



SPARTANBURG CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

A Ministry of First Baptist North Spartanburg
8740 Asheville Highway, Spartanburg, South Carolina 29316
Phone (864) 578-4238 ▪ Fax (864) 542-1846
www.scawarriors.org

“Students are well educated, equipped with a biblical worldview and exhibit a heart for Christ.”

Important Information

School website: www.scawarriors.org

School Phone number: (864)578-4238

International Student Relations Coordinator: Kathi Johnson kjohnson@fbns.org

Headmaster: Rob McDonald rmcdonald@fbns.org

Principal: Jerry Boyd jboyd@fbns.org

Accounting: Janet Painter jpaineter@fbns.org

Athletics: Sean Rogers srogers@fbns.org

Guidance: Kim Williams kwilliams@fbns.org

Mission Statements

Spartanburg Christian Academy:

Students are well educated, equipped with a biblical worldview and exhibit a heart for Christ.

Christian Education:

Spartanburg Christian Academy is a distinctively Christian School. Students are not required to be Christians in order to attend; however, they must agree to respectfully observe the teachings and practice of Christianity and abide by the rules set forth in the Spartanburg Christian Academy handbook. All of the administration, faculty, and staff of Spartanburg Christian Academy are Christians, and classes are taught from a Christian worldview. Students are required to attend Bible classes and weekly chapels. Additional spiritual emphasis events take place throughout the year.

Students who cannot respect the Christian faith, and/or refuse to attend mandatory Bible classes, chapels, or events as part of their school life, may have their participation in the program terminated.

Introduction

Congratulations on being selected to participate as an international homestay student at Spartanburg Christian Academy (SCA)! I hope that your time partnering with SCA is full of strong relationships and memorable experiences that you will carry with you for the rest of your life. We believe that your time here is one step toward God's greater purposes in your life.

Spartanburg Christian Academy is a Christian school that seeks to provide a biblically-based educational experience for all of our students. It is our desire that all students will encounter and grow in relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We seek to respect the God of the Bible and grow in our love for Him through every action of our day. Our hope is that through your time at SCA you will choose to follow God and serve Him through the remainder of your lives.

Guidelines that encourage student responsibility in order to maintain an atmosphere of support, cooperation, mutual respect, and personal integrity are necessary in the SCA International Homestay Program. The guidelines in this homestay student handbook are not intended to restrict students. These guidelines seek to set appropriate boundaries within which students have freedom to develop fully.

Homestay students must know and follow the guidelines in the *International Homestay Program Student Handbook* as well as the *SCA Student and Family Handbook*, which contains guidelines applicable to all students and families of Spartanburg Christian Academy. This handbook was developed to help you succeed as an international homestay student at SCA. It will address issues that may arise during your time here and will give you some practical tips for your entire journey from beginning to end. We hope that your experience at Spartanburg Christian Academy is as life-changing as we desire for every student in our school.

Sincerely,

Kathi Johnson

International Homestay Program Coordinator

Schedule and Travel Information

Homestay Student Arrival Date	Week of August 7-13
Homestay Student Orientation	TBA
First Day of School (1 st semester)	August 17
Last Day of School (1 st semester)	December 16
First Day of School (2 nd semester)	January 3
Last Day of School (2 nd semester)	May 25
Graduation	May 26
Christmas Holidays	December 19-January 2
Spring Break Holiday	April 3-7
Homestay Student Departure Date	All students are required to leave no later than 1 week from the last day of school.

Homestay Orientation:

All homestay students are required to participate in the annual Homestay Student Orientation. The orientation program will include an overview of all homestay program policies and procedures as well as a review of all school policies and procedures. New students will be introduced to homestay peers as well as to school procedures and rules. This orientation is hosted on campus at Spartanburg Christian Academy. Information regarding homestay student orientation is emailed to students during the summer.

School Breaks and Arrival/Departure Information

First year international students are not allowed to return home and must remain with their homestay family during all official SCA school breaks (i.e., Christmas and Easter/Spring Breaks). Homestay students must return to their home country during the SCA summer break. All other international students must get permission to travel from their agency and the SCA International Homestay Program Coordinator.

Student travel is not permitted outside of official SCA breaks except for in extenuating circumstances. Permission must be granted by the International Homestay Program Coordinator as soon as possible for these situations.

Students are required to return to their homestay families prior to the resuming of classes after the break. This is essential in order to maintain continuity within academic classrooms, and it can be very difficult for a student to catch up academically if he or she is late in returning after a SCA break. All classes missed due to late arrivals or returns will be recorded as absences, and after a two day grace period a fine of \$100 will be assessed. For example, a student arriving late enough after a break to miss four class days would receive absences in all classes during those four days and be assessed a \$200 fine. Students may appeal the fine to the International Homestay Program Coordinator within one week of returning to the homestay family if the late arrival is attributable to extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control.

At the end of a semester, students are not allowed to reschedule exams in order to leave earlier. Students are expected to stay at SCA until the last day of school. Students should not purchase airline tickets or make travel plans prior to the last day of school. Students with extenuating circumstances that make it necessary for them to leave earlier than their last exam at the end of a semester must seek an exception to this policy from the High School principal. Such an exception is the only method by which a student's semester exam may be rescheduled.

