Black Hills Christian Academy

2026-2027

PRESCHOOL/PRE-K PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Black Hills Christian Academy History

The Black Hills Christian Academy (BHCA) was founded as the Belle Fourche Christian School in the fall of 1992, with two teachers serving 12 students. Meeting in local churches for four years enabled the BHCA to eventually purchase a facility outside of Belle Fourche in 1996. The doors were opened to students in preschool through 8th grade with continued growth in enrollment and academic achievements. The Belle Fourche Christian School changed its name in 2002 to the BHCA. In 2008 the school moved to Spearfish, leasing from Calvary Temple Assembly of God Church. In 2011 the BHCA purchased a building in Spearfish (current location) to allow for continued growth. In the fall of 2017, the BHCA and Spearfish Classical Christian School partnered together under the name of the BHCA as one body of Christ to impact the Spearfish community and the northern Black Hills. We continue the vision of cultivating character and improving the academic potential of every student to impact the world for Christ in preschool through 12th grades. BHCA is a member of Association of Christian School International (ACSI) and has received ACSI accreditation for kindergarten through 12th grades.

School Policy Statement

The decision to attend BHCA demonstrates the belief in our Statement of Faith, principles, policies, and requirements set forth in this handbook. This handbook provides policies and procedures to be observed by students and parents; for the purpose of this handbook, the term "parent(s)" refers to parent(s), guardian(s), custodian(s), or any caretaker of the student. The policies of BHCA are determined by the BHCA School Board. The school cannot address all potential situations and circumstances within this handbook, and the administration reserves the right to exercise administrative prerogative responding to new situations or circumstances. The administration reserves the right to interpret the written policies of this handbook and to revise policies when necessary. All parents are expected to read, and all students are to read or be told this handbook's contents. This handbook will be used by the Administrator, faculty, staff, and School Board for policies and procedures, along with the Staff and Faculty Handbooks and Board Policies and Procedures.

Mission Statement

Instilling Christian Principles with C.A.R.E.

Vision Statement

Every student equipped to impact the world for Christ.

Core Values

C. A. R. E.

Christ Centered

- Living out Biblical Principles and sharing freely the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
    - Ephesians 5:1-3 – "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people."
    - Deuteronomy 6:5 – "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength."

Academic Excellence

- Providing a high-achieving environment to challenge students towards their God-given potential.
    - Colossians 3:17 – "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."
    - Proverbs 2:1-5 – "My son, if you accept My words and store up My commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God."

Relationship Focused

- Demonstrating authentic relationships through respect for God and others.
    - Hebrews 10:24-25 – "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching."
    - Philippians 2:4-5 "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus."
    - Mark 12:30-31 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."
    - Leviticus 19:18 – "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord."

Excellence Driven

- Promoting integrity and purpose in everything we say and do.
    - I Corinthians 10:31 – "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."
    - Colossians 3:23-24 – "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

Value = Benefits/Cost

- Daily prayer and monthly chapel
- Family atmosphere
- Security and safety
- Gospel-centered
- Teaching through the Biblical worldview
- Encore classes (Art, Music, P.E. and Computer Lab)
- Tuition assistance available
- Small student-to-teacher ratio giving individualized attention
- 4-day school week
- Preschool through high school service projects
- Welcome parent visitation and participation
- Upward sports programs offered throughout the school year
- Student Council and student leadership opportunities
- Afterschool care available for preschool – 5th grade
- RightNow Media Subscription gifted to BHCA families for spiritual development
- Recovery for secondary
- Enrichment courses
- South Dakota State Accreditation
- Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) Accreditation

Future Aspirations

- Achieve full enrollment for preschool-12th grades.
- Continue to develop and support family-style atmospheres and values at BHCA.
- Increase extracurricular activities.
- Improve facilities.
- Continue development of staff and the administration team.
- Grow endowment.
- Increase staff salaries.

Statement of Christian Philosophy

BHCA exists to equip children to view life from God's perspective because He is Truth (John 14:6). BHCA believes Biblical perspective is communicated through: ● His Creation

- His Creation
- His Son, Jesus Christ
- His Holy Word, the Bible

All Truth is rooted in the Bible (John 17:17), therefore Christ and the Bible are central and embedded into every subject and activity. BHCA will not teach anything or incorporate any content into the curriculum that is inconsistent with Biblical worldview, the Statement of Faith, and our commitment to be a distinctively Christian school in every way. Students will be taught how to discern the truth and how to train their minds for excellence.
Our responsibility to the students encompasses the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and emotional areas of their lives. As students recognize God's truth and are assured of their calling and election, they also will recognize the worth God has placed on them and how they can live in a manner worthy of the gospel.

We believe that a proper relationship between family, church, and school is essential to Christian education. It is the responsibility of parents to teach and train their children; BHCA is an extension of the educational process of the home, partnering with families as they raise their children in a counter-cultural manner that honors and glorifies God and encourages a personal and growing relationship with Christ (Gal 1:10). Together, BHCA and parents' partner in providing an education that is both Christian and challenging, equipping students to know, love, and practice that which is true, virtuous, and beautiful, and which challenges them to strive for excellence as they live for the glory of God and the good of all people.

As Christian educators, we desire to be faithful in communicating a Godly vision that inspires our children to walk in the freedom and openness of the Gospel, and in so doing, influence the world for Christ (John 15:19, John 9:5). BHCA grounds everything we do on the transforming power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to instill in our students, families, and staff an eternal mindset based on God's absolute truth.

We support the family of each student and respect the churches that are represented at BHCA. We believe that the Bible is the infallible Word of God, and we study the Word at each level of education. BHCA is a non-denominational school. Currently our staff and students represent over 20 churches. BHCA is not associated with any church or denomination or groups using the BHCA facilities.

