

BACKCREEK

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

Back Creek Christian Academy
1827 Back Creek Church Road
Charlotte, NC 28213





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ABOUT BACK CREEK CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Back Creek Christian Academy first opened as an elementary school on the property of Back Creek Church in 1999, and quickly grew to include grades TK through 8. In 2014, BCCA launched their high school with a ninth-grade class, adding a grade each subsequent year. The first senior class is set to graduate in the spring of 2018, and every student in that senior class has been admitted into college. In the fall of 2018, BCCA will open their new campus on the property of Eastside Church, Charlotte, North Carolina.

Back Creek Christian Academy offers a distinctively Christian education rooted in the classical model. Students attend Bible classes and weekly chapel services, and participate in several service projects throughout the year. As a classical school, BCCA's course of study emphasizes literature, writing, and critical thinking. Smaller class sizes provide opportunities for conversation-based learning, as well as closer connections among students and teachers. Twice during the school year, students participate in short-term courses that focus on specific topics such as scientific innovations, human rights, and personal finance.

As an additional step in helping students prepare for post-high school endeavors, BCCA provides college preparation support. The PSAT is offered on campus each year, and a college counselor spends time with individual high school students, helping students identify colleges for which they are well-suited. The counselor provides guidance in applying to colleges, preparing for the SAT, and finding financial aid opportunities. Also, high school students visit various college campuses each year, and several college representatives visit students at BCCA.

Mission Statement

Back Creek Christian Academy strives to prepare students, faculty, parents and staff to use their unique gifts to serve God in an ever-changing world by providing an excellent academic education founded on the unchanging principles and perspectives of the Bible and presented in a structured and yet nurturing environment.

Vision Statement

The vision of Back Creek Christian Academy is to equip students to display and defend Truth by teaching them using a classically designed curriculum that emphasizes the Lordship of Christ over both their hearts and their minds.

Philosophy Statement

- Back Creek Christian Academy exists to spread the Gospel to children and families (Matthew 28; 18-20). We believe that children are God's creation and that we must honor them and Him by teaching them according to God's Word, and that all aspects of the instructional environment must be founded on the absolute truth of the Bible.

- We believe that God’s character is revealed not only in His Word, but also in every facet of the creation. Therefore, we teach that all knowledge is interrelated and can instruct us about God himself.
- God wants us to love Him with our minds, as well as with our hearts, souls and strength (Matthew 22:37). Therefore, we seek to individually challenge children at all levels and teach them how to learn, using a classical design that is developmentally appropriate.
- We want to help parents teach their children that all they do should be done “heartily as unto the Lord” (Col. 3:23). Therefore, we seek to encourage high-quality academic work and maintain high standards of conduct with the understanding that as an authority we will “give account” on behalf of our students (Hebrews 13:17).
- We believe that children should be trained to see the world from a biblical perspective. We believe that the school should partner with parents to assist students in developing personal values and intellectual scholasticism rooted in the absolute truth of God’s Word and to give them the opportunities to demonstrate these values in their interactions with others (Colossians 2:6-8; I Timothy 4:12).

Core Values

- We value the Word of God as an integral part of education.
- We value an education that challenges the mind of the learner.
- We value the uniqueness of children who are created in the image of God.
- We value service to God through both internal and external community concerns.
- We value creating a learning environment that optimizes spiritual, mental, and physical growth.
- We value community within the school environment that supports parents in the education of their children.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students

Back Creek Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the academy. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies and other school-administered programs.



General Student Handbook

BCCA's general Student Handbook is available at <http://www.bccaschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/BCCA-Student-Handbook-2016-17.pdf>. In addition to the International Student Handbook, international students are responsible for reading the general Student Handbook, and for having the student's parents sign the Student Handbook Parent Agreement Form located at <http://www.bccaschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Handbook-Form.pdf>.

ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

Back Creek Christian Academy's International Student Program seeks to provide a Christian classical education for students of other nationalities while broadening the multi-cultural perspective of its teachers and domestic students.

