



DeKalb Brilliance Academy

FY27 Board Meeting

Published on October 25, 2026 at 11:56 AM EDT

Date and Time

Monday October 26, 2026 at 7:00 PM EDT

Access all board meeting materials [here](#)

Pre:work: Before Monday, please find one number: **your total 2025 Georgia income tax.**

- On your individual return, that's **Georgia Form 500, Line 16 — "Tax."** If you own or are a partner in a business, also find the Georgia tax liability on the entity return (Form 600, 600S, or 700).
- Don't want to pull the return? Estimate it. Georgia's 2025 rate is a flat **5.19%** of Georgia taxable income. As a rough guide, you need about **\$48,000** of Georgia taxable income to owe \$2,500, and about **\$96,000** to owe \$5,000.
- You're not sharing this number with anyone. You need it so that when we apply together Monday, you request an amount you can actually use.

Agenda

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

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
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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.

C.	Approve September meeting minutes	Approve Minutes	Michael Freeland	1 m
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II.	Meeting opening			7:03 PM
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A.	Mission and Vision	FYI	Michael Freeland	1 m
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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	1 m
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- **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.

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
C. Public Comment	FYI	Michael Freeland	3 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:
- 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”

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
A. Finance Committee Update Finance: September financials, FY26 audit + vote. Access financial materials here . I move that the Board accept the audited financial statements of DeKalb Brilliance Academy for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2026, as presented by Bambo Sonaike CPA, LLC, and authorize their submission to the State Charter Schools Commission by the November 1 deadline.	Vote	Quentin Johnson	14 m
B. Academic Committee Update Q1 dashboard: culture, mastery, and where we're pushing. Access dashboard here .	FYI	Mesha Greene	10 m
C. Governance Committee Update Governance: renewal site visit + contract changes. Access renewal site visit slides here .	Discuss	Michael Freeland	18 m
IV. School Leadership Report Out			7:50 PM
A. School Leader Report Out See slides here .	FYI	Jocelyn Alter	10 m
V. Board workshop			8:00 PM
A. Partnerships Committee Update Partnerships: PEACH tax credit	FYI	Jocelyn Alter	25 m
VI. Closing Items			8:25 PM
A. Team shoutouts Align shutouts to board agreements:	Discuss	Michael Freeland	3 m

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
	• 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.		
B.	Meeting closing	FYI Michael Freeland	2 m

Finish your PEACH application: If you didn't submit tonight, do it this week and tell Jocelyn when complete.

Bring one taxpayer: One name from your network, with what you need from staff to make the ask.

Hold November 21: Board retreat — in person, full attendance. Growth questions and the slate.

C.	Adjourn Meeting	FYI Michael Freeland
	<i>Now we will adjourn our board business.</i>	

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?

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
<Pause>			
Seeing none, I adjourn official board business.			

Coversheet

Approve September meeting minutes

Section:	I. Opening Items
Item:	C. Approve September meeting minutes
Purpose:	Approve Minutes
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Minutes for FY27 Board Meeting on September 28, 2026

DRAFT



DeKalb Brilliance Academy

Minutes

FY27 Board Meeting

Date and Time

Monday September 28, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Access all board meeting materials [here](#)

Directors Present

C. Armour, Jr. (remote), J. Akpan, J. Carruth (remote), J. Counts, L. Norris (remote), M. Freeland, M. Greene, Q. Johnson, S. Samuels

Directors Absent

None

Ex Officio Members Present

E. Parks

Guests Present

Daphe Lee (remote), J. Alter, Jade Biddle (remote), Sophia Martin-Clark (remote)

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 Sep 28, 2026 at 7:04 PM.

C. Approve August meeting minutes

M. Greene made a motion to approve the minutes from FY27 Board Meeting on 08-24-26.

S. Samuels seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Meeting opening

A. Mission and Vision

Read by Jazmin and Mesha

B. Board Commitments

the board reviewed the commitments

C. Public Comment

None.

III. Committee Updates

A. Partnerships Committee Update

- Presentation by LaKenya
- PEACH Education Tax Credit- redirect GA income tax you already owe to DBA dollar for dollar at no net cost
- Consult your own tax professional. You do not need to live in GA only pay GA state income tax
- Designating DBA is the step donors miss so please designate DBA.

B. Finance Committee Update

- Presented by Quintin
- 90 of 100 points SCSC fiscal viability meets standards
- 112 days unrestricted days of cash at 8/31/ 147 days projected at June 30
- QBA allotment higher than estimated- \$882,755
- CSGF award received after budget approval-\$645,000
- Lower building depreciation- \$160, 834
- Teacher vacancy savings- \$83, 218 net
- Offsetting- federal sources, supplies and professional and tech services.

