BRIDGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

SPECIAL VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING: STRATEGY SESSION

THIS VIRTUAL MEETING WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PARTICIPATION REMOTELY VIA ZOOM

Date and Time
Tuesday June 9, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Location
ZOOM MEETING:
Meeting ID: **821 7662 3087**
Passcode: **266574**

ZOOM MEETING LINK:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82176623087?pwd=gf7D7EBv5bq9bNtPqSDv2ox4u9A1Bb.1

One tap mobile
+16469313860,,82176623087#,,,,*266574# US
+16465588656,,82176623087#,,,,*266574# US (New York)

Remote Viewing Locations:

- *16 Northport La, Staten Island, NY 10314*
- *735 Sheldon Ave, Staten Island, NY 10312*
- *557 5th St, #3, Brooklyn, NY 11215*
- *1495 East 63rd St, Brooklyn, NY 11234*
- *600 Commodore Ct, #2620, Philadelphia, PA 19146*
- *18 Seth Court, Staten Island, NY 10301*
- *3298 Victory Blvd, Staten Island, NY 10314*

- *47 Highview Ave, Staten Island, NY 10301*

This Special Board Meeting is being held IN ADDITION to the regularly scheduled June 11th Board Meeting

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

Trustees Absent
Jennifer Sammartino-Mallen

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

Non Voting Members Present
Alyse Pecoraro (remote), Lauren (Liv) Livingston (remote)

Guests Present
Kathy Baldassano (remote)

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 Mark Harmon-Vaught, Traci Frey, Rebecca Peters, Nicole DeStefano, Tara Gore and Amanda Wolkowitz 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.

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 Tuesday Jun 9, 2026 at 7:04 PM.

C. Welcome from the Co-Chairs

M. Harmon-Vaught thanked everyone for making time tonight, and for our meeting on Thursday. We had a *Finance Committee* meeting today, and we've been talking about budget planning. The reason we wanted to bring that to this meeting and follow-up from the last meeting was because we've been considering some of the bigger picture questions about the organizational structure/model of the school. We've been thinking about curriculum, programs and initiatives of the school in a more constrained financial environment. For the first time, we've been seeing some decisions are more trade-offs than they were before. But like in any environment, those trade-offs are strategic decisions and they relate to where we want to invest and what we believe is important for achieving our mission. We want to invite that kind of strategic conversation tonight, framed around some of the key levers that we're looking at for the school budget for 2026-2027. We will review and hopefully approve the new school budget at the Board meeting this Thursday.

II. Strategy Session

A. STRATEGIC BUDGET REVIEW & FORECAST

R. Peters started by saying that we had our *Finance Committee* meeting this afternoon, and we are making last-minute tweaks and adjustments in the budget. There's a little more wiggle room than we thought we had last week. A Pecoraro has some ideas where she'd like to allocate those extra dollars, once we confirm exactly how much we have to spend. She then gave the floor to Interim Acting CEO A. Pecoraro

- A. Pecoraro said every time we've talked about budget, she goes over the same points. The biggest priority right now is continuing to focus on academics, teaching and learning. After the first pass through the budget, going from this year to next year, some pretty significant reductions were possible that don't negatively impact teaching and learning. Now that we have a little bit of cushion back in the budget, the first thing that she would advocate for is hiring someone for the Instructional Coach position that already exists in our org structure. The opportunity for flexing the budget was just presented today, and she has a running list of most impactful things, and that's top of the list. If we want to get to a balanced budget, how might we use those dollars? We've made some gains with the assessments in academics this year. One of the bigger challenges that we have is that our school administrators can't be everywhere. When you think about some of the culture, student behavior, family engagement and communication challenges that we have, an Instructional Coach will help our Assistant Principals to distribute their work in a way that's more sustainable for them, and continues to focus on improving instruction and teaching and learning. Under Principal Livingston's leadership, having an Instructional Coach will really help us continue to push towards academic outcomes while having our other APs focus on the very important things that they should be focused on.
- Principal Livingston added that with our coaching cycle, the way it is structured, the frequency and how deep we want to dive, hiring an Instructional Coach will make that cadence and that intensive and intentional deep dive a lot easier to do for every teacher.
- R. Peters presented the latest version of the budget on the shared screen in Excel format. This is just a quick overview. These are our main revenue sources, and a brief

summary of our expenses. Obviously, the highest expense is for personnel. This is something we've been really paying attention to. As you can see in the past these numbers were very, very high. In the millions, and fiscal year 2026 is the first time we're experiencing a very different financial picture. Fiscal year 2027 is similar in that vein. She and Josh Moreau have been planning on the budget getting as close to zero, maximizing every dollar in a sustainable way. This is a more up-to-date budget, so there's actually a little more cushion. Two things she wants to highlight, revenue, and less expense. Our budget is based on accrual-based accounting, which means the expenses are accounted for in the time period in which they incur, rather than when the cash actually went out the door. The biggest factor in that is depreciation. But we're comfortable with this number actually, being closer to zero. If this number is a negative, it's not a true negative because it's accounting for an additional $143,000 of expense. Again, this is a summary and is definitely not set in stone. Changes in student enrollment would have financial implications and of course operating expenses may change.

- M. Harmon-Vaught commented that one of the things that we will need to provide as part of the charter renewal is a 5-year budget. And we need to differentiate what we're showing here from what we would submit as part of a 5-year budget model. This is effectively a projection to a strategic 5-year budget, where we're actually making strategic choices about what we're prioritizing. This budget leaves us in a position where we end up having slightly more resources than we had initially planned. And we had budgeted with some pretty conservative assumptions on some of these lines and there may be places where we want to reinvest. One of those key areas is what A. Pecoraro and Principal Livingston mentioned about filling the position of Instructional Coach. One of the things we'll have to be careful of is if we're operating close to the margin, we will have to be cautious in conserving expenses. And thinking about the fact that whatever our cost base is, whatever baseline amount of money we know we need to spend on staffing and curriculum and all their aspects, we know that will grow over time, because all costs grow over time, and we have to be thoughtful about that. We know that our revenues are pretty much capped, except for growth in other lines, for example, fundraising. Building our capabilities in fundraising so that we could potentially obtain additional revenue. We've had this conversation before, and many of us believe that there are additional resources available if we build that capability. It's not something we've done at the Board of Trustees level. And at the school it's been done in somewhat narrow ways. So that's something that will be a strategic lever that we should look into. Another strategic question is our approach to generating enrollment and increasing visibility and how can we sustain a constant engagement with the community? And it's going to be more important than ever in future years to be telling our story in a proactive way to keep our student enrollment high. One of the things which is distinct about Bridge Prep compared to peer schools in similar positions is our healthy cash position, the funds we actually have in the bank are quite strong because we didn't have to pay for facility space up front. Those large operating surpluses filtered back into our savings, and we have quite a healthy nest egg. It's good to have those resources but there will be 2 strategic questions to answer: Will we need to tap into our resources to cover the difference if we're seeing stagnation with student enrollment and increasing costs? And if that's not the case, and we're stabilizing with an operating model that's consistent, how might we want to leverage some of those resources for strategic purposes?

- R. Peters added that in the last few years, we have been working with investment brokers to not only house our savings, to generate safe high-yield interest *(the interest income we get from that is about $200,000 each year).* Also leveraging their networks has been part of the benefit of working with the investment brokers. We're hoping that when our new CEO C. Zilinski gets on board, we can really leverage this more. JP Morgan's team works with other nonprofits and high-net worth individuals looking for places to donate. and that is another untapped revenue potential we may have. R. Peters then reviewed different areas of the budget, except the salary details since that contains detailed personnel information and this is a public forum. Questions were asked by the attendees as each area was covered and a question and answer session continued throughout the budget presentation.

B. ACTION PLANS & FOLLOW UPS

M. Harmon-Vaught commented that this is a healthy and helpful process for us to work through together. We're grateful for the intentionality of this incredible deep dive. The work that A. Pecoraro, Principal Livingston and the team have done is just remarkable and really good for our organization during this period of transition. It helps us to get a better sense of where we are, and to best position us as we're looking to the future. The conversations that will follow in the weeks ahead, as we're looking towards our charter renewal, will be about how to structure a strategic budget that takes those choices and puts them into a real plan. And, you know, the budget isn't something we're held to tightly. It's a healthy exercise for us to be thinking about the strategic choices we want to make as we're looking ahead. Some of the bigger picture programmatic questions we're asking are about expansion, private facility space, and major curricular investments, etc. Thank you all so much for joining us this evening.

III. 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 8:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano