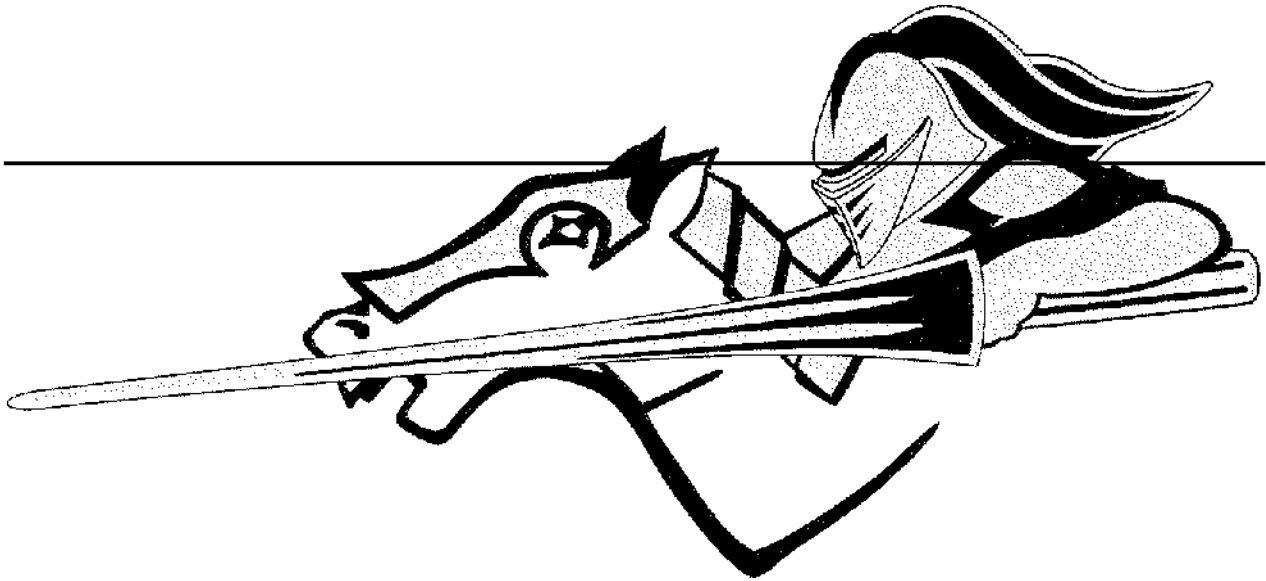


Updated: August 1, 2007

Rocky Bayou Christian School

International Student Handbook



<http://www.rbcs.org>

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Niceville, FL 32578

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RBCS Vision Statement

To impact the world by equipping each generation to use their God-given abilities as champions for Christ

RBCS Mission Statement

- We believe that the purpose of the Rocky Bayou Christian School ministry is to glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by serving as His instrument in declaring and spreading His truth.
- We believe that the subject of Christian education is biblical truth applied to every area of life.
- We believe that the goal of Rocky Bayou Christian School is to provide the best Christian Education by partnering with parents in training their children to live to God's Glory by developing a biblical worldview, Christian character, and the skills necessary to fulfill His calling in their lives.
- We believe that we must employ called, gifted, and godly faculty and staff who strongly believe in the Lordship of Jesus Christ and share a passion for excellence in Christian Education.
- We believe that children must develop as a whole person in order to be equipped with the knowledge, character, and skills needed to become competent servants of Christ. To accomplish this we will emphasize academic excellence, spiritual maturity, leadership development, physical fitness, and high standards of Christian character.
- We believe that the education of children is the responsibility of parents, rather than the state. We further believe that Rocky Bayou Christian School is an instrument of God designed to help parents faithfully discharge their responsibility.

Rocky Bayou Christian School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of any of its policies or programs.