Airport Information:

Homestay students are required to fly in and out of the Greenville-Spartanburg (GSP) International Airport. Students are required to inform both the International Homestay Program Coordinator and their homestay family of all departure and arrival dates and times. Homestay families are responsible for providing transportation to and from the airport. More information is available on the airport website at www.gspairport.com.

End of Year Procedures:

In May of each year, homestay students will be required to complete a Homestay Student Survey. These surveys are used to assist SCA in making adjustments to the homestay program that will benefit students, homestay families, and the SCA administration. These surveys are confidential in nature.

Homestay students will also be required to complete End-Of-The-Year Check-Out Forms before departing for the summer. These forms will be distributed two weeks prior to the end of school and must be submitted to the International Homestay Program Coordinator before the students return home for the summer.

Homestay students must also provide updated contact information for the summer before they leave for the summer. Contact Information Forms will be distributed with the Check-Out Forms two weeks prior to the end of the school and must be submitted with the Check-Out Form.

Returning students who are accepted for the following school year will register for classes before returning to their home country. All new students will register for classes upon arrival to campus.

Returning Students:

In the month of May of a given school year, the I-20 will be extended for another academic year provided: the student has done well academically, a host family is available for the student the following year, and the student demonstrates proof of travel purchase to return home for the summer months of June, July, and August.

SCA reserves the right to terminate a student's participation in the International Homestay program if his or her conduct is considered detrimental or incompatible with the interest of the international program. In this case, all fees paid will be nonrefundable and the student's I-20 will be terminated.

Primary Expectations of Homestay Students

Spartanburg Christian Academy students **RESPECT** others, authority, self, and property. Spartanburg Christian Academy students are open to differences in others (cultural, age, gender, religion, etc.) and purpose to interact with all types of people while taking care to communicate respectfully (Philippians 2:3).

Spartanburg Christian Academy students take personal **RESPONSIBILITY** for their own behavior and learning, exercising self control over their actions and words. Spartanburg Christian Academy students voluntarily follow SCA rules, willingly devote themselves to learning, and fulfill their household responsibilities without being asked or reminded regardless of whether they will be held accountable for their actions. Spartanburg Christian Academy students respond to both correction and consequence with a repentant attitude when correction is necessary (2Timothy 1:7).

Spartanburg Christian Academy students demonstrate personal **INTEGRITY** by pursuing a wholeness of character, action, and thought, filtering personal choices through the lens of what is morally and justly right in God's eyes. Spartanburg Christian Academy students do not lie, cheat, or steal, and they show moral integrity in their relationship with others including matters of sexual purity and propriety (Proverbs 22:1).

Discipline Structure and Administrative Prerogative:

Obedience to homestay program, homestay family, and SCA rules and respectful compliance to the direction of the SCA faculty and staff is expected at all times from SCA students. As much as possible, consequences for any misbehavior will be naturally related to the offense. Consequences are meant to be formative, and not punitive, in nature. The SCA administration retains at its sole discretion the prerogative to assign specific consequences up to and including suspension/expulsion for school and/or homestay offenses. However, in cases warranting expulsion, the administration may, again at its own prerogative, choose to allow a student to withdraw in lieu of expulsion if circumstances warrant.

Homestay students are under the direct care and supervision of SCA and the assigned homestay family parents. Homestay students must respectfully comply with all rules and expectations of the family in which they are living. These rules and expectations are to be communicated to the students through each family's Family Covenant. Homestay students are expected to fully abide by the Family Covenant of their particular homestay family. Homestay parents are authorized to exercise discipline over the student just as they would their own children and in a way that is consistent with the Family Covenant and SCA regulations. Failure to comply with the rules and expectations of the homestay parents may result in consequences up to and including the student's expulsion from Spartanburg Christian Academy. Grievances with the Family Covenant should be first shared with the homestay parents. If a resolution cannot be reached, students may appeal to the International Relations Coordinator.

Homestay students must obey the laws of the United States and the states where they live and visit. A student found guilty of violating the laws or serious misbehavior in the school, homestay family, or community will be returned home at the expense of the student's parents as soon as the student is released by the authorities.

Both homestay students and their parents are expected to read and be familiar with the *Spartanburg Christian Academy Homestay Student Handbook* and *SCA Student and Family Handbook*. By signing the homestay contract, families are also agreeing to the standards and rules detailed in the handbook. Students

should consult the SCA Student and Family Handbook for specific guidelines related to the expectations of dress and behavior as well as disciplinary action while at school or at school-related functions.

Spartanburg Christian Academy reserves the right to terminate a student's participation in the homestay program if his or her conduct is considered detrimental or incompatible with the interests of the homestay program. In this case, all fees paid will be non-refundable and the student's I-20 will be canceled.

Cheating:

Students will refrain from all forms of cheating (Proverbs 11:1). Incidents of cheating or plagiarism are considered major discipline infractions and are subject to consequences which follow the disciplinary progression outlined in the *SCA Student and Family Handbook*.

