

APPROVED



DeKalb Brilliance Academy

Minutes

DeKalb Brilliance Academy Board Meeting

Date and Time

Monday April 28, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Location

All meetings occur at the school's primary address: 2575A Snapfinger Road, Decatur, GA 30034.

Register to attend online at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUqd-2uqTliHNbQk4Rtf5l6MoBLdAEPBC29>

If you have any trouble attending a board meeting, call or text our Head of School, Jocelyn Alter, at 404-618-2242.

Pre-work:

- Familiarize yourself with meeting [slides](#)
- Review competitive bids (see slides for recommendations, bids are [all linked in folder](#))
 - Furniture (FF&E)
 - Signage
 - Moving Vendor
- Review proposed new board members
 - Finance: [Jenea Caruth](#)
 - Partnerships: [LaKenya Norris](#)
 - Governance: [Sharicka Samuels](#)

Directors Present

B. Hartman, B. Howell, B. Riley, C. Armour, Jr., C. Payton, D. Watters, J. Akpan, J. Counts, M. Freeland, M. Greene, Q. Johnson, T. Egbuna, T. Ruffin

Directors Absent

None

Ex Officio Members Present

B. Miller, E. Parks

Non Voting Members Present

B. Miller, E. Parks

Guests Present

Bre Henry, Emma Pean, J. Alter

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 Apr 28, 2025 at 7:05 PM.

C. Approve March meeting minutes

J. Akpan made a motion to approve the minutes from DeKalb Brilliance Academy Board Meeting on 03-24-25.

M. Greene seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Q. Johnson	Aye
J. Counts	Aye
D. Watters	Aye
C. Payton	Aye
M. Greene	Aye
B. Riley	Aye
B. Hartman	Aye
T. Egbuna	Aye
T. Ruffin	Aye
C. Armour, Jr.	Aye
B. Howell	Aye

Roll Call

J. Akpan Aye
M. Freeland Aye

II. Meeting opening

A. Mission and Vision

B. Board Commitments

C. Public Comment

- Only one public comment was made by Adams (AP of Upper School) thanking Jazmin and Mesha for their milestone videos for the scholars

* Mike reminded everyone that the board should not respond to public comments in the future

III. Committee Updates

A. Abbreviated Committee Updates

Curtis completed the midyear evaluation for the head of schools

IV. Finance

A. Finance Committee Update

From Chawn:

- * Overall finances in good shape
- * Enrollment steady at 326
- * Year-end fund balance at 19.1% of target
- * Over \$1M in restricted cash
- * Debt ratios in yellow but expected to improve by fiscal year end
- * Budget review with advisory council completed with no major feedback
- * Some increases in state funding sources
- * Some unplanned expenses occurred
- * EBITDA metrics skewed due to large loan

V. Facility

A. Facilities Taskforce

From Brian:

- * Secured final architectural approval from Georgia DOE

- * Selected AV low voltage vendor and executed equipment order
- * Completed expanding roofing scope
- * Executed loan draws #3 and #4
- * Property walkthrough completed last Thursday
- * Restroom tiles installation in progress
- * Votes pending on furniture vendors and move-in schedule

VI. School Leadership Report Out

A. School Leader Report Out

From Jocelyn:

- * Recruiting at halfway point with many phone screens ongoing
- * 29 staff returning including leadership team
- * 9-10 new hires made
- * 16 phone screens scheduled this week
- * Special Ed positions still need filling
- * 22% enrollment increase since last board meeting
- * Successful registration event with 100+ families
- * Fundraising somewhat stuck but potential 200k grant interview scheduled
- * Year 4 budget hearings well attended with 10 families

B. Staff Advisory report out

- * Teacher appreciation week upcoming
- * Videos made by board members for 3rd/4th grade testing
- * Staff visited new building and had positive reaction

C. Family Advisory report out

- * PTA formation in progress
- * Elections being scheduled for PTA leadership roles
- * Plans to borrow <\$500 from DBA for EIN and registration fees
- * Strong parent interest in PTA participation

VII. Board Vote

A. Competitive Bids

- Furniture bids from 4 vendors: Corporate Environment, CWC, Office Creations, Turner Boone
 - Turner Boone's bid: \$349,772 (under budget of \$380k) - Includes Virco products, delivery, and installation

- 1-year warranty after installation

Discussion around whether approval is for this specific project vs making them default provider. Scope limited to current furniture project, not future needs

Notes:

* Projects over \$25k require separate board approval

M. Greene made a motion to Approve Turner Boone as DBA's furniture provider for the 2025-26 school year.

B. Howell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

M. Greene	Aye
D. Watters	Aye
B. Riley	Aye
B. Howell	Aye
T. Ruffin	Aye
C. Armour, Jr.	Aye
C. Payton	Aye
J. Counts	Aye
B. Hartman	Aye
J. Akpan	Aye
M. Freeland	Aye
Q. Johnson	Aye
T. Egbuna	Aye

* REI's bid was substantially lower than ASI's bid

* Total cost: \$75,000-85,000 for interior/exterior/monument signage

* Exceeds budgeted amount of \$45,000 (+\$16,000 deduct from Carol)

* Gap will be covered by project contingency

* REI has existing relationship with Carol Daniel (construction company)

