DeKalb Brilliance Academy

FY27 Board Meeting

Published on August 23, 2026 at 1:58 PM EDT

Date and Time

Monday August 24, 2026 at 7:00 PM EDT

Access all board meeting materials here

Agenda

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
I.	**Opening Items**			**7:00 PM**
A.	Record Attendance		Jazmin Counts	5 m
B.	Call the Meeting to Order		Michael Freeland	1 m

The August meeting of the DeKalb Brilliance Academy Governing Board is called to order at [TIME].

Anyone that is here for public comment, please indicate by signing up on the clipboard in the back OR in the chat in zoom by X:10 PM if you would like to make a comment. We will have two minutes for each speaker, in the order in which we receive the request to comment.

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
C.	Approve July meeting minutes	Approve Minutes	Michael Freeland	2 m

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
II.	**Meeting opening**			**7:08 PM**
A.	Mission and Vision	FYI	Michael Freeland	3 m

Our mission: With unwavering commitment to exceptional academics, leadership development, and community collaboration, **DeKalb Brilliance Academy** prepares all Kindergarten-8th grade students to thrive in high school and college, have fulfilling careers, and become impactful leaders in our communities.

Our vision: Each child will know and leverage their unique brilliance to critically analyze the world around them and to design a better and more equitable future.

B.	Board Commitments	FYI	Michael Freeland	2 m

- **Build excellence:** We know that an excellent school starts with an excellent founding team. We come to our time together well-prepared, fulfill our commitments, and generate new ideas to accomplish our goals.
- **Stay engaged:** We stay engaged by “remaining morally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue.”
- **Embrace disagreement:** We value disagreement and agree to bring issues into the open. It is through dialogue, even when uncomfortable, that we grow as a team to best serve our students.
- **Take responsibility for intent and impact:** We assume best intent, and also take responsibility for the impact of our actions.
- **Process, not the people:** We know that everyone is working hard for the team, and look first at how to change the process, policies, or plans when we don’t reach our goals.

C.	Public Comment	FYI	Michael Freeland	7 m

If people sign up:

- Transparency: Board meetings are a public forum to provide transparency into the governance of the school. Engagement from the community is strongly encouraged and vital to that governance. We value and appreciate the input from our community members. As we proceed with public comments, we would like to remind everyone of the following guidelines:

	Purpose	Presenter	Time

- Time Limit: A total of 30 minutes shall be set aside for public comment. Each speaker will have a maximum of 3 minutes to speak. A speaker may not sign up to speak more than once during the same public comment period
- Board Action: The board cannot respond to public comment in the meeting, and in general needs to listen, and then follow up after the board meeting, this is because the board acts through policies and votes as a governing body, not through individuals, so we cannot respond until the board has the information to respond as a group (as opposed to individually), as applicable. We understand this can feel awkward, but please know that we are taking careful notes and take all feedback to the board seriously. The board will direct an appropriate committee or the Head of Schools to engage in responding at a later time as necessary and appropriate.
- Scope of discussion: Please be aware that certain topics cannot be discussed during the public comment period. These include, but are not limited to, pending investigations or legal matters, personnel matters, confidential student information and matters, and issues that are subject to ongoing grievance or complaint procedures. Any attempt to discuss these topics during public comment will not be permitted.
- Discourse: Speakers are encouraged to maintain decorum and present their comments in a civil manner. The Governing Board reserves the right to request any speaker engaging in defamatory comments to cease. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding in adhering to these guidelines.
- Any disruptive members of the public will be asked to cease their disruption to allow the Board meeting to continue. If the disruption continues, the disruptive member will be asked to leave the meeting.
- Start public comment: “the order we have for public comment is XYZ”

If people do not sign up: “seeing no requests for public comment, we will move to the next section of our agenda”

III. Committee Updates — 7:20 PM

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
A. Committee Updates	FYI	Michael Freeland	15 m

Governance update covering three areas of charter renewal preparation:
Strategic Plan: Board retreat moved to September for full in-person attendance. Scheduling options are in the board survey linked in Closing. Draft plan returns to the board in November for discussion, with a vote in January. The school is re-engaging an external strategic planning partner to facilitate this work.
Charter Renewal: The board voted in July to seek a five-year renewal. The SCSC site visit window opens in September–October; scheduling is to be determined and

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

board members may be interviewed. The renewal application is released in early November and due in early January, with a Commission vote in late February.
Community Voice: Family advisory structure targeted for September. Three or more community listening sessions by November, including families, scholars, staff, and board, will feed the strategic plan draft.
Committee meeting times: Governance, Academics, and Partnerships to confirm FY27 meeting times offline - this will be in our closing steps.

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
B.	Finance Committee Update	FYI	Quentin Johnson	20 m

Finance update covering FY26 close and the FY27 outlook:
FY26 close: The school finished within $3,096 of the approved budget. Net income was a loss of $329,071 against a budgeted loss of $325,975. Expenses came in $128,365 favorable. Personnel was $308,685 over budget, driven by additional staffing to meet special education needs. All FY26 grants were drawn down by June 30.
SCSC financial performance framework: DBA projects 90 of 100 points for FY26, which meets financial performance standards. Full credit on current ratio, unrestricted days cash, timely debt repayment, and enrollment variance. Partial credit on annual debt-to-income, efficiency margin, and debt-to-asset ratio. Measures dependent on the independent audit and SCSC monitoring remain projections.
FY27 outlook: The awarded CSGF grant and higher-than-estimated charter supplement actuals bring projected FY27 net income to $1,135,568, an increase of $956,263 over the board-approved budget.
Proposed investment of additional resources: Board discussion of a proposed $425,000 investment — playground, part-time operations support, student computers, strategic planning, and website update — with $531,263 retained for future capital needs. Discussion only; no action requested at this meeting.

