

Dear Byron Center Christian School Supporters,

BCCS has been blessed by God with over 100 years of Christian education. Over those 100+ years, while the world has changed tremendously, BCCS has remained faithful to our commitment of providing an education for our children centered on excellence, rooted in God's Word, preparing them for lifelong service in God's Kingdom.

In the spring of 2019, the BCCS School Board began work to transition the school's model of governance as part of its strategic plan. There have been several communications and three town hall meetings over that time related to these changes, which you can find summaries of at [bccs.org/governance](http://bccs.org/governance).

For those who are not familiar with the current governance model, BCCS was founded on a "membership" style of governance. This model was organized with the Society's members at the top of the chain of governance. The members of the Society are responsible for selecting nominees for the School Board, setting strategic direction, executing significant corporate decision making – such as approving the budget and tuition scale - and holding the school accountable in fulfilling its vision and mission. To be a member of the Society today, one must either be a current school tuition payer or a confessing adult church member who gives annually to the school.

As part of the latest review of the school's strategic plan, the School Board proposed that an official shift in the governance model take place - from a membership-governed institution to a directorship-governed institution. This change was proposed for two primary reasons:

1. It legally recognizes how the school has already been operating for the past few decades. When BCCS was established, the societal model of governance was both relevant and effective due to the high participation of members in the Society, lack of other school leadership structures, and the limited risk of outside influence. However, as BCCS has grown, the school has added administrative structures, a School Board, and school leadership that today runs the day-to-day operations of the school. In turn, very few current members of our Society engage with the school in a governing capacity, which reflects a lack of relevance for our societal governing structure.
2. It helps protect the school from the growing risks of remaining a society-governed institution. With such ease of membership, combined with consistent low attendance at Society meetings, the core mission, purpose, and direction of BCCS may be left vulnerable to alteration by a small group of Society members. A society-model potentially could enable individuals who do not possess an understanding of the school's strategic priorities or those opposed to the school's fundamental mission to make decisions, approve/disapprove strategic goals, and to potentially move the school in a direction that is in opposition to advancing the school's founding mission.

Over the past year, the BCCS School Board has continued to review the comments and suggested edits from our town hall meetings. We have also met with BCCS community members who had voiced their concerns about potential governance changes. Thank you to all that we met with and to those who provided constructive feedback and input throughout this process.

The primary concern we've heard is that the administration and School Board would now have the power to take the school in a different direction. We do not believe that to be the case for several reasons:

1. The proposed Bylaws would continue to protect the fundamental purpose and beliefs of the school. As stated in Article XIII of the proposed Bylaws, changes may only be made by the unanimous vote of the Board, and the provisions related to the school's Foundation on Reformed Confession and Purpose are not to be amendable.
2. Board members will continue to term out and new Board members who meet the stated eligibility requirements will continue to require affirmation of supporters of the school at the annual meeting in order to be voted onto the board. See Articles IV and IX of the proposed Bylaws. This helps ensure the Board doesn't turn into a "club" of a short list of individuals.
3. Board votes on day-to-day business will continue to require approval of a majority of the Board members present at a meeting, helping deter a small number of Board members from altering the day-to-day operations of the school. See Article IV of the proposed Bylaws.

As a next step, we will be taking a Society-wide vote on whether to pass this governance change by amending the Articles of Incorporation and adopting Bylaws to replace the current Constitution. Copies of the proposed Restated Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are available online along with paper copies in the school office. A two-thirds supermajority affirmation is required to pass the amendments. Voting will begin May 15 at the annual society meeting with absentee ballots available electronically at [www.bccs.org/governance](http://www.bccs.org/governance). Paper copy absentee ballots will also be available at the school office. Only current members of the BCCS Society will be allowed to vote, one vote per person. Voting will end at 5pm EST on May 19. Votes will be validated by May 26 and final results will be shared publicly by May 30.

We thank the members of the Society for their ongoing support and commitment to BCCS and for the prayers for the administration and Board as we seek to lead the school forward with God's blessing and provision. We'd also like to thank the following School Board members who have been part of this governance transition project since 2019 and have supported making the change to a directorship model.

Kyle Kuipers

Kevin Veltman

Ben DeMots

Blaine Brumels

Sarah VanderHart

Brent Haverdink

Steve Marcusse

Troy Wiers

Matt Fennema

Tara Schreur

Matt Bussa

Doug VandenBerg

Betsy Feyen

Tim Padding

Brad Kreider

Aaron Sal

Bruce DeBoer

Sheila VanderWeide

Deb Blacquiere

Rick Lindhout

Andy Rysdam

Carla Fles

Chris Prins

David Hop

Grant Zondervan

Adam Burgess

Mike Wolf

In His Service,

The Byron Center Christian School Board