

This Issue

Focuses on Curriculum



- Update on Remote Learning
- Stony Brook University Partnership
- Points of Pride
- New Fall Course Offerings
- Addition of 7th Academic Academy
- Communication Reminders



Baldwin UFSD Successful at Striking a Balance Between Technology and Instruction

Over the last few years, the Baldwin Union Free School District (UFSD) has been recognized for designing a robust K-12 curriculum, encouraging meaningful, relevant instruction and fostering the essential life skills: creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication. Beginning as early as kindergarten, while teachers use technology in the classroom to enhance the instructional experience, computers and smartboards are not the main focus. Since the start of the pandemic, the district was successful in finding a balance between implementing an effective curriculum and ensuring that this curriculum translates to the remote students in a way that the content and learning experience are not lost in cyberspace.



"Baldwin School District uses technology to augment, not drive or replace, instruction and has been following this philosophy for years," explains Anthony Mignella, assistant superintendent for instruction. "Although our administrators did offer teachers extensive professional development in early March in anticipation of the school closures due to COVID-19, most teachers and students, along with their families, were already familiar with the technology. Therefore, we focused on ensuring that the quality of the curriculum remained intact."

Using a combination of educational tools, from class exercises incorporating learning applications to video and photo sharing through posting sites, students are engaged in a flexible but structured environment despite being remote. The efficient use of students' and teachers' time has helped prevent screen fatigue, which can negatively impact the ability to learn and process information. Media outlets, including *Newsweek* and *Education Dive*, has featured Baldwin UFSD for its exemplary teaching methodologies used for remote learning, and the district has even been praised by such popular education software vendors as FlipGrid and Animoto.

Baldwin UFSD also discovered techniques, even before the COVID-19 outbreak, which would ensure using technology in and outside the classroom happened seamlessly. For instance, the district was one of the first to implement the single sign-on platform, Clever, which aggregates other services and apps like

IXL, BrainPOP and Newsela into one central location so parents and students are not burdened with multiple usernames and passwords.

"Nuances like this make a difference in a student's and parent's experience with remote learning, helping to alleviate the stress associated with using new technology," said Mr. Mignella. Additionally, teachers were already using the district website and Google Classroom to post homework assignments, presentations and more. This year, as Google adds more features, such as "Breakout Rooms," the district will continue to take advantage of any technological upgrades that will enhance the remote learning experience in Baldwin.

During a recent board meeting, board president Mrs. Mary Jo O'Hagan, on behalf of the entire Board of Education, thanked the administration and staff for their "herculean efforts" last spring and summer so that schools could safely reopen in the fall, as they simultaneously put a robust remote learning curriculum into practice. Baldwin UFSD will adjust courses as new educational technology gets introduced and the situation around the pandemic evolves, ensuring that every Baldwin student receives a high-quality education, whether it occurs in the classroom or over the Internet.

Stony Brook University Awards Grant to Baldwin UFSD for News Literacy Program

Baldwin UFSD was just one of two districts to be awarded a grant for the 2020-2021 school year from Stony Brook University to infuse news literacy throughout the social studies and English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum in both the middle and high schools. Baldwin UFSD was selected based on the proposed news literacy program that was submitted by the administration.

After hearing about the innovative initiatives taking place across the district, Howie Schneider, the program director for Stony Brook's Center for News Literacy and former *Newsday* reporter, reached out to superintendent of schools, Dr. Shari L. Camhi, directly, to inform her of the grant opportunity, after which Baldwin UFSD applied. As part of the grant, several administrators and teachers attended the four-day News Literacy Summer Institute hosted by Stony Brook, where they received extensive training on the foundational lessons. The esteemed program designed the lessons to help students develop critical thinking skills in order to judge the reliability and credibility of information, whether it comes via print, television or the Internet, a critical skill to...

Continue reading on page 2 →

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See more accolades
inside this issue!

Points of PRIDE

In Baldwin Union Free School District, we are proud of our people and the unique and outstanding initiatives taking place. Our *Points of Pride* for 2019-2020 highlights some of the past year's most amazing accomplishments, demonstrating that despite the unprecedented challenges of 2020, we are an incredibly *innovative*, *inclusive*, and *involved* Long Island school district!

Notable Achievements

- ★ 97% graduation rate
- ★ 0% achievement gap – Equity across the entire student body
- ★ Baldwin High School among *U.S. News & World Report's* "Best High Schools for 2020" based on the state assessment performances and college readiness
- ★ Baldwin High School named New York State Recognition School (second year in a row)

Continued from Front Page: Stony Brook University Awards Grant to Baldwin UFSD for News Literacy Program

...harness in the digital age. The district embeds these lessons into the English Language Arts and Social Studies classes for grades 6-12, beginning this past September. Throughout the year, students will learn how to identify different types of misinformation, ultimately becoming fluent in investigative and ethical reporting. In addition, the district aims to launch a college-level news literacy course next year for high school students to receive college credit from Stony Brook University.



