APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday June 11, 2026 at 7:00 PM

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

Remote Locations:

- *46 Alpine Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10301*
- *3298 Victory Blvd, Staten Island, NY 10314*

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

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

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Trustees Present

Amanda Wolkowitz, Jennifer Sammartino-Mallen, Mark Harmon-Vaught (remote), Nicole DeStefano (remote), Rebecca Peters, Tara Gore (remote), Traci Frey

Trustees Absent
None

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

Guests Present
Alex Penfold (remote), Alisa Reed (remote), Amanda Gilmore (remote), Barbara Stella (remote), Christina Caputo (remote), Danyel Demane (remote), Kathy Baldassano (remote), Rose Marie Illuzzi, Shawna (surname not given) (remote), Vincenza Gallassio

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I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

QUORUM IS MET FOR THIS MEETING.
As per Public Officers Law, Article 7, § 103-a *(Videoconferencing by public bodies)* although Board members Tara Gore and Nicole DeStefano 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. In addition, Board member Mark Harmon-Vaught is attending this meeting via videoconference and has been determined to meet "extraordinary circumstances" for remote attendance at a location not open to the public; he therefore is considered to be in attendance for purposes of quorum and is permitted to vote.

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 Jun 11, 2026 at 7:04 PM.

C. Welcome & Kick-Off

T. Frey welcomed everyone and said that tonight is our last full board meeting of the school year. We thought it was important to just give a word of thanks, and celebrate the work of our Interim Acting CEO, Alyse Pecoraro. We have vanilla and chocolate cupcakes cakes to celebrate and just say thank you. We have just been so blessed to have you with us, and the work that you've done, has been extraordinary, even though you knew at some point that you wouldn't be continuing in the role. We welcome the partnership that you've created with all of us, and it is an understatement to say how much we're going to miss you. Definitely an understatement. We just wanted to show a little bit of appreciation, and as my nanny used to say, may the rest of your journey be as sweet as you are.

M. Harmon-Vaught added that because T. Frey and I meet with Alyse regularly as we met with T. Castanza regularly so we have a lot of moments where we observe the life of the school in every element. The good, the bad, the ugly, the very wonderful, we see the full gamut, and Alyse has been such a remarkable colleague. You have not been part of this community for that long, but you have managed to build such close relationships and connect with people, and build trust and rapport. And it's a remarkable signal of your leadership. You know, when we spoke with people about you early on in the process to fill the interim CEO role, what we heard was that you were really technically capable, and very strategic in your thinking. But the other thing was even more loud and clear, that you were a person who led through building relationships, and I have witnessed both elements of your leadership here. I'm extraordinarily grateful, and so deeply impressed, because it's a hard job. It's a really hard job when you're an interim, and you have done it with aplomb, and so I just can't say enough about what you've done for Bridge Prep in this time, so thank you, Alyse. Thank you so much.

A. Pecoraro responded by saying thank you, thank you all, and I feel like the lucky one here. I haven't been here long, but it's been, an incredible experience for me professionally and personally. I think I'm learning a little bit more about myself as I try to figure out what I want to be when I grow up. And I will be forever a supporter of Bridge Prep. So, I might be leaving this role, but I'll be here.

D. Approval of Minutes of May 12, 2026 Special Virtual Board Meeting: Strategy Session

Traci Frey made a motion to approve the minutes from SPECIAL VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING: STRATEGY SESSION on 05-12-26.

T. Frey stated if there is no objection, the motion to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2026 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.

E. Approve Minutes of May 21, 2026 Board Meeting

Traci Frey made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 05-21-26.

T. Frey stated if there is no objection, the motion to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2026 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.

F. Approve Minutes of May 26, 2026 Special Virtual Board Meeting: Strategy Session

Traci Frey made a motion to approve the minutes from SPECIAL VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING: STRATEGY SESSION on 05-26-26.