Rocky Bayou Christian Academy Vision Statement

- Rocky Bayou Christian Academy believes that each child is a unique creation of God and considers educating children according to their God-given abilities and traits a "joint venture" between school, family, and church.
- Rocky Bayou Christian Academy is dedicated to educational excellence by providing a secure, God-honoring, cooperative environment which encourages independent thinking, self-discipline, love of learning, and growth spiritually, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.
- Rocky Bayou Christian Academy desires to educate and train the student to know God and walk in the fullness of that knowledge as a champion for Jesus Christ, through the pursuit of academic excellence with spiritual maturity.

Rocky Bayou Christian Academy Mission Statement

Our mission is to equip minds and nurture hearts to transform the world for Jesus Christ and fulfill His calling in their lives, to provide a loving, Christian environment where all learners have the opportunity to realize their highest academic potential while growing in their knowledge and relationship with God with a biblical worldview. To do this, our mission is to provide a learning environment in which children can grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.

Rocky Bayou Christian International Student Vision Statement

To teach international students how to live for Christ, provide them excellent academic instruction, and expose them to American culture and values. To expose American students and host families to other cultures.

Rocky Bayou Christian International Student Mission Statement

We believe God has commissioned Rocky Bayou Christian School to educate and train students to know God and walk in the fullness of that knowledge as champions for Jesus Christ, through the pursuit of academic excellence with spiritual maturity. We believe that this commission extends not only to the students of the United States, but also to students from all nations. We believe that it is important for Christians to understand other cultures, so that they will be more able to impact them for Christ.

Statement of Faith

The purpose of the RBCS ministry is to glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by serving as His instrument in declaring and spreading His truth. Principles included in God's truth are:

a The Holy Scriptures, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, are the verbally inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original writings concerning historical and scientific facts, and infallible in moral and spiritual teachings. (2 Tim 3:14-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21)

h. There is but one Triune God, eternally subsisting in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Deut 6:4; John 1:1, 14; Acts 5:3-4)

c. The Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, which He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. Believers are redeemed by the blood of Christ, who died on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice. Justification is made sure by His resurrection from the dead. He ascended into heaven and now fulfills the ministry of representative, intercessor, and advocate. (John 1:1-18; Eph 1:3-7; Heb 7:24-27; 1 Pet 1:3-5; 1 John 2:1)

d. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He is the supernatural agent in regeneration and sanctification. He baptizes all believers into the body of Christ, indwells them equally and permanently, and seals them unto the day of redemption. He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth. (John 16:8-15; 1 Cor 12; 13; Eph 1:13-14)

e. Man was created in the image of God, but in Adam's sin, the entire race fell, inherited a sinful nature, became alienated from God, and is utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Gen 1:26-27; Rom 3:10-12, 23; 5:12; Eph 2:1-3)

f. Salvation is the gift of God brought to sinful man by grace and received solely by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who accomplished complete redemption by His precious blood. No repentance, no feeling, no good resolution, no sincere efforts, no submissions to rules and regulations, no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture RBCS Statement of Faith however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, nor any or all of these together, can add in the very least degree to the merit of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross. (John 3:5, 18; Eph 1:7; 2:8-10; Phil 3:4-9; Titus 3:3-8; 1 Pet 1:18-23)

g. Because of the eternal purpose of God, the nature of the Word and promise of God, and the immutability of the covenants of God, all believers, once saved (i.e., elected, called, redeemed, baptized into Christ by the Spirit, justified, regenerated, adopted, sanctified, and already looked upon by God as glorified), are kept by God's power, indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit, and interceded for by Jesus Christ, and therefore, are secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40, 10:27-30; Rom 8:1, 29-30, 38-39; 1 Cor 1:4-8; 1 Pet 1:5)

h Every believer possesses a new nature, with provision made for victory over the flesh through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Every believer possesses at least one spiritual gift for the edification of the body of Christ, and should be a faithful steward of all God has entrusted to him. (Rom 6:13-14; 7:18; 1 Cor 12; 2 Cor 5:17; 2 Cor 9:5-9; Gal 5:16-25; Eph 4:22-24; 1 John 1:10)

i The education of children is the responsibility of parents, rather than the state. God commands parents to teach their children to love God and do all things to His glory. The school is an instrument of God designed to help the parents faithfully discharge their responsibility. (Deut 6:5-7; Prov 4; 22:6; Eph 6:1-4; 2 John 6-11)

j The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. All wisdom and knowledge is His. True knowledge must be consistent with Scripture. Man must learn to discover God's truth. The school can assist by providing a God-centered curriculum and encouraging academic excellence. (Prov 1:7; 23:23; Rom 1:16-25; 1 Cor 1:18-25; 2 Tim 2:15)

RBCS will conduct no activity inconsistent with the above principles included in God's truth. These principles will be taught as orthodox Christian doctrine. Orthodoxy on "denominational issues" (e.g., the proper mode and subjects of water baptism, the correct form of local church government, the proper manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit today, or the correct eschatological system) will be left to the home and local church. RBCS desires to cultivate a spirit of love which will allow students of different denominational backgrounds to discuss doctrinal differences without "stuffing their views down another's throat," or breaking fellowship with those who disagree.

Definitions

ESL—English as a Second Language.

F-1 Visa—Visa required by United States Customs and Immigration to enter into the United States and study at a private high school.

Host Family—Family who houses and provides meals for international students.

I-20—Form required by U.S. Embassy in order to apply for an F-1 Visa.

International Student—Student for whom RBCS has issued an I-20.

International Student Coordinator—RBCS staff member who oversees the international students.

RBCS—Rocky Bayou Christian School.

SLEP—Secondary Level English Proficiency test. Administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

3.7 International Student Manual

1.0 Application Process

The majority of international student applications that RBCS receives come from an exchange student organization with whom RBCS partners. However, RBCS encourages others to apply.

1.1 Documents Required

All of the following documents and forms are required before the student's application can be processed. They can be found on the RBCS website (www.rbes.org). All questions about application can be directed to the international student coordinator.

1.1.1 New Student Admission Application. The entire application including the family and emergency information pages must be completed before RBCS will process the application. Please be sure to fill in the address information correctly (street address in the street address blank, city in the city blank, etc.). RBCS will return an application that is not completed.

1.1.2 International Student Questionnaire Form. The international student who is applying must fill out the form—not the parents or exchange organization.

1.1.3 International Student Reference Form. RBCS requires two student reference forms to be filled out and submitted before an application can be processed. RBCS encourages applicants to choose references that they have known for at least one year.

1.1.4 Financial Policies and Agreement. Parents of applying students must sign this agreement stating that they have read and understand the financial policies of RBCS.

1.1.5 Host Family Rules Agreement. Every applying student and parent must sign the host family rules agreement. The student must agree to submit to the authority of RBCS and his or her host family by following the student code of conduct.

1.1.6 Immunization Record, Health Insurance. Family Registration, Copy of Passport. RBCS requires a copy of the international student's passport, health insurance card (must be travel insurance with coverage in the United States), immunization record (), and a family registration card or birth certificate (where applicable).

1.1.7 International Tuition and Fee Payment Worksheet. Parents of applying students must complete and sign this worksheet. If the international student is planning on living with family or friends in the United States and is not going to require RBCS to arrange a host family, some of the fees are not charged. Every international student must pay the registration fee, start-up fee, tuition, student coordinator fee, activities fee, and a one-time emergency deposit. In addition, every international student who stays with an RBCS arranged host family must pay the host family, lunches, and transportation fee. If an international student wishes to remain in the United States during the summer months, he or she must also pay the monthly summer host fee.

1.1.8 Student Transcripts/Parental Release for Student Records. RBCS requires transcripts for all junior high and high school classes (or their equivalents: middle school, secondary school, etc.) completed prior to application. The international student is responsible to send transcripts of all classes taken since their 7th year of school along with the grade earned in each class.

1.1.9 SLEP Test Answer Sheet. RBCS requires that all applying students submit a SLEP test answer sheet that has been signed and dated by the proctor of the test.

1.2 Acceptance Procedures

RBCS policy is that international student population does not exceed ten percent of the academy student body. Acceptance to RBCS is dependent upon available space in the grade the applicant is applying for. Students are evaluated based upon their student questionnaire answers, references, school transcripts, disciplinary history, previous time spent abroad, and SLEP scores.

