Briya Public Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 22nd, 2026, 6:10-7:30 p.m. on Zoom

This meeting is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Please address any questions or complaints arising under this meeting to the Office of Open Government at opengovoffice@dc.gov.

Board members present
Doris Garay, *Chair*
Geovanna Izurieta, *Treasurer*
Dimelsa Zelaya, *Secretary*
Brittany Pope
Charlotte Baer
Jennifer Huang
Bill Bletzinger
Alejandra Sandoval
Carolina Hernandez

Staff members present
Christie McKay, *Executive Director*
Joel Goering, *Director of Finance*
Judy Kittleson, *NEDP & Adult Education Manager*
Stella Wang, *Board Liaison*
Karen Hertzler, *Director of Accountability*

Board members absent
Stuart Butler, *Vice Chair*
Brenda Martinez

Quorum was reached.

1. **Call to Order**
   - The meeting was called to order at 6:13pm.

2. **Approval of minutes**
   - February 11th Briya Board Meeting Minutes
     - ***Geovanna Izurieta*** *moved to approve the February 11th, 2026 Briya Board meeting minutes;* ***Alejandra Sandoval*** *seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*
       - Roll call:
         - Doris Garay – yes
         - Geovanna Izurieta – yes
         - Dimelsa Zelaya – yes
         - Brittany Pope – yes
         - Charlotte Baer – yes
         - Jennifer Huang – yes
         - Bill Bletzinger – yes
         - Alejandra Sandoval – yes
         - Carolina Hernandez – yes

3. **Director's Report**
    - Charter goals—presented by Karen Hertzler
        - Karen reviewed the charter goals amendment process timeline. On April 27, Briya's amendment will go before PCSB board.
        - The measures that are changing:
            - Employment and post-secondary education measures (consolidate two measures and establish a higher target of 70%)
            - In-seat attendance measures (remove to align with Aspire)
            - PK PT conferences (parents must attend 2 of 3 conferences)
            - Infant/toddler PT conferences (developed for ASPIRE, will replace former reading journal measure)
        - Geovanna asked why Briya changes the goals. Karen, Christie and Joel answered:
            - As part of the five-year review process we have the opportunity to change the goals. These changes were initiated by Briya. Many schools just take ASPIRE as their goals. Briya values the accountability that ASPIRE provides but the charter law allows schools to set their own individual goals and have the ability to have a unique school, so we like the flexibility of having our own charter goals.
            - Over the years our student needs may change, and we would like flexibility to share what has changed. Any school has the right to decide their own goals. Some schools may use ASPIRE as their goals since it's easier and they don't have to report on two separate sets of data. But Briya believes it is important to maintain that flexibility.
            - If PCSB asks, we can also raise the point that it is even more in the spirit of what charter schools were designed to be, to address the unique needs of students based on their particular focus. Briya has a particular focus and niche in DC and that is what charter schools are about, even though it's more work for our team to have two separate sets of goals.
    - LEA Oversight Brief—presented by Karen Hertzler
        - Purpose: consolidated, board-focused resource designed to support effective governance and oversight. It brings together key academic, financial, operational, and compliance information, and helps boards monitor school performance, identify emerging risks, and engage in strategic dialogue with school leadership.
        - Key findings
            - Briya met 10/10 of our charter goals
            - Met PCSB Pathway A for goal attainment
            - Briya scored level 1- exemplary rating for AE and PK in ASPIRE framework
            - Compliance designation: exceeds expectations.
            - 100% on time for all submission.

- 92% rating for accuracy
- Financial compliance: 0 citations,
    - Joel wants to note that there were no conflict-of-interest contracts reported for 24-25 school year. For the last several years we have had two conflict of interest contracts that we approve annually for Julia Toro (former board member) who provides legal services and Amy Houser (former board member) who provides communications and branding support. The reason their contracts are not reported in this particular year is due to timing. For 24-25 school year we approved those contracts in the prior year that didn't fall in this time window, and we didn't approve their 25-26 contracts until July 2025, which fell outside the window of reporting. For next year it should have both of those conflict-of-interest contracts on the brief.

- 20-year review—presented by Christie McKay
    - The laws require us to have a review every five years, and the charter board votes on whether the charter continues.
    - They evaluate our goals, compliance, and finance
    - The final vote will be May 18th. It would be great if the board can tune in for that meeting. It will be a virtual meeting.
    - We always want to be fully prepared for any questions that we may get.
    - Briya's board's role is to understand the review criteria and process, support leadership in preparing for QSR and review, and use findings to strengthen governance and oversight.
    - Bill asked if this review is extending the charter 5 or 15 years?
      Joel answered: PCSB is required to conduct a review at least every 5 years, while charter renewals are every 15 years. For Briya, because this is our 20th year, this is a 5-year review rather than a 15-year renewal.

