

Boca Raton Christian School Style Guide

Purpose: School documents should demonstrate consistency of style and form. This is **not** an inflexible standard that you will be held up to. Rather, it's a reference to pull out at those times when you're not sure which phrase or punctuation to use. Please refer to this guide for future projects. This is a work in progress; please feel free to send me additions or feedback.

~Ruth Tennes

School or Church Name and Abbreviation

- Use **Boca Raton Christian School, Boca Christian, or BRCS.**
- When you need to abbreviate the church's name, use **Boca Community**, not BRCC.
- **Awana** has only the first letter capitalized.

Locations and Phone Numbers

- The address of the school and church is 470 NW 4th Ave, Boca Raton, FL 33432. Use this address even when referring to an event in the Sanctuary or RAC. It is the **front door** for the school and church.
- Use 315 NW 4th St, Boca Raton, FL 33432 as **mailing** address.
- Use 470 NW 4th Ave, Boca Raton, FL 33432 for **packages**.
- Use the term **Sanctuary**, not Auditorium or Worship Center.
- Use the term **Ministry Center**, not School Building.
- Use the term **Media Center**, not Library.
- Write **phone numbers** like this:
561-391-2727 561-391-2727 x362

Dates and Times

- Use these date formats:

Tuesday, September 10	Tues, Sept. 10
September 10	Sept. 10
Tuesday, September 10, 2013	Sept. 10, 2013
September 10, 2013	9/10/13
Website uses three letters of month	Sep and three letters of day Tue
- Avoid hyphens, as in 9-10-13
- Use this time format: **8:00 AM**, not 8:00 a.m., 8:00a, 8:00 A.M., or 8:00 am.

Spelling, Capitalization and Punctuation

- Capitalize personal pronouns that refer to God, like this: God shows us **His** power.
Not like this: God shows us his power.

The exception is if you are quoting directly from a Bible translation that does not follow this style, such as the NIV. Quote the verse as it appears in the translation and give the version in parentheses, such as (NIV) or (KJV), etc.

- Use **1 Samuel** and **2 Corinthians**, not I Samuel and II Corinthians.
- For sports teams, use **Girls Basketball**, not Girls' Basketball, etc.

- Use a single space after the period at the end of a sentence, not a double space.
- In headings and titles, capitalize the first word, the last word, plus all other words except **a, an, and, at, but, by, for, in, nor, of, on, or, so, the, to, up, and yet**.
- **Italicize titles of books.** Do not underline. Also use italics for movie titles, DVD, and CD titles.
- Do not capitalize email addresses or website URLs. For example: Use **bocachristian.org**, not BocaChristian.org
- **Capitalization** – In general, **avoid unnecessary capital letters**. For example: He works as a **physician assistant**. However, the abbreviation is capitalized (PA). They moved back to the **east** coast. (adj)
- **Years** – Use an s without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries (the 1980s, the 1800s). When omitting the first two numbers of the year, use an apostrophe ('98). School years should be written as 1998-1999.
- A **comma** is needed after the last item in a date. For example: Commencement was held on June 18, 2020, at Boca Raton Christian School. Commencement was held on June 18 at Boca Raton Christian School. (no comma)
- A **comma** is needed following an address (city and state). For example: He lives in Boston, Massachusetts, where he works at a bank.

Common Grammatical Errors

- The object of the preposition requires the objective case of a pronoun.
Wrong: It's a big issue for **she** and **I**. **Right:** It's a big issue for **her** and **me**.
Wrong: She gave a gift to John and **I**. **Right:** She gave a gift to John and **me**.
- **Commas and periods** always go inside of quotation marks, not outside.
- **Commas** – Use a comma to complete a quotation (“The school strives for academic excellence,” she said.). Also use a comma to introduce a complete one-sentence quote (She said, “The school strives for academic excellence.”). Include the serial comma before the words and / or. Red, white, and blue not red, white and blue.
- Use **semi-colons** to separate items in a series that already contain commas in the items. Ex: We study reading, spelling, and phonics; multiplication, division, and fractions; etc.
- Please follow the general punctuation principles that we expect from our students, such as placing quotations marks around song titles, capitalizing words (except for articles) in all titles, etc.
- **Quotations** – Open-quote marks and close-quote marks are used to surround the exact words of a quote (“I will not stay,” he replied; “I do not object,” he said, “to the tenor of the report.”). Place quotation marks outside periods and commas.

Numbers

3-ring binder – Hyphenated, not 3 ring binder.

Numbers – Generally, spell out numbers below 12; use figures for 12 and above. Spell out first through ninth when indicating a sequence. If you must begin a sentence with a number or year,

spell it out (Twelve students received the award). Numbers from twenty-one to twenty-nine are hyphenated. See also **Symbols**.

A

Afterschool – One word when referring to the afterschool program. Two words when referring to a time (The dance took place after school).

Alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae, alum, alums – Use alumnus (alumni in the plural) when referring to a man who has attended a school. Use alumna (alumnae in the plural) for similar references to a woman.

alumnus - singular male

alumni - plural male group or gender neutral male/female plural group

alumna - singular female

alumnae - plural female group

alum - informal short form for alumnus and alumna

alums - informal short form of alumni and almnae

AM, PM – Upper case without periods. This is the institutional style for BRCS. The abbreviations are to be used only with time stated in numbers, not in words. Eight in the morning is okay, but eight AM is not.

Associate degree – Not associate's degree.

Athletic department – Not athletics department.