1.3 Upon Acceptance

If a student is accepted by RBCS, the international student coordinator will contact either the partner organization or the parents of the student.

1.3.1 Payment Process. RBCS accepts payment for tuition and fees in the form of cash, check, credit card, or money transfer. Unless the incoming student has an account with a bank or credit union in the U.S., payment must be received in full one month prior to the student's tentative academic start date. The student will not be allowed to start school until full payment is received. If the student banks with an institution in the U.S., he or she may elect to pay tuition and fees in monthly installments. The monthly amount will be drafted from the student's bank or credit union account by the RBCS business office. The student will not be allowed to continue his or her studies at RBCS until the balance is paid.

1.3.2 1-20 Issued / Visa Application. 1-20's are issued upon the student's acceptance to RBCS. The international student coordinator will mail the 1-20 along with an acceptance letter and program information to the address provided in the application. It is the student's responsibility to secure a visa to enter the United States. Students are responsible to contact the nearest United States embassy or consulate to arrange an interview for their F-1 visa. Students will need to take the 1-20, acceptance letter, and valid passport to the interview. RBCS requires a valid passport that will not expire during the student's stay in the United States.

1.3.3 Host Family Placement. The international student coordinator oversees host family placement. In general, RBCS does not place two international students of the same nationality with a host family, unless the students are immediate family. However, situations occasionally arise in which students are placed temporarily with another student of the same nationality. RBCS does not place male and female international students with the same host family unless the students are immediate family. The international student coordinator will match students to host families based on common interests as best he can.

2.0 International Student Program and Policies

2.1 Academic Program

2.1.1 Grade Level. Grade level is determined by the student's age, requested grade, completed classes, and English abilities.

2.1.2 Class Schedule. The RBCS Registrar and International Student Coordinator will assign a student class schedule on a case-by-case basis. Grade level, completed classes, and English abilities are taken into consideration.

2.1.3 ESL Classes. RBCS offers ESL classes in U.S. History, American Literature, English Assist, TOEFL Preparation Class, and Bible. These classes are offered exclusively to the international students.

2.1.4 Bible. The Bible is the foundation of the RBCS philosophy of Christian education. Every RBCS student is required to take one Bible class each year. In addition, every student is required to attend a weekly chapel service.

2.1.5 Graduation Requirements. Graduating from RBCS requires three years of study for most students due to the number of specific course credits required. Many students who enter RBCS in the 11th or 12th grade will not earn enough credits to graduate.

- Regular / Honors Diploma. Graduation from RBCS requires successful completion of at least 26 credits, including 4 English, 3 mathematics, 3 science, 4 Bible, 1 foreign language, 3 literature, 4 social studies, 2 physical education, and 2 electives.
- Students who wish to receive an honors diploma complete at least 28 credits, including 4 English, 4 mathematics (including AP Calculus), 4 science (including AP Physics and/or AP Chemistry), 4 Bible, 2 foreign language, 3 literature (including Philosophy, Apologetics, Senior Honors Literature or AP Literature), 4 Social Studies (including Government and Economics), 1 physical education, 2 electives, and at least 2 science projects.
- Class Credit. RBCS grants credit for some high school equivalent classes taken in the student's native country.
- Christian Community Service. All students must complete a minimum of 50 hours of Christian Service during their time at RBCS to be eligible to graduate.
- Foreign Language Requirement. The foreign language course requirements may be waived for international students. In lieu of taking foreign language courses at RBCS, international students may take the SAT test(s) of their native language(s). Passing the test demonstrates that the students have mastery of at least one language other than English.

2.2 Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities are a privilege at RBCS and are not deemed more important than regular academic coursework. RBCS recommends that a student limit his first year participation in extracurricular activities in order to spend more time studying for regular academic coursework and learning English.

