

U.S. Department of Education
2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [X] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Jannette Wright

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Baldwin Arts and Academics Magnet School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 410 South McDonough Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Montgomery AL 36104-4226
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Montgomery County

Telephone (334) 269-3870

Fax (334) 269-3918

Web site/URL http://www.baldwin.mps-al.org

E-mail jannette.wright@mps.k12.al.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Ann Moore

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail ann.moore@mps.k12.al.us

District Name Montgomery County School District Tel. (334) 230-0657

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Ms. Clare Weil

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 31 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 8 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 11 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 50 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	66	126	192
7	71	120	191
8	69	102	171
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	206	348	554

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 20 % Asian
 - 46 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 27 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: <1%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	5
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	535
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0%
2 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Pampango, Slovakian, Somali, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22%
 Total number students who qualify: 121

8. Students receiving special education services: 1 %
5 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 19
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	34
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 16:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	98%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Baldwin Arts and Academics Magnet School's mission is to foster academic success, nurture artistic talent, and encourage social development by providing middle school students with a challenging curriculum, while producing motivated, conscientious, and well-rounded citizens. Our vision is that Baldwin is a place where students reach their full potential, both academically and artistically.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Students at Baldwin Arts and Academics Magnet are required to meet certain criteria to qualify for a lottery which determines who will fill the available slots each year. Academics Magnet students must have a 3.5 Grade Point Average (GPA) in core subjects and no serious disciplinary infractions for the three semesters preceding the January application period. Arts Magnet students must have a 2.75 GPA in core subjects, meet the same discipline guidelines for the same period of time, and successfully complete auditions in two arts areas. Once that is determined, all qualified students are placed into a lottery and available spaces are filled. In order to remain at Baldwin the next year, Academics Magnet students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in core subjects, and Arts Magnet students must maintain a 2.75 GPA in core subjects and a 3.0 in each arts elective. Both must maintain good conduct records.

PART III – SUMMARY

Baldwin Arts and Academics Magnet School is a public, magnet middle school, located in the downtown area of Montgomery, Alabama, in a 109 year-old school building. The four-story building, erected in 1910, was first home to a high school. Baldwin Junior High School was then established in 1929 when the high school moved to a new and larger location. Due to declining enrollment, Baldwin was closed in 1982 and used as a book depository. However, in 1989 the building was renovated and reopened as Montgomery County's first junior high magnet school. In the fall of 2001, Baldwin Magnet converted to a middle school containing grades six through eight.

Serving almost the entire community of Montgomery County, Baldwin reflects the diverse population of the county in which it is located. With a population of 226,646 as of July 2017, Montgomery County's population breakdown by race is as follows: 36.5% White, 58.6% Black, 3.1% Asian, 3.5% Hispanic, 1.4% multi-race, and 0.3% other. The median household income is \$46,545 while the poverty rate is approximately 20.83%. High school diplomas are held by 85.7% of its population. Montgomery County is also the home to five universities and colleges and two Air Force bases.

Located within walking distance of the State Capitol in the city of Montgomery, Baldwin's percentages for student race have slowly evolved to our current status. As the city has seen its White population move to surrounding communities outside of Montgomery County, the percentage of Black students at Baldwin increased as our percentage of White students decreased. Our Asian student population increased after Montgomery's selection as the site for a Korean car manufacturing plant. The one factor that all of our families, no matter their race, economic or educational level, have in common is a belief in education. Our parents fully support their children and the school. Their support allows their children, our children, to achieve and realize the expectations we have for them.