Statement of Faith

1. BHCA believes that the Bible is God's indisputable message to man, that it is inspired by God himself and, therefore, is without error. II Peter 1:20-21, II Tim. 3:15-17.
2. BHCA believes there is one God who continuously and endlessly evidences Himself in three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. Genesis 1:1, Matt 28:19, John 10:30.
3. BHCA believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and He is one with the Father. John 1:1, Isaiah 43:10-13, John 17:20-21, John 10:30, Luke 3:21-22.
4. BHCA believes that Jesus was born of a virgin, that He lived a sinless life, and that He accomplished amazing miracles, as recorded in Scripture. Isaiah 7:14, Matt 1:18-23, Hebrews 4:15, I Peter 1:18-19.
5. BHCA believes that Jesus shed His blood and died on the cross as our substitute and, in so doing, settled the score once and for all for our sin. Isaiah 53:4-6, Romans 6:23, Gal. 1:4, Romans 5:8, Romans 3:22-24.
6. BHCA believes in the miraculous resurrection of Jesus and that He ascended to the right hand of God the Father where He constantly intercedes on our behalf and that one day He will return to earth in power and glory. Hebrews. 7:26, John 5:28-29, John 11:25, Mark 16:19, Romans 8:26-34, I Thess. 4:16, Hebrews. 4:15.
7. BHCA believes that through a personal heart-felt acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Savior, we are reborn as a new creation by the inner working of the Holy Spirit. John 5:24, Eph. 2:4-9, Titus 3:5-7, Romans 5:8-9, Romans 10:9-10, Eph. 1:13-14, John 14:6.
8. BHCA believes that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian and encourages us to live a Godly life. John 16:1-11, Romans 8:13-26, John 14:26, I Cor. 3:16, Hebrews. 4:15.
9. BHCA believes in the resurrection of the dead for both the believer and the non-believer; those that are saved unto eternal life in heaven and the unsaved to eternal damnation in hell. I John 5:11, Romans 8:11, I Cor. 15:42-49, John 5:28-29.
10. BHCA believes in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ and pledge to look beyond doctrinal conflict in order that the kingdom of God be extended. Gal. 3:26-28, Eph. 4:4-6, I Cor. 12:1-14, Phil. 2:1-5.
11. BHCA believes that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image and His likeness. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. Gen. 1:27-28, Jer., 1:4-5, Psa. 139: 13-16.
12. BHCA believes that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female, therefore: alternative gender identities are contrary to the Bible. Male and female are distinct, complementary genders that together reflect the image and nature of God. BHCA will use gender appropriate pronouns reflecting gender at birth as well as

legally assigned names. Parents may notify the school of appropriate nicknames students would like to be called by. Gen. 1:26-27, Gen. 2:15-24, Lev. 20:13a, Matt. 19:4.

13. BHCA believes that God created marriage to be exclusively the union of one man and one woman, and that intimate sexual activity is to occur exclusively within that union. Gen. 2:22-24, 1 Corin. 7:2-5, Matt. 19: 4-6, Rom. 1:26-27.

BHCA will address spiritual matters using this statement as a basis and guide. The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of the BHCA's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, discipline, and Biblical application, the School Board is the final authority.

School Governance

BHCA is governed by a dedicated School Board, entrusted by God to uphold and clarify the school's vision and mission rooted in faith. This Board establishes policies and procedures, approves the annual budget and the academic curriculum, ensuring the school remains aligned with its Christian values and long-term spiritual goals. The administration partners closely with the School Board to faithfully implement these policies and oversee the daily operations of the school, fostering a collaborative framework that supports effective leadership and a Christ-centered educational environment.

2026-2027 School Board

Kelsie Darling President	**2023-2026** 2nd Term	**Business Owner** Fundraising, Community Partnerships	**Building & Grounds Committee Chair**
Amanda Sletten Vice President	**2023-2026** 1st Term	**Business Owner** Accreditation Support, Education	**Stewardship Committee Chair**
Sarah Anderson Secretary	**2025-2028** 2nd Term	**District Manager** Grant Writing, Policy Experience	**Governance Committee Chair**
Tony Tabisz Treasurer	**2024-2027** 1st Term	**Sales Experience** Biblical Teaching, Strategic Planning	**Finance Committee Chair**
David Otte Member-at-Large	**2024-2027** 1st Term	**Financial Planner** Financial Planner, Public Engagement	**Philanthropy Committee Chair**

SECTION 1 – Enrollment & Tuition Requirements

Admission Policy

The BHCA strongly desires that young people have an opportunity to receive a Christian education, but presently the school is unable to meet the needs of students with the following:

- Low academic performance as indicated by a standardized test and/or previous school records or special education classes.
- Serious emotional or behavioral problems.

- A physical handicap which would impair the learning process.

It shall be the policy and practice of BHCA, in the admission of its students, not to discriminate based on the applicant's race, color, national origin or ethnic origin.

Student Application Process

BHCA offers a program for students who desire an education in a Christian environment and who are capable of achievement in a program dedicated to academic excellence.
The application process is:

1. Submission of a completed and signed Enrollment Application and the enrollment fee.
2. A parent and student introduction with administration. The administration may contact the student's previous school to ascertain past conduct, academic progress, and long-term potential.
3. New students will be given an evaluation before school starts and will be subject to a two- week diagnostic and probationary period. If any academic, social, or behavioral concerns arise during this two-week period, a meeting will be held to discuss acceptance for the current school year.
4. All parents and students must understand that BHCA will be instructing and living by the Statement of Faith and must comply with all school policies and procedures as stated in the Parent/Student Handbook.
5. A copy of the applicant's Birth Certificate and Immunization Form or a signed Immunization Affidavit are due at enrollment

The Student Application form is available online at:
https://blackhillschristianacademy.com/admissions/application

Tuition & Fee Policy

Federal, state, and local tax dollars do not support private Christian schools which is why tuition payments, fees and gift contributions are vital to meeting the financial obligations at BHCA. Tuition and fees will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be established prior to re- enrollment by the School Board.