2. **Academic Committee -** reported by Judy Kittleson
    - Outreach and enrollment update
        - The team is now preparing for a successful count in 2026. They have collected over 3,500 names and enrolled over 800 students since June.
        - In DC it was reported there was a 25% decrease in Spanish speaking pre-K students this year. Our enrollment numbers are impressive when you consider the mass exodus of families during the federal takeover last fall.
    - Board performance review
        - Board members will receive a link to the board performance review. There is one part that is for individual members to fill out, try to fill it out in the next few days. The other part is for your committee to discuss during the May committee meetings. Academic Committee will report the results at the next board meeting in June.
    - Early Childhood program update
        - At the last academic committee meeting, Lisa Luceno gave a presentation about the work that is happening in the EC department.

- Briya uses a dual-language inclusion model, project-based learning, and is Reggio Emilia inspired.
- Teachers speak in students' home languages.
- Over 40% of children in pre-K at Briya have special needs.
- One challenge is we have been looking for a mental health therapist for adults, but we do have a children's therapist.
- Lisa shared the four strategies EC uses.
- The EC Exhibition of Learning will be Wednesday June 24th in the morning. Stella will send out the flyer when available.

3. **Development Committee -** reported by Christie McKay
    - Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Grant
        - We recently learned that we received this grant, which is fantastic. It is a birth-to-5 federal grant that comes through OSSE. We received the highest amount (~$1.8 million) over a span of 3.5 years which will go toward a lot of training for teachers, codifying our EC curriculum, and support for a lot of things we have always wanted to do but were unable to in the past.
        - The Finance Committee had its meeting two weeks ago and had just heard about the grant/have not included it into the budget yet. We are working with OSSE to figure out exactly what is allowable under the grant; it is meant to fund additions to our program, not cover existing programs.

4. **Finance Committee -** reported by Joel Goering
    - FY27 Budget update
        - Joel shared a timeline for budget development. The budget is due to PCSB by June 16th, although the date could be pushed back. Our plan is for the board to approve the budget during the June meeting.
        - Programming changes for 2026-27
            - Last fall and into this spring, Briya analyzed data and gathered input from students, staff, board members, and partners to see how to respond to a changing environment.
            - Next year, we are planning to pilot an evening 2-gen ESOL program with hybrid schedule, add a CDA workforce class, pilot licensed childcare classrooms, and create contingency plans to shift to virtual classes in case of emergency.
            - These changes are incorporated into the FY27 budget, although the evening 2-gen ESOL pilot program is the only one with direct budgetary impact.
        - Budget key considerations
            - Enrollment: cautiously hopeful we can meet our target, which is 750.
            - Per pupil funding: the mayor proposed a 2.55% UPSFF foundation weight, which is less than prior years but better than flat funding or decrease.
            - Per pupil facilities funding: early signs that this will be kept flat, but we aren't sure yet.

        - Federal funding: expect a reduction in AEFLA/AFE grant.
        - New pilot program (evening ESOL classes): we estimate about $30K in new expenses for this initiative.
        - Emergency fund: expect continuing high demand for legal services and other supports for both students and staff.
    - Scenario planning: best case assumes 750 students, 2.55% PPF increase, 3.1% facilities increase, flat/no change to federal funding, $500K philanthropic funding, 2.5% average salary increase, and assumes no change to AE funding weight.
    - Scenario planning is prudent because of the changing environment.
    - We may need to approve a budget with projected negative net income, but that's OK because our projected cash flow is still positive and we would still meet all of our lender covenants. The net income is negative due to large depreciation expense (~$800k next year) related to our facilities improvements in recent years; depreciation is a non-cash expense.
    - We still need to figure out how to incorporate the revenues and expenses related to the new CLSD grant.
- February financials
    - Our forecasted net income is higher than our budgeted net income. Positive variance is due to exceeding our enrollment target, increase in local grants, and more philanthropic grants than budgeted.
    - Our expenses are now higher due to including December and June service awards and increase to fringe benefits.

5. **Announcements/New Business**
    - Briya's Teacher Appreciation lunch is on May 8th. Board members are welcome to join.
    - Fort Totten clean-up day is this Friday April 24th 11:30-1:30.

6. **Adjournment**
    - The meeting adjourned at 7:32pm.