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BRACKEN

Christian School will assist

CHRISTIAN FAMILIES

by providing a

QUALITY EDUCATION

within the context of a

BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW,

equipping students to

IMPACT

their culture for

CHRIST.

Back-to-School Is Just Around the Corner!



CRAIG WALKER
administrator

What a fantastic school year we have ahead of us! Great opportunities to grow in Christ. Unique challenges to test and shape our faith. Walls to be rebuilt. Some walls to be demolished. Are you excited? You should be. I am very pumped up about all that is coming together to make this year the BEST in BCS history!

I believe we finished the '02-'03 year on a very positive note. So much was accomplished in what was a very transitional year. A number of new teachers and staff were brought on board and have flourished in their new positions. From the elementary to the high school we did exceptionally well in speech meets, math competitions, geography and spelling bees. We can honestly say we aren't playing second fiddle to anyone when it comes to academics. Athletically we performed extremely well against some very tough opponents. We were able to purchase our first school van. We competed, for the first time, on our own home soccer field. (Now with an in-ground sprinkler system).

The Fall Gala was a huge success as were the other fundraisers in which we participated. I am very proud of all our students and the families here at Bracken Christian School.

Even more important than these landmark achievements, however, were the day to day triumphs, spiritually, that I was privileged to witness on our campus. I have watched our students joyfully embrace the SALT Ministry and excitedly spend time with their prayer partners. I have seen an attitude of complacency towards spiritual matters changing to one of a thirst for truth followed by joyful obedience. I am seeing a definite pendulum swing to a more serious desire to seek and honor the Lord with a genuine and humble heart. This is the type of 'positive' peer pressure for which many have been praying.

Our Thursday morning Prayer Warrior ministry, headed up by Lynne Ortiz, faithfully met each and every week to praise God and lift

up requests for direction, provision, safety and the salvation of our students, families and friends.

What was only a hope a year ago for Bracken's first mission trip is now just weeks away from being a reality. I have been privileged, over the summer, to be approached by many students who have said how excited they were to be coming back. (No, none seemed feverish or ill) They have been active and growing in their churches and youth groups and are anxious to get back to school where they want to make a positive difference with their friends. Whoa, a big PTL!!

Nowhere is the spiritual growth more evident than with our school board itself. These men have truly demonstrated what being a Godly warrior is all about. They have heard and heeded the call. They have prayed without ceasing, sacrificed financially, fasted regularly and been fighting the good fight of faith. I am so proud to serve with these fine Christians. They understand their responsibilities and what it means to be leaders.

I know that providing a Christian education for your children is a huge financial struggle for many families. I can assure you it's worth the sacrifice. It will pay off; not only now but even more in the life to come. God's Word promises it and many here at our school can testify to that truth.

Trophies, college scholarships, awards and ribbons, athletic titles, win-loss records are all nice, and we will continue to pursue the

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All-School Open House & Dinner

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!

A big thank you to all our families for their continued faithfulness in paying tuition in a timely manner over the summer. Your promptness enables Bracken to meet its own financial obligations on schedule. Tuition is due by the 10th, and statements are mailed shortly thereafter. Please look over your statement carefully for charges such as class lab fees, camps, PSAT, athletics, after-school care, elementary art, etc. Should you ever have any questions concerning the status of your account, please do not hesitate to contact me. It is exciting to start a new year & experience God here at BCS! †

LIBBY MATTHEWS *Tuition*

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Prayer continues at Bracken each Thursday morning at 8:30 am, in room 204.

I am so often reminded that without communication with my husband and children, I would not have a marriage or a family. The same is true for our relationship with our Father God. He desires to have intimate communication with us.

Please join us as we “visit” with God on behalf of our precious children and awesome school!

We will begin Thursday, August 21st. Looking forward to this year. †

LYNNE ORTIZ



PRAY FOR OUR TROOPS



ORIENTATION DINNER

Helping Hands is providing a hot dog dinner for everyone attending Back-to-School orientation on Friday, August 15. If you can help defray the cost of the dinner, please contact Barbara Kubala at (830)885-6957. †

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

- State law and
- Bracken Christian
- School policy
- requires validated
- records of immunizations be on file for
- all students. **ANY STUDENT WHOSE IMMUNIZATIONS OR RECORDS ARE NOT COMPLETE AND CURRENT WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL.**
- All immunizations must have
- medical verification. †



Clinic Chat

ROBIN URBANOVSKY, RN



It is hard to believe that the summer is almost over and school is about to start! I pray this note finds everyone in good health, well rested and raring to go!

As a parent, I know first hand that the business of getting ready to go back to school can cause us to forget that we have a Savior who has promised to share our burdens. Give those harried thoughts over to Him. Spend this time sharing the excitement with each other. Look forward to seeing old friends, making new ones... learning and growing in the ways of the Lord.

As the big day draws near, I am completing the review of immunization records. If you have any need for immunization updates you will receive that information in the mail very soon. If you have any questions about the requirements please call me or the Comal County Health Department(830-608-2015).

Just as a reminder, last year we had a large number of absent students due to illness. As a result, I went through hand washing instruction (Germ Glo) with each class to teach how germs are spread and how to prevent illness. I want to remind everyone to wash your hands regularly, do not drink after anyone, and cover up your coughs and sneezes. Just good basic stuff! Also, let me remind you to keep your germs at home if you are sick.

The school policy states that your child should remain at home if he has had fever within a 24 hour time frame or if your child has thrown up within a 24 hour time frame. Please help prevent the spread of germs and infections by complying with these policies.

I will see you all at Orientation Night! †

Welcome Back Warriors!

I hope that this past summer was as enjoyable as possible for you and your families. We are excited to begin another year and thank God for the many blessings and provisions that He has granted us in the past.

We look forward to all the new and exciting challenges that He has before us. We ask that you pray with us so we will be mindful to see every situation, whether good or bad, as an opportunity to glorify His name above all others. We look forward to hopefully serving you and your family through athletics this year. If you ever have any questions please feel free to get in touch with me through the school office.

New Volleyball Coach – We would like to welcome Abby Bachman to the Bracken family as our new Varsity and J.V. Volleyball coach. Abby just recently finished her degree as well as her playing career at Trinity University here in San Antonio. She is excited about getting into the coaching side of her sport. If you have a chance, be sure to welcome her to the coaching staff here at school.

Summer Camp News – We just completed our last

Warrior Camp of the summer this past week and are thankful to all of those families that participated in one of our many weeks of camp. Over 140 children participated in different camps during the summer, which is one of the largest number of participants that we have had since starting our camp program. I am very



JAMES JOHNSON
athletic director

thankful for the many wonderful coaches and helpers we had over the course of the summer. We hope that these camps were able to bless you and your family in some way as well as being a light to the many non-Bracken families from the local community that attended.

New Athletic Manuals – If you have a student in either MS or HS who plans to play any sport here at Bracken you need to be sure to pick up an Athletic Manual in either the main office or the athletic office in the gym. The manual goes over the rules and expectations for all of our athletes here at Bracken. Please be sure to pick up a copy and go over it so we can hopefully avoid any potential problems. †

GO TEAM GO!

ATHLETICS WISH LIST

- Transportation. We still needed approx. \$6,000.00 of the original \$10,000.00 cost of the second van. This cost includes cost of van, taxes, insurance, and maintenance expense for the year.
- M.S. volleyball and basketball uniforms. Even with last year's fundraising, we still need approx. \$3,500.00 to finish paying for these uniforms.
- Improvements made to the front of the gym. We would like to construct a covering over the entire front of the gym entrance that would be very similar to the one covering the front of the main building, with seating similar to that of the main building as well, making this a much more suitable place for students to gather after school, especially in bad weather. Early reports look like this task will cost approx. \$4,000-\$6,000 to complete.