Contract Status:

Homestay students who do not consistently live out the Primary Expectations (respect, responsibility, and integrity) in all areas of their life- as judged by the expectations and guidelines in the International Homestay Program Student Handbook, the SCA Student and Family Handbook, and the decisions of the SCA staff- may be placed on contract status. Contract status affords fewer privileges and less freedom because students on contract status are still developing the necessary character and maturity to successfully handle greater freedom and responsibility.

In this event, a student will be offered a contract upon which he/she may remain at SCA contingent upon fulfillment of the contract through an agreed upon contract period. If at any time during the contract period the student is found to be in violation of the terms of the contract, the SCA administration reserves the right to dismiss the student from the school. During the designated contract period, the student is responsible to fulfill the terms of the contract while demonstrating growth in Primary Expectations. At the end of the designated contract period, a student's contract may be extended, if deemed necessary by the SCA administration, or a student may be released from the terms of the contract if growth in the Primary Expectations has been duly noted. The student may be dismissed or asked not to return to SCA at the conclusion of a contract period if the administration believes the contract has not been successfully upheld by the student or that sufficient progress has not been made.

All contracts are created for the individual student based upon that student's need for improvement in various areas of the Primary Expectations. Contract periods may vary from several weeks to a full year depending upon the situation. All contracts must be agreed upon by the SCA administration, student, and homestay family.

English Proficiency Requirements:

International students must demonstrate a high level of English proficiency in order to be accepted and enrolled at SCA and to be successful in future undergraduate and graduate studies. Students are expected to show continual improvement in their English proficiency levels from the time of arrival at SCA until graduation. SCA expects all students to be adequately prepared for the next phase of their lives, including college or university attendance. The homestay student must make a concerted effort to improve his or her ability in the English Language. SCA is an English-only campus. Only English may be spoken on campus when English speaking people are present.

Admission requirements for international students at SCA include at least a minimum English proficiency level. English proficiency levels are determined for admission through the Secondary Level English Proficiency (SLEP) Test or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Students must submit official records of one of these scores to be considered for admission.

SCA provides after school tutoring, but does not provide ESL classes at this time.

Homestay Program Regulations

Housing Arrangements:

Unless special permission is granted by SCA administration, all SCA students are required to live throughout the school year with at least one parent or legal guardian or with an approved SCA homestay family. Homestay family assignments are for one academic year. The student will become an integral part of the homestay family, assuming duties and responsibilities that are normal for a child of his or her age in the homestay family household. This may include cooking, doing dishes, helping with laundry, and cleaning the home. The student must obey the host family's rules and be willing to participate in family activities such as attending religious services. Homestay students are expected to seek to learn about the Christian faith, respond to Jesus Christ and adhere to the guidelines for Christian living in the student handbook. The student must have an interest in and not an aversion to the Christian faith.

Problems that arise in the homestay family are to be resolved first through discussion with the homestay family and then with the assistance of the International Program Coordinator. The student is not to discuss problems of a personal nature with the community. If the student is experiencing any sort of relational stress or difficulty or experiences abuse or harassment of any kind, he or she will immediately disclose the incident to the International Program Coordinator.

English Language Use:

Most international students enrolled in the SCA International Homestay Program exhibit a need to improve their English language skill to some degree. For this reason the SCA International Homestay Program requests that students use English as much as possible while at SCA (except when studying or practicing another foreign language studied by the student).

Out of common courtesy in American culture, when in a group of people who do not all speak the same non-English language, English should be the exclusive language used by all members of the group. Speaking in a language other than English when all listeners cannot understand can be interpreted as rude and disrespectful in American culture and may result in alienating people from each other. A student who is not willing to participate in the SCA English speaking learning environment cannot expect to remain a student in good standing in the SCA Homestay Program.

Students who do not demonstrate ample progress and/or are not cooperative in participating in the English language learning culture in the SCA Homestay Program may not be invited to return to SCA the following semester.

English Language Use At School:

Not speaking in English is strictly prohibited in all classrooms (except for foreign language classrooms where the language being studied must be spoken). Similarly, English should be the only language used in any setting where others are present who do not speak the language. In order to effectively foster a learning environment for students learning English, this policy is strictly enforced and subject to disciplinary action by the administration. This means that conversations occurring at school in the presence of others who do not speak the same language should occur in English (i.e. cafeteria, hallways, classrooms, chapel, etc.). Students may seek special permission from a classroom teacher to speak in their native language if they believe the situation warrants it. Teachers have the authority to grant or deny this permission to the students.

English Language Use At Home:

Student communication with parents (via phone or computer) in a student's native language is allowed. Homestay parents have the authority to ask a student to move to another location if the student's conversation with his or her parent(s) is interfering with the home environment. Otherwise, students are expected to speak in English at all times while at home or with the homestay family. Homestay parents have the authority to discipline students for violating this policy at their discretion.

If multiple international students speaking the same non-English language live in the same home, they are not allowed to converse in their native language without the express permission of the homestay parents. These students are to speak English at all times while at home or with the homestay family.

