APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday March 12, 2026 at 7:00 PM

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

Remote Viewing Locations:

- *557 5th Street, #3, Brooklyn, NY 11215*
- *1495 East 63rd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11234*

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Trustees Present
Amanda Wolkowitz, Nicole DeStefano, Rebecca Peters (remote), Tara Gore, Traci Frey

Trustees Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
Alyse Pecoraro, Lauren (Liv) Livingston (remote)

Guests Present
Christina Caputo (remote), Jennifer Sammartino-Mallen (remote), Kathy Baldassano (remote), Mark Harmon-Vaught (remote), Rose Marie Illuzzi (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Traci Frey called a meeting of the board of trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday Mar 12, 2026 at 7:02 PM.

C. Welcome & Kick-Off

T. Frey welcomed everyone and she's glad they are here.

II. Approve Minutes

A. Approve Minutes of Board Meeting of February 12, 2026

Traci Frey made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 02-12-26.
Nicole DeStefano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Votes on Proposed edIT Contract & Chromebooks Purchase Order

A. Approval of Contract Extension for edIT

Amanda Wolkowitz made a motion to approve the contract extension for edIT for school year 2026-2027.
Tara Gore seconded the motion.
A. Pecoraro explained that this contract extension for edIT covers school year 2026-2027 and is for their IT services for Bridge Prep School. This is an incredibly important service, and Matt and his team are very responsive, and take care of all the school's IT needs, as well as things that might come up, such as phishing incidents and as we start to get ahead of contracts for next year, this edIT one we are looking to get early approval of. The contract extension is attached to the agenda for Board members' review.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Approval of Purchase of 60 Chromebooks

Traci Frey made a motion to approve the purchase of 60 Chromebooks with upgrades as shown on the invoice submitted to the Board.
Nicole DeStefano seconded the motion.
A. Pecoraro said that the purchase of these 60 Chromebooks will enable the school to administer ELA and Math state assessments without any issues. This week we did full-scale mock state assessments for Grades 3-5 and some of our students have to use iPads, and other devices that aren't great in usability for the state tests. These 60 new Chromebooks would get us to full capacity for those state tests. They come with all the software already preloaded - that the additional upgrade cost is for, as shown on the invoice submitted for the Board members' review.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Special Focus Topics

A. Charter Renewal Preparation

M. Harmon-Vaught said that Trustees who've been on the Board for a while know, during our prior charter renewal we worked with an outside vendor formerly known as *Pasek Consulting, LLC,* now called *Impact Charters LLC.* to help us prepare the charter materials. Charter renewal is an intensive process that involves preparation of a number of materials, evidence that demonstrates that we're meeting the goals articulated in our charter and the benchmarks set by NYSED. And because this is resource-intensive, for our first charter renewal, we worked with *Pasek Consulting LLC,* now D/B/A *Impact Charters LLC.* That vendor reached out to us about a month ago, and we set up an opportunity for T. Frey, A. Pecoraro and myself to meet with them and learn about how their process works because we didn't steer that process from the start during the last charter renewal. We had an opportunity to listen to them, learn and had a good conversation. They're interested in working with us again, and a few things came up that are important for us to know.
Other charter schools that are being renewed next year, at the same time as Bridge Prep, have been already working on their charter renewal documentation since last Fall. *Impact Charters LLC* said, if we're going to work with them, it will mean a condensed timeline to drive the work forward. That's a concern, but because of the positive signals we received from the NYSED midterm visit report, we are in an okay spot. We will have to accelerate our planning and our draft of the materials to actually prepare for the renewal itself. The other thing we learned which we hadn't heard before, was that our renewal materials will be due to NYSED at the beginning of September. That timeframe has not been confirmed yet from our NYSED liaison, but it's probably accurate. So, we'll need to be thinking about preparing the materials for our renewal between now and September.
We also asked *Impact Charters LLC* for a list of references from recent clients they've worked with so A. Pecoraro can reach out to those clients to learn a little bit more about

their process, what it looked like, what works well, and what challenges there were, so that we have that knowledge going into this process.