Baldwin is a unique school with a tradition of excellence in academics and arts. We are the only magnet school in Montgomery Public Schools that is actually two programs in one building. Academics Magnet students work one or two grade levels ahead in English Language Arts and mathematics. They also take honors and advanced science classes. Arts students are on grade level in core subjects, but they may be in advanced levels in arts classes. With teacher recommendations and high classroom averages, Arts Magnet students may also select honors and advanced classes. Administrators and teachers strongly recommend that practice to our Arts students. Baldwin features classes taught by award-winning professional teacher specialists and artists in nine arts areas, three computer labs with additional laptop carts used in classrooms, flexible scheduling—combining arts and academics, and four foreign languages. Baldwin consistently fields teams that garner recognition as state competition winners in Scholars' Bowl, MATHCOUNTS, Science Olympiad, the National Geography Bee, the National Spelling Bee, various visual arts and creative writing competitions, technology competitions, national foreign language tests, and musical competitions and exams.

Baldwin teachers infuse all subjects with rigor and challenge students to meet the high expectation we place on them. We safeguard instructional time; learning is expected to take place in classes from bell to bell. Student-centered classrooms build self-esteem as students take an active role in instruction, instead of teachers standing in front of them lecturing. These students' voices are heard as teachers plan lessons that incorporate how their students learn and what they enjoy doing. Reading is encouraged through daily classroom reading. Each day of the week is assigned to a subject area, including a day for electives. Each subject begins class with 20 minutes of reading on their assigned day. Students read Accelerated Reader (AR) books, take AR tests, or go to the library. Students are encouraged to always have an AR book with them to read during available time, and are recognized by how many AR points they accumulate. Students' emotional needs are met through a comprehensive counseling program, conducted by guidance counselors who meet with students in classrooms and on an individual basis as needed. These counselors also implement our character education program. Three physical education teachers team teach, ensuring that each student participates and their needs are met while making physical exercise fun. Social skills are learned during the many field trips in which students participate, through the rules of audience participation we constantly review before concerts and assemblies, and by teachers and administrators modeling manners.

All of our students build cultural awareness through the arts program. Even those not participating in an arts class are exposed through attendance at our concerts and guest artists' performances.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

English Language Arts (ELA) curricula consist of units of study in literature, writing, and grammar which address the Alabama Course of Study Standards. Courses offered are grade-level ELA for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade Arts Magnet students. Academics Magnet students who follow an accelerated path take ELA 7, Honors/Advanced (H/A); ELA 8, H/A; and ELA 9, H/A.

Teachers incorporate didactic questioning during direct instruction to engage students. Students have reflective discussions to connect to peers during indirect instruction. Students work independently to complete research projects, essays, memoirs, and character analyses.

Reading levels are monitored three times each year using the Scantron Performance Series Assessment. Allowing differentiation, formative assessment is used during discussions with a show of “thumbs up” or “thumbs down,” writing conferences where students receive immediate feedback, and Quizlet challenges. One teacher moves students who need more time and added instruction on a concept to an “inner circle” while the other students move to the next lesson, spend time journaling, or read.

Students improve reading skills using Accelerated Reader (AR) which is directed by the English teachers. Once students’ individualized goals are determined, English teachers approve all selections made by students and must sign off on the student’s selection before an AR test may be taken. We have attributed gains on the Performance Series Reading benchmark to this practice.

Teachers merge reading, writing, and grammar acquisition by integrating technology. As students work at computers, teachers can access student work, monitor what they are doing, or offer suggestions. Google classroom is used to model distance learning by posting assignments and material. Students are engaged through collaborative groups when studying literature. They summarize plots, write alternative endings, and perform scenes. Anticipation guides that instruct students to agree or disagree with a statement introduce novels. Students must think critically to justify their response.

1b. Mathematics:

Mathematics consists of sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade mathematics, Mathematics 7, Honors and Advanced (H/A), Algebra I, and Geometry. These courses are aligned with the Alabama College and Career Readiness Standards.

Academics Magnet students begin middle school with Math 7, H/A. Based on their level of achievement, they may advance to Algebra I or be required to take Mathematics 8, which reviews concepts from the second semester of Math 7, H/A. They then take Algebra I in the eighth grade. Students who take Algebra I as seventh graders take geometry in the eighth. Arts Magnet students begin with sixth grade mathematics. Based on their level of achievement, they may advance to Math 7 or Math 7, H/A. These students finish, taking either Math 8 or Algebra I.