Home Parents:

Home parents are to communicate directly with homestay parents or the International Homestay Program Coordinator for official business regarding their student.

Home Phone Use:

A home phone is defined as the landline telephone provided by the homestay family. Not all families use landline telephones, so do not assume that your homestay family will have one available. If a home phone is available, it is the student's responsibility to establish with the homestay parents when and how it is acceptable for the student to use this phone. It is highly recommended that students refrain from using this phone to make foreign calls to family or friends in another country. Students should schedule appropriate times with the homestay family for international parents to call using this phone line. The student will be held responsible for any charges incurred through their personal use of the home phone.

Students are encouraged to utilize Skype or other social media communication instead of the telephone to communicate with family or friends in other countries. These communication methods are often free of charge and utilize the internet over phone lines. However, students are responsible to establish with the homestay parents when and how it is acceptable for the student to communicate with family or friends using these methods.

Cell Phone:

A personal cell phone **must be provided** to each international student by his or her parents. The cell phone **must be in working order at all times**. Cost will vary for the year depending on the service plan. Internet may be accessed from the homestay family residence for up to one hour per night. If more time is

necessary to complete school assignments, permission must be asked for from the homestay parent. The homestay family may limit internet and cell phone usage if they feel it is interfering with academic progress or hindering social connections.

Many American homes utilize cell phones for family communication. The student is responsible to discuss with the homestay family what kind of use of a cell phone is expected. The student is responsible to pay for his or her own cell phone plan and/or use. The student should discuss the purchase of any cell phone plan, device, and/or accessories with the homestay family prior to making such a purchase. Many US companies require a two-year commitment, though there are also prepaid phones and alternate plans that allow an individual to purchase minutes as needed. Please discuss any purchases in advance with the homestay family before signing up for any agreement.

Homestay families reserve the right to monitor a student's cell phone use and may restrict the student's cell phone use in a manner consistent with the Family Covenant. The student should discuss any expectations regarding cell phone use with the homestay family upon arrival into the home. The student needs to clearly understand when and where cell phone use is deemed acceptable or unacceptable.

Students' usage of cell phones is **very limited** at school and in the homestay family. **All cell phones and computers will be charged in a public area overnight.** No computers or cell phones are allowed in student rooms overnight.

Dress/Attire:

Modest attire is expected at all times, whether at home or at school. Please consult the SCA Student and Family Handbook for specific guidelines regarding dress at school and school-related functions. Failure to comply with these expectations will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the SCA student and Family Handbook.

When in the home or involved in family life, students should dress in a manner consistent with homestay parent expectations. Homestay parents reserve the right to decide what is acceptable or unacceptable dress while living with their family. The student should always be sensitive to other members of the household as well as to family values. Clothing is to be purchased by the student and it is not the responsibility of the homestay family to purchase clothes for the student. However, any clothing purchased and worn should be consistent with family and school guidelines.

Continual disregard for school and/or homestay family policies regarding dress may result in additional disciplinary action including contract status and/or expulsion from SCA.

Chores/Domestic Duties:

The student may be expected to participate in the family domestic structure, including assigned chores around the home. The student is not to be a servant to the home, but is to act with a heart of service to others in the home by doing what is expected to help around the home. The student should offer to assist with duties such as washing dishes, cleaning their room, doing laundry, etc. Some families may assign specific household duties to each child in the home. Specific domestic duty expectations should usually be communicated through the Family Covenant. Homestay students are expected to participate in this household structure with the appropriate attitude.

A student who feels he or she is being asked to do an excessive amount of work should first appeal directly to the homestay family. If the student continues to feel unfairly treated, he or she may appeal to the International Homestay Program Coordinator.

Safety:

Students are required to wear appropriate safety equipment when riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc. or when participating in activities that typically require some safety equipment to be worn. Students are not permitted to have any type of weapon in the home. Students are not permitted to purchase any type of weapon while a homestay student at SCA. Students found to be in violation of this policy will receive disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from SCA. If a student is unsure whether or not an item would be characterized as a weapon, he or she should consult the International Homestay Program Coordinator prior to entering the homestay.

The SCA administration reserves the right to conduct a search of any and all personal property belonging to the student both in the home and at school. Homestay parents may confiscate any personal property belonging to the student and may request a search to be conducted by the SCA administration. The student's parents will be notified of any searches in a timely manner, and students are allowed to be present at the time of the search. Searches are to be conducted by no less than two members of the SCA administration. Students who refuse to have a search conducted may be dismissed from SCA.

Valuable Items:

Spartanburg Christian Academy highly recommends that students leave all valuable items (e.g., jewelry) at home in their home countries, if possible. However, certain valuable items may be used in daily life (e.g., technology). These items should be kept in a secure location. Large sums of cash should not be kept in the home. Large sums of money should be kept in a personal checking account that the student can access through a debit card or local bank. Homestay families will assist students in opening checking accounts if necessary.

Damage to the Home:

The student is responsible for any damage caused to the homestay family's property (furniture, walls, flooring, etc.). The student must settle these damages with the homestay family directly. These situations will be mediated by the SCA administration, if necessary. If a student causes intentional damage to the home, he/she will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from SCA. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for the property of others.