We received a draft contract from *Impact Charters LLC* who typically work on a 3-year contract with a charter school through the drafting of renewal documents, through the NYSED renewal visit, and then through the first cycle of an annual report and response to the NYSED report as well as preparation for the midterm NYSED visit. We asked *Impact Charters LLC* for a shorter-term contract because of the cost, which is quite high, and because we want to think strategically about the next phase for Bridge Prep and not get too far ahead and bind ourselves to a particular contract before we are ready. So, we arrived at a contract that would run between now and December 2027, which is the shortest timeframe they're willing to consider. The contract would be over the course of the next 3 academic years for $72,000.

T. Frey added that we discussed this at the last *Executive Committee* meeting and we can continue discussing whether we want to look at other charter renewal consultants to help us. This company helped us with the last renewal process, so they already have knowledge of our school and although some of the information will need to be revised, they already have some boilerplate language for Bridge Prep. We asked for client references because we want to make sure that other charter schools and school leaders have a positive experience with *Impact Charters, LLC*. If we are going to spend this much money, we want to make sure we're getting the most for our money and that we are put in the best position to get full charter reauthorization, which is a lot.

A. Pecoraro said that she is scheduled to speak with two charter school leaders given as references, to understand what some of the challenges were, or what they would have done differently, so that going into this process with *Impact Charters LLC* we can figure out if there are gaps in that partnership, and can manage that as we go through this in an accelerated way. A. Pecoraro has also reached out to our NYSED liaison, Paolo to get a timeline of when our renewal documentation is due - we've asked multiple times and we haven't gotten a firm answer yet. Prior to our last charter renewal we spoke to a few different consultants.

We didn't do a formal bidding process, but *Pasek Consulting* came recommended to us by way of the Borough President's office and some of the school staff, and we did vet *Pasek Consulting* extensively. We spoke with their client references at the time and we had a positive experience ourselves with *Pasek*. R. Peters added that she also worked with *Pasek Consulting* at her previous charter school and she recommended them because they had success. M. Harmon-Vaught added that our financial team, Josh et. al. also worked with *Pasek Consulting* on multiple occasions and they had good experiences with *Pasek* as well.

The Board doesn't need to vote on this today, but we wanted to bring it to the Board's attention. It's a large contract, and we will hear more from the *Finance Committee,* but we are going to have to vote on approving any contract of this magnitude in the future. Depending on the timing, this may be something we'd want to vote on at the Strategy Session, or at the April Board meeting because we'll need to move forward pretty quickly.

B. Special Strategy Session In Spring

T. Frey stated that she and her Board Co-Chair, M. Harmon-Vaught would like to hold a Board Special Strategy Session in the spring, because of all the various changes that are happening, the upcoming charter renewal process and also the *Finance Committee* has some minor concerns about increasing our revenue stream and reviewing our spending. It would be good to focus on these things at a strategy session.
You'll hear from the *Finance Committee* that we need to look for different opportunities to increase our school revenue; some of our student enrollment has decreased, And we've had some unique expenses this year, such as carrying two CEOs at one point, and some legal expenses as well. We also had to hire a CEO search firm. So we want to take an opportunity to hold a Board Strategy Session to look at how can we increase our school revenue, and adjust school expenditures. Are we spending money in the right place? Is the money that we're spending benefiting students? If not, how can we readjust so that we're maximizing expenditures for kids. We'll send out a Doodle Poll to Board members to see what date is best because we would love for all Trustees to attend in-person. It's much easier to have these conversations when everyone is in a room together, we can break up into groups and really have an opportunity to both strategize and socialize. When you receive the poll, please be honest about when you are available to come to the Strategy Session. We can meet here at Bridge Prep or somewhere else, like Wagner College.

V. Reports & Updates

A. CEO Report

Interim Acting CEO, A Pecoraro gave the following update, along with a written report to the Board:

- **WRITTEN MONTHLY CEO REPORT TO BOARD:** She will try to work on a process to have some kind of written report every month, so that she can just pull out the most critical updates in her report.
- **STUDENT ENROLLMENT & POSSIBLE BROOKLYN RECRUITMENT:** We have 47 student applications as of March 9th, although today she thinks it was 48. Every one does count. It's trending slightly lower than last year, so she will be huddling with our *Media & Recruitment Coordinator*, Joann Dembinski and our *Director of Strategy*, Fahron Ebanks tomorrow about strategizing and how to boost enrollment numbers a little bit. C. Caputo stated that some of the parents have expressed that they love the website and they love the videos, J. Dembinski did such an amazing job, but some of the Brooklyn parents have asked if Bridge Prep can do a Brooklyn-specific recruitment flyer. They feel that if we had a specific flyer, then we'd be able to put it out in the heavy-hitting Brooklyn areas, like Bay Ridge and or Park Slope, with wording like "door-to-door busing for eligible students". Perhaps we could get more Brooklyn residents to enroll their children at Bridge Prep if we reached out directly with recruitment efforts in Brooklyn. Families in Brooklyn need to know about Bridge Prep and what we can do to help their dyslexic children. We finally have 2 buses transporting students from Brooklyn to Staten Island, but if several Brooklyn students leave Bridge Prep, parents are concerned that we might be down to just 1 bus to