General Financial Policies

BHCA partners with FACTS Management (https://online.factsmgt.com) to provide flexible payment options to our families. This online process is simple, convenient, and secure.

1. Tuition Payment Options (see Tuition Information Sheet for prices)
   a. Payment Plan 12 – 12 months (June 1st – May 1st)
   b. Paid in Full Payment – Due by June 15th to receive 3% discount
   - Tuition Payment Reminders will be sent via email 5 days before your payment is due.
   - Due date on tuition payments is the 15th of each month.
2. Re-Enrollment Fee (nonrefundable)
   a. Returning Pre-K - 12th grade students only
      i. $50.00 before June 1st
      ii. $250.00 after June 1st

   b. Re-enrolling students must be current in their FACTS Management statement to be enrolled in the next school year.
3. New Student Enrollment Fee (non-refundable)
   a. New Preschool - 12th grade students only
      i. $80.00 due at registration
4. Incidental Payments (all charges other than tuition (e.g. food, activities, etc.))
   a. Payment due dates may vary based on charges processed through the office
5. Nonsufficient Funds (NSF) Fee
   a. A $30.00 fee will be charged for insufficient funds
6. Late Payment Fee
   a. A $25.00 fee will be charged for payments not received by the 15th of the month
7. Early Withdrawal Fee
   a. Students may unenroll without charge prior to July 1st. After July 1st, a $750.00 fee per student will be charged for unenrolling, withdrawing, dismissing or expulsion to help cover costs incurred for curriculum, equipment, supplies, etc. and must be paid within 90 days, unless otherwise negotiated in writing and approved by the Head Administrator. Tuition fees will continue for the remainder of the month regardless of the unenrollment, withdrawal, or expulsion date within that month. School records will be released after all invoices are paid in full and all textbooks and materials have been returned.

Tuition Assistance & Student Scholarship Fund

Financial generosity bestowed to BHCA has created a culture of giving and generosity. Tuition Assistance is available for all new and current BHCA students through FACTS Management (https://blackhillschristianacademy.com/admissions/tuition-assistance). While FACTS Management Tuition Assistance applications close on May 31st, BHCA encourages parents to apply throughout the year in case additional funds become available. A non-refundable application process fee of $35.00 is charged by FACTS Management, not BHCA, to process each application request. Applicant information remains confidential to BHCA, including all names and assistance amounts. Based on the funds available and the financial need, the School Board will allocate funds to the undisclosed applicant. The Administrator will contact the applicant regarding the funding determination. If assistance is granted, the awarded family will be notified in June and will need to complete their enrollment packet, Financial Assistance Agreement and a Parent Contract prior to July 15th to retain the funds awarded. Funds not committed by July 15th will revert to the Tuition Assistance account and be awarded to another family.

The Legacy of the Lion Scholarship has been created in honor of BHCA co-founder Kathie Letellier to help BHCA be more accessible to the community and provide financial gifts to students with a heart for Christ. The Legacy of the Lion Scholarship information can be found on BHCA's website at https://blackhillschristianacademy.com/admissions/scholarship. Application deadlines are May 31st and awarded families will be notified in June. A completed enrollment packet and acceptance agreement are required prior to July 15th to retain awarded funds. Funds not committed by July 15th will revert to the Legacy of the Lion Scholarship account and be gifted to another family.

South Dakota Partners in Education (SDPE) offers financial assistance through tax-credit scholarships for K–12th grade students across South Dakota. The program is designed to support academic success and expand educational opportunities for families, helping make private tuition more accessible and affordable. We strongly encourage families to apply for this opportunity. Applications must be completed by May 31st to be considered for financial assistance. Please visit their webpage for more information (https://sdpartnersinedu.org/families).

Delinquent Accounts

Tuition will be invoiced on the first school day of the month. A $25.00 late fee will be assessed for accounts not paid by the 15th of each month. A payment plan with the Administrator will be set up after 45 days. If an account reaches 60 days past due without a written agreement with the school, the student(s) are subject to dismissal until the account is current. The Board will follow Collection Procedure Policies if necessary. A $30.00 fee will be assessed on any check returned by the bank.

Report cards may be picked up in the office upon completion of payment. School records will be mailed to the school district after receiving the Transcript Request and the FACTS Management statement has a $0.00 balance.

Family Service Hours

BHCA has a variety of opportunities available for families to serve and be more involved with the school through service hours. On a monthly basis, families of kindergarten through 12th grade will be given the option to serve a minimum of 3 hours or choose to be invoiced at a rate of $10 per hour not served. Service hours are required for kindergarten through 12th grade families, but are not required for preschool or prekindergarten. Hours served must be recorded on the Parent Portal of FACTS Management monthly statement. After logging your hours, your Family Statement will reflect the credit given for the hours served. Service hours exceeding 3 hours can be rolled forward to the following month. Extra service hours will not be rolled over to the following school year. The office will email or communicate with parents through Class DoJo regarding areas where families may volunteer or serve the school. BHCA appreciates your involvement.