IV. School Leadership Report Out — 7:55 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	School Leader Report Out	FYI	Jocelyn Alter	15 m

See slides here.

V. Board workshop — 8:10 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Workshop 1: Fundraising	Discuss	Jocelyn Alter	20 m

Board working session on tax credit fundraising.
Overview of the PEACH Education Tax Credit, which allows Georgia taxpayers to redirect state income tax owed to DBA on a dollar-for-dollar basis at no net cost to the

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

donor. Review of the application process, designation to DBA, and contribution limits by filing status and entity type.
Board members will complete their own PEACH applications during the meeting and identify one additional Georgia taxpayer in their network.
Brief orientation to the federal scholarship tax credit taking effect January 1, 2027, and what remains unknown pending U.S. Treasury guidance.

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
B.	Workshop 2: Board Recruitment	Discuss	Michael Freeland	20 m

Board working session on composition and recruitment.
Review of current committee composition across Governance, Finance, Academics, and Partnerships, and the board's own assessment that recruitment is off track.
Review of the term horizon: four of nine board members complete their first term at the end of FY27 and are eligible for a second term. Confirmation of intent requested by September 15.
Open seats: one on Academics and two on Partnerships, with priority on candidates who can advance fundraising. Chair succession planning to begin this year.
Each board member to name one prospective candidate.

VI. Closing Items — 8:50 PM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Team shoutouts	Discuss	Michael Freeland	5 m

Align shutouts to board agreements:

- **Build excellence:** We know that an excellent school starts with an excellent founding team. We come to our time together well-prepared, fulfill our commitments, and generate new ideas to accomplish our goals.
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B.	Meeting closing	FYI	Michael Freeland	5 m

Closing & next steps

Apply for PEACH: Complete your application at gfpe.org and designate DBA this fall.

Confirm term intent: FY27-expiring members confirm second-term intent by September 15.

Name a candidate; One prospective board member with fundraising capacity.

Confirm committee times: Governance, Academics, and Partnerships send times to Mike & Jocelyn

Schedule September retreat: Complete board survey here - https://forms.gle/mwKcZtsJJ3poehfc9

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C.	Adjourn Meeting	FYI	Michael Freeland	

Now we will adjourn our board business.

As a reminder, we don’t need a motion to close - I will just ask if there is any further business, and if there is none, we can adjourn board business. Do we have any further board business to discuss?

<Pause>

Seeing none, I adjourn official board business.

Coversheet

Approve July meeting minutes

Section:	I. Opening Items
Item:	C. Approve July meeting minutes
Purpose:	Approve Minutes
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Minutes for FY27 Board Meeting on July 27, 2026

DRAFT

DeKalb Brilliance Academy

Minutes

FY27 Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday July 27, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Pre-work:

- review revised local wellness policy, staff handbook, and parent/family handbook (changes in red text (additions) and strikethrough (removals).

Access all board meeting materials here

Directors Present
J. Akpan (remote), J. Carruth (remote), L. Norris (remote), M. Freeland (remote), M. Greene (remote), Q. Johnson (remote), S. Samuels (remote)

Directors Absent
C. Armour, Jr., J. Counts

Ex Officio Members Present
K. Herbert

Non Voting Members Present
K. Herbert

Guests Present

J. Alter, Tonisha Footman

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

M. Freeland called a meeting of the board of directors of DeKalb Brilliance Academy to order on Monday Jul 27, 2026 at 7:10 PM.

C. Approve June meeting minutes

Q. Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes from June 2026 FY26 Full Board Meetings on 06-29-26.
J. Carruth seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Freeland	Aye
J. Akpan	Aye
Q. Johnson	Aye
M. Greene	Aye
J. Counts	Absent
C. Armour, Jr.	Absent
L. Norris	Aye
S. Samuels	Aye
J. Carruth	Aye

II. Board votes

A. Decision 1: Approval of Handbook and Policy Revisions

M. Greene made a motion to I move to approve the revisions as submitted to the board in the Local Wellness Policy, Staff Handbook and Student & Family Handbook, as submitted to the Board.
J. Carruth seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Freeland	Aye
M. Greene	Aye
L. Norris	Aye
C. Armour, Jr.	Absent
Q. Johnson	Aye
J. Counts	Absent
J. Akpan	Aye

Roll Call

J. Carruth	Aye
S. Samuels	Aye

B. Decision 2: Vote on charter renewal

J. Carruth made a motion to I move to direct the DeKalb Brilliance staff to seek a five-year charter renewal for DeKalb Brilliance Academy.
Q. Johnson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Q. Johnson	Aye
J. Counts	Absent
L. Norris	Aye
M. Freeland	Aye
J. Carruth	Aye
S. Samuels	Aye
M. Greene	Aye
J. Akpan	Aye
C. Armour, Jr.	Absent

C. Decision 3: Vote on FY26 Executive Bonuses

J. Akpan made a motion to I move to approve the issuance of FY26 executive merit bonuses of $5,000 per eligible head of school, Principal, and director of Ops , in accordance with the terms outlined in their employment contracts and at the Board's sole discretion.
S. Samuels seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Norris	Aye
M. Freeland	Aye
M. Greene	Aye
J. Akpan	Aye
J. Counts	Absent
J. Carruth	Aye
C. Armour, Jr.	Absent
Q. Johnson	Aye
S. Samuels	Aye

III. Closing Items

A. Team shoutouts

B. Meeting closing

C.

Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Freeland