Instruction includes cooperative groups, manipulatives, technology, spiral review, and project-based learning. Explicit instruction is used when appropriate. Critical thinking challenges like logic puzzles are employed. The main goal is to make math meaningful to students and to develop students who apply mathematical concepts in real world settings.

Pretests are used before each unit to guide planning. Formative assessment includes exit slips, online quizzes, and other questioning techniques. Tests and projects are used as summative assessment, which students review to complete an error analysis to learn from their mistakes.

Teachers use many methods to ensure student success. Each teacher tutors weekly. One teacher also offers tutoring several times a year to parents, so they may help their children. Newsletters are sent home each Monday with assignments for the week. Teachers use their school webpage and the Remind application to communicate class information.

All students participate in the annual Alabama-Mississippi-Louisiana Mathematics Contests. Our MATHCOUNTS Club had approximately 40 members, from which 10 were selected through a school completion as our MATHCOUNTS team. They placed first in the region and sixth in the state this year.

1c. Science:

Baldwin's Science Department offers the state-required courses utilizing the Alabama Course of Study Standards for sixth-grade Earth Science, seventh-grade Life Science, eighth-grade Physical Science and honors and advanced Biology. Students focus on concepts concerning the Earth's natural resources and magnetic field, meteorology, and biogeochemical cycles; the study of all living things, including genetics, the cell parts, mitosis and meiosis, and food webs. As they progress to eighth grade, students master concepts of basic chemistry and physics, including atoms and subatomic particles, bonding and balancing equations, as well as Newton's Laws of Motion. Biology is currently taught to Academics Magnet students, but will be phased out next year in favor of Physical Science, Honors and Advanced, which will extend the scope of the current Physical Science course.

Instructional practices include interactive activities that get students excited about science while concepts are reinforced. One activity involving genetics has students roll a die to determine mutations and model advantages and disadvantages of that mutation on a species. Another science class recently wrote plays illustrating food-web relationship where some students took the part of predator and others of prey. Technology is also often used as students complete web quests to complete labs using the internet.

Formative assessment data is used to drive small group instruction for missed concepts such as integrated math and graphing concepts. Student-conducted labs offer authentic assessment of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) concepts.

All of Baldwin's science teachers coach 85 students who are members of our Science Olympiad Club. Of these, 30 are selected through a school competition to represent Baldwin at the Regional Competition. Our varsity team placed second and qualified for the state competition again this year.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

Baldwin's social studies curricula consist of sixth-grade United States Studies from 1877 to the present, seventh-grade Citizenship/Geography, and eighth-grade World History to 1500. Students learn in these courses to master concepts on which our country is founded; how to become active and engaged citizens; where they fit within the earth's people, places, and environment; and the world's history, including growth of early civilizations and economic systems of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the America's.

Assessment data is used to improve the performance of students. After formative and summative assessment, teachers reteach based on student performance, looking for different approaches for students to master concepts taught. Students are also given the opportunity for authentic assessment. Geography students learn to use geospatial technology to create story maps to present research on selected countries. During civics students are assessed during classroom debates on topics such as voting or gun laws; some taking the side with which they do not necessarily agree. Art is incorporated during American history when students research Black History and incorporate what they learn into quilt squares for a class quilt. These types of student-centered activities make learning history and geography relevant for Baldwin students.

Through the integration of the Alabama Course of Study Standards and Social Studies C3 Framework, teachers focus lessons on skills, literacy, and comprehension using research-based strategies. Understanding that the study of history and our world allows students to become active members of society, teachers plan lessons that encourage critical thinking through questioning techniques, student-led classroom discussions,

and student feedback about how history shapes the world in which we live. Learning is enhanced through field trips such as trips to the Roosevelt Little White House in Warm Springs, Georgia, the Civil Rights Memorial, Rosa Parks Museum, and Alabama State Capitol, all within walking distance of Baldwin. Montgomery's rich history is used as a catalyst for learning.