If you have any questions regarding any of these items, please feel free to contact me here at the school. If you are able to contribute in any way to any of these areas we as a school would be very appreciative. Any sized contribution to any of these areas will be set-aside in a special account by Mrs. Dixon. You may drop off any donations to either the main office or the coach's office at your convenience. Thank you for your continued support and please help us pray that these needs can be met according to God's will. †

Fall Retreats

6TH GRADE:

September 25 at Singing Hills in Bulverde

7TH – 8TH GRADE:

Oct. 2–3 at Linnet's Wing HEB Camp

9TH – 12TH GRADE:

Sept. 29–Oct. 1 at Echo Valley HEB Camp

Transportation is needed for all the camps.

Ready! Set! Go!



JIM CAGLE
secondary principal

Only days remain till school begins and the calendar is already bulging with things to do. It will be a full year! So get ready, buckle up, and hold on for a great ride as we begin an exciting spin through the next nine months. You

never know what's around the next corner; so hold on to your hats 'cause this year will go by faster than you think.

Here are a few things to help you along the journey:

Uniform standards will follow the long-standing policy regarding the school uniform. The standard for style, color and appearance for the school uniform is the uniform items provided by Parker School Uniforms. We will be enforcing the standard on Parker uniform pants as the only acceptable uniform pants. Also, remember that school shoes are to be solid black or brown leather low top shoes. Tennis shoes or an athletic cloth type shoes is not acceptable.

Absences are judged to be excused or unexcused by the administration. Absences due to personal illness, medical appointment, and death in the family are usually considered excused absences.

In order for the administration to consider excusing a student's absence the parents must contact the school no later than two (2) days after his/her return to school. Students absent more than five (5) consecutive school days must bring a note from a doctor.

Upon returning to school a student must go to the school office, where the student will be given an admit slip which will enable the student to return to class. Students

returning to school without the parents having contacted the school concerning the reason for the absence will have the admit slip marked as an unexcused absence. **Students with unexcused absences receive a zero on the work due during their absence.**

Pre-approved excused absences can be arranged when parents know in advance their student will be absent. The administration recognizes that there are times when the parents may have family needs that necessitate their student being absent from school to be with family. The school will allow a student to have five (5) days excused absences per year for family needs if these conditions are met:

1. The student completes a Pre-Approved Excused Absence Request (PEAR form)
2. Parents provide evidence that this time dedicated to meeting family needs significantly benefits family relations and/or yields important educational benefits.
3. Parents understand that these days absent will count toward the student's total days absent allowable by the state which requires a student attend 90% of a class in order to receive credit

The "Pre-Approved Excused Absences Request" (PEAR form) is available in the office and is to be completed before the student's absence. The completion of the form will: ⁽¹⁾allow the student/parent to know in advance if the reason for the absence will be considered sufficient to excuse the absence ⁽²⁾prepare the student with the work that will be missed during the absence and ⁽³⁾enable the teacher to plan for the student's absence. Students are

to complete the form at least two days prior to the planned absence. The form is not used when a student is participating in a school function.

Make up work is permitted only in the case of an excused absence. Students have one class period to make up worked missed for each class period for which they have an excused absence.

In the case of missing a test, if a student is absent only the day a test is given the student is expected to make up the test by the end of the day on which that class next meets. A student, who is only absent for the class period preceding a test but present the day of the test, is expected to take the test, provided it was announced before the preceding class period.

Major projects and research papers that are assigned days or weeks in advance must be turned in on or before the time due in order to receive full credit *even in the event of an excused absence.* This means even if a student is sick the day the project is due or absent due to a school function, the project must be turned in by the beginning of the class period if the student is to receive full credit. This may require the parent to bring the project, report or assignment to the teacher.

Students will not be given extra credit work to make up for assignments missed or poor performance on assignments, quizzes, tests or projects. Extra work only adds to the normal workload a student is already struggling to handle.

Assignment sheets will be used in the middle school this year rather than an assignment book. Each student will be required to maintain a three-ring binder divided by classes.