BCCA's International Student Program began in 2016 and has welcomed students from countries including Bolivia, China, Ivory Coast, and Vietnam. Additional English support is available to students through ESL classes and online coursework. International students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities such as athletics, school drama performances, and social activities.

Admissions

Once a student has been admitted to Back Creek Christian Academy, and required tuition and fees have been submitted, BCCA will issue the student's I-20. Upon receipt of the I-20, the student is to schedule an appointment with the US Embassy in his or her country. For that appointment, the student will need the following:

- I-20
- Acceptance letter from BCCA
- Passport
- I-901 (Receipt for payment to SEVIS; see Study in the States website at <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>.)
- Designated School Official contact information
- Two passport photographs
- Two copies of BCCA Power of Attorney (to be notarized)
- BCCA Enrollment Contract (to be notarized)



Students who have been admitted to Back Creek Christian Academy must submit all required documentation and fees upon or prior to arrival in the United States unless otherwise specified. In addition to supporting documents for application, required documentation and fees include the following:

- First semester tuition and fees
- Record of Immunizations
- Enrollment Contract
- Power of Attorney
- Proof of Medical Insurance
- Photo and Video Release
- BCCA Honor Code
- Technology Use Agreement

The need for additional documentation will be communicated to the student and parent if necessary.

For arrival in the United States, students must have the following:

- Passport
- I-94
- F-1 Visa
- Contact information for a BCCA Designated School Official

These documents are to be kept in hand, not checked with luggage.

After the student receives the F-1 Visa, issued by the US Embassy, the student is to contact BCCA and arrange dates available for travel to the US. Students are not to make any travel arrangements until an arrival date has been approved by BCCA.

For further information, please visit the Study in the States website at <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>.

Refunds

Refunds will not be granted under any condition in which the student, of his or her own initiative, transfers his or her I-20 to another school or program, nor will refunds be granted should the student be removed from BCCA for school rules and requirements violations, academic failure, behavioral issues, legal infractions, host-home violations, or any other behavioral issue.

If for any reason the student is denied an F-1 Visa by the US Embassy, BCCA will refund pre-paid tuition, less \$1,500 for administrative costs.



Once the student had been enrolled, any remaining tuition for the academic year must be submitted to the BCCA Business Office by August 1 of that school year. Any withdrawal notices must be made in writing 30 days before the first day of school.

Insurance

Back Creek Christian Academy requires that each international student maintain valid health insurance coverage for the duration of his or her time in the United States as a student of BCCA.

Students residing with a host family are required to purchase an insurance policy available through Independent School Management (ISM). Information regarding these insurance plans is included with the International Student Enrollment Packet.

Students residing with verified family in the United States are required to show proof of insurance provided by a registered company based in the United States.

- The coverage must be effective no later than the date of the student's arrival to the United States.
- Coverage must not be allowed to lapse at any time while the student is in the United States as a student of BCCA.
- The student's insurance card must be kept in the student's possession for the duration of the student's time in the United States as a student of BCCA.
- A copy of the student's insurance card - both front and back - must be submitted to BCCA two weeks before the student's arrival in the United States.
- A copy of the student's insurance card - both front and back - must be provided to the student's host family upon the student's arrival in the United States.
- The student must accept full responsibility for all financial healthcare obligations, including those not paid by the student's insurance provider, while the student is in, or traveling to and from, the United States.

Neither Back Creek Christian Academy, nor the faculty or staff of BCCA, nor the student's host family, nor any affiliates of BCCA will be held responsible for any healthcare related cost of the student. Failure to maintain appropriate health insurance, or allowing a lapse in health care coverage, constitutes a violation of the student's Back Creek Christian Academy Enrollment Contract, and may result in the student being dismissed from Back Creek Christian Academy, as well as cancellation of the student's United States visa.

