Overview of Online Learning

In this scenario, parents would be electing to have their daughter learning from home, joining her on-campus classes via videoconference technology (i.e., Zoom). Her schedule and teachers remain the same as for in-person class, as she would be joining via video for underway lessons, discussions, class meetings, and so on. Major upgrades are underway across campus to ensure that all classrooms have technology (e.g., flatscreen TVs or video projection capabilities, cameras, and speakers) in place to ensure that students off campus could video into underway activities, in all divisions, if necessary. This model will provide the opportunity for students to remain academically and socially connected with their teachers and classmates by providing the chance to video into class, advisory, assembly, etc. Teachers will work to include students who are online in discussions, group work, and activities.

This online learning experience is distinctly different from Baldwin Wired, which is designed as an explicitly and exclusively remote program. If Baldwin transitions to a fully remote scenario for Baldwin Wired 2.0, our courses will be repositioned for an online learning experience, which changes how material is covered, what lessons look and sound like, and so on. While classes are occurring on campus, our program will need to be structured with the "brick and mortar" classroom environment at the forefront; our teachers’ focus will be primarily on teaching their classes on campus and the experience will not be the same as it was from March through June 2020 if we are teaching on campus. We will keep students learning online from home as engaged as possible, even as they will need to take on additional independence in their learning, and families will need to play a larger role in supporting student engagement, especially in the lower grades.

FAQs for Baldwin Families

Can my daughter switch back and forth between in-person and online learning options?

In order to provide the best learning experience possible, we ask that families choose in-person or online, even as we know that circumstances may change along the way as described below. As you make your decision, please remember that consistency, routine, and clear expectations are beneficial to our girls, at all ages, and are critical to our teachers too as they plan for the best learning experience possible given the constraints in place by the current situation.

In the event a family opts for online learning and then decides they would like to switch to on-campus learning, or vice versa, we ask that families provide 3 school days’ notice of the change in plans. This will allow your daughter’s Division Director and teachers to prepare your daughter to transition between learning environments, and for the teacher(s) to prepare the classroom or online program to be fully ready for your daughter and ensure we can provide the best learning experience possible throughout. Given the amount of time that goes into preparing both our physical classrooms and the virtual learning environment, particularly this school year, we kindly ask that families do not toggle back and forth between the two options unless absolutely necessary.

Note: This is different from a situation where a student is participating in online class due to illness or quarantine - i.e., for a short period of time, not a full quarter. In this instance, she can re-enter the physical classroom once she has met the criteria outlined in the School’s health and safety guidelines. Families will need to remain in communication with our school nurses and Wellness Coordinator, as well as your daughter’s Division Director, to plan for re-entry post-illness/quarantine.
What will the online learning option look like in Lower School?
- Students will Zoom into morning meeting, lunch, LS assemblies, and scheduled academic classes, with teachers including online students as participants in discussions, group work, and other classroom activities.
- There will be times during the day when the students at home will not join via Zoom, such as outdoor recess, PE and other activities outside the classroom. Students may be provided with independent, asynchronous assignments for some of these classes.
- The classroom teacher will provide an academic outline, each week, with supporting assignments (emailed/posted to Seesaw or Google Classroom) to be completed independently at home.
- While the daily schedule will have a good deal of consistency, there will be some variability based on the needs of the on-campus students. LS classrooms continue to operate as highly flexible spaces with schedules that are often adjusted throughout the day.
- Daily attendance and engaged participation in classroom discussion, group projects, and other synchronous activities will be essential in order for students to participate fully in the planned learning.
- Workbooks and other supplies will be provided for at-home students (DREAM Lab, art, etc.). Students should have access at home to typical school supplies, such as scissors, glue, writing and drawing implements, etc. A printer and/or scanner will also be beneficial.
- There will be a variety of opportunities each week for individual or small group check-ins with a teacher.
- Students may require adult support at home in order to set and maintain daily routines and sustain full engagement in classroom activities and independent assignments.

What will the online learning option look like for Middle and Upper School?
- Students will Zoom into classes, advisory, assemblies, and co-curricular activities, via Zoom, with teachers including online students as active participants in discussions, group work, and other classroom activities.
- Daily attendance and engaged participation in classroom discussion, group projects, and other synchronous activities will be essential in order for students to fully participate in the planned learning.
- Teachers will provide learning materials and assignments via Google Classroom.
- Students can schedule time for one-on-one support by scheduling an appointment during teacher office hours.
- Students may require adult support at home in order to set and maintain daily routines and sustain full engagement in classroom activities and independent assignments.

What will classroom participation be like in this online learning scenario?
Our faculty have worked a tremendous amount this summer to adjust their curriculum and instruction in preparation for the 2020-21 school year, including to prepare materials and resources to students who opt to remain in the virtual classroom.

However, it is important to understand that teaching in the physical classroom and teaching in the virtual environment entail different approaches to instruction and classroom engagement. Therefore, families electing to remain in a virtual learning environment should expect that the instruction will be different from the spring’s Baldwin Wired program, when we were all in a virtual learning environment. Students will be able to video into the classroom and teachers will work hard to make those students engaging virtually part of the class experience, but the nature of the virtual set up will likely result in a more passive learning experience for students at home.
In an effort to maintain connections with students opting to remain in the virtual classroom and to address individual questions related to instruction, Lower School classroom teachers will arrange for individual or small group check-ins for online learners; Middle and Upper School teachers will likewise have opportunities for students to sign up to receive one-on-one support, as needed (i.e., office hours for online learners).

Please also note that it will be difficult for teachers to help troubleshoot tech issues in the moment, but Baldwin's technology department will be available to support all our online learners and families throughout the fall. We will provide tech training to students and families during parent and student orientation sessions and will share information about requesting tech help during the school day.