Cooking:

Any student cooking should be done in the kitchen with the express permission of the homestay parents. No cooking is permitted in a student's room. Clean-up must occur immediately after meals, and any leftovers or other food must be kept in a properly sealed container and refrigerated as appropriate. Students must consult with the homestay parents and gain permission before using any cooking utensils or appliances. All student cooking should be done under the supervision of the homestay parents.

Financial Support

The student should have sufficient financial support to ensure his or her well-being during the entire program. Parents must submit proof of a credit ATM VISA card in the student's name with at least a \$2,000 credit limit for expenses throughout the year. If it is preferred, the student may open a bank account in the U.S. and provide wire transfer instructions to their parents. Proof of a deposit of \$2,000 will need to be provided to the International Homestay Program Coordinator.

Room and board are included in the tuition and fees. The student will need to purchase school uniforms and school supplies. The student may wish to purchase items such as clothing, room decorations, school lunches, and music lessons. He or she may also wish to attend banquets or other entertainment activities. These expenses would be paid for by the extra money students bring with them on the ATM VISA card or additional funds sent to the student during the school year by his or her parents.

The student and his or her parents must pay bills promptly. Full tuition for the year is due by the date on the contract.

The student is not permitted to borrow money.

If for any reason the student is unable to participate in the program, a full refund is not guaranteed. The refund amount will depend on the timing and circumstances of the withdrawal.

Bedtime and Quiet Hours:

Students are expected to follow their homestay family's bedtimes as well as respect quiet or study hours in the home. Students should understand that each family may vary in expectations regarding study or quiet hours and bedtimes. Some families require students to be in bed with lights out by a specific time in the evening. Students are to respect whatever the family requirements are for their homestay. Any exceptions to the family's policy regarding study or quiet hours and bedtimes must be appealed in advance directly to the homestay parents. Computers and cell phones are to be charged in a public area overnight.

Visitors to the Homestay:

Homestay parents must grant permission in advance in order to host visitors of the student. Visitors of the opposite gender cannot stay overnight under any circumstances and are not allowed in the student bedroom area. Out-of-town visitors (e.g., parents, siblings, family, and friends) are expected to obtain their own lodging outside of the homestay home unless the homestay parents specifically invite the visitors to stay in the homestay home.

Students who have visitors coming to Spartanburg are required to notify their homestay parents and the International Homestay Program Coordinator of the visit as early as possible. Visits by the student's family and friends while in the program require prior approval by the International Homestay Program Coordinator. Visitors should not impact the student's normal activities (e.g., school, studying, and other activities). Any alteration in schedule due to visitors should be discussed with the homestay parents in advance.

Socializing and Dating:

Spartanburg Christian Academy requires a no-touch policy between the sexes at all times. This applies to hand-holding, kissing, hugging, etc. Additionally, students should maintain proper postures and positions

while standing, sitting, or leaning in each other's presence so as not to reveal themselves to the opposite gender. Any non-homestay student socializing with or dating a homestay student must abide by the following homestay program guidelines.

Socializing is a description for any time a group consisting of both male and female students spends time together whether simply talking or participating in an activity. All socializing after dark must be in well-lit public areas, and it is not a time for male and female students to be isolated or alone together. Students are accountable to their homestay parents regarding the amount of time spent with the opposite gender, and homestay parents have the authority to limit a student's socializing time when appropriate and as outlined in the Family Covenant.

Dating is any kind of formal, planned socializing involving students of both genders. Homestay students age 16 and younger or first year students are limited to dating in group-type activities where three or more students meet somewhere like a park, a restaurant, an approved activity, or a school-sponsored function. Students are not granted the privilege of non-group dates simply because of their age. Each student must earn this privilege by demonstrating responsibility in the area of relationships.

Returning students age 17 and older are allowed the privilege of non-group dates with the approval of their parents, homestay parents, and SCA administration. Homestay parents reserve the right to restrict dating according to their Family Covenant and family standards, even for a student age 17 or older. The administration of SCA also reserves the right to restrict dating for any homestay student.

The student will abstain from all sexual activity. Serious romantic involvement or dating is strongly discouraged. The student may not take any action that may change the nature of his/her life (i.e., become engaged or married).

Harassment:

The SCA homestay program protects the right of every student to have an environment that respects human dignity. Harassment and/or abuse of students are contrary to biblical principles, morally wrong, and illegal. The homestay program expressly forbids sexual harassment (opposite or same-sex) and any threatening/offensive conduct or expressions with respect to gender, race, color, national origin, or age.

Harassment can include a pattern of remarks, gestures, jokes, physical contact, teasing, excessive attention, bullying (including cyber-bullying), and/or pictures or written material that a person finds personally threatening, derogatory, offensive, or unwanted. Sometimes individuals responsible for these actions may not know that they are offensive. A student should tell the person responsible for the harassment and a SCA staff member if the student feels that he or she is being harassed.

Any student initiating or persisting in any form of harassment and/or abuse (verbal, physical, or visual) is subject to immediate discipline by the SCA administration up to and including dismissal from SCA.

