

Back To School

And the Year Begins

Tomorrow is the day, the first day of school.

Woah. Can you believe it? We've been waiting for over a year to meet the students of Black Forest Academy, and now we get to. It will be extremely exciting, I'm sure.

We'll start the day off with BFA's Opening Ceremony, which includes a flag processional for all of the different countries represented this year. For those of you who've been to JBU, it's like International Chapel, which pretty much guarantees that Dani will cry. The Opening Ceremony is meant to be inspiring and fun for all involved, especially the students. Right now, that's all I know specifically about the first day of school. I'm sure Dani knows way more specifics, but my main job will be taking pictures and capturing what goes on.

The First Time For Many Students

After the Opening Ceremony tomorrow, parents will say goodbye to their kids. We're told that it's a very difficult time, with lots of tears. Tomorrow will be the first time for about 70 students to be at BFA. Most of them probably haven't ever stayed at a boarding school. They will be leaving their parents and having many experiences that college students have back in the states: homesickness, a new environment, a new country, nothing familiar, no parents, dorm life. As you can imagine, it can be difficult.

There will be around 350 students total this year. I think there are around 47 students in the elementary school, which includes a bilingual school. The elementary school is in another town about 10-15 minutes away. The building is very tiny for the amount of students they have this year. They are growing each year, so everyone here is excited about the potential for that school.

Every year there are many changes, both for staff and students. New staff arrives, current staff change positions, and old staff leave. This year there is even a new director. Every year, students must say goodbye to their teachers, dorm staff and friends. BFA is a place that is always changing. Tomorrow is the beginning of another year, which will inevitably look different from the next one. Yet in all of these changes, God is present and at work. As you can imagine, the first day can be pretty overwhelming for everyone, but it holds so much hope and potential too.

God's Timing Is Perfect

Over the past month, we've had moments when we couldn't believe that we were finally here. Our hearts have been at BFA since July of last year, so it's nice that our bodies have finally joined them. As we prepare for tomorrow, it feels like the fulfillment of the path God set us on over a year ago. He's been building and shaping us for this, for what begins tomorrow. It's become abundantly clear that this was his perfect timing for us to be at BFA. We are honored to have the opportunity to serve these kids. Please keep us all in your thoughts and prayers as we begin this new year.

Some Things To Be Praying About For The School

- That families will know how to say goodbye well. That parents will be able to have peace about their decisions to send their children to BFA.
- That the new students will not get overwhelmed by the enemy, but will have peace and excitement in their transitions.
- That all the students will have a good first day and first week, and will figure out all their class schedules.
- That the new director will have peace and know how to lead.
- That the staff at BFA will be rested and ready for anything that might get thrown their way tomorrow.

Some Things You Can Pray About For Us

- That we feel like we fit in well at BFA. Dani especially always has a difficult time with the initial adjustment period of new situations.
- That we adjust to how long everything takes to done. Washing a load of laundry takes at least 90 minutes, no drying included.
- That we are able to be a part of the German community here, by getting to know our landlords, for example.
- For our new routine, neither of us have had regular work routines for about a year now. For Dani it's been two years.
- That we continue to pursue God, especially now that our ministry is officially starting up.

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