



Academic Committee
Bright Star Schools Board of Directors
Minutes of the Regular Meeting

An Academic Committee meeting of the Board of Directors at Bright Star Schools was held on **Tuesday, February 17, 2026** at Stella Elementary Charter Academy- Mansfield 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 were Committee Chair Dr. Roberta Benjamin-Edwards and committee members Jen Cole, and Lois Levy. Bright Star Board Chair Andrew Murr was also present.

Bright Star Schools staff in attendance were: Liliana Bustos, Angelina Calderon, Elizabeth Carter, Laura Gaboudian, Lydia Garcia, Eliza Kimly, Alexandra Lee, Ana Martinez, Marni Parsons, and Jessica Rodriguez.

1. **Call to Order and Introduction of Guests:** Dr. Benjamin-Edwards called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.
2. **Public Comment Period for Non-Agenda Items:** none at this time.
3. **Vice President of Instructional Systems and Strategy Presentation by Alexandra Lee:** Alexandra presented the SY 2026-2027 Academic Calendar draft to the Academic Committee, outlining the three-phase development process. Phase 1, currently underway, focuses on establishing Instructional and Non-Instructional days. Phase 2 will involve alignment with School Support Team (SST) functions, including setting assessment windows, grading periods, Professional Development (PD) structure, Communities of Practice (COP), and other PD schedules. Phase 3 consists of internal approval, integrating school events, the instructional calendar, bell schedules, and master schedules. Alexandra confirmed that Phase 1 considerations and requirements have been reviewed and noted that the SY 26-27 calendar aligns closely with LAUSD's published draft. She also provided a concise comparison of the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 calendars, highlighting areas that will remain consistent and where changes are anticipated for the upcoming school year.
4. **Closed Session: PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION** (Gov. Code section 54957(b)(1).) Title: Lead Executive Officer. All members of the Academic Committee and Ana Martinez entered a closed session at 5:16 p.m. and returned at 5:37 p.m. There were no actions to report from the closed session.
5. **Chief Executive Officer Update by Ana Martinez:** The strategic goal update that Ana provided to the Committee outlined the recent strategic decisions around the strategic staffing of the SST (School Support Team) and communication timeline. Ana shared that this



process included internal meetings with impacted staff, beginning with one-on-one sessions, department meetings and email communication.

6. Chief Instructional Officer Presentation by Liliana Bustos: Liliana's updates were as follows:

i-Ready D2: Liliana Reported that the iReady D2 data shows overall growth from fall to winter in both ELA and Math. From winter to winter, the percentage of students performing at or above grade level in ELA increased from 24% to 27%, with especially positive results in grade levels participating in the ELA curriculum pilot. In Math, the percentage of students scoring three or more grade levels below decreased from 37% to 34%, and SGI pilot programs are showing progress for students in Tier 3.

Curriculum Audit & Adoption: Liliana introduced Laura Gaboudian and Jessica Rodriguez who were involved in the curriculum audit process. Laura presented an overview of the K-12 English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum and adoption process. She began by reviewing the current ELA programming and outlining the audit and adoption timeline, explaining the steps taken and the rationale behind each phase as her team evaluated various curriculum options. She highlighted the mission of the ELA Curriculum Adoption Committee and shared how both teachers and committee members identified a need for high-quality instructional materials within one comprehensive K-12 ELA program. Laura also detailed the criteria used to narrow the initial curriculum search and determine which programs would move forward to pilot for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12, along with the five domains used to evaluate each curriculum. She concluded by requesting that the Academic Committee recommend the Board the adoption of Bright Star Schools' K-12 ELA Curriculum, proposing Benchmark for grades K-5 and Into Literature for grades 6-12.

Options for Youth: Liliana Bustos introduced Dr. Eliza Kimly and Elizabeth Carter to provide an update on this topic. Eliza shared that the high school summer school plan includes establishing a one-year MOU with Options for Youth to allow time to explore additional vendor partnerships. Key action steps include releasing the Summer School Administrator application on January 30, holding the first data meeting on January 30 to review credit-deficient students across all high schools, and opening summer school teaching positions starting on February 27. These steps are designed to ensure strong leadership, data-informed planning, and appropriate staffing to effectively support students in need of credit recovery. Elizabeth Carter talked about the growth trends and performance drivers for Dynasty's United Youth Association. She also provided an overview of DUYA SECA tutoring examples which included student pre-assessment and post-assessment scores, which overall showed positive results.

7. Senior Vice President of Student and Family Services Presentation by Marni Parsons:

Marni shared ADA updates and indicated that it is trending positively, with ADA in January 2025 being at 92.45% compared to 91.52 in January 2026. She also reviewed each school's current chronic absenteeism as of 2/1/26, and indicated that RKMS, VAES, and VAMS exceeded their ADA targets, while SHCA currently has the lowest ADA at 92.01%. However they are doing a little better than they did at this time of year last year. Marni shared that in 23-24, LAUSD issued a Notice to Cure for Rise Kohyang Elementary School due to a high disproportionate suspension rate for African American students (21.48%). For 24-25, LAUSD issued a Notice of Concern, calculating the rate of African American/Black students at 15.85%, showing improvement but still above expectations; however, the state's calculation method (which counts students suspended rather than total suspensions) shows a lower rate of 4.35%. LAUSD expects its authorized charter schools to keep overall suspension rates



below 5% yearly and reduce disproportionality among student groups. In 25-26, RKES currently has zero suspensions and is emphasizing “Other Means of Correction” (OMC), using alternatives to suspension and training staff to document these interventions. Similarly, Rise Kohyang Middle School (RKMS) and Stella High Charter Academy received Notices of Concern last year but both reduced suspension rates in 24-25, lowered disproportionality, and currently maintain low suspension rates in 25-26 while increasing use of OMC strategies. Overall, across the network, schools are keeping suspension rates low, prioritizing alternatives to suspension, and working to meet district expectations, especially important as RKMS and SHCA will renew their charters in SY26-27.

8. **Vice President of Public Affairs Presentation by Angelina Calderon:** Angelina provided the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) Mid-Year update which included an overview about the purpose of the mid-year reports, including legal requirements, a high level overview of the data collection and general timeline for approval of the LCAP. She shared that our LCAP goals are the same as last year’s across all schools and focus on increasing student academic growth through state test scores, English proficiency, iReady assessments; fostering a positive and supportive school culture that supports both social-emotional development and family involvement; and maintaining well-kept school facilities, ensuring properly credentialed staff, and delivering standards-aligned instruction. Angelina also talked about the metrics and actions for each goal, and their level of implementation across all of our schools. She also provided an overview of the expenditures linked to each action.

9. **Recommendation for Approval of Consent Agenda:** Dr. Roberta Benjamin-Edwards called for a motion to approve the items on the consent agenda. Jen Cole moved and Lois Levy seconded the motion:
 - i. SY 2026-2027 Academic Calendar
 - ii. Literacy Audit & Adoption

Board Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Dr. Roberta Benjamin-Edwards	X			
Lois Levy	X			
Marisol León				X
Jennifer Cole	X			
Total	3	0	0	1
Motion Carries?	YES			

10. **Adjournment:** Dr. Roberta Benjamin-Edwards adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Dr. Roberta Benjamin-Edwards
Committee Chair

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