1e. For secondary schools:

Although Baldwin is not a high school, we support college and career readiness through the rigor of our academic program. Students are challenged daily to master concepts that prepare them for college or the workplace. Through our advance curriculum, middle school students begin earning credits toward high school graduation. Arts students learn skills through their arts electives that start them on a path toward a career in the area of their greatest interest.

1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Each arts course offers arts education and training daily in a professional environment to all sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. Arts students are required to take the two Arts electives for which they auditioned during the application period. Academics students may choose to drop one Academics elective (computer or foreign language) and audition for one Arts elective. Seventy-five percent of all Academics students choose this option. After auditioning students are placed in one of three increasingly difficult levels according to their skill. We also offer beginning level, with no experience, in each component. At the end of the year, students who have mastered all skills in their current level, move to the next level. Students may also continue their arts education as ninth graders at the high school arts magnet. Special activities include master classes, guest artists, and collaborations combining multiple arts electives. Each arts area performs in venues around Montgomery and gives two school performances per year, along with an arts showcase. Classical ballet is the foundation of our Dance curriculum with additional study in Pointe, Jazz, and Modern dance technique. Dance academic units include basic anatomy, dance history, music theory, and nutrition. Classical Guitar forms the core of the guitar program; however, the Baldwin program is unique in that it includes related fretted instruments. Our fretted ensembles are modeled after string orchestra instrumentation but employ classical guitar, mandolins, mandolas, mandocellos, 4- and 5-string banjos, acoustic and electric bass, and ukulele. The orchestra program consists of the concert and advanced orchestras. The orchestra curriculum includes music theory, rhythm and dictation study, composition, ear training, and sight reading along with chamber music study, solo repertoire, and small ensembles. Band focuses on creating well rounded musicians while ensuring students leave with skills necessary for success as musicians in high school, college, and a professional career. The curriculum includes music theory including the understanding of treble and bass clef, rhythm dictation and dynamics, articulation, and balance. Piano provides students with intensive solo repertoire training, music history, a rigorous written music theory component, and music composition. All piano students participate in at least one solo piano festival and two piano recitals. The Visual Arts Department's aim is to give students a foundation built on observational skills and the use of a variety of media. The program hinges on applying the principles of fine art to student art work. Drama exposes students to elements of working in a professional theater. This curriculum includes theater history, production, and acting technique. Creative Writing recognizes the role of the literary arts, as well as the importance of creative writing in helping students develop expression, empathy, and critical reading and thinking. Students' final project is the publication of their work in our literary magazine. The Choral program focuses on vocal techniques, sight-singing, music theory, and music history. Sight singing is approached using solfege symbols and the Kodaly method, along with silent cues. Middle-school physical education (PE) is required every day each year for all students in all grade levels with multiple grade levels represented in each PE class. With no outside space, three PE teachers team teach carefully planned units teaching skills in conditioning, volleyball, bowling, basketball, archery, and Pickleball in the gymnasium. Each unit culminates in a tournament where students' knowledge and skill are assessed. During our rigorous running program, students run the mile around the city block, while coaches motivate students to perform their best as they build healthy life skills. Four foreign languages are offered to

Academics Magnet students: Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, French, and German. Sixth graders are offered a foreign-language wheel which introduces them to a different language each quarter. These students then choose one on which to focus in seventh and eighth grades, continuing their study at the high school level. These courses curricula are aligned with the world readiness standards for learning languages. Students communicate through interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes. Technology is infused throughout the day, as teachers plan lessons that include its use. We also offer three levels of computer electives for Academic Magnet students. Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders with no computer experience take Technology Education which focuses on keyboarding and the basics of computers. These beginners take Computer Science the next year to learn applications using various Office Suite products and Google Office. Both of these classes are prerequisites for Business Technology Applications for which eighth grade students receive a high school credit. Baldwin's media specialist actively seeks students' input before making selections for the library collection. Students are given time daily to go to the library, and teachers serve on a Library Committee that ensures input from the faculty about services.

