Bright Star Schools Board of Directors
Minutes of the Regular Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Directors of Bright Star Schools was held on **Tuesday, May 12, 2026** at Stella Elementary Charter Academy - Mansfield and via teleconference, pursuant to notice duly given.

On the meeting agenda, the legislative body noticed each teleconference location of each member participating in the public meeting, each teleconference location was accessible to the public, members of the public were allowed to address the legislative body at each teleconference location, and the legislative body posted an agenda at each teleconference location. At least a quorum of the legislative body participated from locations within the boundaries of the local agency's jurisdiction.

In attendance at the start of the meeting were board members Andrew Murr, Dr. Roberta Benjamin-Edwards, Jen Cole, Stephen Green, Marisol León, Louisa Wee, Lois Levy, Dr. Marissiko Wheaton-Greer.

Bright Star Schools staff in attendance were Gene Castro, Daniel Feria, Lydia Garcia, Darryl Garris, Alexandra Lee, Ana Martinez, Marni Parsons, Elijah Sugay, Johnny Teran, Sebastian Valdes. Auditor Ira Gonzalez from Eide Bailly, LLP, and attorneys Terry Tao, Miguel Iniguez, and Jeremy Brust from Tao Rossini APC also joined as guests.

1. **Call to Order and Introduction of Guests:** Andrew Murr called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. after confirming that a quorum was present.

2. **Public Comment Period for Non-Agenda Items**: The chair explained public comment rules and asked for public comment on non-agenda items. No comments were made at this time.

3. **Meeting Kick-off by Johnny Teran, Community School Manager at Rise Kohyang High School:** Johnny presented an overview of how Rise Kohyang High School supports student success through academic interventions, enrichment opportunities, and community partnerships. The presentation highlighted programs such as office hours, targeted academic support, AP and honors courses, student-leg conferences, and expanding hands-on opportunities like journalism, art, bike repair, and gardening projects. RKHS also collaborates with numerous community organizations to provide wellness, mentorship, recreation, leadership, and family support services. Students demonstrated significant community impact throughout volunteer initiatives including food distribution, neighborhood cleanups, and care packages drives, while upcoming programs will expand parent education, citizenship classes, and mental health support. The school also celebrated major achievements in 2025, including providing hundreds of students with free vision care, earning recognition from the City of Los Angeles, receiving a 2025-26 U.S. News Best High Schools award, and supporting five students in earning full four-year scholarships.

4. **Academic Committee Report by Committee Chair Dr. Roberta Benjamin-Edwards:** Dr. Benjamin-Edwards reported that the Committee received updates of key PD dates that will be taking place in June at Rise Kohyang High School. She also reported that LAUSD oversight visits concluded at VAES, with both monitors attending in person. She also shared that Liliana Bustos gave updates on how BSS is building capacity through external learning

opportunities, and she also shared updates on ADA and Chronic absenteeism on Marni's behalf. Lastly, Lydia Garcia provided updates on LACOE monitoring visits.

5. **Chief Executive Officer/Lead Executive Officer Presentation by Ana Martinez:** Ana Martinez provided updates on the following:
Strategic updates: Ana shared that the final three weeks of the school year are underway. The last day of instruction is June 4, followed by a closeout day for teachers on June 5. Preparation is also in progress for the third annual leadership retreat, which will bring together principals, assistant principals, deans, community school managers, office managers, and relevant school support staff for three days of training focused on strengthening school leadership teams. Lead teachers will join for the final two days to support instructional culture work. The retreat will take place June 15-18 at Rise Kohyang High School, and BSS Board members are welcome to attend. Additional details will be shared soon. Ana also reported that Bright Star's last Annual Performance-Based Oversight Visit with LAUSD for this school year took place on April 16 at the new Valor Academy Elementary School campus. James Perreault and Sunserae Keaton, LAUSD-CSD Specialists, were both in attendance. She highlighted the School Leaders work in preparation for each visit and highlighted Angelina Calderon and Lydia Garcia's efforts in supporting them. Updates on APBOV scores for all our schools will be provided at a later time, once LAUSD finalizes the reports.
BSS Board Membership Term Renewal**:** Ana shared the Board membership term renewal for Dr. Roberta Benjamin-Edwards has been added to the consent agenda for today's meeting.

6. **Chief Instructional Officer Presentation by Liliana Bustos:** Liliana was absent, in her place, Ana Martinez provided the following updates on her behalf:
Capacity Building Through External Learning Opportunities: Ana presented an overview of how the organization is building capacity through external learning opportunities, conferences, and school visits. She highlighted strong collaboration with Community School Managers, including using grant funding to plan for attendance at CABE conference in San Francisco, and to bring back key strategies focused on high-quality instruction and support for multilingual learners. Across these learning experiences, teams gained greater alignment around instructional rigor, equity, and culturally responsive practices, while also strengthening collaboration across schools. Visits to high-performing schools such as Fenton Elementary and Alliance Marine provided affirmation of the organization's current direction and a vision for what success could look like in the future, along with practical tools and insights from effective classrooms. Ana also emphasized next steps, including sharing these learnings more broadly through a training-the-trainer model, expanding professional development opportunities, and continuing to build partnerships and connections to support ongoing improvement.

