



January 10, 2017

Dear Families of the Baldwin Middle School Community,

I just wanted to take a moment and wish each and every one a healthy and happy new year. As the calendar flips its page to 2017, it is important to take stock in the things that make the Baldwin Middle School special while also recognizing areas of focus.

Baldwin has been progressing towards a 21st Century learning environment so that the skills and competencies required of your child as he/she enters high school are introduced and understood as they make that transition to 9th grade. The tool of choice for most 9-12 learning environments is Google Applications for Education. Baldwin now has over 100 chrome book student devices for classroom use and over 70 student desktop and laptop computers for student use. This is important so that when teachers plan lessons and units; there is adequate technological infrastructure and hardware in place for viable use and accessibility. Google is a fairly intuitive program suite and teachers will be embarking on specialized training during the spring.

It is important to recognize that as technology is added and woven into classroom activities and learning that we, and that means we, as adults need to recognize that not all learning is going to be seamless and easy. If things were always easy then it would not be defined as learning. The foundational skills, the basics, the core, does not change with the advent of technology and chrome book devices. We cannot sugar coat the importance of hard work, diligence, and grinding things out. This mentality can be contradictory with much of what social media and societal undertones focus on; and that is perfectly okay with me. There is an educational movement focused on the concept that “grit” should be taught in schools. I feel that “grit” can be modeled, explained, and referred to; while the individual student develops skills and “grit”. It is important for us to support our kiddos as they try and fail, and then try again.

I want to continue to enhance the dichotomy that the Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School is becoming. On one hand, a place where students access and learn the 21st century skills needed to be prepared for high school while on the other hand, focusing on the basics and core of education in terms of reading, writing, and arithmetic. In the future, I hope to support an increased capacity for our students, your children, to speak publicly, write proficiently, and solve problems in various methods and ways.

With support for our school budget and effective utilization of donated funds like the Savarese estate and a gracious donation from the Petruniw family, there will be progress made with increased library offerings, curricular resource improvements and access, and student focused technological upgrades.

I thank you for your continued support of education in Canterbury and remind you to access the school website at www.canterburypublicschools.org/dhbms for up to date information and invite you to follow the up to date events on Instagram by following at [baldwinmiddleschoolct](https://www.instagram.com/baldwinmiddleschoolct).

Mr. Ryan Earley