Denial of Enrollment

Students with behavioral challenges or extreme academic difficulties who we are unable to service may be denied enrollment. Denial of enrollment does not prohibit a student from applying the following academic year if deficient areas are corrected. Upon completion of the designated steps, parents will be notified by email provided on the application as to whether their child has been admitted into BHCA.

SECTION 2 – Attendance Policies

Attendance

BHCA believes it is the responsibility of the student and parents to create the habit of being punctual and regular in attendance. Teachers record attendance on RenWeb daily.

School Hours & Days

Part-time	Monday through Thursday	8:00 am – 12:30 pm
Full-time	Monday through Thursday	8:00 am – 3:15 pm

1. Morning Drop-off
   Students may arrive 15 minutes before class starts (7:45 am).
   - Class starts at 8:00 am
2. Midday Pick-up
   - Students will be picked up at the office at 12:30 pm.
     - Correspondence with the office is required prior to a student leaving with someone who is not on the authorized pick-up list. All staff members have permission to ask to see driver's identification/license for confirmation.
3. Afternoon Pick-up
   - Students will be picked up at the designated door between 3:15 and 3:30 pm. Teachers will direct students to the vehicle when parents have displayed name placards.
   - Parents are to display their provided name placards on the dash of their vehicle or on the driver's window for safety purposes in the pick-up line. Only those who display the name placards will be allowed to pick up.
     - Correspondence with the office is required prior to a student leaving with someone who is not on the authorized pick-up list. All staff members have permission to ask to see driver's identification/license for confirmation.
   - All families in a carpool must complete and turn in their forms to the office before carpool tags/name placards are issued.
   - Extra name placards may be requested from the office.
   - Provisions can be made for students who need Extended Care.
4. Early Pick-Up
   If it is necessary to pick up a student prior to dismissal time, please notify the office at 605- 722-1276. A parent or someone from the authorized pick-up list must come to the office to sign out the student and indicate the purpose for early dismissal on the Student Check- In/Check-Out sheet.

Absences

If a student is absent for any reason, please contact the office before **8:30 am** on the day of the student's absence. ***Please email your teacher; do not call or text personal cell phones***. The teacher or Administrator may ask for a signed note from home stating the reason for his/her absence. A student missing more than one hour, but less than 3 hours of class work, will be marked a half day absent.

Parents will be notified in writing when their child is absent for ten days during the school year, regardless of excused or unexcused absences. If a student is absent for fifteen days or more during the school year, BHCA reserves the right to retain the student at the same

grade level. The final authority on this decision will be determined by the Administrator, teacher, and School Board.

BHCA is required to record tardies and absences but reserves the right to alter the Absence Policy in the event of widespread infectious disease or other disaster declared by the BHCA School Board.

Tardies & Late Arrival

1. School begins promptly at 8:00 am for all students.
2. Students in preschool or pre-kindergarten who arrive after the start time at 8:00 am will be marked tardy.
3. If your child is arriving to school after 8:00 am because of an appointment or is tardy for other reasons, the parent must take the student to the school office to sign in the student on the Student Check-In/Check-Out sheet.
4. If a student receives five tardies in a quarter, parents will be notified in writing. Repeated tardiness is not acceptable.
5. Tardies may be excused per administrative approval after parent contact and receiving an official doctor notification.

Authorized Student Pick-up

1. Only people whose names are on the student's authorized pick-up list may be allowed to pick up the student during school hours, at pick-up time, or at Extended Care. Parents must provide authorized student pick-up designees on the RenWeb.
2. Special arrangements can be made to allow others to pick-up the student by contacting the office no later than 30 minutes prior to dismissal time. ***Please do not call or text the classroom teacher.***
3. BHCA staff have permission to request to see identification/driver's license before releasing a student.

Extended Care for Preschool – 5th Grades

BHCA offers Extended Care for BHCA students for preschool through 5th grade; older students may be allowed on a provisional basis.

SECTION 3 – Academic Policies

Preschool Academics

Academics for preschool include the following:

- Letter identification, sounds and sequencing
- Number recognition, counting and sequencing
- Shapes and colors
- Tracing letters and numbers
- Watercolor painting, cutting, paper tearing, and gluing
- Calendar time focusing on days of the week, months, weather, and seasons
- Structured play time

- Bible stories and Bible verses
- Motor skill activities

Pre-Kindergarten Academics

Academics for pre-kindergarten include the following:

- Letter identification, sounds and sequencing
- Blending letters and sounds
- Introductory reading
- Vowel and consonant identification
- Rhyming recognition
- Handwriting
- Motor skill activities
- Number recognition, counting and sequencing
- Shapes and patterns
- Bible stories and Bible verses

Preschool & Prekindergarten Assessments

Preschool and pre-kindergarten assessments are conducted throughout the school year. Areas that will be assessed include academic, social, emotional, fine and gross motor skills, etc. Assessments are shared during parent-teacher conferences or via email.

Academic Screening

BHCA provides annual academic screening for preschool through kindergarten to help assess learning outcomes and determine grade placement and advancement.

Curriculum

The BHCA academic program is composed of a non-denominational curriculum and is taught through a Biblical worldview. Curriculum is grade dependent and BHCA administration would be pleased to discuss specific inquiries. Lost or damaged school texts or BHCA library books will be the student's responsibility, and the price of the damaged or lost book will be added to the student's FACTS Management statement for the cost of the book replacement and shipping cost.

Grading System

Preschool and prekindergarten use the following grading scale:

A = Advanced P = Proficient B = Basic BG = Below Grade Level

Part-Time Students

The part-time student program is geared toward students who are homeschooled or dually enrolled. This program allows students to take courses to complete their individual academic program. This program is available to students in preschool through 12th grade. Please refer to the tuition schedule for additional information.

