

# BALDWIN INSIDER

## ▶ Baldwin Preparatory Academy Innovating Career-Tech High School Education to Empower Tomorrow's Workforce Today

As Baldwin Preparatory Academy (Baldwin Prep) opens its doors to the inaugural classes of career-tech students this fall, the Baldwin County Economic Development Alliance (BCEDA) is thrilled to provide an inside look at this pioneering educational institution. This innovative school is positioned to leave a lasting impact on Baldwin County's academic landscape, workforce, industry engagement, and overall community growth.

### A NEW KIND OF EDUCATION

Baldwin Prep is more than just a school; it represents a visionary approach to education and work-based learning. Designed to be a competitive and academically rigorous full-time campus, Baldwin Prep prepares students for diverse paths, including college and vocational careers. Housed in a state-of-the-art facility in the center of Baldwin County near the City of Loxley, the school seamlessly integrates academics with real-world, on-the-job experiences, ensuring students are well-equipped for the future.

This unique approach is further enhanced by the active involvement of business and industry partners, strengthening the curriculum's relevancy and impact. Baldwin Prep's curriculum includes a diverse range of career pathways, such as automotive engine repair, diesel repair, construction, welding, aviation, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, mechatronics engineering, health sciences, cybersecurity, graphic design, teaching, culinary arts, cosmetology, and barbering. Industry partners play a crucial role in shaping these offerings, and additional courses will be introduced to meet evolving workforce needs.

### ADDRESSING WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Baldwin County boasts a robust professional landscape with abundant opportunities. However, there is a pressing need to address the declining prime-age workforce. Community leaders, including Baldwin County Public Schools Superintendent Eddie Tyler, have prioritized investing in the workforce for years.



Eddie Tyler,  
Superintendent,  
Baldwin County Public  
Schools

"Baldwin Preparatory Academy has been years in the making," said Tyler. "We are set to finally open its doors this fall. With it being the first of its kind in our area and the state, we did not know how it would be perceived by the public, our parents, and our students. We knew the industry needed this. We knew our kids needed this, even if they didn't."

Tyler's vision for Baldwin Prep is clear. He believes that not every student is destined for college, and that's perfectly fine. The school aims to help students find their paths and fill critical roles in the workforce.

### AN UNPRECEDENTED RESPONSE

The enthusiasm for Baldwin Prep has been overwhelming, with around 1,600 applications received for the 2024-2025 school year. Tyler commented on the significant student interest in the



career-tech school. “As soon as we started sending out information, the calls and emails started coming in. We held informational meetings in all our feeder patterns, and people showed up in droves,” Tyler continued. “We had so much interest on the first day of registration our system crashed. We have been blown away by the attention of our students and their families all over our region. To add to that, we have industry involvement we have never seen before. Big businesses to smaller shops all want to be a part of something that will change the lives of students and the face of industry on the Gulf Coast for years to come.”

Ultimately, 870 students were admitted, including 270 graduating seniors. The school boasts a dedicated faculty of 18 career-tech instructors and 18 core class teachers, all committed to providing an exceptional educational experience..

### A WORK-INTEGRATED APPROACH

Baldwin Prep operates like a real-world work environment, teaching students fundamental responsibilities such as clocking in and out, wearing industry-recognized uniforms, and participating in team meetings. This practical approach ensures that students are well-prepared for the demands of the modern workplace.

Students can earn multiple industry credentials, such as certifications and college credit through dual enrollment with Coastal Alabama Community College. Many students will graduate with an associate degree or be at least 68 to 84 percent closer to earning one, free of charge. Additionally, all seniors are encouraged to participate in apprenticeships and internships and submit a culminating project to

industry partners before graduation.



Adam Sealy, President,  
Baldwin Prep

“We’re committed to pioneering programs that not only capture industry needs but set new benchmarks in educational excellence,” said Adam Sealy, Principal of Baldwin Prep. “Our state-of-the-art equipment ensures students have hands-on experience with cutting-edge technology, preparing them for future challenges. What truly sets us apart is our relentless pursuit of innovation and our personalized approach to nurturing each student’s potential. At Baldwin Preparatory Academy, we’re not just shaping minds; we’re shaping their future of Career College Choice.”

### INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

The Board of Education has invested \$100 million in Baldwin Prep, with an additional \$5 million dedicated to equipment that rivals the cutting-edge technology used in our local industries. The 200,000-square-foot career-tech campus features open-concept pods and labs for collaboration and training, meeting spaces, and classrooms for testing and tutoring. Postsecondary institutions, stakeholders, and industry partners are all part of the shared campus, offering multiple venues for corporate meetings and college courses in the evenings.

Christina Hellmich, the Industry Engagement Director for Baldwin Prep, emphasized the importance of industry involvement. “The world of work has changed drastically and will continue to change, so



Christina Hellmich,  
Industry Engagement  
Director, Baldwin Prep

seeing our school system take the leap to meet the demands of business and industry with Baldwin Prep is astounding,” said Hellmich. “With this kind of investment, it is essential to have business and industry partners with us to ensure students’ success by bridging the gap from the classroom to the workplace. Your investment will help open doors and opportunities for learners. This career technical high school is a pathway for students to figure out what they want to do before graduating from high school.”

### PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

Business and industry engagement is crucial to Baldwin Prep’s success. The Baldwin Community + Economic Development Foundation (BCEDF) has been raising funds in the private sector through annual commitments to support Baldwin Prep. These funds provide essential resources, including additional equipment, instructor stipends, and programming, to ensure the students’ success.



Lee Lawson, President  
& CEO, BCEDA

“Baldwin Preparatory Academy is a game changer for our community from an economic development standpoint, showing business and industry leaders that we are addressing workforce development in a way that has not been done before in Alabama,” said Lee Lawson, President and CEO

of the BCEDA. “I’m grateful to our private sector companies who have come alongside the BCEDF and the Baldwin County School System to not only financially support Baldwin Prep but also engage at a high level for student success.”

Partnering with Baldwin Prep offers numerous benefits, including being on the advisory council, developing curriculum, accessing premium student engagement opportunities, and delivering industry insight through regular “Tech Talks.” The BCEDF has already secured significant investments from various industry partners, with the Founder’s Circle including 68 Ventures, D.R. Horton, Infirmiry Health, Novelis, and TF Warren Group. More partnerships are anticipated, further strengthening the school’s capacity.

“We’re incredibly proud to invest in Baldwin Preparatory Academy as a Founders’ Circle Sponsor,” said Tori Holt, Novelis Plant Manager.



Tori Holt, Plant Manager,  
Novelis

“This partnership reflects our deep commitment to fostering strong workforce-industry relationships that benefit not only Baldwin County employers, but also the broader community. By supporting Baldwin Preparatory Academy, we are investing in the future of our local workforce, ensuring

that students receive the education and real-life skills necessary to thrive in today’s job market. We believe that this collaboration will create a pipeline of talented individuals who are well-prepared to meet the evolving needs of our industry for generations to come.”



Joe T. Stough III,  
Executive Vice  
President and COO,  
Infirmiry Health

Joe T. Stough III, the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Infirmiry Health, also expressed what investing in Baldwin County’s future workforce means to him. “We are deeply honored to be a member of the Founder’s Circle of the Baldwin County Preparatory Academy, underscoring our role as the premier healthcare provider in

Baldwin County,” said Stough. “This affiliation serves as a testament to our steadfast commitment to fulfilling the needs of the communities we serve. Our ongoing dedication to nurturing the development of young individuals, thereby facilitating a seamless transition into the workforce, remains a key priority. We express sincere appreciation to the Baldwin County School System and the BCEDA for their visionary leadership in establishing this academy.”

### A BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD

Baldwin Preparatory Academy represents a bold step forward for education and workforce development in Baldwin County. By fostering strong partnerships between education and industry, Baldwin Prep is poised to create long-term positive effects on the regional workforce and economy. As the first students embark on this exciting journey, the Alliance, along with the community, looks forward to witnessing the transformative power of this innovative institution.

For more information on engagement opportunities, please get in touch with Christina Hellmich at [chellmich@baldwineda.com](mailto:chellmich@baldwineda.com). Together, we can shape the future of Baldwin County and create a thriving, skilled workforce for generations.

## The Alliance Welcomes Economic Development Specialist and Executive Assistant



Ashton Feaster,  
Economic Development  
Specialist, BCEDA

The Alliance has recently made strategic additions to the incredible staff, hiring Ashton Feaster as the Economic Development Specialist and Kristie Pybus as the Executive Assistant.

Furthering his experience in economic development, Feaster transitions to his new role after interning with the Alliance in the spring of 2024. In his internship, Feaster assisted with projects and content research, preparing him for his responsibilities in research, data collection, project support, GIS and financial analysis, and other functions.

A native of Gulf Shores, Alabama, Feaster is a proud alumnus of Spanish Fort High School and earned his Bachelor of Finance from the University of South Alabama in 2024.

“I am honored to be joining the team at the BCEDA and building on the thriving community it supports,”

said Feaster. “As a recent graduate, I am eager to apply my education and skills to ensure Baldwin County remains a balanced community of growth and sustainability.”



Kristie Pybus, Executive  
Assistant, BCEDA

Kristie Pybus has joined the Alliance to provide high-level support to the executive staff while optimizing day-to-day office operations.

A resident of Daphne, Alabama, Pybus graduated with an Associate of Nursing from George C. Wallace Community College. Before her current role,

she served patients as a nurse and then worked at Mobile Infirmary for ten years, performing administrative duties.

“I am excited to join the BCEDA and bring my unique perspective and skills to the team,” Pybus said. “The Alliance values innovation and growth. The beginning is always today.”