3. Special Populations:

Baldwin welcomes all students with special needs. We provide a special education teacher to work specifically with students with disabilities. This support may be academic as well as social. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is provided annually for each student she teaches to address deficits in learning. The IEP provides goals for instruction and accommodations on daily work. For example a student with Attention Deficit Disorder may need a distraction-free room for classroom and state testing or help with organizational skills. A student with mobility issues might need assistance from an aide. All of Baldwin's students with disabilities are in an inclusive setting, spending 80 to 100 percent of their time in the general education classroom. To accommodate English Learners (ELs), the school utilizes teaching practices in academic instruction, progress monitoring, and family-school partnerships. Teachers provide interventions for those EL students who need assistance beyond Tier I instruction, such as extended time for tests and assignments or one-on-one instruction. The 504 team meets the needs of students who fall under Section 504. We may accommodate a visually impaired student with an aide to help the student navigate the halls. A student with diabetes may have accommodations to test blood sugar levels during the day or before a test and a place to eat a snack in the afternoon. For those students who struggle academically, each teacher offers after-school tutoring at least one day a week. We also have a fully implemented Response to Instruction (RtI) program for students who are approaching failing. The Problem-Solving Team meets three times each quarter to review students' grades and to recommend interventions to the classroom teacher, such as one-on-one or small-group instruction, computer-assisted remediation, and peer tutoring for these students. We communicate these interventions to parents through conferences and the postal service. We, also, offer support to these families by teaching parents how to help students at home and providing them with assistance through teachers' webpages. For students who are performing above grade level, we offer honors and advanced courses and the opportunity to take courses at a higher grade level. Many of these students will earn high school credit while at Baldwin. Our extensive extra-curricular offerings, such as Science Olympiad, MATHCOUNTS, and Scholars' Bowl teams, allow these students to enhance skills and put into practice what they have learned in the classroom. The Arts electives in which many advanced students participate also offer the opportunity for students to study beyond their grade level. Arts teachers place students in classes according to their skill instead of their grade, allowing them to work at advanced levels.

1. School Climate/Culture:

Baldwin’s faculty members set forth to foster college-preparatory academic success, nurture artistic talent, and promote positive social development in middle-school students by employing a unique dual-based curriculum of academics and arts for grades six through eight. All students participate in a rigorous curriculum that challenges them to do their best. Students also participate in electives that encourage artistic endeavor or advanced academics. In the Academics magnet program, students are placed in classes one to two years advanced in mathematics and English Language Arts; their science class, while on grade level, is also an honors and advanced course. Academics students may choose from three levels of computer and four foreign languages—Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, German, and French. Their placement in the appropriate level is determined by previous coursework. They may also drop one of the academics electives and audition for one of nine arts electives—band, choral, drama, creative writing, classical ballet, piano, strings, classical guitar, and visual arts. Arts magnet students’ core classes are on grade level. If they are identified for the gifted program, they may choose to take honors and advanced core courses, also. Mathematics teachers seek to prepare all arts students for honors and advanced, Math 7. Arts students must take two arts electives for which they audition. Their placement in one of three increasingly difficult levels is also determined by previous coursework and expertise.

Performing arts classes each produce a major concert each semester. Creative writing students produce and sell a literary magazine yearly, while drama students produce a play or musical each semester. Visual Arts students enter many competitions yearly and host a sale of their artwork to support their program. These productions, competitions, and performances allow Baldwin students to build self-esteem and pride in their accomplishments. We have learned that when students are allowed to step on a stage, not only do they grow creatively and socially, but they also become critical thinkers.