2.2.1 Athletic Program. RBCS is a member of the Florida High Schools Activities Association (FHSAA). All first year students interesting in playing varsity sports at RBCS are required to complete FHSAA EL2, EL3, and EL4 forms prior to participating in athletic events. The international student coordinator will assist the student in completing these forms upon arrival at RBCS. RBCS participates in girls' basketball, cross country, track and field, soccer, softball, and volleyball. RBCS participates in boys' basketball, cross country, track and field, soccer, baseball, and golf.

2.2.2 Performing Arts. RBCS has an award-winning academy band, jazz ensemble, chamber choir, and marching band. Most of the students involved in the performing arts earn academic credit.

2.2.3 Academic and Social Organizations. RBCS offers and participates in a variety of clubs and organizations including: art club, Beta club, academic team, chess club, French club, Junior Classical League, Leadership Trek, Math Counts, Mu Alpha Theta, missions club, sailing team, Shakespeare club, Spanish club, science club, spelling bee team, spirit club, student government, and Teen Political Affairs Club.

2.3 Student Codes of Conduct

The complete student code of conduct is documented in the Academy Student Handbook.

2.3.1 Standards and Discipline Policies. International students must obey all federal, state, and local laws and ordinances in addition to the standards and rules of RBCS. The standards and discipline policies for all RBCS students are found in the Academy Student Handbook.

2.3.2 Major Offenses. Committing any of the following offenses may lead to the suspension or expulsion of a student. It is the reserved right of the administration to determine judgment. Students must avoid: use or possession of alcoholic beverage (except in a church communion service), drugs (unless prescribed to that child by a physician), tobacco products, and pornographic material. Other major offenses include: blackmailing a host family, cheating, continual non-support of school standards, defacing or destroying school property, being disrespectful or insolent, fighting, gambling, immoral conduct, insubordination, unauthorized leaving of a host family's home, lying, lying about actions taken by a host family, negative attitude, plagiarism, profanity, racism, theft, truancy, unauthorized possession of deadly weapons, vandalism, and vulgarity. A single action of cheating, lying, racism, theft, or possession of a banned substance can result in being expelled from RBCS and revoking the student's 1-20.

2.3.3 Dress Code. RBCS requires every student to wear uniform apparel to attend regular classes and all academic events. The uniforms must be purchased upon arrival in the United States. The boys wear a polo or oxford style shirt with khaki or navy blue pants or shorts. The girls wear a polo or oxford style shirt with khaki or navy blue pants, knee-length shorts, or a knee-length skirt. Blue jeans and t-shirts are unacceptable at RBCS. More specific information about the RBCS dress code and uniforms is found in the RBCS Student Handbook.

2.3.4 School Authority. RBCS has authority over the international student **wilt** the student is outside of school, participating in extracurricular activities, staying with the host family, traveling to visit friends, and engaging all other activities during the duration of his or her stay in the United States. All international students are under the authority of all faculty and staff of RBCS including all teachers, administrative staff, the international student coordinator, principals, and the superintendent. **2.3.5 Living with Host Family.** The host family has authority over the international student while the student is staying with the host. The host family is not simply a "hotel" or place in which the student lives and eats. In order to get the most out of a stay in the United States and to learn better conversational English and American culture, the international student should interact with the host family and participate in all family activities. The host family has the authority to place house rules upon the international student in addition to RBCS policies. If a student breaks the host family or RBCS rules while staying with the host, RBCS can and will punish the student in accordance with RBCS policy. International students must communicate with the host family and coordinate all transportation to extracurricular activities. Students must treat the host family and all of their property with respect. If a student damages host family property, the student is required to repair or replace whatever is damaged. The host parents are to know where the student is at all times. The student may not leave the house without the permission of the host parents. Students are not to have in their possession a sum of cash worth more than \$300. International students are not to lend money to other students.

2.3.6 Vehicle Use. Under no circumstances are international students allowed to obtain a driver's license or operate a motor vehicle (car, motorcycle, scooter, powerboats, all-terrain vehicles) during their stay in the United States unless the student is residing with a member of his or her immediate family.