7. **Senior Vice President of Student and Family Services Presentation by Marni Parsons:** Marni Parsons shared ADA updates and indicated that it is trending positively, with ADA in March 2025 being at 93.66% compared to 94.06% in March 2026. She also reviewed each school's current chronic absenteeism as of 4/21/26.

8. **Governance Committee Report by Andrew Murr, Board and Committee Chair:** Andrew reported that the Governance Committee received updates on the upcoming charter renewals for five Bright Star schools. Board members were informed that Lydia Garcia will

share the required charter renewal documentation at the end of May or early June, once LAUSD confirms the guidelines for the 2026-2027 charter petition submissions. The Committee also received updates on new legal requirements, including that, effective July 1, Board members will become mandatory reporters. In addition, under Brown Act requirements, Board members participating remotely in public meetings must post a copy of the agenda in a public area outside their dial-in location. The Committee also received updates on the final results of this school year's LACOE Williams monitoring visits.

9. **Vice President of Public Affairs Presentation by Angelina Calderon:** Angelina was absent, in her place, Ana Martinez provided the following updates on her behalf:
Charter Petitions Renewal: BSS will be submitting charter petition renewals for five schools. Submissions are currently planned for July 2026. During months of May and June, Board members will be asked to complete and submit two documents - Board Member Questionnaires and a copy of their resume, which will be attached to each of the charter petition applications. Ana also shared that two LAUSD Board members visited BSS. Karla Griego visited Rise Kohyang High School and Sherlett Hendy Newbill visited Stella High Charter Academy. They both had the opportunity to tour the campuses and meet our students.
2026 New Laws: Ana shared that Beginning July 1, 2026, all Board members will be designated as Mandated Reporter, and they will be required to complete online training in August 2026. Additional instructions on how to complete this training is forthcoming. She assured that Board members will have plenty of time to complete the training. Ana also reviewed recent updates to the Brown Act noting that while Board members may use social media to discuss school-related matters, a majority of members (six for BSS) may not engage with the same post by liking, commenting, reposting, or responding. Additionally, an oral report must be presented before the Board can approve any executive-level compensation. The Board also has the authority to remove disruptive individuals from meetings, but only after the Board Chair has issued a formal warning. She also reminded everyone of several key requirements: teleconference locations must be listed on the agenda and be accessible to the public; agendas must also be posted at those teleconference locations, at least a quorum of the Board must participate from within the agency's jurisdiction (Los Angeles County for BSS), and all votes must be conducted by roll call. Ana noted that BSS is already in compliance with these requirements.

10. **Manager of Compliance and Special Projects Update by Lydia Garcia:** Lydia provided a summary of the LACOE Williams school facilities and instructional materials monitoring visits, indicating that all schools reported sufficient instructional materials. Facilities and safety inspections - both announced and unannounced - resulted in strong overall performance, with most schools earning ratings of "Good" to "Exemplary." Several sites, including RKHS, VAES, and SMCA, achieved perfect scores, while others received high marks with only minor deficiencies noted, such as lighting issues, fire safety concerns, cleanliness, and minor structural or storage-related items. SECA also received a passing score, with the official report pending. It was noted that school operations staff have addressed all areas identified during safety and inspection visits and have implemented systems to ensure ongoing readiness. These include regular site walkthroughs conducted by the Dean of Operations and the Manager of Compliance throughout the year, as well as in advance of any announced visits, ensuring that all campuses remain monitoring-ready at all times. Finally, she thanked all school-based teammates including school principals, teachers,

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and Deans of Operations for taking the time and effort to prepare as best as possible for each visit.

11. **Finance Committee Report by Stephen Green, Committee Member:** Stephen Green shared that enrollment trends are slightly below budget but remain higher year over year. This has been offset by higher-than-budgeted ADA and strong fiscal management by the team, leaving the organization in a strong financial position with expenses below forecast and net revenue above projections. The committee also discussed the audit report. Stephen noted that a few material weaknesses were identified, but all were administrative and technical in nature, primarily related to understated assets rather than fiscal mismanagement. He shared that the team has implemented processes to prevent similar issues moving forward and has a clear plan to address the findings during upcoming charter renewals. Stephen also reported that the Committee discussed the Wilshire office lease renewal and highlighted that the team negotiated favorable terms and identified cost savings.