The Time Is Near

School supplies are flying off the shelf, Parker uniforms are being washed and prepared for the first day, and parents and students alike are bombarded with a mixture of excitement that a new year is starting, yet regret that summer is over. We are delighted that you have decided to invest in a Christian education, an education that is vastly different than any other education. We are committed to the well being of your student's spiritual, emotional, physical, and yes, intellectual development. I have heard numerous comments over my years in education and counseling that Christian education is great for the soul but weak and ineffective for the mind. Let me assure you that we continually strive to provide quality and even challenging and demanding courses. And our students are accepted and attend excellent universities.

We are launching a new year with a renewed desire to educate the mind to discern, defend, analyze, and comprehend the Christian worldview equipping your student to stand firm for the faith of Jesus Christ. Many parents believe that once a student reaches high school, even middle school, that the need for them to intervene, be involved, make decisions, and take a strong line on boundaries of acceptable behavior and life goal directions is minimal. Be assured that middle school and particularly high school will require your constant participation in the educational process of your student.

Over the next months of the school year, we will provide articles that we hope will assist you in evaluating the four-year adventure leading to college. We will be actively involved with the students in their junior year and especially in their senior year. We will have college tours in the spring of their junior year. We will offer the PLAN, PSAT and the ASVAB (military) tests to prepare your stu-

dents for the ACT (PLAN), the SAT (PSAT), and a possible military career (ASVAB). At the appropriate grade level, your students will be given scholarship information and applications. You may want to check periodically with your students to see if any have been handed out. There is a copy of all originals in my office and you are welcome to look through the entire file.



KAREN WATKINS
counselor

Some suggestions as you enter high school or are completing high school:

- Start to talk about, look for information, and even visit colleges that your students are interested in.
- Push for your students to take the ACT and the SAT every year, and then in their junior year have them take at least two of each in the spring.
- Monitor grades and courses to make sure your students are achieving their best and are taking advantage of the higher-level courses if possible.
- Keep a record of volunteer work outside school and if your students are not involved with any volunteer work then go to a retirement home and read to the elderly or go to a homeless dining hall and serve the homeless. Volunteer work is an important part of college acceptance.
- Encourage your students to choose one or two extracurricular activities that they excel in and enjoy, then do those activities well. Several well-done activities are much better than trying to do everything and suffering burn out.

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Mr. Walker continued from page 1

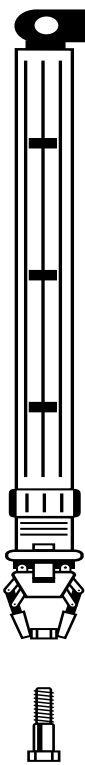
highest standards but remember this; these all fail to compare with the surpassing greatness of knowing the Lord, Jesus Christ. We need to keep it all in perspective. If we have accomplished things only in our flesh and for ourselves then they will quickly wither and fade. However, what is done WITH Christ will last forever. I want the students at this school to hunger and thirst for righteousness. This must be the distinctive that sets us apart. God's Word is true. If we seek Him FIRST and His righteousness, then everything

else will come in proper time.

Our theme for last year was, 'Growing Together,' and I believe the Lord was honored in our efforts to do just that. He will continue to us bring us closer as a family as we draw even closer to Him.

Am I excited about this school year? You bet I am!! I look forward to seeing everyone on Friday, August 15th for our school-wide orientation. Come meet the teachers, greet the new students, enjoy a fun time with old friends and eat the best hot dogs ever cooked. †

Robotics comes to BCS



When school begins August 18th, BCS high school students will have the opportunity to participate in the SA BEST robotics competition. Teams in the competition are given a task that their robot must perform. The SA BEST program provides at no charge all the materials needed to construct a working robot. Beginning September 13th students have six weeks to complete the design, construction and testing of their radio-controlled robot.

