



MATT DAVIDSON

[Timothy Christian Schools](#)

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Introduction:

Matt Davidson is in his sixteenth year at the helm of Timothy Christian Schools (non-denominational PK3 - 12), the largest Christian school in Illinois and one of the largest in the country. During that time, Davidson and his team have raised nearly \$70MM for capital improvements, real estate acquisitions, existing programs, and new initiatives. Additionally, during his tenure, the school has earned a National Blue Ribbon of Excellence from the US Department of Education and has increased enrollment to record numbers, capacity, and wait lists.

Davidson frequently offers his consulting expertise with other private schools, non-profits, businesses, and organizations. He is a frequent speaker at Christian school conferences and churches. Topics include leadership, team-building, parenting, family issues, client engagement and satisfaction, and a host of others. In general, he enjoys coaching, inspiring, and challenging leaders.

In his thirty-third year, Davidson has been involved in Christian education for his entire professional career. Davidson started his career in 1993 as a U.S. History and Bible teacher and a basketball and baseball coach. His experiences in the classroom and the locker room have provided him with a well-rounded perspective of Christian schools and leadership. Eventually, Davidson moved into administration as a dean of students and then a principal. He assumed his first head of school position at age 36 in the largest private school in Arizona before ultimately coming to Timothy Christian Schools (est. 1911). Few leaders, if any, have served at the largest Christian school in two different states. Davidson has successfully ushered in energizing change while maintaining a worthy respect for the institution's history and foundation. He has championed necessary and wide-scale shifts in the organization while holding fast to the mission and foundation of the school.

Davidson is also involved with multiple boards and committees, mostly in the nonprofit world. Among his favorites are Reclaim13, an organization committed to ending the sex trafficking of children in Chicagoland, and the committee for the Coaches vs. Cancer National Golf Classic – an event of the American Cancer Society. He is also an Ambassador for the Elmhurst Memorial Hospital Foundation. Davidson has been the chairman of the Thrivent Member Network Chicagoland Region Board of Directors since 2019 and was instrumental in moving the team into a tie for first place in 2023 among all of the Thrivent regions in the country. Thrivent is a Fortune 500 Company in the wealth management and financial planning industry. Additionally, he serves as the lead elder at his church; and as a board member for the Timothy Foundation.

As it relates to education, Davidson is also the chairman of the board for the Illinois Coalition of Nonpublic Schools, representing all private and nonpublic schools in the state; and he is the state representative in Washington DC for the Council for American Private Education. Furthermore, he serves on a tax credit board in Arizona to help hard-working families afford a private education. Davidson is a person of influence at the local, state, and national levels. On a personal level, he is a husband of thirty three years and a father of three children – all married. He is also a proud grandfather.

Education

- Benedictine University, Lisle, Illinois, Masters in Educational Leadership and Administration, 2002-2005,
- Trinity International University, Deerfield, Il., Bachelor's Degree, History and Secondary Education, 1989-1993
- Illinois Type 75 Administrator Certificate
- Illinois Type 09 Teaching Certificate
- ACSI Lifetime Superintendent Certification
- CESA Superintendent Certification

Professional Positions

- Superintendent, Timothy Christian Schools, Elmhurst, Il., June 2010-present
- Superintendent, Northwest Christian School, Phoenix, Az, June 2007-June 2010
- Principal, Aurora Christian School, Aurora, Il., June 2006-June 2007
- Dean of Students, Aurora Christian School, Aurora, Il. August 2004-2006
- Bible Department Head, Aurora Christian School, August 2004-June 2007
- Assistant Athletic Director, Aurora Christian School, August 2002-June 2004
- HS Bible Teacher, Aurora Christian School, August August 1993-May 2007
- History Department Head, Aurora Christian School, August 1995-May 2004
- HS History Teacher, Aurora Christian School, August 1993-May 2004
- HS Basketball Coach, Aurora Christian School, August 1993-2004
- HS Baseball Coach, Aurora Christian School, August 1993-2004