C. Academic Committee Update

- Presented by Mesha
- 52% DIBELS, K-2- OF SCHOALRS AT OR ABOVE BENCHMARK
- 58% MAP READING—IN THE TWO HIGHER ACHIEVEMENTS BANDS
- 51% MAP MATH - IN THE TWO HIGHER ACHIEVEMENTS BANDS
- Tier II and Tier III response — prioritizing the 30% of scholars who will benefit most from additional targeted instruction. Each scholar has one identified skill, one consistent intervention, and one measurable six-week goal.
- Grades K-4- embedded in reading, math or WIN blocks- 3 days plus weekly progress monitoring
- Grades 5-6: reading and math in WIN (what I need_ - two sessions per subject weekly
- Unified Literacy Plan—recommended for adoption
- this documents what DBA already does, it asks for no new programs, staffing or instructional changes.
- HB 1193, the Georgia Early Literacy Act of 2026, requires every Georgia district to adopt a unified literacy plan. As an SCSC-authroized school, DBA functions as its own district and submits its own plan.

D. Governance Committee Update

- Presented by Mike
- Strategic Planning — In 2024, this board did strategic planning through the Georgia Charter Growth Initiative, producing four priorities for FY25-FY28 and a framework for evaluating growth
- Middle School Design — complete 7th-8th grade build-out, Inclusive Program Design — continue with consistency, Right People, Right Work - reduce key person dependency, High School Transition — if the board approves partner agreements
- Those 4 carry us through the charter term
- High SChool Proposal — Priority 4: our oldest scholars will be graduating soon
- Why partnerships not our own high school scale: the efficient range for a high school at 600–900 students for grades at our current grade size is roughly 340, summing zero attrition and cost. Small schools run 20–30% higher per pupil on average. Our own 2024 analysis concluded a DBA high school would likely need subsidy from the lower grades and breadth: families choose high schools for AP slates, CTE pathways, athletics, and band. Scholars migrate to comprehensive high schools , facilities: high schools needs labs performance and athletic space
- Executing Priority 4: Placement partners — the goal is that every scholar leaves DBA with a high-quality high school placement
- Bellwether led our 2024 work. TogetherEd is leading the next stage (\$22k within the \$25K budget)
- Is there a demand?, What form of growth? When and on what basis? What is the earliest?

- Board Composition need to fill 2+ seats between Academics and Partnerships

IV. School Leadership Report Out

A. School Leader Report Out

- Presented by Jocelyn
- data infrastructure driving leadership
- Coaching- the off track strand sets next week's co-planning agenda for that grade team
- Compliance and renewal- 39 of 54 SCSC requirements submitted on time, no compliance concerns to date- 50% through monitoring, prepared for website auditing preemptively, financial audit due Nov 1 tracking clean, facility readiness emergency response procedures (Alyssa's Law) fully implemented. 100% compliant on health, fire, & building inspections, whats next: SCSC site visits- renewal site visit Oct 14 health and safety visit Oct 20
- 95% daily attendance
- 105 scholars with IEPS, 25 of them new this year, 13 additional students in the evaluation pipeline
- 617 enrolled against a funded ceiling of 620 (\$50k budget impact)
- 916 applications; 517 families on the waitlist
- every student received an individualized Learning Partnership Plan
- Room rep for every classroom & family advisory council launched
- staffing: fully staffed, leader pipeline launched, 97% of staff feel supported by their coach
- presented at the GCSA conference on the MTSS process slated to be approved for the \$100k tutoring grant
- peer school visits.

V. Board votes

A. Snapology STEM Enrichment Services Contract

Q. Johnson made a motion to move to approve a contract with Snapology for enrichment instructional services at a cost not to exceed \$63,000 for the year, replacing the budgeted part-time enrichment teacher position. This expense is already reflected in the FY27 forecast and is offset by savings from the eliminated position.

J. Akpan seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. Adoption of the Unified Literacy Plan

M. Greene made a motion to adopt the DeKalb Brilliance Academy Unified Literacy Plan as presented, authorizing its submission to the Georgia Department of Education in satisfaction of HB 1193, and directing that the plan be reviewed annually and brought back to the Board with academic performance reporting.

Q. Johnson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

C. High school transition strategy

Q. Johnson made a motion to that the Board adopt a high school transition strategy based on placement partnerships directing the leadership team to pursue formal partnership agreements with high schools (subject to board approval) aligned to scholars' pathways, and affirming that DBA will not pursue operating its own high school during the next charter term.

J. Counts seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

VI. Closing Items

A. Team shoutouts

Jazmin shouted out Joseph for his leadership with the confirmed stance of KABOOM! for the playground fundraiser and build.

Quintin shouted out the board for healthy debate on difficult issues; he also thanked the leadership team for helping to keep us under budget and meeting all things asked of them; he thanked Academics led by Kedra

Jocelyn thanked Mike for his Board leadership

Kedra thanked the board for making her feel seen and heard

B. Meeting closing

Apply for PEACH

Site visit readiness- October 14

Hold 11/21 open for retreat

C. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Freeland