This will be a fun, hands-on program where students make the decisions and build the robot. Adults act as mentors giving advice and helping stimulate discussion, but students do the work. Students with writing, technology, art and many other skills are needed. Each team is evaluated on not only their robot, but 60% of their score is based on their documentation notebook. There is even an award for the

most original competition t-shirt design! Students will meet 2-3 times per week for six weeks (after school) to develop their robot.

If your student is interested, please have them contact me as soon as possible.

Whether or not your child is on the team, would you please consider being a mentor for our BCS team? Adults are needed to advise and encourage our team. You do not need engineering or technical skills to be a mentor, and even visiting with them once a week to see their progress would be a big inspiration.

Please let me know if you could make this short time commitment (only six weeks!) to help launch this exciting new program.

Watch the newsletters for more news about our BCS robot! †

JULIE KORKOSZ

Mr. Cagle continued from page 4

Assignments will be recorded on an assignment sheet specific for each class. Teachers will take up and check the assignments weekly to be sure the student is keeping the assignments properly. Parents are asked to sign the assignment sheet weekly to indicate they are checking the student's work. Students will be given credit for properly keeping the assignment sheet and having it signed.

"Bracken Casual" dress days frequently occur during the year. Guidelines for that dress have been added to the handbook this year. "Bracken casual" dress has traditionally meant a Bracken shirt, jeans, and tennis shoes. "Bracken casual" dress must meet the non-uniform dress guidelines in the handbook with the additional requirement that the student must wear a shirt embossed with the Bracken Christian School name. †

WAY TO GO!!

This summer Brittany Pittman participated in the National Dance competition in Las Vegas for 7 days. She won the gold trophy for her jazz solo and their group took home 2 gold's and 1 high silver.

Technology Tidbits CAROLINE BOOTH



Our Technology Committee has been busy this summer with several projects. The most significant has been to "homerun" the high school lab and upgrade the computers from Windows 95 to Windows 98. "THANKS" to Terry and Peter Lewis for all your time and energy on this project. We appreciate your commitment to our program!

We are excited about two new additions to our technology program. First of all, we will be starting a student produced school newspaper this year. High school students will have the opportunity to serve as reporters, photographers, and editors to staff a newspaper that appeals to both middle and high school students.

Secondly, high school students will have the opportunity to participate in a robotics competition. See Mrs. Korkosz' article

above for detailed information about the program.

Both of these projects will require the use of photographs. Our technology department could use an inexpensive but good quality digital camera. If you are interested in donating a camera or the funds to purchase one, please contact me at the school.

Our technology department is also in need of some equipment to keep our computers running smoothly. If you would like to make a donation to our technology fund, please contact the school office.

We would like to thank those of you who have contributed to our program by way of donating equipment or funds, as well as time and other resources. We truly appreciate your support of technology in education. †



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Mrs. Karen Watkins	Guidance Counselor
Mr. James Johnson	Athletic Director
Mrs. Natalie Dixon	Office Manager/Bookkeeper
Mrs. Judy Enberg	Registrar
Mrs. Libby Matthews	Tuition
Mrs. Elora Harmon	Secretary/Receptionist
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Your up-to-date school information source every day of the year!

College Corner continued from page 5

- Ask about their course work, look at their homework, understand what is asked of them in courses and monitor their successes/difficulties.
- Communication with your students' teachers, we are here to serve you and your students. We understand that you know your children far better than we do and we want to be in a partnership with you, not apart from you.

The investment you make for the next four years will provide the greatest return you can imagine. You will provide the foundation for your students to successfully navigate college and the world at large. It is the most exciting of times, and it is the most demanding of times. My prayer is that we bear the burdens together and share in the triumphs as well.

Remember those you love...

<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 <input type="checkbox"/> other <i>is sent to remember...</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial <input type="checkbox"/> Anniversary <input type="checkbox"/> Birthday <input type="checkbox"/> Other			
MY NAME IS	NAME	STREET ADDRESS	
	CITY	STATE	ZIP
SEND LETTER TO	NAME	STREET ADDRESS	
	CITY	STATE	ZIP