* They will prioritize code-compliant signage for building inspections

* Will coordinate directly with construction company

* Motion passed to approve REI as signage provider for 2025-26 school year

J. Counts made a motion to Approve REI as DBA's signage vendor for the 2025-26 school year.

B. Riley seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

M. Greene	Aye
B. Howell	Aye
C. Armour, Jr.	Aye
B. Riley	Aye
C. Payton	Aye
J. Counts	Aye

Roll Call

D. Watters Aye
Q. Johnson Aye
T. Egbuna Aye
T. Ruffin Aye
B. Hartman Aye
M. Freeland Aye
J. Akpan Aye

- * 3 competitive bids received (range: \$32,000-\$48,000)
- * Companies toured school since December for inventory
- * All vendors meet June 9-14 schedule window
- * Two-phase moving approach required for health/fire inspections:
 - Phase 1: Kitchen
 - Phase 2: Rest of building
- * Atlanta Peach Movers recommended due to:
 - Cost savings
 - Responsiveness
 - Willingness to do two-phase approach
- * All contracts stored in finance committee's folder
- * Motion passed to approve Atlanta Peach as moving services provider

J. Counts made a motion to Approve to approve Peach Movers as the approved vendor for DBA's moving services provider for the 2025-26 school year.

B. Hartman seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

M. Freeland Aye
B. Hartman Aye
T. Ruffin Aye
J. Akpan Aye
C. Payton Aye
B. Riley Aye
J. Counts Aye
C. Armour, Jr. Aye
M. Greene Aye
Q. Johnson Aye
B. Howell Aye
T. Egbuna Aye
D. Watters Aye

B. New Board Member Vote

Q. Johnson made a motion to Approve LaKenya Norris, Jenea Caruth, and Sharicka Samuels as new board members for the 2025-26 school year.

J. Counts seconded the motion.

- * 3 new members approved:

- Janae (Finance) - Partner at Deloitte
- Laquenia (Partnerships) - Boys & Girls Club, focus on digital/social media
- Sharika (Governance) - Organizational leadership experience

Key points:

- * All reached out voluntarily, not recruited
 - * Local connections (e.g., Sharika grew up off Panola Road)
 - * Have previous board experience
 - * Motivated by:
 - Desire to give back to education
 - Personal connection to DeKalb
 - Impressed by DBA's work with students
 - * Vetted through:
 - School visits
 - Commerce Club event
 - Real conversations about board commitment
 - * Filling gaps from founding board members transitioning off
- The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Freeland	Aye
M. Greene	Aye
D. Watters	Aye
T. Egbuna	Aye
T. Ruffin	Aye
Q. Johnson	Aye
J. Counts	Aye
C. Armour, Jr.	Aye
B. Howell	Aye
J. Akpan	Aye
B. Hartman	Aye
C. Payton	Aye
B. Riley	Aye

J. Counts made a motion to Move into executive session to discuss real estate.

T. Ruffin seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

T. Ruffin	Aye
Q. Johnson	Aye
B. Riley	Aye
B. Hartman	Aye
C. Armour, Jr.	Aye
C. Payton	Aye
M. Freeland	Aye
J. Akpan	Aye

Roll Call

B. Howell	Aye
J. Counts	Aye
D. Watters	Aye
T. Egbuna	Aye
M. Greene	Aye

VIII. Executive Session: Real Estate

A. Entering executive session at 8:04pm

J. Counts made a motion to Exit the executive session.

M. Greene seconded the motion.

* Board discussing \$1.05M offer for 5-acre plot adjacent to new school building

* Key decision points:

- \$10k earnest money required
- 26-day due diligence period
- 60 days to close
- Right of first refusal must be exercised by May 2nd

* Strategic considerations:

- Potential use for high school/early childhood/athletic fields
- Prevents undesirable neighboring development (truck parking)
- Limited future expansion opportunities in area
- \$1M for 5 acres in city viewed as reasonable

* Capacity concerns:

- Timing conflicts with school move
- Leadership team already at capacity
- Need for additional project management support
- Possible early hire of special projects person

* Board support:

- Joseph, Mesha, and others volunteered to help lead
- Will need emergency meeting within 26 days
- Level Field may provide additional support
- Board authorized task force to proceed with offer

* Next steps:

- Review legal terms in existing agreement
- Coordinate with broker
- Formalize task force authorization
- Begin due diligence if accepted

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

Roll Call

M. Freeland Aye
B. Howell Aye
D. Watters Aye
B. Riley Aye
J. Akpan Aye
T. Egbuna Aye
T. Ruffin Aye
Q. Johnson Aye
B. Hartman Aye
J. Counts Aye
M. Greene Aye
C. Armour, Jr. Aye
C. Payton Aye

J. Counts made a motion to Exercise the school's right of first approval.

Q. Johnson seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

T. Egbuna Aye
C. Armour, Jr. Aye
D. Watters Aye
T. Ruffin Aye
J. Counts Aye
J. Akpan Aye
Q. Johnson Aye
B. Hartman Aye
B. Howell Aye
B. Riley Aye
M. Greene Aye
M. Freeland Aye
C. Payton Aye

IX. Closing Items

A. Team shoutouts

B. Meeting feedback survey

C. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:16 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Freeland