12. **Chief Financial Officer Presentation by Elijah Sugay:** Elijah provided update on the following:
    Independent Audit Report Update: Elijah began his presentation by providing additional context about the prior audit communications during the last board meeting and clarified that updates evolved as the audit progressed. The final outcome remains an unmodified (clean) audit opinion. However, several material adjustments were identified, particularly in balance sheet accounts, resulting in a revised understated net asset balance of $32.6 million as of June 30, higher than previously reported. This change was largely driven by lease accounting adjustments and, more significantly, the recognition of Prop 51 funds related to the RKHS project. These funds had previously been recorded as deferred revenue but, following further review with auditors, were required to be recognized in 2024-2025, shifting them to grant revenue and increasing net assets. Elijah also outlined steps being implemented to prevent similar issues in the future, including strengthening monthly close procedures, clearly assigning account ownership, and establishing pre-audit check-ins with auditors. Overall, the key takeaway is that the organization received a clear audit opinion, with no negative impact on its financial position.
    Financial Dashboard & Monthly Financials Ending 2/28/26: Elijah provided an overview of financial performance of the organization. When we started the year, the budget was projecting a net income of -$332K. Year end Forecast with financials through 2/28/26 are projected to be at $411K. That's a net improvement of $743K. The improvement is primarily driven by grant-funded activity and P2 ADA higher than budgeted. For expenses, he reported that the increase of $0.7M was mostly driven by the expenses tied to program/curriculum tied to grant funding. The magnitude is partially offset by personnel cost vacancies and true-up of benefits costs.
    School-Level Forecast: 5 Schools Trending Above Budget: The school-level forecast shows a generally positive financial outlook, with five schools trending above their budgeted net income targets. Several schools, including VAHS, RKHS, VAMS, and VAES, are projected to significantly outperform their budgets, contributing to overall strength across the network. Three schools are performing slightly below budget but remain stable and close to their targets. One school, RKMS, has been identified as a focus area, as it is currently projected to end the year below budget and may require additional support. Overall, the forecast reflects strong performance across most schools, with only targeted attention needed to address remaining gaps.

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Facilities Updates: Elijah shared that SECA continues to benefit from a strong partnership with Archdiocese in working toward a sustainable facility plan, while SHCA remains stable at its current location as next steps and site pathways are monitored. In terms of the Rise cluster, RKMS is actively engaging with partners to support a long-term facilities solution, and RKHS is finalizing remaining items with a settlement reached below the original project budget. He also shared that VAES is nearing completion, with a final punch list items and closeout currently in progress. Additionally, the Wilshire office has secured a three-year lease extension with favorable terms, including a modest escalation and two months of free rent, providing stability for central operations.

13. **Senior Vice President of Operations Presentation by Sebastian Valdes:** Sebastian Valdes provided updates on the following:
    2025-26 School Enrollment Overview: Sebastian shared enrollment numbers, showing a small increase of 0.49% from this time in comparison to the 24-25 school year. 3,727 students were enrolled during March 2026, compared to 3,709 in March, 2025. He also reported that while enrollment is 1.4% below budget, ADA is 1.43% above budget, effectively offsetting the enrollment variance and resulting in a positive overall budget position.

14. **Approval of Consent Agenda:** Andrew Murr asked if any board members wished to remove items on the consent agenda. Hearing none, he called for a motion to approve all items on the consent agenda as follows:
    Governance
    - Minutes of the BSS Board meeting on April 6, 2026
    - Minutes of the Academic Committee meeting on April 28, 2026
    - Minutes of the Governance Committee meeting on April 29, 2026
    - Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on April 30, 2026
    - Minutes of the Special Finance Committee meeting on May 4, 2026
    - Term Renewal of Dr. Roberta Benjamin-Edwards to the Academic Committee and BSS Board

    Finance and Facilities
    - Financial Dashboard & Monthly Financials Ending 2/28/2026: Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Forecast, and Budget-to-Actuals
    - Independent Audit Report
    - Wilshire Office Lease Agreement

Jen Cole moved to approve all items on the consent agenda, and Dr. Marissiko Wheaton-Greer seconded the motion. Votes were then recorded as follows:

Board Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Andrew Murr	x			
Dr. Marissiko Wheaton-Greer	x			
Jennifer Cole	x			

Lois Levy	x			
Louisa Wee	x			
Marisol León	x			
Stephen Green	x			
Dr. Roberta Benjamin	x			
Alyce Johnson				x
David Chang				x
Total	8	0	0	2
Motion Carries?	Yes			

15. **Closed Session:** Conference with Legal Counsel - Existing Litigation (Gov. Code section 54956.9(d)(1).) Case Name Unspecified: (disclosure would jeopardize settlement negotiations): All Board members, Ana Martinez, Elijah Sugay, Terry Tao, Miguel Iniguez, and Jeremy Brust entered a closed session at 5:49 p.m. At 6:00 p.m., all board members and BSS staff returned from the closed session. There were no actions to report.

16. **Closed Session:** PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION (Gov. Code section 54957(b)(1).) Title: Lead Executive Officer: All Board members and Ana Martinez entered a closed session at 6:00 p.m. and returned at 6:04p.m. There were no actions to report from the closed session.

17. **Adjournment:** There being no further business, Andrew Murr called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Lois Levy moved, and Jen Cole seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Signed by:
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Andrew Murr, Board Chair

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Lydia Garcia
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Lydia Garcia, Manager of Compliance & Special Projects & Board Secretary