



*The mission of SAIS is to provide leadership, accreditation services, and professional development resources to strengthen member schools as they fulfill their missions.*

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April 12, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the accreditation status of Edmund Burke Academy in Waynesboro, Georgia. I can confirm that the school is accredited by SAIS. The school's current term of accreditation is July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2023. Please note that a re-accreditation visit is scheduled for spring 2023 at which time it is anticipated that the school will be reaccredited for a five-year period.

Tracing its roots to 1903, the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS) is a membership and accrediting organization encompassing four countries and fourteen US states, primarily in the southeastern United States. We ensure that schools meet or exceed our rigorous standards and are engaged in an authentic school improvement process. Edmund Burke Academy is a private school in the state of Georgia.

SAIS accreditation encompasses all phases of school life and with it, the school is eligible to issue credits for courses completed in accordance with school policies, including those academic courses, such as ESL, which may be taught during the summer months. The school is also fully eligible to participate in exchange programs that require authorization through the United States Student and Exchange Visitor Program. Please note that all grade levels and all campuses are fully accredited by SAIS.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance.

Joanne Andruscavage  
Director of Accreditation

[joanne@sais.org](mailto:joanne@sais.org)

(678) 231-2908



VISITING TEAM REPORT

## Edmund Burke Academy

PO Box 787  
Waynesboro, GA 30830 United States

Mr. Gregg Bunn  
Head of School

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Dr. Hunter Chadwick  
High School Principal  
Chair  
King's Ridge Christian School  
2765 Bethany Bnd  
Alpharetta, GA 30004-4331, United States

03/07/2018 - 03/09/2018

# A History of SAIS Accreditation

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SAIS member schools are part of a remarkable history of quality assurance in education.

SAIS began its organizational life in 1903 as the "Mid-South Association of Independent Schools," providing training for teachers in private schools and some early public schools in the southeastern states. In 1953, another organization began as the Southern Association of Independent Schools, providing a forum for independent school administrators to work with public schools through SACS and to contribute to the larger interest in accreditation in the southeast. MAIS and SAIS merged in 1986 to form the present SAIS, with an emphasis on accreditations through SACS for independent schools and professional development for administrators, trustees, and teachers. Today, SAIS works to help both established and emerging schools approach these issues with creativity and innovation. Working at the state, regional, and national levels, SAIS serves and strengthens member schools through the promotion of the highest quality educational standards and ethical conduct.

The mission of SAIS is to provide leadership, accreditation services, and professional development resources that will strengthen member schools as they fulfill their missions. The focus of SAIS's interest when it began in 1953 was to develop and maintain relationships with the expanding organization of SACS in order to ensure significant input from independent schools into the exploding world of public school accreditation. The post-WWII years of baby booming, facility planning, teacher training, and legislative entitlement funding eclipsed the scope and role of private education in America close to the current level of service. Part of this history of negotiating standards in a predominantly public-school oriented world of education caused SAIS to embark on its own method of accreditation in the late '90s. The efforts resulted in the SAIS method of accreditation available to member schools.

SAIS has designed and implemented a significant program of accreditation to assist member schools as they develop and promote high quality education in this region. This method is based on a school's stated mission and its own unique approach to thorough and vigorous self-examination.

In today's world of accountability in schooling, accreditation serves as a critical component of a school's demonstrated effectiveness and ability to provide successful schooling for children. A school that is able to achieve accreditation demonstrates a commitment to a process that requires the school to meet a set of rigorous standards; to engage in a program of continuous school improvement; and to demonstrate quality assurance to its stakeholders through self-evaluation and peer-review. SAIS accreditation provides schools access to an integrated network of services and technical assistance that supports every school's ability to identify and meet its goals for improving student performance and the teaching and learning process.

SAIS accredited member schools are part of an international network of accredited schools that have demonstrated success in educating children. As such, SAIS accreditation is recognized throughout the world as a symbol of quality in education for students and teachers. To earn accreditation, schools must meet quality standards, be evaluated by an outside group of peer professionals, and implement a school plan focused on strategic improvement and student performance. Accreditation is voluntary and must be renewed each year.

# The Review

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A team representing SAIS conducted an on-site visit to review this school's self-study and standards compliance. The team was comprised of team members whose diverse independent school backgrounds provided an array of expertise. The visiting team sought the answers to these four critical questions within the framework of the school's self-study. The following pages contain the findings.

