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-2uqTIiHNbQk4Rtf5l6MoBLdAEPBC29

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: Shericka 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

**Guests Present**
Bre Henry, Emma Pean, J. Alter

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## 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**

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

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

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| J. Akpan | Aye |
| B. Howell | Aye |
| D. Watters | 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**

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

## B. New Board Member Vote

Q. Johnson made a motion to Approve LaKenya Norris, Jenea Caruth, and Shericka 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
- Laquenya (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**

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

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

**Roll Call**

D. Watters 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**

C. Armour, Jr. Aye
M. Greene Aye

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| M. Freeland | Aye |
| Q. Johnson | Aye |
| J. Akpan | Aye |
| D. Watters | Aye |
| B. Riley | Aye |
| C. Payton | Aye |
| J. Counts | Aye |
| B. Hartman | Aye |
| T. Egbuna | Aye |
| T. Ruffin | Aye |
| B. Howell | 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**

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