Professional Associations

- DuPage County School Safety Task Force – task force member
- Illinois Coalition of Nonpublic Schools – Chairman of the board
- Coaches vs. Cancer National Golf Classic – National Committee
- Arizona Tuition Organization – state tax credit program for private schools – board member
- Reclaim 13 – putting an end to sexual exploitation of children and bringing about the beginnings of healing and hope – board member
- Timothy Foundation – tuition assistance for families in need – board member
- Thrivent – Fortune 500 Company (Chairman of the Regional Board) – helping people achieve financial clarity, promoting equitable access to sound financial advice
- One Line Church – board member; finance committee member
- National Association of School Superintendents
- Elmhurst Memorial Hospital Foundation – Ambassador

Staff Development Leadership Activity

- Head of School Certification with the Council on Educational Standards and Accountability (CESA)
- Frequent presenter at private school seminars nationally, including an event for Christian School leaders held at Grand Canyon University in Phoenix
- Work collaboratively with the School Board and Business Office on policy and finance/budget related matters
- Work collaboratively with the Foundation Board and CIBC Bank on managing and growing the assets of the Foundation/Endowment
- Work directly with our top donors and the Advancement Office
- Cast the vision and direction for various capital projects
- Oversee and guide the organization from PK3-12 (over 650 families; 1,270 students; 280+ employees; 220 churches represented at the school)
- Work routinely and collaboratively with the administrative team
- Work collaboratively with attorneys on school legal matters
- Hire, supervise, coach, mentor, and evaluate administrators; involvement with all areas of the school

Awards and Recognitions

- Illinois Music Educators Association (IMEA) – Outstanding Administrator Award for the entire state in 2017
- Recipient of the inaugural Outstanding Leadership Award at Timothy Christian School in May of 2021
- National Blue Ribbon High School Award (For the School)
- [IL ASCD](#) Whole Child Award (For the School)
- [ISBE](#) Those Who Excel Meritorious Service Award in 2023
- [Cover of Elmhurst Magazine](#) in July 2023
- [Marquis Who's Who](#) in 2023

Interview:

Tell us about how you see today's superintendent.

The superintendency has emerged as more of a CEO role in many schools over the last few years. Historically, the superintendent has been focused on curricular matters, union issues, transportation issues, and board meetings. The role leaned heavily toward the bureaucratic functions that come with the job. Although all of this (and more) remains an important responsibility of a superintendent, the role today requires other skills that are more difficult to define and measure. Today's superintendent must be a decision-maker, a listener, a visionary, an encourager, a challenger, an innovator, and someone who genuinely and demonstrably cares for the families and staff of his/her school community. The best superintendents are more than simply effective managers with a strong attention to detail. They are also inspirational and courageous leaders. We are witnessing teacher and administrator shortages across the county. More than ever in American history, we need leadership in our schools. There are enormous expectations on us and our staff, but our youth are counting on us. Our work is important.

What new understandings did you acquire after two or three years on the job?

I think it's a temptation to work with blinders on while in the classroom or even in the principal role. It was easy to convince myself that I was only responsible for a piece or a few pieces of the puzzle. But when I became the superintendent of one of the largest Christian schools in the country at age 36, I quickly realized that the full puzzle, "the big picture", is highly complicated and demands my best and most. I learned that I needed to consider everything and everyone in the school to be highly important – not just my classroom or one area of the school. Of course, the new temptation for me is to micro-manage all of this. Even now, after 18 years as a superintendent, I'm still growing and learning in this tight-rope act of expressing value and expecting excellence in every corner of our school; while avoiding an overly involved and suffocating management style and allowing others to develop in their own leadership.

Share an idea to use or something you've learned with your colleagues.

Ask and even require your team to speak freely with you. We make clumsy and weak decisions in echo chambers, and we make sound and strong decisions in tension. Our ideas and plans need to be pressure-tested. Allow the tension in meetings and conversations with team members. Discipline yourself to even embrace it. I'm not encouraging mutinous or rebellious behaviors. Of course we all desire to serve with loyal teammates. But loyalty is only artificial and often short-lived if it's demanded instead of earned. Win the loyalty of your team and your school community with an authentic commitment to collaboration and teamwork.

Submitted by:



Matt Davidson
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