In conducting the on-site reviews, the visiting team was responsible for:

1. Assessing the adequacy of the self-study process;
2. Identifying strengths of the school deserving commendation;
3. Developing recommendations that may help to strengthen the programs of the school;
4. Assessing compliance with the standards of SAIS;
5. Developing a written report of the findings.

To fulfill the team's responsibilities, team members:

1. Reviewed documentation provided by the school;
2. Conducted interviews with board members, parents, school personnel, students, and community members;
3. Applied the standards for accreditation;
4. Developed a draft of commendations and recommendations;
5. Contributed to the content and focus of the written report;
6. Provided input as to the determination of accreditation.

The primary focus of the self-study process is to demonstrate the capacity of a school to meet the requirements for accreditation. A typical self-study consists of:

1. Analysis and response to accreditation standards;
2. Identification and demonstration of a continuous process of improvement;
3. Implementation of methods that provide for quality assurance.

The study addresses four critical questions relative to each of the school's stated goals for improvement and mission fulfillment:

- **PROFILE:** Where is the school today? The PROFILE should include clear, comprehensive information reflecting current student performance data, stakeholder perspectives, community characteristics, and analysis of strengths and limitations in the areas of student learning and school performance.
- **VISION:** Where does the school want to go? The VISION is a clear, compelling purpose communicated through the school's vision and mission statements, beliefs, and core values.
- **PLAN:** What is the plan to get there? The PLAN should be based on an analysis of pertinent data, research of the best practices, and alignment with generally-accepted expectations for student learning at schools with similar missions.
- **RESULTS:** How will the school know when it has accomplished its plan? The RESULTS are documented evidence demonstrating successful implementation of strategies that resulted in accomplishment of the school's mission and student achievement gains related to the school's mission.

# SAIS Accreditation Policies

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- **Accreditation Committee**  
The SAIS Board of Trustees has established the SAIS Accreditation Committee to oversee the accreditation services offered by SAIS. The Accreditation Committee establishes and maintains review boards whose members review and act upon visiting team recommendations. The Board of Trustees reviews and officially approves the schools recommended for accreditation by the Accreditation Committee.
- **Accreditation Appeal Process**  
If the visiting team recommendation to offer accreditation or re-accreditation is rejected, specific reasons will be given and the school may be given a timeframe and assistance to address deficiencies. The decision of a review board may be appealed in writing by the head of school, referencing specific area(s) in which the school was found deficient. A subsequent review board will review the original findings and the appeal materials. If the decision is upheld by the subsequent review board, the decision may be appealed in writing by the head of school to the SAIS Board of Trustees. The school's accreditation status will remain unchanged during an appeals process. The judgment of the SAIS Board of Trustees is final.
- **Interim Report Requirements**  
Accredited schools must submit a two-year interim report to SAIS after the team visit. This report ensures continued compliance with standards/indicators and documents efforts made in addressing the visiting team's recommendations and the school's self-study goals.
- **Member in good standing:** Schools must remain a member in good standing, with all annual membership dues paid in full and abiding by policies and procedures.
- **Notification of substantive change / head of school change:** Accredited schools must notify SAIS in a timely manner of a substantive change using the form at [www.sais.org/change](http://www.sais.org/change). Changes may include: head of school change, other leadership changes, adding or contracting grade levels, merger, name change, mission change, major construction, crisis situation, litigation, school closure, other changes. In the event of a substantive change, SAIS may request additional information or conduct a visit to the school.
- **Terms of accreditation and re-accreditation:** Terms of accreditation are generally for five years commencing on July 1 and concluding on June 30. Schools must host a visiting team prior to the expiration of their term of accreditation and during the same semester of their previous accreditation if a re-accreditation visit and within three years of becoming a candidate for accreditation if an initial accreditation. Any variance to an accreditation timeline must be approved by SAIS. A new self-study is required for each five-year period reflecting evidence of continuous improvement.
- **Non-compliance:** Stakeholders may file a non-compliance complaint against a school. Upon receipt and verification of a non-compliance report, the school will be given an opportunity to respond to the inquiry. The inquiry, response, and any subsequent written correspondence on the matter may be made available to the accreditation visiting team chair on the next accreditation visit. However, an immediate investigative visit to the school may be undertaken if the response by the school is unsatisfactory or an accumulation of complaints indicates that a school's response is inconsistent with a preponderance of evidence. As is frequently the case, if a school's practices are bordering on non-compliance, a discussion that is triggered by a non-compliance complaint is often a catalyst to remedy such practices. In the event that a school is not compliant, a series of actions will be undertaken with the school such as but not limited to: a request to remedy the non-compliance issue, placing the school on warned status or probation, and an ultimate action of dropping accreditation.