Absentee Make-up Work

If your student will have a known absence, please contact your student's teacher(s) and the office two days or more prior to the known absence and your student's teacher will prepare make-up assignments. Assignments missed during a pre-planned absence are expected to be completed and returned to the teacher upon your student's return to class to receive full credit. If your student is unexpectedly absent, please contact your student's teacher for missed assignments. Special circumstances may warrant additional time, at the discretion of the teacher and administration.

SECTION 4 – General School Policies

Office & Teacher-to-Parent Communication

Communication between the school and parents is important. BHCA offers the following communication platforms to help communicate to families:

- **Website:** The BHCA website (www.blackhillschristianacademy.com) contains contact information, newsletters, upcoming events, the school calendar, etc.
- **Office:** All office communication will be printed on blue paper for easy recognition.
- **Emails:** Emails may be sent for notifications or weekly updates. Please check your email settings so you can receive communication from the office.
- **Parent Alert:** Parent Alert is the phone and text communication system between the school, staff, teachers, and parents. This system will be used for important school messages, school lockdowns, school closings, and school delays. All parents are to set up their own preferences on the RenWeb for receiving communication on their cell phone and/or home phone and/or text messaging.
- **RenWeb:** RenWeb is a private and secure, internet-based school management portal used to record attendance, grades, progress reports, report cards, documentation, notification of discipline, assigned homework, missing assignments, school calendar, announcements, notification of medication, pre-order for lunches, school directory, and teacher email addresses. Please ensure your contact information is always up to date if you have a change in address, work location, phone number, or email; it is important the school contacts you in case of an emergency.
- **ClassDojo:** ClassDojo is a communication platform used to connect families with school assignments, activities, and events. Teachers may share photos, videos and updates on a secure, private feed.
- **Social Media:** BHCA can be found on Facebook and Instagram.

School Visitors

Anyone visiting the school must check in at the office and sign the Visitor Sign-In Sheet. We ask that all visitors wear the BHCA Visitor's badge and return the badge to the office at the end of the visit.

Sick Policy

Do not send your ill child to school for the welfare of your child and others. Students with a temperature of **100 degrees** or higher will not be allowed to remain in school. A doctor's

explanation must be submitted to the office if a student has been absent for longer than five consecutive school days. Parents are advised that the Absence Policy may be altered in the event of widespread infectious disease. **Students should NOT return to school if they have had a fever or have vomited in the past twenty-four (24) hours.** If a student has symptoms of a communicable illness, written consent to return to school may be required from a physician upon the Administrator's request.

Medication**:** If a student must take prescription medicine during the school day, that medicine along with an Administration of Medication Form is to be given to the office as soon as the student arrives at school. The office staff may administer medications such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Pepto-Bismol, or Tums if the Medication Authorization form on the student's RenWeb profile gives permission. All families will receive an email of the time, the name of medication, treatment, and outcome.

School Calendar

The school calendar will be established prior to each academic year and available for viewing on RenWeb or the school website (www.blackhillschristianacademy.com).

Chapel Policy

Chapel is held on the first Thursday of each month unless otherwise noted on the school calendar. Some chapels will be combined, and others will be split between preschool – 5th grades and 6th – 12th grades. A spirit of reverence with attentive, courteous conduct honoring the Lord should be observed at all chapel services. Parents are encouraged to attend.

Lunch Program

All students have the choice of pre-ordering hot lunch or bringing cold lunch from home. Parents must pre-order hot lunch the week before (Thursday by 12:00 pm) on RenWeb, which will be added to the student's monthly FACTS Management statement. If a student is absent from school, the pre-ordered lunch will still be charged to the monthly FACTS Management statement. Students have the choice of white milk on Mondays-Wednesdays and chocolate or white milk on Thursdays for an additional cost. The cost will be added to the monthly FACTS Management statement. Parents are welcome to eat lunch with their child and bring outside food.

Recess Procedures

BHCA staff encourage outdoor recess as much as possible. Outdoor recess time may be reduced for younger students if the temperature with wind chill is below 15 degrees Fahrenheit. Inside recess will be provided if the temperature with wind chill is near 0 degrees Fahrenheit. Students must be prepared for all weather conditions and will not be allowed to stay inside if they forget the appropriate gear.

Playground Rules

- Use the Golden Rule in Matthew 7:12
- Take turns on all equipment
- No throwing rocks, sticks, or snowballs
- No grabbing, hitting, jumping, or pulling on other's clothes
- No using sticks as swords or as weapons
- No "piggyback" or carrying other students
- Go down feet first only on slides – use ladder to go up
- No jumping out of swings, twisting or doing flips out of swings
- Only one person on a swing at a time
- Line up immediately when teacher blows the whistle

Dress Code

Students should dress comfortably and wear layered clothing to be prepared for all weather conditions. All clothing should be modest and adhere to the following:

- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be fingertip length or longer
- Distressed or rips in jeans or shorts must be fingertip length or longer
- Hats may be worn, but not inside
- Swim wear for female students must cover the midriff; male students must wear boxer- type swim shorts during a school sponsored event
- Offensive or inappropriate slogans or images on clothing are not acceptable
- No uncovered spaghetti straps
- Waistbands are to be no lower than the top of the hipbone
- No pajama bottoms (unless otherwise specified)
- Leggings must be worn with a longer shirt/dress to cover the hips

Students in violation must change into clothing that complies with the dress code.
Winter gear is required, including coat, hat, mittens or gloves, snow pants, and boots.
Please label all winter gear.

Lost & Found

Please label all clothing, boots, gloves, lunch boxes, etc. Lost items that are not claimed by the end of the school year will be donated.