T. Frey stated if there is no objection, the motion to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2026 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. Focus on Special Topics

A. ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS

J. Sammartino-Mallen, acting a *Chair ProTem*, opened the nominations for Board of Trustees Officers as follows:

OFFICER POSITIONS

- **BOARD CHAIR/CO-CHAIRS:** R. Peters nominated M. Harmon-Vaught and T. Frey for Board Co-Chairs. There were no other nominations for this position. VOTE: 7 Yes; 0 No; 0 Abstentions. **MARK HARMON-VAUGHT & TRACI FREY ARE ELECTED AS BOARD CO-CHAIRS.**
- **BOARD SECRETARY**: M. Harmon-Vaught nominated N. DeStefano for Board Secretary. There were no other nominations for this position. VOTE: 7 Yes; 0 No; 0 Abstentions. **NICOLE DESTEFANO IS ELECTED AS BOARD SECRETARY**
- **BOARD TREASURER:** A. Wolkowitz nominated R. Peters for Board Treasurer. There were no other nominations for this position. VOTE: 7 Yes; 0 No; 0 Abstentions. **REBECCA PETERS IS ELECTED AS BOARD TREASURER.**

B. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF SY 2026-2027 SCHOOL BUDGET // Finance Committee Report

Jennifer Sammartino-Mallen made a motion to approve the Bridge Preparatory Charter School budget for SY 2026-2027 as presented to the Board of Trustees.
Rebecca Peters seconded the motion.
An Excel document containing the school's budget was shared with the Board of Trustees and the meeting attendees. A detailed description was given by R. Peters and A. Pecoraro with specific budget lines pointed out and explained. This is the budget to be approved at this time.
As we do every year in the fall, we'll do a budget refresh and see what the updated student enrollment count is, and if anything in the budget needs to change, if we need to reallocate budget lines, we will have an opportunity to do so. The budget as voted upon tonight is not set in stone and can be adjusted later.
A question and answer session followed the presentation prior to the vote.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. REVIEW & APPROVE: 2026-27 Insurance Proposal

Traci Frey made a motion to approve the commercial insurance proposal from Gallagher Insurance dated June 5, 2026.
Mark Harmon-Vaught seconded the motion.
A. Pecoraro gave a brief overview of the commercial insurance policies covered by the proposal.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Reports & Updates

A. CEO Report

A. Pecoraro gave the following CEO update:

- **STUDENT RETENTION/ENROLLMENT:** Last time we met we didn't have as good a pulse on returning families as we do now, and so the team were able to speak to all but 2 families to confirm that we have 154 confirmed returning, and there's still 22 unsure. And so, with those numbers, we're looking right now with student enrollment somewhere in the low 230s. I know from the past, we'll get some applications late in the summer as well that I think would put us above that number which is a conservative estimate that we built the budget on.
- **STAFF RETENTION:** All staff renewal letters went out last week, and so over the next week or two, we'll have a better handle on retention of staff as well. So far, there's only 3 teachers not returning.

B. Academic Committee Report & Trimester III Academic Review

T. Frey gave the following report on the *Academic Committee* Meeting held on June 10, 2026:

- **MAP DATA DIVE:** We did a data dive with the MAP data, which Principal Livingston is going to walk us through later at tonight's meeting.
- **TEACHER SCHEDULE CHANGES**: We talked about the day-in-the-life updates, which we had brought last month where teachers were presented with a potential new schedule, and that schedule has been finalized. Teachers are super excited.
- **CURRICULUM BLOCK CHANGES**: The grade team leaders were brought to the table to talk about the decrease in ELA time from 90 minutes to 60 minutes for all grades. And it turns out that in addition to the 60-minute period, they also have a Humanities block, which will be used in a purposeful way to address skill gaps. The Humanities block is station teaching, which incorporates iReady, as well as 2 teacher-led stations. There's also a 15-minute period of sustained writing. We discussed how messaging to the community in general, and as a whole is important about all of the components for literacy, so that there's dedicated instruction, there's the amount of these blocks, there's also the dedicated OG period, as well as the writing blocks. When you add up all of that time, you get to that 90 minutes. Science is also going to have a full hour every day in 5th grade because they have to prepare for the NYS 5th grade Science assessment. Grades K-4 will have 50 minutes, so kids will be getting Science every day in school. Social Studies will be worked on as one of the stations in the Humanities block, and it's also embedded within the *Wit & Wisdom* ELA curriculum, so kids are getting touch points of Social Studies also throughout the week.

- **STAFF RETENTION & STUDENT ENROLLMENT:** We discussed staff retention and got and update on student enrollment,

She then gave the floor to Principal Livingston to give a presentation on student MAP Data.

Principal Livingston shared a document ***"Maps Data: Fall-Spring Comparison SY'25-26"*** containing the data for students of every grade, K-5 with data in these categories: ELA Total Growth (Winter); ELA Average Proficiency (Winter); ELA Total Growth (Spring); ELA Average Proficiency (Spring); Math Total Growth (Winter); Math Average Proficiency (Winter); Math Total Growth (Spring); Math Average Proficiency (Spring). She explained that where the chart is green, that means that, we have already met or surpassed the end of the year goal that we had set for ourselves. The light pink sections are where we met those goals. Where the chart is dark red, we are below our targeted goals. The 2 areas where we did not meet our targeted goals are 3rd Grade ELA Average Proficiency (Spring) and 5th Grade ELA Total Growth (Spring). We either met or exceeded our goals in every other area shown on the chart. Principal Livingston explained each data section in detail and answered any questions on the data.
T. Frey thanked her for all the work that she put in with her team and with the teachers. This is not easy work, and these increases don't just happen. The work has to be put in for this time. And we're hopeful that when the scores are released at the end of the summer, that they will look very similar.
M. Harmon-Vaught said he has an update that relates to the information that Principal Livingston was just sharing with us. We met today with Paolo, our NYSED liaison who had requested a meeting with us. We didn't quite know what the meeting was for, but T. Frey and I, A. Pecoraro, Principal Livingston and F. Ebanks met with Paolo and he basically said this was a routine check-in, between the visits, before the renewal process gets underway in earnest. He shared some context on that. And he asked us questions about some of the ways that we're working to address the challenges that were raised in our last midterm report. Specifically, he was interested in understanding what interventions we've been making around student outcomes, and Principal Livingston shared that MAP data. He was very happy to hear about that. He also flagged something that we've all heard before, which is the question of ELL students, and how we are working to recruit them and making *"best faith effort"* to continue recruiting ELL students, which remains a challenge for us, given our focus on population. Otherwise, he shared just some updates about what the visit might look like, including the possibility that the visit could look quite different this year due to funding differences. Previously, when the NYSED visited, they've brought an outside consultant, a private sector person that comes with them and helps to prepare the report that they do in the analysis. Paolo suggested that may not happen this year because of funding availability, so it may just be Paolo coming along with, of course, colleagues from SEQA, which is the *State Office of Special Education Quality Assurance*, which always participates in our renewal visits. So, it was an informative conversation, we were grateful to have today. In terms of timeline, we thought that the renewal application was due at the very beginning of September, and Paolo estimates that that will not be the case, that it will probably be later than that. But we still are going to work as we did at the beginning. No other key action

items or concerns to flag for the Board, but Just and update since today was a contact with our charter authorizer.

C. Board Development & Governance Committee Report

N. DeStefano said we don't have any major Board Development & Governance Committee updates, just our continued excitement, for V. Gallassio and M. Taddei to complete the formal Board of Trustees application process through NYSED and having their expertise on board.

D. Annual Board Self-Assessment Report

M. Harmon-Vaught then said he wants to turn quickly to the interim results of our BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT. It is interim because there are still some Trustees who haven't completed the survey but still have the chance, and it would be really helpful if everyone could do it.

He then shared a copy of the report based on the surveys already received and summarized that our self-assessment looks very similar to past years. The self-assessment scores us on a scale of 1 to 5, in terms of our overall level as a Board. We're currently scoring at level 4 overall.