# Roster of Team Members

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## Chair(s)

Chair: Dr. Hunter Chadwick  
High School Principal  
King's Ridge Christian School  
2765 Bethany Bnd  
Alpharetta, GA 30004-4331, United States  
(770) 754-5738  
hchadwick@kingsridgecs.org

## Team Members

Ms. Angie Fowler  
Director of Outplacement and Assessment  
Gracepoint School  
570 Piedmont Rd  
Marietta, GA 30066, United States  
angie.fowler@gracepointschool.org

Mr. Jeff Pickren  
Dean of Students  
King's Ridge Christian School  
2765 Bethany Bnd  
Alpharetta, GA 30004-4331, United States  
(770) 754-5738  
jpickren@kingsridgecs.org

# School Snapshot

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## Mission

Edmund Burke Academy's educational goal is to provide the best possible education in a Christian environment conducive to learning. Honesty, integrity, courtesy, and respect for the rights of others are a way of life.

Motto: Character. Culture. Knowledge.

Edmund Burke Academy's vision is to clearly define expectations for parents and students regarding academic success and social maturation while providing opportunities for Christian growth. Our mission statement answers questions about who we are, what do we value, and where we're going.

## Brief History

Edmund Burke Academy is located in scenic Burke County. It was founded in 1960 supporting grades 1-8 based on Christian ideals and principles. In 1969, the school expanded to include grades 1-12 and had the first graduating class in 1971. The school currently serves students in grades K-12. Since its beginning the school itself has met in a variety of places ranging from a Masonic Lodge (which has since been torn down) to a commercial building, to a home (the Brown House). The present building was built by EBA families and volunteers who shared the same vision and wanted to provide the best for their children. Without this type of loyalty, work ethic, vision and sacrifice, our school would not be the family that it is today. Edmund Burke Academy is proud of our 57 years of academic excellence. Edmund Burke offers a full college preparatory academic program, a full literary program, and a solid athletic program.

The school is located on Georgia Highway 56 South a few miles outside of the city of Waynesboro. The campus is nestled on 97 acres and consists of four buildings: a main classroom building, a gymnasium/classroom building, a modular classroom, and a kindergarten center.

In addition to the four academic buildings, there is a concession stand, an outdoor restroom facility, and a weight room.

Executive Update: Since July 2013, Edmund Burke Academy has implemented many positive changes and improvements. Listed below are a few.

- Career Fair
- Seniors Job Shadowing
- Re-sequenced high school math
- New emphasis on professional growth
- Established a National Beta Club (recognized as National Beta Club of Distinction 2015-16 and 2016-17)
- Baseline salaries have been raised
- Open House format allows Follow Your Child's Schedule
- Dual Enrollment participants has increased with both the Augusta Tech Waynesboro Campus and East Georgia College
- BYOT - Bring Your Own Technology
- Teenage Years 101 - Judge Wade Padgett (grades 7-12)
- Technology infrastructure upgraded - Fiber lines added
- CHAMPS program for 5th grade (Burke County Sheriff 's Department)
- Daily devotionals during morning announcements
- Weekly Chapel on Thursdays

- Purchase of Promethean Boards
- Fine Art Show in spring
- Fine Arts field trips and pottery unit by retired educator
- Added the following courses:
  - Advanced Placement U.S. History course added
  - World/Affairs Composition
  - Current Affairs (Local, State, and National)
  - Engineering/Drafting
  - Financial Planning (Dave Ramsey)
  - One semester of drafting/engineering for 7th/8th grade
- Spanish 3 students work with elementary students 2nd semester
- Renovated concession stand
- New outside restroom facility
- Select restrooms refurbished

### Expanded Student statistics

Enrollment: There are currently 363 students in grades K4-12.

Tuition: The enrollment period begins in March with pre-registration. Payments are made monthly from April 1 through the following March. Tuition ranges from \$4,910 for K4 & 5 to \$6,420 for upper school.

## Leadership

The board of directors consists of nine members, each serving a three-year term. Directors are eligible to be nominated for unlimited terms. Board members whose term is about expire are automatically placed on the ballot. Voting parents nominate three candidates each year during pre-registration. The parents then elect three directors each year at the Corporate Meeting. The board of directors selects its own officers annually.

The faculty and staff at Edmund Burke Academy consists of 53 employees. This includes the headmaster, an assistant headmaster, a guidance counselor, an athletic director, 4 business office employees, 2 media center employees, 1 resource specialists, 30 classroom teachers, 6 teaching assistants, 1 maintenance employee, 2 lunchroom personnel, and 4 custodians.

