# Brighten Academy

## Minutes

### Brighten Academy Governing Board Meeting

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**Date and Time**
Monday August 10, 2026 at 6:00 PM

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The Brighten Academy Governing Board will meet on Monday, August 10, 2026 at 6:00 pm, in the media center..

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**Directors Present**
E. Hammonds, J. Smith, L. Bryant, M. Vitale, R. Coffee, T. Cabrera

**Directors Absent**
*None*

**Ex Officio Members Present**
S. Wells, T. Washington-Knight

**Non Voting Members Present**
S. Wells, T. Washington-Knight

**Guests Present**
A. Cameron, C. Johnson, C. Sparks, D. Davis, S. Littles

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**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 Aug 10, 2026 at 7:07 PM.

### B. Record Attendance

### C. Adoption of Agenda

J. Smith made a motion to Adopt the agenda for 8/10.
E. Hammonds seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

### D. Approval of Minutes

L. Bryant made a motion to approve the minutes from Brighten Academy Governing Board Meeting on 7/13/2026.
R. Coffee seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## II. Executive Committee

### A. Bio One MOU

Proposal Presentation by TJ Jefferson, Owner of Bio-One South Metro Atlanta - outlining a proposed formal partnership with Brighten Academy to provide specialty cleaning and biohazard remediation services on an as-needed basis. The company emphasized its commitment to maintaining a safe, healthy school environment through professional, discreet, and rapid-response services. Key services include bloodborne pathogen cleanup, infectious disease disinfection, odor remediation, rodent contamination cleanup, and emergency response for incidents occurring on campus or involving school transportation. The proposal highlighted Bio-One's operational qualifications, such as 24/7 emergency availability, OSHA-compliant practices, insurance coverage, regulatory compliance, trained personnel, and strict confidentiality protections. The presentation reinforced Bio-One's commitment to professionalism, minimal disruption to school operations, safety, proper documentation, and respectful service when working around students and staff.

## III. Finance Committee

### A. Finance Committee

Info Only

- June Financials

- **Revenue:**
  - **YTD Actual:** $10.60M
  - **YTD Budget:** $10.46M
  - **Variance:** $137K over budget (primarily due to ERC refunds in August and December)
- **Expenses:**
  - **YTD Actual:** $9.97M
  - **YTD Budget:** $9.79M
  - **Variance:** $184K over budget (due to ERC commission and select overages in GL codes)
- **Net Income:**
  - **YTD Surplus:** $630K
  - **June Surplus:** $109K
- **Cash Position:**
  - **Cash Balance:** $5.24M
  - **Unrestricted Days Cash on Hand:** 157 days (well above the 60-day best practice threshold)
  - **Prior 12-Month Days Cash:** 150 days

Brighten Academy closed FY26 with a strong financial position, exceeding revenue targets and maintaining a healthy cash reserve. All key compliance and sustainability metrics were met or exceeded, and the school continues to operate well above state financial standards. No material financial risks or challenges were identified for the period.

- HVAC Repairs
Use funds for AC repairs and repair both units in gymnasium, additional quotes aside from Shumate, $100k bid, could create problems if go with someone else, admin suggest Shumate as they are connected vs causing more damage, have quotes from others about $10k less than Shumate should negotiate with them, 4Seasons and Assured are the other quotes

## IV. School Leadership Report

### A. Information Only

**Presented by Executive Director Washington-Knight**

**Staffing & Operational Transitions**

- The Finance Manager transition was successfully completed effective August.
- Additional staffing transitions remain underway, with SOPs for HR and Finance currently being developed and refined.

**Technology & Infrastructure Needs**

- Significant technology replacement needs were identified, including outdated teacher laptops that are impacting instructional and operational efficiency.
- Infrastructure upgrades are required, specifically additional access points for the café and the BuildOne1 administrative hallway.
- These upgrades are essential to maintain reliable connectivity and support daily instructional tools and platforms.

**Vendor Contracts & Operational Processes**

- A current vendor roster was reviewed, including contract start and end dates for ongoing services.
- Continued work is in progress to solidify SOPs for both HR and Finance to ensure consistency, compliance, and operational clarity.
- Athletics funding concerns were noted, with follow-up actions needed to ensure adequate budget support.

**Risk & Compliance Management**

- Charter compliance requirements are actively being addressed and remain in progress.
- Accreditation preparation is underway; leadership is reviewing submission processes and documentation requirements for re-accreditation.
- Financial obligations are on schedule: TRS submissions and new-hire benefits have been completed. Payroll is next and currently on track.

**Acknowledgements**
Executive Director Washington-Knight recognized the efforts of:

- **Ms. Chandell Johnson**
- **Ms. Shanika Wells**
- **Ms. Aubriel Cameron**
- for ensuring critical financial tasks and responsibilities are completed in a timely manner.

**TEKS/LEKS Implementation & Leadership Calibration**

- TEKS/LEKS certification work is in progress for all administrators to prepare for the 2026–2027 observation and evaluation cycle.
- The administrative team will conduct internal instructional walks to calibrate before district-led walks begin.

**Financial Oversight & Audit Status**

- The school audit is currently in progress.

- There is an active effort to fill the Finance Manager role with a candidate who has strong financial analysis skills and operational expertise.
- Strengthening financial oversight remains a priority, including building systems that improve alignment between HR and Finance for more efficient workflow.

**Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

- Student achievement, attendance, and discipline KPIs were reviewed.
- The upcoming i-Ready benchmark will require an “all-hands-on-deck” approach to ensure strong participation and performance.

**Technology Implementation & Organizational Health**

- Leadership continues to conduct ongoing meetings to refine processes and build sustainable systems supporting current technology and organizational initiatives.
- Enrollment growth efforts are ongoing, including outreach and increasing seat availability. Current enrollment: **774 students**.

**Celebrations**

- **Teacher of the Year:** Congratulations to **Sharon Young**!

### B. Staff Updates: Areas of Function

Kriston Petersen (b/y) of Aubriel Cameron - presented on an update on the current condition of teacher laptops, many of which are aging, slow, and increasingly unable to support daily instructional and administrative tasks. These performance issues continue to affect teacher efficiency, creating delays in lesson preparation, grading, communication, and technology-integrated instruction. A need was identified for replacing outdated teacher laptops to ensure staff can work productively and maintain consistent instructional delivery. In addition, the school would like to allocate budget funds for new student Chromebook cases. These cases are needed to reduce device breakage, extend the lifespan of existing Chromebooks, and lower long-term repair and replacement costs. Cost estimates for both the teacher laptop replacements and Chromebook cases were presented for consideration in the upcoming budget planning cycle.

## V. Governance Committee

### A. Info Only

E9 - Social Media Policy
F39 - Staff Leave & Critical Days
H7 - Food Service Charges

Annual Policy Review:
G3 - Field Trips and Enrichment Activities
G4 - Substitute, Volunteer, and Chaperone Records Check

G4-R1- Chaperone Duties and Responsibilities
B1-E1 - Board Functions

### B. Items for Vote

E. Hammonds made a motion to update F24 to accurately reflect what has been Brighten's actual policy, which is that, consistent with the Charter Schools Act, unless otherwise stated in a written contract, employees are at-will and not entitled to continued employment or any kind of hearing regarding dismissal or non-renewal.
L. Bryant seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## VI. Other Business

### A. Announcements

Parent Power Summit 2026 - The Douglas County School System is hosting a two-day Parent Power Summit (August 21–22, Magnolia Room) focused on strengthening parent–school partnerships, improving clarity around student support processes, and expanding access to resources such as scholarships and transition planning. Registration is required, Seats are limited; parents are encouraged to register early.

## VII. 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 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Smith