

August 13, 2025

Baldwin School Council Minutes

7:30 - 8:45 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

School Council Members in Attendance

Parent Members: Caitlin Dube, Jackie Hayes, Matt Meyersohn, Jen Nigro, Eugenia Schraa Huh, Andrew Verardo, Chunying Yue

School Staff and Community Members: Heidi Cook, Ben Geiger, Sara Oliveira, Susan Tiersch

Agenda

New School Council Membership

School Council Meeting Schedule Discussion

Student and Family Handbook Review

Updated Snack Policy Proposal

Back to School Night Format Discussion

School Council Membership

Thank you to Friends of Baldwin for running the school council election. Thanks to Lilli Martinez, Baldwin Faculty Advisory Committee, for reaching out to faculty, encouraging school council membership.

The 2025-2026 Baldwin School Council Members:

Parent / Caregivers

Caitlin Dube

Jackie Hayes

Matt Heyersohn

Jen Nigro

Eugenia Schraa Huh

Andrew Verardo

Chunying Yue

Faculty

Heidi Cook (principal, chair)

Ben Geiger (grade 5 teacher)

Elena Haro (kindergarten teacher)
Karin Kugel (librarian)
Corianne LaBounty (preschool teacher)
Sara Oliveira (kindergarten paraprofessional)
Susan Tiersch (family liaison)

Community Member

Allegra Fletcher (Baldwin Community Center Director of Children's Programming)

Parent Co-Chair Nomination and Election

The co-chair position is a two-year position. Working with the principal (co-chair), the responsibility is to help craft meeting agenda, represent the school council in the school and district community, and bring ideas and issues you hear from the community.

Nominated and with unanimous consensus, Chunying Yue will be the school council parent co-chair.

School Council Meeting Schedule Discussion

Last school year, the meetings were scheduled on Wednesday mornings, in-person. Discussion on what is the best time/day to schedule school council meetings to meet the schedule of the council membership and being thoughtful to break down barriers to engagement for the community, as all school council meetings are open to all. Concern about faculty schedule (last year, meetings were 7:45 - 8:45 and faculty members had to leave at 8:30 a.m. to meet their contract obligation). The priority is to have as many members as possible at each meeting.

Matt will create a Doodle poll for the school council members to help determine optimal time. With that data, Heidi and Chunying will meet to create a proposed meeting schedule for the school year. That will be discussed at the September meeting, Thursday, September 18, 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. in the library (in-person) with a hybrid option. Calendar invitation with the link will be sent to the school community. Meeting notices should include verbiage letting families know if they need support attending the meeting.

Student and Family Handbook Review

The Student and Family Handbook has been rewritten with input from many. It is ready to go. It will be a live, online document. The school council reviewed and provided edits in the spring. Reviewed again and provided more edits during the meeting (document updated).

As discussed, there is a quick-page with general information that will be printed and put in all backpacks, including a letter that sets the tone, welcoming families, encouraging engagement, letting families know they should get in touch with Susan if they have questions.

Updated Snack Policy Proposal

Ms. Heidi shared an updated snack proposal that will be shared with staff members during their opening days. Faculty needs time to review.

Background: Providing snack for the entire class was becoming a hardship for families. The proposal is that families are to pack a daily individual snack for all grades. These snacks should follow the allergy guidelines for the classroom. Teachers will have extra snack on hand from the school cafeteria (fruit, cereal, crackers), food vetted by the Food Services Department.

Wording of Snack Proposal

As part of our ongoing commitment to student health, safety, and inclusivity, we are reviewing our classroom snack practices. Many schools have shifted away from communal snacks due to concerns around allergies, medical needs, and equity. Shared snacks, though well-intentioned, can unintentionally isolate some students and place extra burdens on families. The goal is to create a snack routine that is simple, safe, and welcoming for all children.

Proposed Snack Guidelines:

- Daily Individual Snacks: Families are asked to pack a daily individual snack for their child. This helps ensure every student has something safe and appropriate to eat during snack time.
- Allergy-Aware Classrooms: Families should follow any allergy-specific snack guidelines provided by the classroom teacher. This protects the health and well-being of students with medical restrictions.
- Extra Snacks on Hand: Teachers may request voluntary donations of extra snacks to keep available for children who forget or are unable to bring snacks. The school will also provide basic fruit and crackers/cookies, purchased through Food Services, for backup.
- No Food Celebrations in Class: To promote safety and inclusion, food celebrations—including birthdays—will not be held in classrooms. Exceptions (such as potlucks or special breakfast shares) require principal approval.

Back to School Night Format Discussion

Back to School Curriculum Night is scheduled for Wednesday, September 17. One night for all grades. Teachers will do a 30 minute presentation in their classroom, where parents and caregivers receive a curriculum overview and hear about the great things the year has to offer their child. Specialist teachers will be onhand. As was done last school year, Ms. Heidi's welcome address will be an optional video (may be watched at home, or in the classroom and time will be scheduled for this).

Discussion:

Best to keep the evening simple and welcoming, providing the best format to encourage all families to attend. Include welcome tables with Friends of Baldwin and the School Council.

Other Topics Raised

Council member raised gratitude for technology discussion at school council meeting this past school year and having the district technology leaders on hand to discuss technology use in classrooms. Request to revisit technology for an agenda item in the coming year.

Next Meeting

Thursday, September 18, 2025

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.

Baldwin School Library

Agenda: Proposed schedule of school council dates for the 2025-2026 school year and School Improvement Plan.

School council meetings follow the open meeting law. Meetings are open to all.

Students are always welcome to come to the library and may go to the cafeteria for breakfast at 8:00 or they may stay in the library until the bell rings at 8:30.