The headmaster holds and shares the responsibility for the overall educational process as well as the daily functions.

## Self Study

Prior to March 2013, Edmund Burke Academy's Board of Directors made a decision to seek dual accreditation by SAIS and AdvancED/SACS. The school went through dual accreditation in March, 2013. Jerry Coaster served as the chairman of the SAIS/SACS team. The team completed a thorough study of EBA's compliance of the standards set forth by SAIS and AdvancED/SACS, and the school was granted accreditation until the spring of 2018.

Implementation of the continuous improvement plan developed in March 2013 was initiated in July 2013. The two year report was completed and submitted in June 2015. Edmund Burke Academy began the process for re-accreditation in January 2017. In August 2017, the headmaster presented to the faculty and staff the plans for the survey.

In August of 2017 the school administration and select board members began designing an on-line survey to be accessed on our school website. The school administration also served as the steering committee. Questions

were based on input from the various stakeholders from the previous school year. This included input from faculty at our monthly meetings, input from board members at monthly meetings, and culminating with a board/faculty and staff meeting in May 2017 in the media center to discuss our areas of needed improvement. The survey was administered to faculty, staff, and students in the computer labs in September 2017. A mail out letter to all parents and a SchoolCast message was generated to the EBA families by the headmaster explaining the survey. Class presidents of 2013-2017 were notified to ask classmates via Facebook to participate in the survey. The results of the surveys coupled with the input from our stakeholders provided the school with the needed information to formulate our plan.

## Improvement

Edmund Burke Academy realizes the responsibility to think strategically about the school and its future. The self-study process included all members of the Edmund Burke Academy family began during the 2016-2017 school year. In the fall of 2017, the board of directors, faculty and staff, parents, alumni, and students were surveyed. The results of those surveys in conjunction with faculty meetings, board meetings, and a board/faculty meeting were used to identify four major areas:

1. To attract and retain students;
2. To assist teachers in continuing to become better experts in their field (professional learning);
3. To assess and meet current needs of technology;
4. To maintain and improve facilities.

These four areas were used to derive our vision for the next three to five years. The vision was used as the focus in developing our Strategic Plan for 2017. The board of directors adopted our Strategic Plan in the late fall of 2018 and it will be presented to our stockholders during the 2018 Corporate Meeting. We have since accomplished several of the initiatives set forth in the plan and we look enthusiastically towards completing all initiatives.

The strategic plan identifies many initiatives. The purpose of the initiatives is to reflect our commitment to the voice of our stockholders.

Our Strategic Plan includes our profile (current state), our vision (initiatives), our plan (action steps), and our results (evaluation) that lets us know we have accomplished our goals. The Plan also lists who holds the responsibility for completing the initiative, what resources will be used in achieving the initiative, and the year of evaluation to document the results of the action steps.

# Introduction

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## Introduction and Overview of the Visit

The SAIS visiting team enjoyed the experience at Edmund Burke Academy (EBA). All stakeholders, faculty and cadets were open and cooperative, providing the team insight into the culture and mission of the academy. The team met with the board members of the school and representative groups of parents, students, and teachers. The accreditation chair and key administrators answered questions about the school's self-study process and the strategic goals identified for school improvement. The visiting team also visited classrooms and observed teachers and students involved in their day to day activities which was unique at EBA. The interviews with various groups on campus revealed common themes providing insight into the school's mission and was a testament to what they continue to produce. All groups mentioned the caring, supportive family atmosphere of the school, inside the classroom and outside the classroom.

The mission of Edmund Burke Academy is to provide the best possible education in a Christian environment conducive to learning. Honesty, integrity, courtesy, and respect for the rights of others are a way of life. EBA strives to fulfill their mission through the provision of a rigorous academic program, leadership opportunities, competitive athletics, extensive co-curricular activities, and the structure and discipline inherent in a college preparatory school environment. The mission is evident when speaking with all groups. The school community also shared appreciation for the small class sizes. All groups expressed great respect for leadership and the board and administration's stewardship of the school's resources. The visiting team was impressed with and commend the board for their understanding of their role in independent school governance. The groups interviewed felt that they had voice in the school improvement process and that the process was collaborative. Common improvement themes were related to cadet development, resources, technology needs, enrollment, stakeholder support and personnel. The visiting team members felt that the strategic vision developed by the school reflects and has potential to address these common themes for improvement.