Music & Fine Arts

- Six musicians chosen for Long Island String Festival
- Two musicians chosen for NYSSMA All-State Festival
- One musician selected for All-Eastern Honor Ensemble Mixed Choir
- 33 Art Supervisor Association All-County Art Exhibition artists
- 55 students represented Baldwin at the All-County Music Festival
- The NAMM Foundation recognized Baldwin as "Best Community for Music Education" for 4th Consecutive Year
- Baldwin High School Choir performed at Carnegie Hall
- Baldwin High School students performed at the Induction of the 13th Nassau County Legislature
- Baldwin Pep Band and Chorus featured at Hofstra University





Academics

- Baldwin High School's Virtual Enterprise, SuppLI, named one of the winners in the Virtual Enterprise International (VEI) #YBSReimagined Social Media Competition
- Virtual Enterprise earned five gold plaques at the Long Island Trade Show and placed in the top 10% nationally in the VEI Newsletter Competition
- Baldwin High School's Business Development Team placed 3rd and won \$1500 in the Northwell Health Spark! Challenge
- Baldwin High School's Future Business Leaders of America club won 1st prize in the annual Nassau County Comptroller Competition
- Two "Commended Students" in the 2020 National Merit Scholarship Program
- Baldwin High School student named National Hispanic Recognition Program (NHRP) Scholar
- Walt Whitman Birthplace Association 34th Annual Student Poetry Contest winner
- Baldwin High School student represented Nassau County on the New York State Governor's Youth Council and featured on PBS' National Storytelling Project
- Baldwin Middle School LEGO robotics teams placed in top 10 of the Long Island First LEGO League Robotics Competition. Team Chuck Norris' Fist also placed 1st for "Research Project" and in the "Alliance" round, and advisor/teacher, Thomas Girolamo, nominated for "Coach of the Year"
- Plaza designated a 2019-2021 PTA School of Excellence
- Lenox Elementary School named a 2020 Emerging State School of Character
- Programs at Brookside and Plaza Elementary Schools recognized as a "2020 Promising Practice"
- Meadow named winner of the Nassau County Pick-a-Reading-Partner (PARP) Award
- The Meadow Community Problem Solvers placed 2nd internationally in the Jr. Division of the International Future Problem Solver Competition
- MENTOR New York featured Plaza's Mentoring Program at annual benefit dinner



Baldwin Family

- Long Island Business Teacher Association named Michele Leonardo of Baldwin High School "Outstanding New Teacher of the Year"
- Renee MacDermott of Lenox Elementary School selected for the elite New York State Master Teacher Program
- *Newsday* named Darius Burton of Baldwin High School "Nassau Coach of the Year"
- Tom Catapano of Baldwin High School among *Newsday*'s Top High School Coaches of the 2010s
- Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Shari L. Camhi, one of twelve nationwide to be recognized as *Education Week*'s "Leaders To Learn From"
- Mary Jo O'Hagan, president of the Board of Education, won New York State School Boards Association's highest honor—the 2019 Everett R. Dyer Award for Distinguished School Board Service
- Two Baldwin families featured on PBS/WNET's "Parenting Minutes"



Athletics

- Girls' Basketball named Nassau County Champions for 6 consecutive years (9 of the last 10 years)
- Boys' Basketball named Nassau County Champions
- Boys' Bowling, as well as the Badminton team, both named Conference Champions
- Baldwin High School athletes among *Newsday*'s 100 Top Soccer Players on Long Island
- Student named "News 12 Long Island Scholar Athlete"
- Two "Students of the Year" designated by the Association for Health, Physical Education Recreation and Dance Nassau Zone Outstanding Physical Education
- Nassau County Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees: Breanne Elise Nasti, Alice Jean



VISIT THE DISTRICT WEBSITE FOR
MORE ACCOLADES AND NEWS

Go to www.baldwinschools.org/news or
scan the QR code with your cell phone

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Baldwin UFSD Offers New Innovative Courses This Fall

Starting in September, Baldwin UFSD added new courses to the high school curriculum. The courses include *Introduction to Drones*, which will allow students to become FAA certified in drone flying, *College Coding*, *College Criminalistics*, *Introduction to Teaching*, and *Sports Officiating*, leaving students certified to officiate games in the sport the course covers.



WATCH VIDEOS OF NEW COURSES
Scan the QR code with your cell phone camera or QR reader app.

Fine and Performing Arts Academy Makes Debut

Baldwin High School's Academic Academies take learning to the next level by immersing students in grades 9-12 into a specific area of study. Education and learning occurs in an enriching, small school environment, where students work alongside professionals within a given field. This year, Baldwin UFSD is pleased to announce the addition of the Fine & Performing Arts Academy. Beginning in 9th grade, the new academy will allow students to explore one of four distinct concentration paths: Performing Arts, Fine Arts, Digital Design and Dramatic Arts. Students will experience "Shadow Days" or hands-on experiences through a partnership with Long Island University and will collaborate with professional musicians and artists.

In addition, Theater 1, the first dedicated performing arts course at Baldwin High School, started this fall. Students will strengthen their basic theater principles and will study the work of various playwrights, musicals, and the history of theater. They will also write original scenes, develop improvisational techniques, and develop acting and directing skills for performances. To learn more about the academic academies, visit baldwinschools.org/academies.

Important Communication Reminders

Attention Community Members: Stay Informed

If you are a Baldwin resident with no children in the schools but would like to receive updates from the district about school news and building closures, please visit baldwinschools.org/notificationsignup to sign up!

Update Contact Information

Check that your most up-to-date contact information is provided to the main office of your child's school including a cell phone number and email address in order to receive emails, phone calls, and text messages from the district. If you are a high school student, please make sure your cell phone number is also on file in case of an emergency.



Available Resources

For our latest communication channels and resources, please visit the district website and click on the "Communication Channels" button, located at the very top of the homepage, or visit: baldwinschools.org/communications



Connect with Us!

Be sure to connect with Baldwin UFSD on social media for the latest news about our extraordinary people and endeavors happening across the entire district.

Facebook (@BaldwinSchools)
Twitter (@BaldwinUFSD)
Instagram (@Baldwin_Schools)
LinkedIn (school/baldwinschools)

Tag us in your posts about Baldwin UFSD and use #WhatsBRUINinBaldwin