Outside Flyers/Information

Flyers/information/letters/invitations originating from sources other than BHCA must be approved by the office prior to being distributed to students or posted on bulletin boards. The office has the right to approve or decline.

Birthdays & Parties

A birthday is special and to help celebrate and parents may provide treats for their student's class. Please contact your student's teacher to coordinate a celebration time that is convenient for the class schedule. Invitations to parties outside of the classroom may be distributed in class if ALL students are invited, or all boys, or all girls.

Emergency School Closing & Snow Days

BHCA will send notifications through Parent Alert if school needs to be dismissed early. Extended Care will not be available during emergency school closings or weather-related early- release days.

Parents will be notified of inclement weather causing a delayed start or full closure by:

- Parent Alert will contact parents through a text and/or call. BHCA posts all notifications between 6:00-6:30 am.
- TV stations KOTA and KEVN will post the school's name and if it is a two-hour delay or if school is closed for the day.

Make-up days have been scheduled into the school calendar; however, if additional makeup days are needed, they will be planned for the Friday immediately following the missed school day. The administration will communicate these details to parents as soon as possible; all dates are subject to change.

Fire, Weather & Crisis Management Drills

Fire drills, both announced and unannounced, will be practiced throughout the year. In an orderly manner, please encourage your student to do the following:

- Listen quietly to the staff member providing instructions.
- Follow staff to the Emergency Exit or prepare for all doors to be shut with lights off.
- Wait for the all-clear signal and return to the classroom or open doors.

Weather/tornado drills will be practiced throughout the year. The office has a weather radio to receive watches/warning alerts. The Spearfish tornado siren or the BHCA emergency alarm will alert all students and staff to walk to their designated room or hallway. Students will return to their classrooms after an all-clear signal is given. Parents will be notified by Parent Alert if an actual warning occurs.

The Crisis Management Plan will be discussed and reviewed by staff members prior to the beginning of the school year. Crisis training will be explained and practiced throughout the year. Parents will be notified before either code is practiced. Designated sites have been identified if students need to be taken off campus for safety. Parents will be notified by Parent Alert if the school has a hard lock-down if circumstances permit.

Unforeseeable Crisis or Natural Disaster

In the event of pandemic, outbreak, natural disaster, or other unforeseeable crisis, the School Board will prayerfully consider guidelines issued by government officials and relevant government agencies. BHCA reserves the right to modify curriculum and resources, schedule, length of school year, teaching methods, and demonstrations of learning as deemed necessary by the School Board. Any changes due to pandemic, outbreak, natural disaster, or other unforeseeable crisis do not excuse families from their enrollment contract and tuition obligations.

Child Abuse Reporting

The state of South Dakota requires BHCA to report allegations of suspected child abuse to the Department of Social Services (DSS). Forms of abuse include physical or emotional abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, inadequate supervision, or other forms of abuse. While BHCA is expected to communicate with parents regarding the well-being of their child, the administration is placed between the parent and the state, acting on behalf of the child, in accordance with the state law. BHCA does not have to contact parents before reporting to the DSS. Reports will be made in the best interest of the child and does not, once cause is established, have any legal alternative except to take the report to the DSS for their investigation and review. BHCA may undertake an inquiry of school personnel prior to making a report to determine whether there are sufficient grounds to require reporting.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy

BHCA enrolls students of any race, color, natural born gender, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, tuition assistance, athletic, and other school-administered programs.

Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy

BHCA has adopted an Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy to ensure Biblical values are instilled and to create a more loving environment. BHCA is committed to maintaining a culture in which all students treat each other with dignity and respect. Intimidation, exploitation, hazing and harassment, including sexual and electronic harassment, are not permitted. Conflicts may occur from time to time, but bullying is never acceptable. The school includes harassment in its definition of bullying. BHCA has zero-tolerance for such conduct, and consistent with this policy a violation will result in disciplinary action.

A clear framework has been developed to address bullying incidents to protect our students. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, which may lead expulsion.

Definitions include but are not limited to:

- Verbal Harassment. Derogatory or stereotypical classifications based on gender, race, color, disability, ethnic or national origin, or age (e.g. discriminatory identifications or jokes). BHCA does not tolerate such violations.
- Physical Harassment. The use of pushing, shoving or other unwanted physical contact as an intentional act to impede normal movement in an effort to intimidate. The act of damaging physical property or possessions or taking them without permission.
- Visual Harassment. The use of obscene gestures or display of signs, pictures, cartoons, written statements, or other material that denigrates, intimidates, bullies or otherwise discrimination.
- Sexual Harassment. Sexual Harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by any student.
- Electronic Harassment. Harassment may occur through a number of mediums or means, including electronic communications. The student Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy applies to all harassment, including any that occurs by or through any type of electronic

communication. This includes, but is not limited to, Internet, email, cell phones (including picture phone or text and voice messaging) or other communication devices, and communications of any type. This list of electronic devices is not inclusive, and the policy is intended to cover other types of electronics.

- Bullying. Bullying is a repeated pattern of willful and deliberate activity on the part of one or more persons intended to cause harm or instill fear. Bullying is conduct of a physical, verbal, or written nature that interferes with a student's educational opportunities, benefits, performance, or with a student's physical or psychological wellbeing.