3.0 Host Family Policies

3.1 Vision and Philosophy

Hosting an international student should be seen as a learning experience for both the host family and the international student. RBCS desires to place international students with host families that live consistent with the teaching of the Bible. RBCS desires that the students will grow spiritually by observing and interacting with a Christian family, emotionally through the relationships that students develop while with the host family, and mentally by learning English, American culture, and many other subjects of interest from the student's teachers—the host family.

3.2 Host Family Selection

The international student coordinator will take into consideration common interests with the exchange student, family members and ages, and many other factors when placing an international student with a host family. Host family requests will not always be honored.

3.2.1 Application. Each host family new to the RBCS program must complete a Host Family Application and submit it to the international student coordinator prior to the arrival of the international student.

3.2.2 Additional Family Rules. The host family is allowed to impose additional house rules such as curfew, television, phone, and internet usage, bedtime, chores, mealtime, and other rules. All house rules must be listed on the application form and approved by the international student coordinator.

3.2.3 Verbal Reference Questionnaire. The host family must provide the names and contact information of three references. The individuals referenced cannot be family members and must have known the family for at least one year. The international student coordinator will complete a verbal reference questionnaire with the individuals referenced.

3.2.4 Home Visit. Prior to the arrival of the international student, the international student coordinator will visit and inspect the host family's home and neighborhood.

3.3 Host Family Requirements

3.3.1 Lodging. The host family is required to provide a separate bed for each student, storage space for personal items, and access to a bathroom. Additionally the host family must provide access to a quiet study area consisting of a desk or table, chair, and lighting adequate to read by. The host family must also provide a means for the student to wash laundry.

3.3.2 Meals. The host family is responsible to provide three meals per day per international student (On school days lunch is provided by the school). The meals must be nutritionally balanced. If the host family goes out to eat, the host family is responsible to pay for the international student if the meal is one of the daily three. Remember: treat the international student as your own child. A monthly stipend will be paid to the host families by RBCS to offset the expenses of lodging and meals.

3.3.3 Transportation. The host family is required to provide transportation to and from school if no bus service is available. All international students pay for bus service. If the host family decides to transport the student to and from school for regular classes instead of bus service, the host family may receive an additional stipend. The host family is also required to arrange or

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provide transportation for the student to and from church and extracurricular activities, such as sports, band activities, retreats, and other school functions.

3.3.4 Weekends and Entertainment. The host family is to include the international student in all family activities. Remember: treat the international student as your own child.

3.3.5 Additional Expenses. The host family is not required to pay for anything beyond lodging, meals, utilities, and transportation. Additional expenses such as school supplies, clothing, and RBCS fees are not the responsibility of the host family. The host family should not loan the international student any money.

3.3.6 Supervision. The host family cannot leave the international student alone overnight or longer. If the host family schedules a trip, they must either take the international student with them or arrange another for the student to stay with an alternate host family approved by RBCS. In case of emergency, the host family may contact the international student coordinator for assistance in finding an alternate host family. The host family should also take caution when leaving large sums of cash, jewelry, or other expensive items within access of the international student.

3.4 Student Requirements and Discipline

3.4.1 Family Chores. The host family can assign small household chores (washing dishes, sweeping floors) to the international student. RBCS requests that the host family only ask the international students to perform large chores (such as pulling weeds, cleaning gutters, etc.) when other members of the family are involved.

3.4.2 Ban on Dangerous Chores. The international student cannot be required to do any chore that involves chemicals, heavy machinery, sharp objects, heights, or bodily fluids.

3.4.3 Ban on Physical Punishment. Under no circumstances is the host family allowed to use corporal punishment on the international student.

3.4.4 Host Family Discipline. RBCS recommends grounding and restriction for international student punishment. Remember: treat the international student as your own child.

3.4.5 School Discipline. If the host family has any recurring or major discipline problems issues with the international student, they must contact the international student coordinator at RBCS. RBCS has authority over international students at all times during their stay in the United States. RBCS reserves the right to discipline international students for infractions occurring outside of school and while under supervision of the host family.

3.5 Policy Violation

If students believe that a host family has violated any of the requirements set forth in this manual, they should contact the international student coordinator. The international student coordinator will investigate the claim and, if necessary, take action.