Baldwin’s success also resonates with teachers. All teachers are encouraged to try new methods to reach students. They are given credit for being the master teachers they are. During Faculty Meetings we always ask for announcements from the faculty. Each week teachers tell how their programs have flourished. They are celebrated for the success of the Mathematics Teams, the Scholars’ Bowl Team, the Science Olympiad Team, musical productions, and competition. No success is too small to mention. Administrators attend all of these events to support and to help.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Baldwin we encourage our stakeholders to help us achieve our mission by taking an active role in the education of our students by volunteering in all aspects of the school program. Baldwin’s success is in direct correlation to the amount of support we receive from the community. Our strong Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) provides chaperones, library and office assistance, and teacher and arts assistance. This group plans and holds social events including dances and parties for our students that give us opportunities to teach students positive social relationships outside the classroom. They give “mini-grants” to teachers for classroom instructional supplies and equipment, feed teachers during auditions, and generally support Baldwin teachers and students anyway they can. They also serve on committees for instructional and financial purposes. Each arts area has a support group of parents who help fold programs, work the box office, drive students to performances around town, and measure students for band and choral uniforms. Academics club sponsors also have a group of parents who help prepare academic teams for events, like Scholars’ Bowl, MATHCOUNTS, and Science Olympiad.

Various groups around Montgomery also support Baldwin students. Clefworks, a nonprofit, yearly brings musical groups, such as this year’s woodwind ensemble, Windsync, to play for Baldwin students and teach master classes. The Arts Council of Montgomery sponsors ACES, an arts competition that awards money for summer lessons to winners. The Montgomery Museum holds a sidewalk chalk art contest in which our students participate.

This year Baldwin had more girls interested in math careers participate in Auburn University's Sonya Kovalevsky Day than any other Montgomery school. Auburn professors have also helped coach our MATHCOUNTS team. Troy University sponsors a Confucius Classroom at Baldwin, providing outreach and funds for instruction. Alabama State University helps by supplying student aides, master classes for the arts program, and enrichment for students.

Local businesses partner with Baldwin to help with needed supplies, personnel to help with our building needs, and printing of flyers and posters for events. A nearby church helps with character building and social skills by having weekly Bible study to which all students are invited for fellowship and character building. As a downtown school, our parents often need a safe place for their students who stay after school for arts or team practices and tutoring. The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) provides a Good Times program after school with a director and college-student assistants to provide a safe place for students after school hours.

3. Professional Development:

Each year teachers and administrators are required to develop a Professional Development Plan. After completing a self-assessment that is aligned with our state standards and teaching practices and discussing the results of the self-assessment with a direct supervisor, a plan is written that will strengthen the area in which the teacher or employee believes needs improvement. The plan must address at least two areas.

Baldwin teachers and administrators voted to work on one area as a group, and this year asked the school Leadership Team to research one area that would most impact education at our school. This year's topic is "The Student-Centered Classroom." After presenting this topic to the faculty, the team was charged with writing the plan.

We do not receive much monetary assistance for profession development, so we turn to each other or the local school system to help us. The Leadership Team wrote activities that will help us develop mastery of this instructional practice. The first was sending two teachers to a system-supported in-service supplied by the accrediting agency for our state's public schools. After attending the all-day session on "The Art of Engagement," these teachers conducted turn-around training for the faculty after school hours. The second activity planned a book study. This time we turned to our system's Title II office, for a suggestion of a book to support our endeavor and to purchase the books for us. After receiving *Teach Smart: Learner-Centered Strategies that Ensure Student Success* by P.J. Caposey and Todd Whitaker, teachers volunteered to lead the discussion of each chapter. The take-away from this book study was two-fold. We all learned strategies to strengthen our instruction by allowing students to direct more of their learning, but we also built mutual respect for each other as we participated in these group discussions. We then called on specialists from our central office to observe our classrooms and share with teachers what they saw and improvements that could be made. Our culminating activity for this area is to observe each other and offer support and observations.