This policy applies to school hours; to any school-sponsored event or activity, including during school-arranged transportation of any type to or from an event or activity, and whether the activity or event occurs on or off the school campus; while on school property or at school- leased facilities; or at any other time when the event or activity has any school recognition. A student who violates these Biblical standards – whether occurring at school or during school- sponsored events, activities, or functions or not, or on campus or not – is subject to appropriate action by the school. BHCA expects prompt reporting of all incidents of harassment to the administration who will investigate and take appropriate action to prevent and correct any violation of this policy with reasonable promptness to prevent retaliation and preserve confidentiality if possible. A student or parent may report harassment anonymously, though formal disciplinary action will not be based solely on anonymous reports. Staff members are required to respond to all complaints of harassment/bullying and to immediately intervene if they witness harassment/bullying. This policy applies to students everywhere on campus, while traveling to school-sponsored activities, or off campus during a school event. BHCA reserves the right to treat any single act as severe enough to warrant dismissal/expulsion from school. Consequences will only take effect after an incident has been thoroughly investigated and can be corroborated by the students involved, multiple sources or eyewitnesses.

SECTION 5 - Student Discipline Policies

Banned Items

Students are not to bring the following:

- I-Pod, MP3 player, etc.
- Air pods
- Electronic game gear
- Inappropriate magazines or books
- Drugs/*medication
- Alcohol
- Tobacco, E-cigarettes, vaping equipment
- Matches or lighters
- Weapons of any type – real or play
- Fidgets or toys (except show and tell)
- Other items as deemed inappropriate by staff

Items will be confiscated by the staff and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken according to the discipline level.

*Medication prescribed in writing by a licensed medical provider that must remain with the student at all times for safety reasons is subject to review and approval by the Head Administrator.

Cell Phone Policy

BHCA seeks to provide an environment free of distractions for student safety, liability, and protection of personal property. **Cell Phones are not to be used during school hours for any reason.** Outgoing and incoming phone calls are to pass through the office. If a student needs to use their phone during parent pick-up, they need to ask permission from their classroom teacher. Cell phone cameras are banned during school hours. Cell phones are to be left in the student's locker during school hours. They should be turned off or silenced. If a cell phone is being used during school hours, it will be immediately confiscated and taken to the office. Confiscated phones may only be retrieved at the end of the day. Repeated violations will result in further disciplinary action.

Smart Watches & Similar Devices

Smart watches and similar devices must be on "do not disturb" mode during school hours and may only be used during parent pick-up if permission is granted by the classroom teacher. Teachers reserve the right to ask a student to remove his/her smart watch if it becomes a distraction. The watch will be confiscated and taken to the office. Confiscated items may only be retrieved at the end of the day. Repeated violations will result in further disciplinary action.

Grievance Procedure

The principles of Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1 require the following steps:

1. If a parent has a complaint about a student issue, the parent should go directly to the student's teacher—not the administration, School Board member, or another parent. If the issue is unresolved at the two-person level, the matter should be prayerfully and orderly moved on to the administration. This level can include the teacher at the three-person level at the administration's discretion.
2. If a parent has a complaint against a teacher, the parent should go directly to the teacher— not the administration, School Board member, or another parent. If the issue is unresolved at the two-person level, the matter should be prayerfully and orderly moved on to the administration. This level can include the teacher at the three-person level at the administration's discretion.
3. If a parent has a complaint against the administration (Head of Operations or Head Administrator), the parent should go directly to them. If the issue is unresolved with the Head of Operations at the two-person level, the matter should be prayerfully and orderly moved on to the Head Administrator. If the issue is with the Head Administrator, the matter should be moved on to the School Board President. This level can include the Administrator at the three-person level at the School Board President's discretion.

4. As stated in 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, Christians are to handle disputes or disagreements within the body of Christ and not go to a secular court of law.

Discipline Guidelines

Parents are expected to support the disciplinary philosophy of the school. There will be no spanking or physical punishment of students by staff members. Students are expected to adhere to the basic rules of conduct and are subject to the authority of any staff member during the school day or during school functions.

Love and Logic is a philosophy used in teaching students to be respectful, responsible, and character driven individuals. The four main points used include:

- Mutual dignity
- Shared thinking
- Shared control within limits
- Empathy before consequences

Discipline Procedures

1. **Level I Misbehavior** – Misbehavior impedes the orderly operation of the classroom or playground and includes the following:
   - Not coming to class prepared to learn
   - Classroom disturbances
   - Failure to complete daily assignments or to follow directions
   - Tardiness (Please refer to Section 2, Tardies/Late Arrival)
   - Other behaviors that make a problem or impede learning for others

   A. *Level I Disciplinary Procedures*
   1. The staff member who is supervising the student or who observes the misbehavior will immediately intervene. The student will be informed of the nature of the violation and the possible consequences.
   2. The staff member who observes the misbehavior will document behavior and consequence on student's RenWeb; staff member determines if email is sent to parent.
   3. If the staff-student conference fails to correct the behavior, then persistent behavior will require a parent-teacher conference with the student present.

   B. *Level I Consequences*
   - Notification to parent by email or conference with parents by phone or in person
   - Verbal reprimand
   - Recovery time
   - Withdrawal of privileges
   - Other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by teacher/staff

2. **Level II Acute Misbehavior** – Acute misbehavior includes activities in which degree of seriousness tends to disrupt the classroom or playground and includes the following:

- Continuation of any Level I documented misbehavior
- Sinful language (swearing or vulgarities)
- Arguing with any staff member
- Truancy
- Dishonesty
- Disrespect toward staff or students or substitute teacher
- Physical or verbal altercation
- Bullying
- Vandalism
- Stealing
- Cheating or Plagiarism
- Leaving school without permission
- Failure to abide by corrective measures for misconduct
- Other behavior that distracts from the classroom/school environment

A. *Level II Disciplinary Procedures*

1. The supervising staff member immediately intervenes and informs the student of the violation and consequence.
2. The student is referred to the school Head of Operations for disciplinary action decided upon by both the Head of Operations and staff member.
3. The Head of Operations will meet with the student and staff member for resolution.
4. The supervising staff member will document behavior on student's RenWeb. The Head of Operations will document and add disciplinary action.
5. An email of documentation will be sent to parents by the Head of Operations.
6. The Head of Operations and/or student may call parents in for a conference.