If a student finds the homestay environment hostile or offensive, if a student believes he or she has been harassed and/or abused by another student or person, or if a student knows someone who has been harassed and/or abused, a prompt report of the harassment and/or abuse to the International Homestay Program Coordinator is expected. If a student is experiencing any sort of relational stress or difficulty, he or she will need to immediately disclose the incident to the International Homestay Program Coordinator. All reports will be promptly and thoroughly reviewed and investigated in as confidential a manner as circumstances permit, and the appropriate action will be taken. If a student is dissatisfied with the

investigation or action taken, he or she should bring the matter directly to the International Homestay Program Coordinator.

Meals:

Students should expect to be provided three meals per day by their homestay families, including lunches on school days. Students must make lunch arrangements with their homestay families upon their arrival to the home. Some families may choose to send a bag lunch with their student while others may prefer to place money in the student's account to purchase lunch at school. Homestay families are only expected to provide a reasonable amount of food for lunch for the student. Students who eat large quantities of food should expect to assist the homestay family in buying some of their own food or using personal funds to purchase lunches at school.

When homestay families eat together, the student is expected to participate in the meal as a family member. Students may volunteer to help prepare some meals for the family and may request specific food on occasion. However, meals are determined by the homestay parents in a manner consistent with their Family Covenant and household expectations. Students are not to avoid family meals, whether at home or "eating out."

Students are responsible to make arrangements with the homestay parents to determine which of the family's foods are acceptable for the student to consume as snacks. Students are responsible to clarify the household expectations for snacks and meals upon their arrival into the home.

Church Attendance:

Students are required to attend church with their homestay family. Some families may choose to attend church functions on a more frequent basis than others. Students are expected to attend church and church-related functions in a manner that is consistent with family expectations. Students are not to make alternate arrangements for church without first consulting their homestay parents. Students should be attending the same church as their homestay family. Students who wish to visit another church on occasion may seek permission from their homestay parents and must make appropriate arrangements with their homestay parents. Church attendance should be regular and is not optional. Students may not make up excuses in order to avoid attending church.

Technology:

Students are required to register all technology devices (e.g., computer, iPads, iPods, cell phones, etc.) with the homestay parents and the International Homestay Program Coordinator upon their arrival. Any student found possessing a device that has not be registered with the homestay parents and school will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from SCA. The computer and cell phone settings **must be in English.**

When accessing the internet, students are required to connect through the homestay family's internet (wifi) connection only. Students are not allowed to connect to the internet through any other means (e.g., 3G, 4G, mifi, etc.) while in the home. Students are expected to leave the door open when using technology. Homestay parents reserve the right to determine appropriate study areas and areas where technology devices are on or off-limits to the student. Use in the student's room will be limited and regular use will be in a general living area of the house. Homestay parents reserve the right to monitor all computer activity through the use of internet filters or other filtering programs as outlined in the Family Covenant. In

appropriate use of the internet by the student, including viewing pornography or visiting questionable websites is not acceptable. Such activity may result in dismissal from SCA.

Students are required to turn off and turn in all technology devices to the homestay parents at the prescribed family bedtime (if one is prescribed in the Family Covenant) or 11 p.m. (whichever is earlier). Students may occasionally request permission from the homestay parents for a late night with technology for academic purposes. Homestay parents reserved the right to grant or deny such a privilege as they see fit. The homestay family may limit internet and cell phone usage to certain hours of the day if they feel it is interfering with academic progress or with face-to-face social connections. Students are responsible to follow all family guidelines regarding technology use as prescribed in the Family Covenant.

Vehicle Use:

Students are not allowed to possess or drive a vehicle while in the homestay environment. Transportation of the homestay student should be provided by the homestay family. This requires advanced planning on the student's part as the homestay family needs to plan ahead to meet the needs of all family members. Homestay students may only ride in vehicles driven by an SCA homestay parent, a student driver from their personal homestay home, or another school-approved driver. Homestay students are not permitted to ride with any other drivers without the express permission of their homestay parents and the International Homestay Program Coordinator. The student may not operate a motorized vehicle including the homestay family's vehicle or any friend's vehicle.

Students who desire to pursue a South Carolina driver's license may do so only with the express written consent of their parents, homestay parents, and the approval of the International Homestay Program Coordinator. Students who are approved to pursue a South Carolina driver's license must make appropriate arrangements with their homestay parents to enroll in an approved driver training course. Any costs associated with driver training and pursuing a license are the responsibility of the student.

Students are not allowed to drive outside of an approved driver training course. Students may not own or possess a personal vehicle while enrolled at SCA. Students who have a license are required to surrender their license to the International Homestay Program Coordinator during the school year.

Medical Forms:

A completed medical authorization and treatment form, an Athletic Health Screening Form, if necessary, and immunizations form must be received by the International Homestay Program Coordinator prior to the start of the school year.

Medications:

Students must share with their host family any medication they bring from their home country to take on a regular or occasional basis.

Medical Insurance:

Students are provided with medical insurance by SCA or their agency. The insurance coverage extends through the entire school year. If any student plans to remain in the United States during the summer, medical insurance coverage must be extended at an additional cost to the student.

The medical insurance provided offers excellent coverage of most physician visits and other accident or sickness medical expenses. However, medical insurance does not usually cover 100% of all medical bills in the case of large or expensive medical procedures. A full explanation of medical benefits is available upon request from the International Homestay Program Coordinator. Costs incurred due to pre-existing conditions will be the responsibility of the home parents.

Please note that all medical forms must be completed as part of the application process. Failure to provide the required medical forms to the school during the application process may result in the student not being allowed to begin classes on schedule.

Changing Families:

Changing homestay families is not generally permitted during the school year. Homestay students and families are asked to make a one-year commitment to the homestay situation at the beginning of each school year. Homestay situations are reviewed by the International Homestay Program Coordinator in the spring of each school year in order to make timely placements for the following school year. Students who desire a change in their homestay for the following school year must appeal to the International Homestay Program Coordinator either verbally or in writing by the end of April. Changing families, even between school years, is generally discouraged.

There are extenuating circumstances that do allow for the changing of families during the course of a school year. A student seeking an immediate change in homestay family during the course of the school year must submit a written appeal to the International Homestay Program Coordinator. Circumstances warranting a mid-year change may include but are not limited to harassment, abuse, ongoing and irresolvable family conflict, life changes in the homestay family's situation, etc.

The SCA administration reserves the right to grant or refuse a student's desire to change families both during the school year and over the summer. All homestay family assignments are made at the discretion of the SCA administration and the SCA administration reserves the right to remove students from a homestay situation immediately and without warning, if necessary.

Students who demonstrate an inability to adapt to homestay situations may not be asked to return to SCA or may be dismissed from SCA at any time if deemed necessary by the SCA administration. Students who regularly request or seek changes in homestay family placements may not be asked to return to SCA or may be dismissed from SCA at any time if deemed necessary by the SCA administration.

Sports Eligibility:

The student's acceptance to SCA does not guarantee athletic eligibility. An eligibility ruling is made for each individual case by SCA's Athletic Director. International students are usually NOT eligible for varsity sports their first academic year, but may participate in school-sponsored extra-curricular activities, trips, clubs, and fine arts programs.

Employment:

International students on an F-1 visa are not generally allowed to work in the United States off campus. If an international student is considering employment, that student must first consult with the International Homestay Program Coordinator to ensure that any such work would not endanger his or her visa status. SCA does not offer employment to students during the school year. Homestay students are generally

discouraged from seeking any employment and should not do so without the express permission of their homestay parents and SCA administration.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Use:

The student is not allowed to buy, sell, possess, or use illegal drugs. Smoking or the use of any tobacco products is forbidden. The drinking of any alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine, is expressly forbidden. United States law strictly forbids the consumption of alcohol for everyone under age 21. The viewing or possession of pornography is strictly forbidden. Participation in any of these activities would likely result in an immediate expulsion and return home.

Violence:

The student must not commit or take part in any act of violence against another person or property.

Tattoos/Piercings:

The student is not allowed to get any new tattoos or body piercings while participating in the homestay program.

Hitchhiking:

The student is not permitted to hitchhike, whether alone or with companions.

High Risk Activities:

The student is forbidden from participating in any dangerous sports or activities such as hang gliding, bungee jumping, and sky diving, and/or an activity that SCA defines as a high risk activity. The home family will accept full responsibility from any situation arising from the student's involvement in a forbidden activity.

Publications:

The student's parents give SCA the right to use the student's photograph and/or video image for reproduction in any medium for the purposes of publication, advertising, display, or editorial use. No personal information will be publicized.

Vacations, Trips, & Emergencies

Students are **not** permitted to take a trip alone without adult (25 years or older) supervision. **Under no circumstances should students be left alone overnight.**

- Students are not allowed to travel alone by bus or train. Students may travel alone by airplane; however, arrangements must be made for an approved adult to provide transportation for the student to and from the airport.
- SCA reserves the right to reject any travel proposal that involves "high risk activity". These activities include, but are not limited to: hunting of any kind, handling firearms or any activity involving the use of firearms or weapons, skydiving, bungee jumping, and operating motor vehicles (ATVs, snow mobiles, cars, boats, aircraft, etc...). If you have any questions about whether an activity is considered "high risk", please contact the International Homestay Program Coordinator.

- SCA discourages frequent or extensive personal visits to or from friends or relatives during the program. It is, however, understandable and natural for international students to wish to visit relatives or friends of their natural families while they are in the United States. Such visits may be permitted if they do not interfere with the primary obligation of the international students to their host families and schools, and if proper permission is obtained from the International Homestay Program Coordinator and from the student's natural parents.
- Since the first months of the program are an important adjustment period for the students and the host families, visits to or from friends and family should take place after this period, and it is recommended that such visits take place toward the end of the program.
- Students will visit home during the prolonged break at Christmas unless special permission is given to stay. However, most holidays will be spent with the host family.
- The International Homestay Program Coordinator's approval is required for student overnight stays outside the host family's community.
- Students are not allowed to travel to their home country, other than during Christmas break for returning students, prior to the end of their program **unless it does not interfere with school**. Occasional exceptions may be made to return home in cases of death or serious illness of an immediate family member.
- The International Homestay Program Coordinator will decide if the trip is permissible. Factors that determine whether the student can go include school grades, overall attitude, whether the mode of transportation is safe (a young driver is not), how safe the destination is, and whether they are staying with a responsible adult (25 years or older).
- If any changes are made to the trip plan, e.g. in mode of transportation, destination, travel partner, or the days going on the trip, the trip must be resubmitted for approval.

Overnight Travel with The Host Family

- **Any time** a student wants to travel overnight outside of their host community, but within the United States, with their host parents, the student must advise the International Homestay Program Coordinator of their travel plans in advance.
- **Any time** the student travels **outside of the United States** with the host family, the student must submit a request to the International Homestay Program Coordinator:
 - Travel Proposal Form for Outside of the United States
 - Natural Parent Release for Travel with the Host Family Outside the United States

NOTE: If a student is planning to travel outside of the United States, he or she must contact the International Homestay Program Coordinator regarding any visa forms that would need to be signed in order to re-enter the United States. Students must abide by the visa restrictions of the country they plan to visit. It is the student's responsibility to investigate such visa requirements with the help of the International Homestay Program Coordinator. Spartanburg Christian Academy does not bear any responsibility for information or procedures relative to the visa requirements of the destination country.

Overnight Travel with An Adult Other Than The Host Parent

- **Any time** a student wants to travel overnight within their host community e.g. on a sleep-over, this is permitted as long as **the host parents know the parents at the home in which the student will stay and student has informed the Homestay Coordinator**. Sleepovers are permitted without any documentation for **up to two consecutive nights**. If a student intends to stay at another home in their host community for more than two nights consecutively, the student must submit:

- Travel Proposal Form
- Host Parent Permission Form
- **Any time** the host family does not know the parents at the home where the student will stay for a sleep-over, the student must:
 - Get permission from the International Homestay Program Coordinator
- **Any time** the student plans to travel overnight outside the host community with someone who is not the host parent (e.g. another family, church youth group, etc.), the student must submit:
 - Travel Proposal Form
 - Host Parent Permission Form
 - Independent Party receiving Acceptance Form for Independent Student Travel
- **Any time** the student plans to travel overnight outside of the United States; with someone who is not the host parent, the student must submit:
 - Travel Proposal Form
 - Host Parent Permission Form
 - Independent Party Receiving Acceptance Form for Independent Student Travel
 - Natural Parent Release for Travel with School, Church, Clubs, or any other Independent Party during the Program

NOTE: If a student is planning to travel outside of the United States, he or she must contact the International Homestay Program Coordinator regarding any visa forms that would need to be signed in order to re-enter the United States. Students must abide by the visa restrictions of the country they plan to visit. **It is the student's responsibility to investigate such visa requirements** with the help of the International Homestay Program Coordinator. Spartanburg Christian Academy does not bear any responsibility for information or procedures relative to the visa requirements of the destination country.

Overnight Travel with the Natural Parents

NOTE: Visits with the natural parents are discouraged until the end of the student's program. Students are not permitted to return to their home country during their stay unless there are exceptional circumstances (e.g. an extended break over Christmas or a death in the immediate family). Travel to their home country would need to be specifically approved by the International Homestay Program Coordinator.

- Any time the student wants to travel overnight with their natural parents within the United States during the school year, the student must submit:
 - Travel Proposal Form
 - Host Parent Permission Form
 - Natural Parent Release for Travel with Natural Parents

NOTE: If a student is planning to travel outside of the United States, he or she must contact the International Homestay Program Coordinator regarding any visa forms that would need to be signed in order to re-enter the United States. Students must abide by the visa restrictions of the country they plan to visit. **It is the student's responsibility to investigate such visa requirements** with the help of the International Homestay Program Coordinator. Spartanburg Christian Academy does not bear any responsibility for information or procedures relative to the visa requirements of the destination country.

Each student should be in possession of his or her own original I-20 form.

The policies and procedures of the Spartanburg Christian Academy International Homestay Program are subject to revision and change at any time as deemed appropriate by the SCA administration. Individuals will be notified of such revisions and changes in a timely manner, should they occur.

Handbook Commitment Form

Please initial next to each statement if you agree, and sign where indicated.

As a Spartanburg Christian Academy International student, I

_____ Understand and commit to obey the biblical and community standards set forth in the *SCA Student & Family Handbook* and the *SCA International Homestay Program Student Handbook* without complaint.

_____ Commit to do my best in all my studies.

_____ Commit to maintain a high standard in accordance with the social life, entertainment, dress code, and home living standards outlined in the handbooks.

_____ Agree to participate in various forms of support services designed to help each IHP student achieve his or her academic, personal, spiritual, and social potential. These support activities may include advisor meetings, study groups, orientation programs, mentoring, social activities, counseling services, etc.

_____ Agree to follow the rules contained in the handbooks regarding appropriate technology usage.

_____ Commit to be a student of respect, responsibility, and integrity in all areas of life.

Student's Printed Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____