APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday September 11, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Location
Bridge Preparatory Charter School
Petrides Educational Complex
715 Ocean Terrace, Bldg. A
Staten Island, NY 10301

Remote Locations:

- 1045 Rivershore Road, Charleston SC 29492
- 557 5th St. #3, Brooklyn, NY 11215

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87699275285?pwd=Zla4rXFdeYXXnqSUYeaQGOZvwZR8qV.1

Zoom Meeting ID: **876 9927 5285**
Passcode: **717305**

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+16465588656,,87699275285#,,,,*717305# US (New York)

Trustees Present

Amanda Wolkowitz, Mark Harmon-Vaught, Rebecca Peters (remote), Tara Gore, Traci Frey (remote)

Trustees Absent
Nicole DeStefano

Ex Officio Members Present
Lauren (Liv) Livingston (remote), Tim Castanza

Guests Present
Fahron Ebanks (remote), Jennifer Sammartino-Mallen (remote), Kathy Baldassano (remote), Rose Marie Illuzzi (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

As per Public Officers Law, Article 7, § 103-a *(Videoconferencing by public bodies)* although Board members Traci Frey and Rebecca Peters are not present in-person for this meeting, they are attending via videoconference from locations posted on the public meeting notice/agenda and open to the public; they are therefore considered to be in attendance for purposes of quorum and are permitted to vote.
As total Board membership currently totals 6 Trustees, quorum is 4 members.
QUORUM IS MET FOR THIS MEETING.

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Mark Harmon-Vaught called a meeting of the board of trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday Sep 11, 2025 at 7:01 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

Mark Harmon-Vaught made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 08-29-25.
M. Harmon-Vaught stated if there is no objection, the motion to approve the minutes of the 08-29-25 board meeting will be adopted. As there was no objection, the motion is adopted and the minutes are approved by unanimous consent.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. PROPOSED CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Board Vote to Enter Into Executive Session

Mark Harmon-Vaught made a motion to enter into CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION for the purpose of discussing the employment history of a particular person.

Traci Frey seconded the motion.
As per NYS Public Officers Law, ARTICLE 7, §105 (f), the Board entered into **CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION** at 7:03 PM to discuss the employment history of a particular person.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
The Board returned to **OPEN PUBLIC SESSION** at 8:02 PM.

M. Harmon-Vaught stated that due to the extended timing of tonight's meeting caused by the lengthy closed Executive Session, we'll proceed with a few agenda items, and hold some items for our next meeting so that tonight's meeting doesn't run too long.

III. ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS FOR 2025-2026

A. Board of Trustees Officers' Election

A. Wolkowitz, acting a *Chair ProTem*, opened the nominations for Board of Trustees Officers as follows:
Officer Positions

- **Board Chair/Co-Chairs:** A. Wolkowitz nominated M. Harmon-Vaught and T. Frey for Board Co-Chairs. 2nd by R. Peters. There were no other nominations for this position. VOTE: 4 Yes; 0 No; 0 Abstentions. **M. HARMON-VAUGHT & TRACI FREY ARE ELECTED AS BOARD CO-CHAIRS.**
- **Board Secretary:** M. Harmon-Vaught nominated N. DeStefano for Board Secretary. 2nd by T. Frey. There were no other nominations for this position. VOTE: 4 Yes; 0 No; 0 Abstentions. **NICOLE DESTEFANO IS ELECTED AS BOARD SECRETARY.**
- **Board Treasurer:** M. Harmon-Vaught nominated R. Peters for Board Treasurer. 2nd by A. Wolkowitz. There were no other nominations for this position. VOTE: 4 Yes; 0 No; 0 Abstentions. **R. PETERS IS ELECTED AS BOARD TREASURER.**

M. Harmon-Vaught stated that because we don't have a lot of time, we don't want to go too far into tonight's agenda, and Board Secretary N. DeStefano is absent tonight, so we will postpone to a future meeting the following agenda items:

Special Areas of Focus & Unfinished Business discussion of:

- The CEO & Bridge Prep School’s Goals in the areas of External Community Involvement & Fiscal Management
- The Board Business Calendar & Meeting Calendar SY 2025-2026