He then gave an overview of the 9 areas that the survey covered and the current scores for our Board: Board Meetings (5); Board Structure (5); Board Composition (4); Board Recruitment (2); Board Goals & Accountability (4); Finance (4); Development (1); Academic Oversight (5); CEO Support & Evaluation (5). He discussed each area in detail and answered any questions.

E. Proposed Changes to Board Meeting Schedule Pattern for SY 2026-2027

M. Harmon-Vaught thanked every Board Member who completed the brief Google form regarding your availability for Board Meetings for the upcoming school year. I took a look at results and did some analysis, and found some very interesting things from Board Members about availability. And so, this is a first proffer. This is a conversation we'll continue, and K. Baldassano can help us make sure we're actually checking all the boxes and appropriately accounting for meeting dates. Here's what we found. Thursday nights don't really work very well for many people and interestingly, of the nights of the week, the 2 nights that tended to work best, based on your responses to the survey, were Wednesdays and Mondays. And Mondays were the best day by far for the majority of people. We've never had Monday meetings. We had Tuesdays and Wednesdays for a while, and then Thursdays, but Mondays is most popular. The other thing is that historically we've scheduled meetings for the 3rd week of the month on a Thursday. But sometimes, because of school calendar and holidays, we need to flex on those days. The other challenge that we've seen this year is that because of our timing and the need to push the board meeting forward in the month a little bit, we've been crunched with Academic Committee meetings and Finance Committee Meetings, and then scheduling the Executive Committee meeting after the other committees so that we actually have committee reports for the Executive Committee meeting. I want to propose that we look at Monday evenings for our regular monthly Board

meetings based on the best night for availability, same time as usual 7 PM, and that we set our, default to the 4th Monday of each month. I think we would only need to change 3 or 4 of the meetings to the 3rd Monday in order to coordinate the calendar with the school calendar/holiday calendar. We could schedule the Executive Committee meetings for the week before (3rd week each month) and then the Academic Committee and Finance Committee the week before that (2nd week each month). I'm curious for reactions because this is a radical change. *The reaction from the Board Members was mostly positive with the June meeting date being questioned for possibly being too far into June 2027 or too late in the school year; various possible holiday and school recess closures were brought up.* This is just a proposal and will be fine-tuned for possible school conflicts by K. Baldassano before the July 2026 meeting date. K. Baldassano offered to create a mock-up calendar, then go through the year, make sure there aren't any legal holidays on the Mondays that are listed for meetings and share it with the Board. If anyone has a major conflict, we can possibly move a meeting to accommodate them.

F. Family Association Update

C. Caputo gave the following *Family Association* report:
The *Family Association* held their in-person meeting last night, not virtual and no Zoom option. Because it was in-person only and the Knicks game was on, the meeting wasn't well attended. I sent them some notes from the previous Board meeting. Things are moving along.
I'll just briefly go over their Treasurer's Report for May, and there shouldn't be too much change, for June. In May, the starting balance was $5,965.87. The starting balance included income of about $2,700 from various sales. The Plant Sale brought in $896. And there was a few hundred dollars additional that came in after the Soapbox Derby, some money still coming in from the Sweetheart Dance, and some leftover Valentine's Gram earnings. The ending balance for the month of May was $6,392.78.
There was a Bake Sale today. As always, the *Family Association* requests donations from parents to send in donated baked goods. Many parents sent in some items. Today netted around $500 from the Bake Sale. Anytime there's a situation that a child doesn't have money, that's usually handled well.
They're wrapping up the end of the school year. Things are coming together. We were also discussing next year, and the *Family Association* is planning a yearly calendar in advance so they can make plans for their October events, October fundraising goals. November events, November fundraising goals. I suggested that when they have that tentative calendar, it'd be really helpful to share with the Board of Trustees so that everyone at the school is in the loop. Other than that, there is not really much news. I would have had more news, but the Knicks game last night took precedent over family involvement because I guess many families were home together watching the game. But everyone is motivated and looking forward to next year. We're hopeful for more events and collaboration is something we can work on. The *Family Association,* the school and the Board, really working together to bring great things for the kids and their families.

