APPROVED

Brighten Academy

Minutes

Brighten Academy Charter School Governing Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday March 9, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Location
5897 Prestley Mill Rd
Douglasville, GA 30135

The Brighten Academy Governing Board will meet on Monday, March 9, 2026 at 6:00 pm, in the Media Center.

Directors Present
C. Burns Falker (remote), C. Claiborne, J. Smith, K. Moses, M. Vitale, S. Battle

Directors Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
T. Pugh

Guests Present
C. Sparks, D. Davis, G. McGhee, K. Smith, S. Littles

I. Opening Items

A.

Call the Meeting to Order

J. Smith called a meeting of the board of directors of Brighten Academy to order on Monday Mar 9, 2026 at 6:11 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Adoption of Agenda

Motion to approve the amended agenda.
S. Battle seconded the motion.
Agenda amended to move Executive Session to the end of the meeting.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Approval of Minutes

J. Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from Brighten Academy Charter School Governing Board Meeting on 02-23-26.
C. Claiborne seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. School Leadership Report

A. Operations

1.

- February Surplus: 4 duplicate/unused instructional materials, 2 damaged / outdated laptops, and 1 lost book
- Mrs. Pugh introduced the new initiative: The Brighten Way: EL Education Crew Culture + Integrated STEAM Innovation.
- **Updates on Risk and Compliance Management**
  - Systems. Due date 2026. Playbook of systems, processes and protocols are in progress; will collaborate with Board to review and receive feedback
- **Risk and Compliance Incidents**
  - Parents of former students making online complaints
  - Bullying escalating
    - Next Steps: Administration is implementing structured communication protocols and ensuring timely follow-up with families. Meetings and investigations are being conducted where appropriate.

Board Awareness: Potential reputational risk and need for consistent communication expectations with families.

1. An initial meeting was held with the parents, investigation (bullying flow chart), follow up communication, and a concluding meeting.

Board Awareness: Ensuring policy alignment, documentation standards, and student safety protocols remain consistent.

2.
IT (Mr. Estwick) attempted to rectify our Microsoft 365 licenses (needed to access Microsoft Apps for students and staff).

- District IT informed Mr. E that we are not included in the DCS domain. IT will share quotes and follow up.

Board Awareness: Possible budget impact and operational implications for staff and student technology access.

- A procedural gap was identified in the purchasing process. Financial review meeting Friday, March 6th, 2026. Corrective steps are being implemented to ensure alignment with board policy. Developing clearer compliance monitoring processes (draft Policy for review)

3. **Updates on Strategic Plan Implementation**

- Strategically hire and implement instructional coaches or department chairs: Coach Ochoa currently supports a caseload of teachers who are participating in 6–8 week coaching cycles focused on targeted instructional growth and development aligned with TKES & EL Education
- Enhance professional development for instruction:
  - Implementing a common Data-Driven Instruction (DDI) protocol across all grade levels significantly strengthens instructional continuity schoolwide by establishing consistent systems, shared expectations, and aligned practices.
- Implement comprehensive wraparound services for students and families: The BACS School Store launched last Wednesday. This is a student led initiative from our Student Council and Beta Club members. The team is connecting with the Atlanta Community Food bank to establish a donation schedule with Brighten.
- Cultivate robust community and business partnerships: Planning with the Business Manager to coordinate editorial submissions to Douglas County publications. A meeting is scheduled with the Douglasville Living editor next week to discuss potential articles for publication.
- Plan for facility upgrades and expansion to add an auditorium space: Discussions regarding feasibility, potential funding sources, grant opportunities, and overall need are currently underway with the Facilities Manager. Will collaborate with board to develop RFP.
- Build and sustain an internal Leadership Pipeline to ensure continuity of school leadership, program quality, and organizational stability: 9-box Matrix Talent Review. A talent review was completed with the principal to assess staff

performance, identify development needs, and determine supports required to continue building the leadership pipeline.

Enrollment Data:

- 12 current openings-K-0,1st-1,2nd-over 1,3rd-1,4th-1,5th-2,6th-1,7th-0,8th-6
- 21 absent on FTE Count Day
- 100 over on wait list for 25/26 school year AND 500+ went through the lottery for the 26/27 school year

Facilities Updates (Mr. Len):

1. Repair fencing and changing out green tarps for metal slats. In process.
2. Completed all lighting fixtures in both buildings to LED with 5 year warranty.
3. Met with Graystone for additional power for digital sign
4. Working with Avalon on live updated P.O. system to better view day to day spending
5. Updated fire extinguisher inspection for 2026 in both buildings
6. Changed out all air filters in both buildings
7. Worked with IT to implement a new upgraded system.
8. Working with Facility Resource Center

Staff Updates:

- 3rd grade-Long term sub, tutoring, providing extra support with small groups & Coach O
- 5th grade-Certified Teacher as a long term substitute & tutoring
- 8th grade-Long term sub & tutoring, providing extra support with small group & Coach O
- Non-Returning Staff: 2 SPED Teachers, PEC Specialist, 8th grade
- Intent to Return Updates
- HR Strategy for Talent Recruitment and Hiring
    - Revisions to hiring process
    - Attending Job Fairs
    - Building applicant pool
    - Developing ideal candidate profile for Brighten Academy

B. Academic

III. Executive Committee

A. Requests for Proposals Update

Next steps:

- Interviews. Board discussed potential dates in March to hold interviews. March 19 is the tentative date.

IV. Finance Committee

A. Finance Committee

Treasurer discussed January 2026 financials. The budget amendment will have to be rescheduled due to scheduling conflicts.

B. Birdies Fore Brighten

- Premier finalized their sponsorship.
- Admin is explaining to companies that we have various forms of support available if companies and individuals are not able to golf.

V. Governance Committee

A. Info Only

F22-25 is up for review.
f22: no edits
f23: no edits
f24: no edits
f25: no edits

B. Items for Vote

S. Battle made a motion to approve the changes/review made to policies f18, f19, f21.
M. Vitale seconded the motion.
Policy f20 was tabled.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

VI. Local SBOE/Chamber Events

A. State of the County- April 13th

We have four available seats for the SOC. The suggestion to allow students to attend was mentioned.

VII. Other Business

A. Announcements

C. Claiborne made a motion to Delegate power to the Director of Finance and HR to resolve the pending resignation circumstance of an elementary school teacher. delegate powers to the board chair to resolve a pending personnel matter at the school. Shauncey seconded.

S. Battle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. Executive Session

C. Claiborne made a motion to cancel the golf tournament due to low ticket and sponsorship sales.
S. Battle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
C. Claiborne made a motion to Host a volunteer recognition/appreciation event.
S. Battle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

VIII. 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 11:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Smith