Immunizations

Each student must have an official record from a registered physician's office or hospital of current immunizations required for entry into a United States school. The following vaccinations are required:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Influenza
- Influenza Type B (Hib)
- Measles
- Meningococcal
- Mumps
- Pneumococcal

Re-enrollment

Re-enrollment for the following school year is open to current students at or near the start of the second semester. In order to be guaranteed a spot for the following year, students must complete their re-enrollment forms and pay the appropriate re-enrollment fee by the designated deadline. International students who have not re-enrolled within 15 days of the end of the school year will have their I-20 / F-1 Visa status terminated.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Off-Campus Events

Students are encouraged to participate in activities that extend beyond the typical school day. Each fall, students attend a three-day, two-night retreat, during which students participate in various social activities, peer-group competitions, and chapel services. Additional spring trips to locations of historical importance are also scheduled during select school years. These trips provide outstanding opportunities for developing friendships and for strengthening historical and cultural awareness. Thus, international students are expected to participate in these events, as well as other off-campus trips throughout the year.

Standardized Testing

All BCCA students, grades 1-12, take the Terra Nova each spring. The Terra Nova is a national test built from the former California Achievement Test. International students participate in this test, and each student's scores are a part of the student's cumulative file. These scores do not directly affect college admissions. No additional cost is incurred for this testing.

The PSAT is administered each year on the BCCA campus for students in grades 9-11. A BCCA college counselor reviews students' PSAT scores and works with students in preparation of the SAT. No additional cost is incurred for this testing.



The SAT is administered at various times throughout the school year, usually on Saturdays, at locations not on BCCA's campus. BCCA's college counselor communicates testing dates and locations with students, but is not part of the testing process. Students are responsible for registering for the SAT and for arranging travel to the testing site, as well as paying the additional cost of the test.

Return Travel

Students wishing to return home during school breaks should coordinate travel with BCCA administration in advance. Students are expected to arrange travel times that do not interfere with their academic schedules or exams. Students should plan to return home over summer break, unless they are residing with family in the United States. Students are required to keep their F-1 Visa documentation with them at all times and are responsible for acquiring the endorsement of a Designated School Official before traveling. All costs of travel are the direct responsibility of each student and is in no part included in any money paid to BCCA.

HOST FAMILY POLICIES

Tuition and additional fees for International Students at Back Creek Christian Academy do not include fees for homestay with a host family. International students not residing with family relatives are to reside with host families approved by BCCA Administration.

- The host family is to receive monthly stipend payments in the amount of \$800 for the duration of the student's stay.
- Payment is to be made by the student or the student's family directly to the host family.
- If the student is away from the host home, the stipend payment may be reduced by \$200 per full week the student is away. (A minimum of five consecutive nights away is required to constitute one full week away.)
- The homestay fee guarantees the student will receive required room and board accommodations, including three meals per day, and general transportation. The homestay fee does not provide for the student's personal spending money, school supplies, activity fees, medical payments, school hot-lunches, alternative transportation, cell phone service, or any other money beyond general room and board. (A list of general homestay provisions is provided in the document School Covenant: Host Family and Visiting Student, copied below.)
- Students, student families, host families, placement agencies, or other interested parties are not permitted to negotiate higher or lower stipend amounts without direct consent of BCCA Administration.

Failure of the student to adhere to the terms of the International Student Program Homestay Policy, or to the terms of other BCCA policies, may result in the dismissal of the student from Back Creek Christian Academy, and the cancellation of the student's I-20 status.



Students residing with host families in the United States are required to agree to the following policy:

The Host Parents covenant with the Visiting Student and BCCA to:

- Provide for the Visiting Student's physical needs by:
 - using the Visiting Student's stipend to fully cover rooming, three adequate meals per day, and transportation to and from school;
 - providing a home atmosphere of reasonable comfort and privacy;
 - facilitating opportunities for the student to shop and purchase supplies and clothing when necessary;
- Provide for the Visiting Student's educational needs by:
 - providing a home environment conducive to the completion of educational studies;
 - ensuring the student is in school every day except in the case of illness;
 - helping the student secure necessary school supplies;
 - attending parent-teacher conferences and other meetings necessary for the student's success;
 - making tutoring sessions possible when needed;
 - supporting disciplinary actions taken by the school;
 - refraining from the discussion of issues concerning the Visiting Student with other families;
 - supporting the school's standard procedures for addressing academic and behavioral concerns;
- Provide for the Visiting Student's social and emotional needs by:
 - allowing the Visiting Student to spend time with friends on weekends or holidays;
 - allowing the Visiting Student to have regular contact with his or her family, friends, and sponsoring agent;
 - providing or otherwise arranging transportation for the Visiting Student to various locations and activities when practical and possible;
 - attending games, school programs, and other events in which the Visiting Student is a participant when practical and possible;
 - inviting and allowing the student to accompany the Host Family out of the home.

The Visiting Student covenants with the BCCA Host Parents to:

- Be respectful of the Host Parents' home by:
 - cleaning up behind himself or herself in shared areas such as the kitchen and bath;
 - keeping his or her laundry done on a weekly basis;
 - cleaning his or her room on a weekly basis;
- Be respectful of the Host Parents' time by:
 - communicating directly and in person when possible;
 - ceasing the use of communication devices and social technology by 10:00pm;
 - Refraining from the use of speaker phone unless necessary;
 - arising by 9:00am on weekends and holidays;
- Be respectful of the Host Parents' finances by:
 - using personal money for items beyond housing, food and meals provided by the host parents, and transportation to and from school;
- Demonstrate care for Host Family children by:
 - respecting the privacy of the children;

- supporting the interactions of the parents and children;
- refraining from loud talking and disruptive behavior while the child is in bed or sleeping;
- Demonstrate school dedication by:
 - completing school assignments on time and with excellence;
 - honestly attempting to maintain least a C average.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Motor Vehicle License

Due to risk of liability, international students are not allowed to operate any motor vehicle, nor participate in any driver's education courses, while in the United States as students of Back Creek Christian Academy. Exceptions may be made only for an international student who resides with family members if those family members also maintain documented legal guardianship of the student. Documentation of legal guardianship must be submitted to BCCA Administration, and consent of BCCA Administration obtained, before the student may pursue motor vehicle licensure.

Program Termination

Back Creek Christian Academy reserves the right to terminate program participation for the violation of any program, residence, local, state, or federal rules, or when a student's mental or physical health (as determined by a physician or BCCA administration) is in jeopardy. If necessary, program termination will result in the loss of all program fees and require that the student return to his or her home at the student's own monetary expense.

Rules to Note

Any infraction of the following rules will result in immediate dismissal from BCCA and the termination of the student's I-20 / F-1 Visa status.

- Students must abide by all laws of the United States.
- Students may not buy or drink alcohol.
- Students may not use drugs for any non-medical reason. Some examples of illegal (non-medical) drugs are marijuana, cocaine, LSD, methamphetamines, etc.
- Students may not smoke or use tobacco at school.
- Students are not permitted to hitchhike.
- Students are not permitted to purchase, carry, or use firearms or any other weapons, under any circumstances.
- Students are not allowed to hold part-time jobs. A non-immigrant alien who accepts paid employment is subject to deportation.
- Students are not permitted to operate any motor vehicle except in compliance with BCCA's



International Student Driver Policy.

- Students are not permitted to steal or otherwise take without direct and appropriate permission any item or property of others.
- Students are not participated to commit acts of vandalism.
- Students are not permitted to have sexual relations with any person.
- Students are not permitted to possess or otherwise view pornographic material of any kind.



Back Creek Christian Academy

International Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I/We _____, the parent/s of _____, have read and discussed the material in the Back Creek Christian Academy International Student Handbook. We agree to follow and uphold all school policies while our student is enrolled at Back Creek Christian Academy.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____