B

B.A., (Bachelor of Arts), **B.S.** (Bachelor of Science), **M.A.**, (Master of Arts), **PhD.**, (doctorate)

Bachelor's degree – Not baccalaureate or bachelor degree. Capitalize Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science when referring to a specific degree.

Back-to-School – Hyphenated when used as an adjective, as in Back-to-School Night

Biblical – Lower case unless it's the first word.

Busing, buses – Not busses.

C

Cell phone – Two words.

Child care – Two words.

Chromebooks – Capitalized and one word.

Class of (year) – Capitalize when referring to a specific graduating class (Class of 1973 reunion).

Classwork – One word.

Course work – Two words.

Co-worker – Hyphenate.

Course or subject name – Capitalize only when referring to the name of the course, whether the name has a number or not, such as American History. When referring to a general subject, use lower case, such as, “He teaches history.” The exception to this is any course or reference to a language, nationality, or sacred text, which are always capitalized. For example, a course is British Literature and a reference is, “I teach English.” Note that sophomore English is not the name of a course, so “sophomore” is not capitalized, but “English” is because it is the name of a language. See also **Grade levels**.

Course numbers – Use figures and capitalize the subject when used with a numeral (History 3)
Curriculum – This is a singular noun; the plural is **curricula** or **curriculum**s. (While both forms are correct, the first form listed is the preferred.)

D

Database – One word.

Data – A plural noun. Singular is **datum**.

Disk; diskette – Not disc for computer-related references.

Doctorate – Doctorate degree, not doctor’s degree.

E

eBook – Not e-book.

Email – Not e-mail. Always lowercase. When listing an email address, use all lowercase letters

Extracurricular – No hyphen.

F

Foreign language – Do not use this term; the preferred term is “world language.”

Full-time – Hyphenate when used as an adjective (full-time student).

Fundraiser (event or person), **fundraising** (adj.) – One word in all cases.

G

Gospel – Do not capitalize when it is used as a common noun. If it is part of the title of a work (like the Gospel of John or the Gospels), then it is capitalized.

Grade levels – Elementary grades should be called **Grade 1**, **Grade 2**, etc., always capitalized. With the phrase “in the second grade,” etc., use lower case. To show a range, use **Grades 1-5**, etc. Use the following for kindergarten and below: **PreK3-12th Grade**, **K-12**, **PreK3**, **PreK4**, **VPK4**, **K5**. **PK3**, **PK4**, and **PK3-12** are also acceptable.

H

Halftime – One word when referring to intermission in a sports event. When referring to terms of employment or enrollment, it is hyphenated, **half-time**. (Merriam-Webster)

Handbells – One word.

Hands-on – Use a hyphen; do not put quotes around it.

Health care – Two words.

Homeroom (adj., n.) – One word.

Home page – Two words.

Homeschool, **homeschooled**, **homeschooler** – One word.

Hyphens – Hyphens are used strictly for hyphenating words or line breaks. If a word may be used with or without a hyphen, preferred use is to omit the hyphen, such as schoolwide.

Back-to-School (adj)

Hands-on

Ten-year anniversary (adj)

Co-worker

Up-to-date

Full-time

One-year-old child (adj)

I

Initials – Use periods and omit spaces between initials (E.B. White, not E. B. White).

Internet – Always capitalize.

K

Kindergarten – Not capitalized unless it's the name of the course. See explanation under **Course**.

M

Make up (v.), **makeup** (n., adj.) – No hyphen in the noun or adjective form (The teacher scheduled a makeup exam; The couple decided to make up.).

Master's degree – Master's degree *in* education, not master's degree *of* education. Capitalize when referring to a specific degree (Master of Arts). **M.A.**, (Master of Arts) – no space after first period.

Mission trip – Not missions trip.

N

Noon – Not 12 PM. or 12 noon (This doesn't apply to website.)

O

OK, OK'd, OK'ing, OKs – Do not use *okay*.

Off campus, on campus (subject); **off-campus, on-campus** (adj.) – Hyphenate the adjective form. Example: “The recruiter conducted on-campus interviews”; “The interview was conducted off campus.”

Online – One word.

P

PM, AM – The abbreviations are to be used only with time stated in numbers, not in words. Eight in the morning is okay, but eight AM is not.

Ph.D., (doctorate) – No space after first period.

Preschool – One word.

President – Capitalize only as a formal title used directly before an individual’s name. Lower case all other uses (Board President Kristi Swett).

Presidents Day – No apostrophe.

Principal – Do not confuse with *principle*. Capitalize only when used as a formal title before a name (Principal Jane Doe).

R

RenWeb – Not Renweb.

RSVP – No periods.

S

Schoolwide – One word.

Scripture and **Scriptures** – Capitalize.

Scriptural – Lower case.

Subject name – See **Course or subject name** above. See also **Grade levels** above.

Symbols – In writing, spell out words for symbols, such as *per cent*, *cents*, *dollars*, *plus*, *minus*, etc. Example: “Homework counts 25 per cent of the grade.” “I owe you ten cents.” “You are required to do one book report plus two reviews.”

T

Telephone numbers – Use the form 561-391-2727 x362.

T-shirt – Not t-shirt.

U

Up-to-date – Hyphenated.

V

Valentine’s Day – Use an apostrophe.

Veterans Day – No apostrophe.

W

Webpage, website – One word. Do not capitalize.

-wide – No hyphen (worldwide, nationwide, districtwide)

World language – Not foreign language.

Worldview – One word.

Y

Years – Use an *s* without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries (the 1980s, the 1800s). When omitting the first two numbers of the year, use an apostrophe ('98). School years should be written as 1998-1999.