The second area of each teacher's plan is an area where they think they need to improve. Some choose to develop lessons to improve student writing or reading skills. Others choose to study how to develop rubrics for authentic assessment. No matter what they choose, it must be something that supports student achievement; it must be something that improves student learning and impacts school improvement.

4. School Leadership:

Putting students and learning first is the cornerstone of school leadership philosophy at Baldwin. To create an environment that allows learning and personal growth to be achieved by all students is one of the most important jobs to which our school leader is charged. Baldwin's leadership believes that it is the principal's responsibility to ensure that students have what is needed—organization, a positive atmosphere, resources, support—to achieve academic, social, and emotional growth.

In order to accomplish this mission, the school leader must share responsibility and build a leadership team that can help accomplish such a daunting task. Delegating responsibility to others within the school

community is the method used at Baldwin. The organization and membership of Baldwin's leadership team is important to achieving our shared goal—student learning. This team consisting of the assistant principal, department chairs, support personnel, parents, and community stakeholders accepts responsibility for making students the focus of all school planning.

As the instructional leader of the school, the principal must understand the curricular needs of each subject area. Utilizing department chairs to determine these needs is the most effective method to accomplish this duty. At Baldwin each department's chairperson works with teachers within the department to help ensure that teachers have what they need to teach. After chairpersons report to the team about departmental needs, decisions can then be made concerning how to obtain needed resources.

Another area which members of the team are useful is helping to build an accomplished and exceptional instructional staff. The assistant principal shares responsibility in observing and evaluating teachers. By assuming this role as evaluator, he can then help mentor those teachers who need help in honing their craft. Department chairs also help mentor teachers, especially those who are considered novice.

Stakeholders, such as parents, must have buy-in before accepting school policies. When they are asked to help formulate policies, like dress codes, they are often more willing to support them. The officers of the Parent-Teacher-Student Association can serve as an important resource. Their access to parents is an important tool that the principal can use to communicate with parents in a non-threatening manner, therefore, maintaining positive relationships. These stakeholders also help the principal obtain classroom resources that teachers need to impact student achievement.

By sharing responsibility with staff members, the principal builds an organization that has at its center—students and their learning. This, above all, is the purpose of any successful school.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At Baldwin Arts and Academics Magnet School we have discovered the best way to reach, inspire, and teach middle school students is through combining an extensive arts program with strong academics.

We see on a daily basis how a curriculum infused with arts impacts our students. We see students whose self-esteem grows when we give them the opportunity to stand on the stage and sing a song or play a solo at the band, strings, guitar, or piano concert. There is no brighter smile than one that lights the face of a dancer whose peers applaud him after a performance. What these students come to know is that “if I can do that, then I can do anything.”

After students master complex music theory during classical guitar, it is simply the next step to apply those critical thinking skills developed in that process to solving quadratic equations during Algebra I. The creative writing student is better able to grasp the complexity of a Shakespearian sonnet after writing one herself. Visual arts students who closely examine a lily during a watercolor unit and add petals, carpel, stamen, and stigma to their paintings will have no trouble remembering those flower parts during life science class.

Educators ponder how to motivate middle school students to come to school, how to teach them to become team players, how to encourage them to become independent and responsible. At Baldwin we have discovered that our extensive arts offerings help us to accomplish all of those goals. When a student begins every school day with dance class and ends it by practicing for show choir, he builds a great attendance record. When a drama student is selected as the student director for the musical, she learns responsibility that carries over to completing homework without being prodded. Orchestra students selected as part of a quartet learn team work which emerges when they are part of a group completing a lab during biology.

Core teachers at Baldwin have learned that incorporating arts activities into lessons engage students in their classrooms. During science students use colorful plastic clay to create beautiful models of cells. Foreign language students create and act in videos using cell phones of soap operas they write in the language they are studying.

It is obvious when visitors or central office personnel walk around Baldwin that this is a happy place where learning takes place. What Baldwin students learn during their arts classes allows them to be successful in all classes.