B. *Level II Consequences*

- Mandatory parent notification
- In-school detention determined by staff/administration
- Temporary removal from class
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Financial restitution where loss occurs
- Referral to outside agency
- One to three-day home suspension
- Suspension of all non-academic privileges
- Behavioral contract
- Other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the staff/administration

3. Level III Expulsive Misbehavior

If continuation of Level II behaviors, or an expulsive misbehavior occurs, the Assistant Administrator along with the Administrator will be notified, and a parent meeting will be established with the teacher, Assistant Administrator, Administrator, and parents. Each

case will be comprehensively evaluated as a team for determining the best next steps. Some examples of a Level III Expulsive Misbehavior may be as follows:

- Continuation of Level II documented misbehavior
- Possession or use of weapons
- Safety threats (gun, bomb, etc.) towards the school.
- Purposefully setting a fire or setting a false fire alarm
- Physical abuse
- Other acts of misconduct which are seriously disruptive, equivalent to felony crimes, or create a safety hazard to students, staff, or BHCA property

A. *Level III Disciplinary Procedures*

1. The Head of Operations verifies the offense, confers with the supervising staff member(s) and the Administrator and schedules a meeting with the student.
2. Parents are notified and the student may be immediately removed from school.
3. Administration contacts law enforcement, if appropriate.
4. The School Board will be notified by the Administrator if deemed necessary.
5. The Head of Operations maintains an accurate record on the student's RenWeb behavior page of the offense, disciplinary actions, and parent's response. Staff members may also be asked to provide additional documentation. Parents will be emailed this documentation.

B. *Level III Consequences*

- Immediate suspension or dismissal pending an expulsion hearing includes the student, the parent(s), the Head of Operations or one School Board member, and the Administrator.
- Referral to law enforcement officials or other disciplinary action as deemed necessary by the School Board.

We recognize that any list of misbehavior and consequences cannot be all-inclusive. Therefore, the staff and the administration will address any misbehaviors and consequences not included in this handbook.

Behavioral Intervention Plan

If BHCA administration deems a Behavioral Intervention Plan is needed, parents will be contacted, and a plan will be made for the student on a case-by-case basis. If at any time BHCA has exhausted our ideas and/or resources available, we reserve the right to dismiss the student from BHCA.

Suspension

The administration will make every effort to contact parents and personally discuss the student's infraction and suspension the day it is issued. A suspension notice must be signed by parents and returned to the administration.

Probation or Dismissal

A written plan will be created and shared to encourage academic and behavioral alignment with BHCA's core values. Conditions of probation will be specified to give the student and parents direction. If the student does not meet the terms of the probation, he/she may be dismissed from BHCA.

Unenrollment, Withdrawal, Dismissal

Students may unenroll without charge prior to July 1st. After July 1st, a $750.00 fee per student will be charged for unenrolling, withdrawing, dismissal or expulsion to help cover costs incurred for curriculum, equipment, supplies, etc. and must be paid within 90 days, unless otherwise negotiated in writing and approved by the Head Administrator. Unenrollment must be communicated to the office. Official withdrawal from school must be made in person with the administration and a written statement of withdrawal provided to the office. Opportunity for an exit interview will be given to communicate directly with the administration. Tuition fees will continue for the remainder of the month regardless of the unenrollment (after July 1st), withdrawal, dismissal, or expulsion date within that month. School records will be released after all invoices are paid in full and all textbooks and materials have been returned. In a situation where circumstances are out of the parent's control, (i.e. job transfer) a refund will be at the discretion of the School Board.

Expulsion

It is the responsibility of the School Board to make the final decision regarding the expulsion of any student. If a student's conduct is serious enough to merit a recommendation of expulsion by the Administrator, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The Administrator will communicate with the student and parent(s) to summarize the reason(s) for a recommendation of expulsion.
2. The Administrator will notify the President of the School Board of his or her recommendation. A date and time will be established for the Board to hear the recommendation.
3. The School Board will then meet with the Administration, involved teachers, parent(s), and the student for a hearing and make a final decision.

A $750.00 fee per student will be charged for expulsion to help cover costs incurred for curriculum, equipment, supplies, etc. and must be paid within 90 days, unless otherwise negotiated in writing and approved by the Head Administrator. Tuition fees will continue for the remainder of the month regardless of the expulsion date within that month. School records will be released after all invoices are paid in full and all textbooks and materials have been returned. A student who is expelled from BHCA will not be considered for re-enrollment during the current school year. Re-enrollment may be considered the following school year after a plan has been established with the administration and School Board President. An option of withdrawal or dismissal may be recommended by the Administrator in lieu of expulsion.

Use of Restraint or Seclusion

Though SDCL 13-32-20 allows for the use of physical force for supervisory control of students, when necessary, BHCA staff will only use physical restraint when necessary to protect a student's safety, or the safety of other students. If restraint must be used to ensure student safety, every effort will be made by BHCA staff to avoid prone restraint.

Every effort will be made to interact with students in a calm, safe manner. Students will not be kept alone in a room unless they pose a clear and present danger to other students. If restraint is required, parents/guardians of the student will be called by the administration within the hour. Parents may be required to come to the school for a conference or to pick up the student, depending on the severity of the situation.

Students will not be locked alone in a room unless they pose a clear and present danger to other students. Every effort will be made to interact with students in a calm, safe manner.