



BERKSHIRE WALDORF SCHOOL

Winter Plan 2020-21



*Suppose we did our work
like the snow, quietly, quietly,
Leaving nothing out.
-Wendell Berry*

Dear Berkshire Waldorf Families,

As we enter the coldest, darkest months of the year, under the cloud of the coronavirus, we are warmed by the strength and resilience of our community. After a week of faculty, staff and board meetings around a grand fire, nourished with the gratitude of our families, we are beginning the next step on our journey with clarity and fortitude. There is still a long road ahead, but traveling it together we feel truly blessed.

Our work is unique because of a strategic, collaborative approach. In creating this plan, we allowed time for group reflection and generative conversation. We mindfully processed individual feedback and the survey data we collected from nearly all BWS families. Our in-house health and safety team met regularly with the Medical Advisory Panel (MAP), a team of 3 local physicians and BWS parents. The MAP, from three unique vantage points, keeps our understanding of the public health crisis current and our response plan relevant. This plan was conceived by the full faculty and staff and ultimately reviewed and accepted by the Council of Teachers and the Board of Trustees.

Winter will be an exceptional time that will undoubtedly challenge our nimbleness, but we are forging ahead in solidarity and with contingencies for all that lies ahead. We understand that aspects of this plan may present new challenges, but we aimed to balance benefit with impact. As always, we appreciate your trust, confidence and patience. We wish you good health and balance in the coming weeks and beyond.

Kind Regards,
Karen Fierst
Reopening Project Coordinator

Once Around the Sun Together

*Seasons come and go
Watch and wait for life to grow
Some days bursting bright and full
Some days more a quiet lull
Wind blow, rain will fall
Sun will shine on one and all
Look with love out to my world
Do my best to heed the call*

-Anne Brontë

New Beginnings

At long last, we gather with new friends and old

You Are Here



Winter at BWS

We weather the cold and quiet months in the warmth of our community

Summer at BWS

We hold this space for the possibility of extending our time together

Aug

Sep

Oct

Nov

Dec

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Autumn at BWS

As the leaves change, so do we, greatly expanding our outdoor offerings

Spring at BWS

As nature awakes in spring, we too expect growth and renewal from our journey

The Winter Plan Framework

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The Structure of the Winter Term

January 4 - 8

- Faculty and staff return to school
- Parents and/or students attend online training session

January 11 - March 18

- 10 am start time MONDAYS ONLY*
- Early dismissal FRIDAYS: EC 12pm, Grades 12:15pm*
(Bus has been adjusted for changes)
- Monday, Jan 18 No School MLK Day
- Friday, Jan 29 No School PT Conferences
- February 15 - 19 Mid Winter Recess

*Faculty will be in session regular hours throughout the winter. Monday mornings and Friday afternoons are established times, on both ends of the week, for faculty to accommodate families who are pursuing individual accommodations for the winter term ONLY. This will allow for check-ins, online classroom updates, and even on campus or home visits, if deemed appropriate.

Indoor/Outdoor Guidelines

- Throughout the winter term classes will take place both indoors and outdoors.
- A day that is above 40 degrees (sometimes lower if sunny) will resemble the autumn term outdoor learning schedule.
- EC will strive to remain outdoors with indoor/warming sessions, and will continue to nap indoors. Additional structural elements are being added to the EC campus to provide warmth and shelter outdoors.
- Grades will move book work indoors, and strive for 30%+ of the day to be outdoors with frequent outdoor mask breaks, including meals outdoors, when possible.
- When extreme weather prohibits the 30% of the day outdoors threshold, BWS will evaluate the possibility of a learning at home day. (See Inclement Weather Plan for details and criteria on page 10)
- An HVAC summary will be sent in a separate communication.



Indoor Health and Safety: Early Childhood

- Each classroom has their own entrance/exit and bathroom, and classes will not mix.
- Adults will be masked at all times indoors. Mask breaks will be taken outdoors and/or away from children.
- Children will also be masked when indoors, except when sleeping.
- EC will strive to eat outdoors, but if there is a need to eat indoors, they will sit at 6ft physical distance.
- Windows and doors will be opened for increased ventilation.
- The daily schedule will incorporate frequent handwashing.
- Keeping children with signs of illness home is a critical health and safety measure.



Indoor Health and Safety: Grades



- Whenever possible, classes will enter and exit through exterior doorways, limiting passage through common spaces. Visual cues will be placed around the school to encourage 6 ft distancing and one way traffic flow patterns.
- Classroom desks and/or table seating will be spaced 6 ft apart. Large classes will move for main lesson to accommodate distance and split for additional subjects.
- Adults and students will be required to wear masks indoors.
- As much as possible, mask breaks will be taken outdoors.
- Windows will remain open for increased ventilation.
- Adults and students will frequently wash hands.
- Keeping children with signs of illness home is a critical health and safety measure.

Individual Accommodations for the Winter Term

If your family is interested in an individualized accommodation for the winter term due to Covid-19, please reach out to your class teacher. While individual accommodations will vary by age and family preference, the following systems have been put in place to support various options across the school:

- Each class will have an online classroom populated with resources for home learning, accessible to families through the winter term.
- Faculty have time set aside on Monday mornings and Friday afternoons for the purpose of supporting home learning.
- While current interest in these options is moderate, BWS faculty will tailor accommodations to the families who request it.
- Individual accommodations for more than 25% of the class will trigger the design of a collective option.



Inclement Weather Plan

Extreme Weather Days and Snow Days

- Given our commitment to using the outdoors throughout the day, we may close school for extreme weather conditions.
- Extreme weather conditions include exceptionally cold temperatures, freezing rain and high winds. We will monitor the forecast weekly and communicate with families when we predict the possibility of an extreme weather day(s). If we can make the determination in advance, we will do so.
- Faculty will be on campus during extreme weather conditions and provide home learning.
- However, should substantial snow prevent faculty from making it to campus, we will have a traditional snow day, and no home learning will be provided. Sledding and hot chocolate are strongly encouraged.



Covid-19 Class Closures

- To determine a class closure, we consult the BWS Medical Advisory Panel. The following significant events could trigger a class closure:
 - A confirmed positive student
 - A student who is a primary contact to a confirmed positive case
 - A high number of student absences due to illness
- When a class is closed, class parents will receive specific communications about the closure and reopening.
- The school community receives a general update.
- Our capacity for covering teacher absences is between 3 and 4 teachers across the school. If teacher absences exceed this capacity, we could close classes or potentially sections of the school.

Covid-19 School Closure

- In the event of a stay-at-home order for our region, Berkshire Waldorf School will provide remote learning for our classes.
- Remote learning takes place through the combined use of online classrooms, virtual meetings or calls, and shared resources.*
- If the school, or part of the school, transitions to remote learning, there will be two-days of no programming before entering the new learning scenario.
- Remote learning would be implemented in 3 week blocks, with two transitional days between each series.
- Class meetings with parents will be held virtually during each block to support home learning and respond to questions/feedback.
- If it is reasonable and permissible to do so, BWS will strive to (re)introduce on-campus learning with our educators in “pods” during remote learning.

**The BWS Board of Trustees obtained a variance from the state to provide childcare for our teachers' children during remote learning.*

REVISED 2020-2021 School Year Calendar Subject to Change



2020-2021 Preliminary School Year Calendar

August 20						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 20						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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October 20						
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November 20						
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December 20						
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January 21						
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31						

February 21						
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28						

March 21						
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April 21						
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May 21						
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30	31					

June 21						
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

July 21						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August 21						
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

September 21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

- Optional Orientation Activities
- School Begins w/ Modified Schedule
- Autumn Term
- Winter Term
- Spring Term
- Flexible Summer Term
- Holidays and Breaks
- In-Service Days/No Students
- Noon Dismissal

Holidays and Breaks:

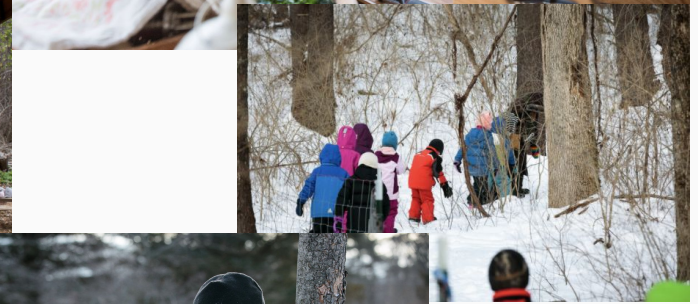
- September 8 Labor Day
- September 8 First Day of School
- September 28 Yom Kippur
- October 12 First Nation's Day
- October 30 Parent Teacher Conferences
- November 11 Veteran's Day
- Nov 25 - Dec 4 Thanksgiving Recess
- Dec 21 - Jan 8 Holiday Recess
- January 18 Martin Luther King Day
- January 29 Parent Teacher Conferences
- February 15 - 19 Winter Break
- March 29 - April 9 Spring Break
- May 31 Memorial Day
- July 2 - 5 Independence Day

Calendar Changes

- Winter Term ONLY:
10am start Mondays
Half day Fridays:
EC 12pm Grades 12:15pm
- Spring recess is now **March 29 - April 9** to allow for holidays and spring campus preparation.
- Spring Term ends on Friday June 18. June 21 moved to potential summer term



Winter Verse
Deep in the ground of the
human soul,
Of victory assured,
The spirit-sun is living.
All through the winter of the
inner life,
The faithful heart divines it.
-Rudolf Steiner



Much gratitude for all of the dedication, hard work and courage...

Faculty

Mabel Albert
Safina Alessandra
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Victoria Cartier
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**Health and Safety Team Members*



*Thank you
Berkshire Waldorf families
for your continuing support!*