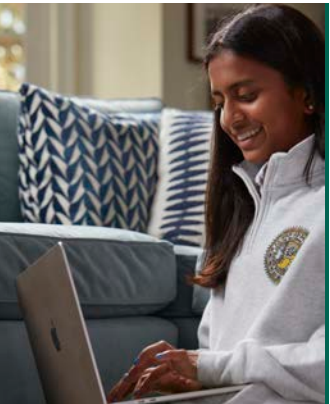


Compiled by Educators
at Bryn Mawr Online

A Parent's Guide to Choosing an Online High School



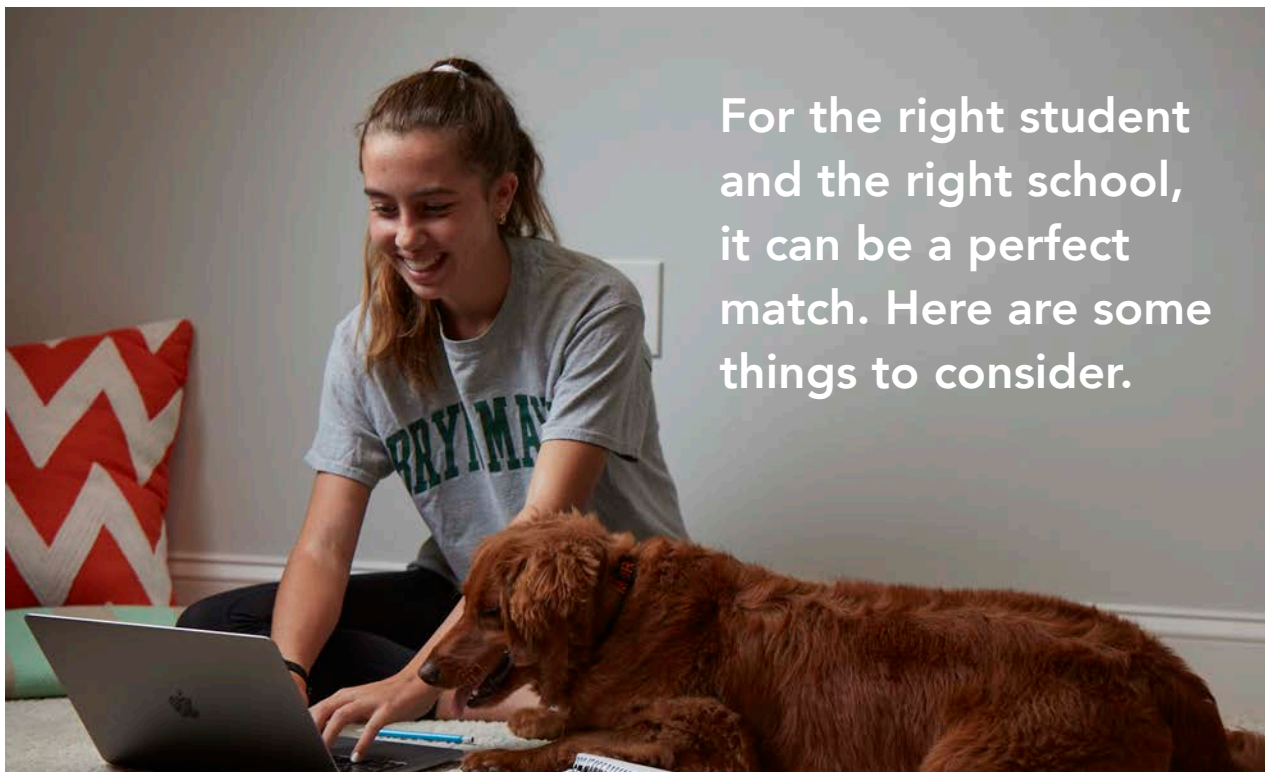
Re-Imagining The Virtual Classroom

How do you decide if an online school is right for your child? First, forget what you think you know about remote learning.

The mention of a virtual classroom may prompt flashbacks to the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic. For many, that experience – born out of necessity and created quickly – is their only frame of reference.