# Area 1

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## Title

Technology

## Description

Technology has received a major upgrade and continues to be a focus of all stakeholders at Edmund Burke Academy. EBA will continue to enhance its technology and address their needs based upon annual surveys and feedback from the stakeholders.

## Commendations

The visiting team commends the school for the following:

- Improving technology needs for the entire campus with the addition of full campus wireless and teacher technology needs;
- Utilizing the technology upgrades to enhance instruction while maintaining desired traditional instruction methods;
- Utilizing technology in school fundraising efforts.

## Recommendations

The visiting team recommends that the school consider the following:

- Focusing on outside funding support toward one common technology need;
- Creating a professional development plan for specific training in the areas of technology for teachers and evaluate school-wide technology integration initiative in the classroom;
- Investigating computer science program utilizing a BYOD program to train students on current IT needs within college preparatory school.

# Area 2

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## Title

Enrollment and Sustainability

## Description

Edmund Burke Academy seeks to retain and attract mission appropriate families to maintain viability and sustainability. The school is researching ways to attract and retain mission appropriate families to help improve enrollment numbers. The school will continue to promote financial sustainability as well as offer a strong sense of community to families.

## Commendations

The visiting team commends the school for the following:

- Remaining financially stable while implementing new avenues for fund raising to support school needs;
- Commending school for offering a strong sense of community to all constituents;
- Involving generations of alumni in school community by providing opportunities for camaraderie and engagement.

## Recommendations

The visiting team recommends that the school consider:

- Developing a strategic plan for sustained enrollment and growth by increased marketing with community opportunities;
- Embracing the success and history of EBA versus the local competition's lack of sustained history and multitude of co-curricular opportunities currently offered at EBA and differentiate all areas of the school to include: athletics, fine arts, academics, spiritual life and any other area of the EBA school community;
- Re-evaluating the current position regarding financial aid opportunities for prospective families.

# Area 3

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## Title

Professional Development

## Description

The board and administration of Edmund Burke Academy has expressed that professional development for faculty and staff is a high priority and desires to enhance the professional development planning process and offerings for teachers.

## Commendations

The visiting team commends the school for the following:

- Allowing teacher to research their own plan for professional development strategy;
- Setting aside days in pre-planning and post-planning to address professional development needs;
- Providing resources for teachers to access needed professional development.

## Recommendations

The visiting team recommends the school consider the following:

- Providing specialized and group specific professional development that also incorporates faculty and staff needs;
- Implementing professional development days during the school year.

# Area 4

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## Title

Communication

## Description

Edmund Burke Academy has established itself as a strong community that values and wants to continue to foster a culture of communication with faculty, staff, stakeholders, and the surrounding community.

## Commendations

The visiting team commends the school for the following:

- Having a consistent and effective communication plan for parents, students and alumni;
- Having clear policies and procedures regarding violations of the school's drug policy;
- Establishing a culture of healthy communication between faculty and parents;
- Establishing a culture of support for faculty by school administration;
- Establishing and maintaining a strong sense of community and family atmosphere inside and outside of school;
- Having an open door policy for parents to partner with the school in all areas of education.

## Recommendations

The visiting team recommends that the school consider the following:

- Clarifying disciplinary procedures regarding consequences, cell phone policy, Honor Code, and other disciplinary procedures;
- Evaluating the message that is being communicated to the larger community with the school's lack of diversity among the student body.

# Additional Commendations and Recommendations

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## Additional Recommendations

The team recommends the school consider the following:

- Establishing sub-committees within the board of trustees to focus on particular areas of the school i.e., finance, advancement, trustee development;
- Evaluating the allocation of funds for co-curricular activities;
- Revising bylaws regarding the election of board members. By best practice, independent school boards should be self-perpetuating, not elected. In addition consider adding definite term limits including limits to the number of consecutive terms served.

# Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

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## Summary

The SAIS visiting team would like to thank the school for their coordination efforts, support, and cooperation. The faculty members were impressive in their collegiality and high level of engagement and competency in the school improvement process. The community made the team's work encouraging, enjoyable, and intellectually stimulating. The team greatly appreciates the generous hospitality that was extended.

## Standards Compliance

The school is in compliance with all standards of the SAIS accreditation process as verified by documentation, observations, and interviews.

## Self-Study Quality

The self-study conducted by the school meets the standard of quality and thoroughness required by the SAIS accreditation process and answers the four critical questions as outlined in the Guidebook.

## Recommendation

The school is unanimously recommended for accreditation.