IV. Public Comment

A. Comments From Guests & the Public

- **ALEX PENFOLD**: Hi, I'm Alex Penfold, I'm a new parent this year. My son is one of the few that takes a bus from Brooklyn. And I heard the discussion about fundraising, and I think you guys have a lot of great ideas about, aligning it with the mission, and I just think from my experience, I have three sons who've been to a lot of different schools, all different charter, public, private. And I think that when families know what you're raising the money for, they get invested and involved and excited. And if there's more of that, like a wish list or something that you guys want to do, I'm in District 15 in Brooklyn, which is pretty bougie, so there's a wide range. My kids have gone to schools where the PTA budget was like $12, which is PS 230, or you know, half a million dollars, and that's like, an underfunded school in District 15. But I did see in PS 39, one of the things that they do is they actually have a fundraiser there, they raised money for an author to come visit. And the kids raised the money, and I was invited one year as the author, because that's what I do for one of my jobs, and it was really special because all of the kids were so excited that they had done that through their Read-a-Thon, and they had worked all year long, and then an author came, and that was something that they did. And not that it necessarily has to be an author, I mean, it kind of goes with the mission with reading and all of that, but for the library, some sort of thing that the kids could experience and be a part of, or the families really get involved. I think that that would be exciting and would also help build community, and help with the funding. And I saw the flyer recently about suggested dues, and it's a wide range of income at the school, but some families have means, and some also have matching donations through a 501c3 with their employer, we may be able to get more funds, especially if it's going to something like a library for kids with dyslexia. I think that there's a lot we can do to align our mission with things that would really benefit our students and help the school. So that's it. *M. Harmon-Vaught remarked thank you. I think that's a great set of ideas, and, you know, co-signing the notion that it matters to know what we're fundraising for, and when we have initiatives that are meaningful, that's a good way to engage families and engage community.*
- **ALISA REED**: Has a question about the Bridge Prep *Family Association* fundraising for a library. Money was raised for the library, but then it was a literacy lab? What does the Literacy Lab entail? Can you be more specific? *A. Wolkowitz responded that the Literacy Lab was a classroom with computers, special high tech equipment and books of all kinds. They had big high tables with books for many different reading levels. Funds were raised for the Literacy Lab by the Family Association and it was open shortly after the donation was made by the FA. But it was set up in a classroom and when additional space was needed for classroom use, the Literacy Lab was divided up and each classroom received some of the Literacy Lab books and equipment. Each classroom now has its own library center. We all know that classroom space is our biggest issue. And if it came to taking in more students and making a classroom out of the Literacy Lab space, I think the school made a good*

judgment call. The Literacy Lab was a beautiful space, and now these classrooms have these beautiful libraries that the teachers set up.

- **CHRISTINA CAPUTO**: Has the school communicated to the *Family Association*, we want this, this, and this, and are we doing that now? Is there something between the school or the Board? Does the school say, this is our wish list for the year. Does the Family Association know what the school needs? Amanda mentioned the wonderful book donations are these things usually planned ahead of time? Because I want to help be an active role with this. I'm just curious if the Board and the school communicate to the FA, if you have extra money this year, can we have X, Y, and Z? That's all I want to know. *M. Harmon-Vaught responded that the question you're asking is a good one, one about prioritization, and I think it actually relates a lot to what we were talking about earlier about fundraising in a clear, coherent way and thinking about shared priorities. It sounds to me like something we want to think about as we look into next year, and really across stakeholder groups, including the Board, the FA, and the school, is a sort of coherent approach to our external engagement, and particularly where we're talking about developing resources for specific initiatives. So, it sounds to me like that's the question that we want to take up more formally, and maybe we as a Board can have a committee that's thinking specifically about this, but we want to do so in coordination with the FA and in coordination with the school in a clear way for the future.*

V. Closing Items

A. Review of Action Items & Future Topics

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano

Documents used during the meeting

- BPCS_Budget_FY27.pdf
- 2026 Proposal Bridge Preparatory Charter School.pdf
- Board Facing Maps Data_ Fall-Spring Comparison SY'25-26.pdf