We will also postpone ***Reports & Updates by:***

- CEO
- Academic Committee
- Finance Committee
- Board Development & Governance Committee

- Family Association Representative
- Board Co-Chairs Wrap-Up with Review of Action Items & Future Topics

We can now move forward to the new business item, an iReady contract with Curriculum Associates.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of I-Ready Contract with Curriculum Associates

Mark Harmon-Vaught made a motion to approve the contract with Curriculum Associates for the I-Ready Program assessments and teachers' toolbox for the period 07-30-25 through 12-31-25.
Tara Gore seconded the motion.
T. Castanza gave a brief presentation on the I-Ready Program and Contract with Curriculum Associates for 2025. He stated that at the Academic Committee meeting, we discussed bringing on iReady, which is not something that we've had in the past. It's a program that Principal Livingston and the SLT feel will go really well with how they're approaching viewing data and small groupings. We use IXL Learning Program right now, and iReady would replace IXL. The Academic Committee had no concerns with the contract, If the contract is approved tonight, we can discuss specific implementation at a later point when it's implemented, how it's implemented and scaled-in, and what it looks like. But first we wanted to make sure that the Board would approve the actual contract and agreement, and then we can go from there.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. REPORTS & UPDATES

A. Chief Executive Officer Report & Updates

T. Castanza gave the following CEO update:

- **STUDENT ENROLLMENT:** We just had a Board Strategy Session, but we are well into the school year at this point. Our student enrollment is starting to level out a bit, so we now have about 260 students, significantly above where we projected to be at this time, which was around 245 students. That's well above what we budgeted for (232 students). We will keep monitoring enrollment until October 31st or November 1st which is usually when the numbers start to level out a bit. We are thankful to our recruitment team for doing good work and for pushing some families forward that were on the fence. We continue to get enrollment demand and we do have some seats available. There are no seats available in the grades where we have applications. But we have seats available in 2nd grade. We currently have only 1 section of 2nd grade, and enrolling more of those students would push the class size to be just too high. Right now, 2nd grade is probably about as high as it can go for only 1 section. The only path forward for us to accept more 2nd grade students would be if we add a 2nd section of 2nd grade. Second grade would be approximately 27

students split into 2 sections of around 13 or 14 students which would be one of our smaller sections. There's some additional considerations that we need to look into, particularly the ability to hire enough quality teachers. Classroom space is another consideration, but that is something we could probably work through. Our team has done very well with over the past couple of years, so he's not concerned about that as much as making sure that we have 2 high-quality 2nd grade teachers. We're going to monitor this over the next couple of weeks, but overall, we're feeling really good about student enrollment. The higher student numbers will drastically change our budget, as I shared at the Finance Committee meeting. And this is one of the years that I was the most nervous about enrollment. And this is the year that he's most proud of where we are at this point with enrollment, which was a worry of this summer.

- **TEACHER RECRUITMENT**: We spent a lot of time this summer planning new ways, engaging new partners, thinking about different strategies and branding. Now we're going to shift the same level of energy to teacher recruitment and teacher hiring, because that'll be our next worthy endeavor. We're doing something we haven't done before for teacher hiring. We have a new partnership with Kokua, a company that connects candidates to jobs as student teachers in K-12 schools. They will send us substitute teachers when we need them. Right now, we have a teacher vacancy that we're working to fill. We have a teacher in the classroom right now, but we've been using the sub in the interim, and the subs that came to us from Kokua are really quality teachers. We have 1 really high-quality sub that we are going to explore an employment contract with. Kokua charges a finder's fee for any candidate that we hire, but high-quality teaching candidates who are looking for a full-time job will be great for us. Not just for our staff, but also as an alternate pipeline for potential teachers as they come in. The finder's fee is a percentage of the hire's total salary.
- **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**: We are still working on getting the Board a calendar of events, as a month-by-month calendar. The school team was gracious enough to provide him with a very detailed overview, so he will put some of those events and dates on a calendar that the Board might be interested in.

At this point of the meeting, a **FIRE ALARM** sounded in the building and the Board of Trustees were instructed to evacuate the school. Therefore, this meeting was adjourned.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano