they can access self-control and learning.

After-School Program

Our after-school program serves 325 children during the school year with an average 91% daily attendance rate. The program provides a structured environment beginning with mindful transition time and social connection over snacks, followed by focused academic support and engaging enrichment activities. Students participate in rotating clubs, athletics through MAISL, and leadership development through Student Council.

Summer Program

Our eight-week summer program extends learning for 41% of our students through immersive themed weeks, including "Lost in Nature," "LEGO Mania," and "Out of this World." Camp runs for 10 hours a day and offers hands-on activities like rocket-making, habitat exploration, and engineering challenges. Weekly field trips include Cave of the Mounds, Chazen Museum and The Dream Park. Weekly field trips include the petting zoo and Madison Circus Space teaching juggling.

"I have rarely encountered a school that embraces trauma-informed education as effectively as Lighthouse Christian School. The environment at LCS not only supports all learners but also inspires parents and professionals to continually adapt to meet student needs."

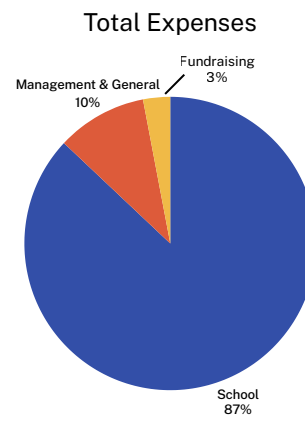
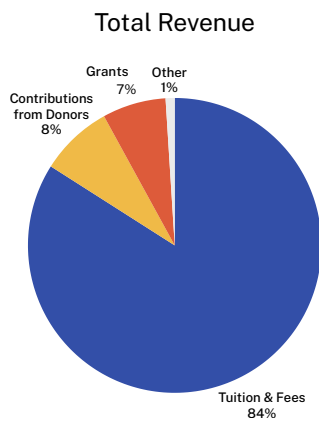
— Beth Miller Swanson, MA, CCC-SLP, Asst. Clinical Professor, Dept of Communication

Financial Overview

Financial Year Ending June 30, 2025

Revenues	Total Revenues
Contributions from Donors	\$364,290.37
Government Grants	\$301,351.00
Tuition and Fees	\$3,885,897.00
Other	\$84,427.00
Total Revenues	\$4,635,965.37

Expenses	Total Expenses
School	\$4,178,752.00
Management and General	\$462,428.00
Fundraising	\$156,493.00
Total Expenses	\$4,797,673.00



2025 Quick Facts:

- Annual Expenses: \$4,797,673.00
- Percentage of Expenses Fundraised: 16%
- Total Funds Raised: \$750,068.00
- Student Aid & Tuition funding gap: \$200,000
- Lunch & Healthy Snack funding gap: \$115,000
- Athletic Program funding gap: \$16,500

Primary funding sources include:

- Wisconsin Parental Choice Program
- Individual donors
- Foundations and grants
- Churches and community organizations

2025 Highlight: Building Expansion

Last year, LCS faced many challenges due to space constraints: classrooms were at capacity, art classes were held in the cafeteria, and large gathering spaces were limited.

In response, LCS leadership took a bold step of faith — **launching a \$2 million campus expansion**. The project added two new classrooms, a permanent art room, an expanded teacher lounge, and a multi-purpose community space designed to serve both students and families.

By August, the new spaces were completed and fully furnished, ready to welcome students for the start of the school year — **with 65% of the project already paid off**. These additions have not only strengthened our academic environment but have also created room for our Daycare Program to expand and serve more children.

We are grateful to announce that as of January 2026, **92% of the \$2 million expansion has been raised**. What once required faith and vision is now a vibrant, life-giving space that is already blessing our school community.

Thank You to Our Donors!

With deep gratitude, we thank the many partners who generously walked alongside Lighthouse Christian School in 2025.

Your generosity transforms lives — one student at a time. Through your prayers, financial support, and faithful partnership, Lighthouse continues to be a place where students are known, loved, and equipped to thrive academically and spiritually.

New in 2025: Lighthouse Education Foundation

Launched in 2025, **The Lighthouse Education Foundation (LEF)** is an independent, non-religious nonprofit organization that creates visibility and raises funds to support the students, families, teachers, and programs of Lighthouse Christian School in Madison, Wisconsin. All funds raised by the Foundation go directly toward enhancing educational opportunities for students at the school.

Our Mission

To raise resources and visibility for Lighthouse Christian School, ensuring that every student has access to an academically excellent and inclusive education.

How We Work

LEF raises funds and provides grants to the school for scholarships, facilities, and program needs. The Foundation does not operate programs of its own but exists solely to ensure that the school has the resources it needs to succeed.

LEFMadison.org (or www.lcsmadison.org/foundation)



Special thanks to those who made significant gifts over \$50,000:

- The Mehring Family Foundation
- The Blake Family Foundation
- The Lynde & Harry Bradley Foundation
- The Catherine Zdeblick Foundation
- The Schlecht Family Foundation
- Darlene Ballweg
- Anonymous Donors

*Gifts received 2025 calendar year.



We are truly grateful for your commitment to our mission.

Get Involved

- Pray for our students and staff
- Donate to scholarships and programs
- Volunteer your time and talents
- Tour our school
- Get involved with the LEF Board
- Sponsor an event or Partner with us
- Spread the word!

Email our development director jwartinbee@lcsmadison.net for more information.

A Story of Hope

“One of our recent 8th-grade graduates, who has autism, spent years unable to tolerate music of any kind. Worship time meant leaving the room. With patient support and individualized care, she slowly built tolerance.

At first, she stayed in music class with headphones, then would stand during worship. By her final year at Lighthouse, she was singing, doing hand motions, and even invited her mom to sing a special song in chapel. We are constantly reminded that God is shaping lives at Lighthouse and He can do incredible things through a loving and caring environment.”

— Diana Camargo, Director of Student Services



Love God • Love Others • Love Yourself

Lighthouse Christian School
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