Many schools have re-imagined what online school can be.


Carefully developed to marry the best aspects of both brick-and-mortar school and remote learning, today's online high school can be a challenging, engaging, high-quality alternative that provides much-needed flexibility.



For the right student and the right school, it can be a perfect match. Here are some things to consider.


What is Most Important for You and Your Family?

Any student who has a desire to learn, to engage or to be challenged can thrive in an online environment. Families who are looking for an online school are typically seeking one or more of the following:




Flexibility

Athletes and artists, such as equestrians or dancers, need a flexible schedule to accommodate training, rehearsals and travel—without sacrificing academics.




Support

For a variety of reasons, some students struggle in person. It could be anxiety, distractions, class size or a lack of dedicated support. The right online environment allows them to thrive.



Stability

Students who move often or live overseas, like those in military or foreign service families, can have a stable educational experience and community no matter where they live.



Challenge

Talented, motivated students who don't have a top-tier academic institution in their area can access a nationally-ranked school no matter where they are.

“We were looking for a school that provides flexibility for our family’s frequent moves while keeping continuity with teachers and peers. We searched for a program that would support and challenge our daughter while encouraging her to discover and pursue her interests.”—CURRENT BRYN MAWR ONLINE PARENT

How Do You Find Success in an Online School?

If an online school will address what's important to your family, what comes next? Consider if you and your student are a good fit for what it takes to succeed in a remote classroom.



Get Engaged!

Successful online students need to be driven and have a love for learning. Remote learning requires a strong sense of self-awareness; students must know what works for them and what doesn't. Maybe that doesn't describe your student **yet**, but the right program will help bring out these qualities.



Time is of the Essence

The flexibility of online school is a draw for many, but the level of independence is something students must learn to master. Developing time management and organizational skills are critical.



Communication is Key

Online school is a team effort – teachers, students, counselors, and parents. Make sure you're ready to be all in!



Ready to move ahead? Once you've decided online school is the way to go, now it's time to choose the right one. Here are some things to think about:

Academic Credentials

Be sure your school is a fully accredited institution that awards a diploma. You may also want to check about the availability of Advanced Placement classes or an honors-level curriculum.

Stimulating Classes and Faculty

Avoid the "cookie cutter" curriculum many virtual schools use. Look for one with a robust and diverse curriculum that has direct involvement from an engaged faculty.

Face Time

Some virtual schools offer mainly asynchronous work and limited face-to-face time with teachers and students. Other schools prioritize the online classroom experience, strong relationships, and a creative academic program that focuses on excellence.

Social Connections

If a close-knit student community is important to you, be sure your online school finds creative ways to establish social connections and bond as a class. For example, Bryn Mawr Online offers afternoon clubs, virtual meetups like movie nights, international travel opportunities, and an annual on-campus retreat. Some families may opt to find other networks for their kids outside of school, such as sports, Girl Scouts, or local youth groups.

Testimonials

Talk to current students and families at the schools you are considering to get a firsthand account of their experiences.

Money Matters

Consider if the school is a for-profit venture or a nonprofit institution that reinvests its revenue in the school.

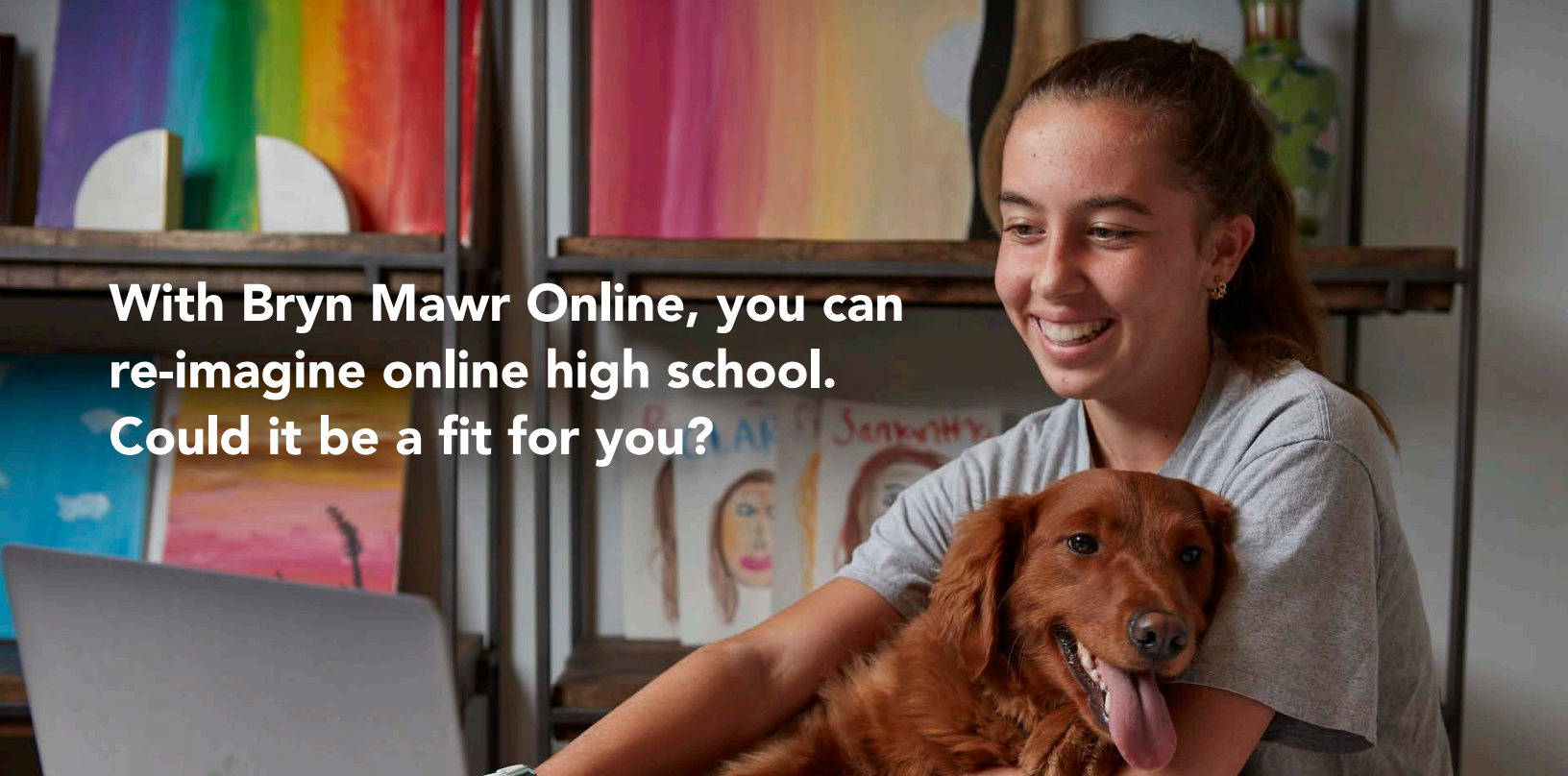
"I have worked with families who switched online schools because they were unhappy with the curriculum, only to find out their child's new school uses the same curriculum. Many online schools use one of four off-the-shelf curriculum packages. I encourage the families I work with to look for online schools with a unique curriculum backed by strong college acceptances."

—ANN, COLLEGE COUNSELOR

This guide was prepared for you by the educators at Bryn Mawr Online.

The Bryn Mawr School is a premier all-girls college preparatory school in Baltimore, Maryland. Founded in 1885, it ranks as the number one college prep private high school in Maryland and 14th among all-girls high schools in the United States by Niche.com.

Bryn Mawr Online expands access to a prestigious Bryn Mawr education beyond Maryland to girls anywhere in the country. It is a full-time, fully accredited, diploma-awarding program offering an honors-level curriculum taught by the acclaimed Bryn Mawr faculty.



**With Bryn Mawr Online, you can
re-imagine online high school.
Could it be a fit for you?**

Find out more at brynmawronline.org.