and from Brooklyn again and our children would get home after 5 pm. We need to get more Brooklyn students enrolled to get more student bus service for Brooklyn to Staten Island trips. T. Frey asked if there were any locations in Brooklyn where Bridge Prep could do a "Meet & Greet" type of event; we can look into it and see if there are any charter school fairs in Brooklyn. Also there are 3 Jewish Community Centers in Brooklyn and YMCAs in Brooklyn that offer pre-school programs so maybe we can put Bridge Prep flyers in those locations too. We can even do outreach via local Brooklyn community newspapers like the Brooklyn Eagle, or the Canarsie Courier with targeted recruitment ads. If Bridge Prep can make targeted flyers for Brooklyn families, C. Caputo said she can distribute them in Brooklyn. A. Pecoraro said she would put this topic on her agenda for her meeting tomorrow with *Media & Recruitment Coordinator*, Joann Dembinski. J. Sammartino-Mallen suggested that we look into joining the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce to reach out more into Brooklyn.

- **UPCOMING SCHOOL EVENTS:** We have a few enrollment events coming up: a School Tour on Monday, March16th and an Open House for Saturday, April 18th following Saturday Academy. There's some fun events, thanks to RoseMarie Illuzzi, our *Director of Community Partnerships* listed on the written CEO report and shared with the Board: Karaoke FUNraiser at Burrito Bar on May 1st; Step Up for Dyslexia (walk and community day) on Campus on May 9th; Bridge Prep Design of a Decade at Snug Harbor on June 4th and Graduation at St. George Theatre on June 18th.

B. Academic Committee Report

T. Frey gave the following report on the Academic Committee meeting held on March 2, 2026:

- **iREADY PROGRAM:** Principal Livingston discussed a new program that they're using now called iReady, which is a blended learning program in reading/math and is fully implemented now, all students have taken the diagnostic, and they use iReady during their Humanities, Math, Fluency, and Blended Learning blocks. There's a blended learning block now because one of the Art teachers, Ms. Vassar left and that Art period was replaced by a blended learning block. Teachers can use the toolbox on iReady to pull lessons and address groups of students. They're implementing a monthly classroom incentive, and there was some discussion about doing a March Madness school-wide incentive. Teachers can use the iReady results to form instructional groups with students. There's a summary report that teachers can generate that will tell them how many lessons students have passed, how many students are rushing through the lesson, and what needs to be taught. They're using a student data chat report with students for them to set goals and monitor their own progress in the class. And teachers are using the weekly Tuesday data PLCs to look over the data. iReady is replacing the IXL Program, which we used last year that is no longer used now. Teachers had training via Zoom with the iReady team, and Principal Livingston also provided them with detailed notes on how to use the program; Principal Livingston also shared that teachers were using it, looking at

student work protocol in their Tuesday PLCs. It indicates whether teachers are tracking students during the lessons. And, teachers will add in the daily success criteria and note whether students are meeting the success criteria, listing common errors for misconceptions, and whether or not they have to reteach the lesson. They have a template that lists the learning targets, the class trends, successes, areas for growth and implications for teaching. This is done for every student in class in the tracker. Teachers are taking the data during class, but then they're analyzing the data on Tuesdays during their PLC time.

- **STUDENT ENROLLMENT UPDATE:** On March 2nd when the Academic Committee met, we had 43 applications, so it has increased since then.
- **INSTRUCTIONAL COACH**: The school hired an instructional coach who was working with K-1, a 5th grade team and some new teachers; she's running a new teacher mentoring group. She's observing classes, she's giving feedback to teachers. Principal Livingston feels like it has been working well for teachers. I don't know if teachers feel the same way. A. Pecoraro commented that she was sitting on the other side of the wall from the instructional coach's session and our walls are very thin, and hearing her coach was amazing - the way she was redirecting and focusing teachers on what's next, Even through their frustration she was able to offer such amazing coaching. Wonderful to hear her the other side of the wall.
- **ORTON-GILLIANHAM UPDATE**: There was some conversation around OG, and teachers had asked if we could move the OG period from right after lunch to earlier in the day. So Principal Livingston did do that. And they also instituted progress monitoring for OG, so the groups were reshuffled back in January, They've incorporated running records and reading passages, along with short writing pieces. Principal Livingston felt that, based on data, the 4th and 5th grade students didn't need as much of the foundational work as the lower grades needed, and so in order to help prepare them for middle school, they were going to give them more reading and more writing opportunities. Specifically, the 4th and 5th grade students that were in the 2 higher levels. There were students moved from what their original OG group was into different OG groups. We're going to do some test prep in the higher level groups and lower-level groups, and the principal sent out an email to parents to let them know why this was happening, So this way parents would have a sense of what was happening in the classroom.
- **SCHOOL UNIFORMS**: There was a conversation around school uniforms, It was noted that more kids were out of uniform than in uniform in some pictures on social media. Principal Livingston said the parents had been called. Some parents are reticent to put kids in uniform, and the principal wasn't sure why this was happening. Parents said that they didn't feel that their children should wear uniforms. The principal did note that it didn't seem to be a financial hardship that was causing it. T. Frey said that student uniforms is really not a Board of Trustees decision. It's up to the school to decide whether they want to keep the uniform/eliminate the uniform/enforce the uniform/not enforce the uniform. That's a school-based decision - not a Board decision. She also shared that she had been the principal of a uniform high school, and it's a challenge. So the uniform question is something that the principal will work

out with their school leadership team and figure out if it's a hill they want to die on, or if it's something they can work with families and students to solve.

C. Finance Committee Report

R. Peters gave the following report on the *Finance Committee* meeting held on March 10, 2026:

- **SCHOOL REVENUE & EXPENSES:** Regarding the possible Board Strategy Session discussed earlier, some of the topics for that session have to do with Bridge Prep being at a place financially where expenses may start to outweigh income. If we look into the future, some variables may change. Josh and A. Pecoraro are reviewing the school's budget and one of the questions is, how can we increase school revenue? What are we here for? From an accounting perspective, there's various ways to just adjust numbers on a spreadsheet. But I think really grounding us is why we're here, what we're doing here, and how we want to be intentional, not only spending money, but how we generate that revenue, That is a really important conversation that we need to have. A. Pecoraro, Josh and I will sit down and go through the numbers and variables. I think we're on the calendar for the end of March, so, we'll have some more financial data for the board, or I'll be able to bring more specific financial information to the Board Strategy Session. We need to think on a high level about the direction we want Bridge Prep to go. One of the strategies of increasing revenue is possibly adding a 6th grade or adding more kindergarten classes. Those are 2 ways to enroll more students, but are really not easy. Those are immediate ways to generate more revenue, but those are completely different strategies, with 2 completely different efforts. We need think about what direction we want the school to go in, and then make sure that the budget is aligned with that strategy.
- **IMPACT CHARTERS LLC CONSULTING CONTRACT:** As previously discussed, this charter renewal consultant company offers a 3-year contract for $72,000 which is a pretty big contract, but it's not all from one school year budget.
- **SCHOOL FINANCIAL AUDIT:** We discussed the upcoming audit briefly; we may do preliminary testing in May, or we may push all of the testing to August, so we asked Josh to make sure that the auditors know that we're going to be very busy at the school with the charter renewal, and we want to make sure the audit makes the least impact on school staff as possible this year with everything going on.
- **SIGNATORIES ON BANK ACCOUNTS:** We're still finishing up putting A. Pecoraro on all the bank accounts, making sure only authorized active members of Bridge Prep are on the bank accounts, and we are just about finished.
- **CONTRACT & INVOICE NEEDING BOARD APPROVAL:** We discussed the contract extension for edIT services and the purchase of 60 Chromebooks for students, which the Board already approved earlier at today's meeting.

D. Board Development & Governance Committee Report

N. DeStefano gave the following *Board Development & Governance Committee* update:

- **POTENTIAL NEW BOARD MEMBERS:** We touched on this in our *Executive Committee* meeting. We feel that the 2 Board candidates: Michael Taddei and Vincenza Gallassio brought good energy to the meeting when they visited; they have levels of expertise and asked good questions. We want to invite them formally to go through the Trustee application process, and we wanted to bounce that off the full Board to see what the sense was, so we could invite them to do so in addition to future meetings. A. Pecoraro asked if there was any particular areas or profiles on the Board that we are trying to fill? T. Frey responded that we need to find an attorney. N. DeStefano added that the 2 candidates we have now, one has expertise in finance (Michael Taddei) and the other in education/academics (Vincenza Gallassio), both of which could be really beneficial to our focus, If anyone has someone in mind for Board membership that you want us to meet, please let us know.

E. Family Association Report

C. Caputo gave the following *Family Association* update:

- **FAMILY ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD:** Good news! The Family Association now has a full Executive Board of officers. It's such great news, because with a full board, everything's moving along. *Family Association Officers*: Georgia Orosz, President; Relisha Gibson, Vice President; Polina Struits, Treasurer; Danyel Nicholle Bishop-Demane, Recording Secretary; Kariyma King: Corresponding Secretary.
- **BOOK FAIR:** March 23rd, 24th and 25th at the school.
- **BAKE SALE:** Held today was a great success; they brought in $600. They're will hold bake sales every month through the end of the year because it's successful, and the kids and the families really enjoy it. Next Bake Sale is April 14th.
- **ICE SKATING EVENT**: April 25th
- **MUFFINS WITH MOM & PLANT SALE**: May 8th at the school
- **FAMILY ASSOCIATION MEETING:** March meeting was cancelled due to a conflict with the 5th Grade parents meeting, so there isn't too much to report this month. April Family Association meeting will be held on April 15th.
- **TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK** is coming up but we don't have the details yet. A. Wolkowitz commented that the *Family Association* in the past has offered staff either a lunch or a breakfast, or snacks. We change it every year, but we try to coordinate with the school, which does several days of events so it isn't too much in one day, C. Caputo said she is waiting to hear back on that.
- **POPCORN FUNDRAISER** is being planned as a 5th grade fundraiser.
- **FIFTH GRADE COMMITTEE** is doing well.
- **MEET THE BOARD ZOOM EVENT:** T. Frey stated that she wants to thank C. Caputo for for advocating that the *Board of Trustee* members meet the *Family Association* members via Zoom on this Wednesday, March 18th at 7pm. Everyone should have received the Zoom link. We just want to put a face to our names and offer a little presentation, and give parents the opportunity to ask us questions. Just a little social

event, even though it's on Zoom. C. Caputo responded that she thinks it's a great idea and will be really good for parents to learn about the many wonderful things the Board does that parents don't know about. She thinks parents would feel grateful to know about the Board who are volunteers working to improve our school and our staffing and make things better for our children. It's going to be a really good event. The *Family Association* is sending the Zoom link out as a reminder to parents. She's really looking forward to that event.

F. Review of Action Items & Future Topics

T. Frey reminded everyone:

- Please attend the virtual **"Meet the Board"** with the *Parent Association* on Zoom Wednesday, March 18th at 7 pm.
- We will send out a Doodle Poll, to all Board members asking about your availability to attend an in-person **Board Strategy Session**. What dates are good? Do you prefer weekday? Weekend? Evening? Afternoon? We really want to set it up so that everybody, can come in person.
- The Board of Trustees sent an offer letter to someone we would like as our new CEO. We will be announcing that publicly to the community on Monday, March 16th and that's why we are not discussing it now. After Monday we can discuss this in public.
- A. Wolkowitz wants to remind everyone about the the **Dyslexia Walk** on May 9th at 12noon on the Petrides Campus. It's the first one that the school's doing. Staten Island doesn't have a Dyslexia Walk event. There's never been a Dyslexia Walk on Staten Island at all, so this is huge. We're inviting, obviously, our families, community members, we have sponsorships, it's set up to be a whole family day, besides the walk, there's bounce houses, and activities, and food and it's going to be a really amazing day. It's important that the Board shows up to the event, so please put it on your calendars.
- The Board members are also invited to attend the **80's Karaoke Night FUNraiser** at the Burrito Bar on May 1st at 6pm; it's a 80's theme event. **Tickets are $70 per person** *(includes unlimited tapas & 2 drinks).*

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 8:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano