



**B.E.S.T. ACADEMY MINUTES:  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF THE BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS February 26, 2025**

A meeting of the Board of Directors (the “**Board**”) of Brookfield Engineering Science and Technology Academy Charter School (“**B.E.S.T.**” or the “**School**”) was held on February 26, 2025



**VIDEO LINK:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/rc3vQ\\_c1kb7DDHU88di3siy7wMzOr8yrASeJUPf5OuwF24XYwoX-vIK-gcYWG4J1.BTyUBmTkiAuMa496](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/rc3vQ_c1kb7DDHU88di3siy7wMzOr8yrASeJUPf5OuwF24XYwoX-vIK-gcYWG4J1.BTyUBmTkiAuMa496)

**Directors Present in Person:** Joseph Cipres, Marcella Nino, Debra Webb  
**LOCATION:**

Barker Blue Dog Office  
6360 El Cajon Blvd #101  
San Diego, CA 92115

**Directors Present Via Video Conference:** None

**Directors Absent:** Gary McCloskey

**Also Present:** Alex Soriano, James Mays, Joel Manwarren, Cory Cavanaugh, Mariano Lozano, Celeste Danner, James Hummel, Cassandra Bolden, Chad Leptich

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Board Vice President Debra Webb called the meeting to order at 10:31 AM. A quorum of the directors was present, and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with business.

Present: Marcella Nino, Debra Webb, Joseph Cipres

Absent: Gary McCloskey

**2. Approval of Agenda:** *Motion to approve the February 26, 2025 Regular Board Meeting agenda.*

**Approval Motion:** Joseph Cipres

**Second:** Marcella Nino

**Ayes:** all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Gary McCloskey - *absent*

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Leads Pledge: *Marcella Nino*

**4. PUBLIC COMMENTS / RECOGNITION / REPORTS**

None

**5. CORRESPONDENCE/PROPOSALS/REPORTS/INFORMATION**

**a. Budget / School Update**

**i. 2nd Interim [LINK](#) [Slides](#)**

*Cory Cavanaugh presents slides explaining the 2nd interim budget.*

**b. LCAP Mid Year Review [LINK](#) [Slides](#)**

*[Mariano Lozano-Soto](#) and James Hummel present the LCAP status and the 4 goals associated with the LCAP*

**c. Board Member Candidate:**

i. **Cassandra Bolden** [LINK](#)

*Alex Soriano provides a brief overview of the skills Cassandra Bolden can bring to the board. Cassandra provides a brief experience summary.*

d. **Board Ethics Training** [LINK](#)

*Alex Soriano explains the new requirements for ethics training for all board members. It is in addition to the Governance training, Form 700, and Brown Act training. We have until January of 2026 to complete the 2-hour training.*

i. **Must be completed by January 2026**

e. **Parent/Student Handbook** [LINK](#)

*Alex Soriano reports that the handbook has been updated to comply with new legislation and policies. The Integrity and AI Policy will be added.*

**6. APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED MOTION FOR CONSENT CALENDAR**

The Board considers all matters under the consent agenda to be routine and will be approved, ratified, and enacted in one motion in the form listed below. Unless specifically requested by a board member for further discussion or removed from the agenda, there will be no more discussion on these items prior to the Board vote. Comments by the Board may be made at the discretion of the Chairperson.

**Approval Motion:** Joseph Cipres

**Second:** Marcella Nino

**Ayes:** all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - aye

Joseph Cipres - aye

Debra Webb - aye

Gary McCloskey - absent

a. **Minutes** [LINK](#)

i. **12/4/24 and 2/2/25**

- b. Expense Reports**
- c. Check Register**
- d. Routine Contract Renewals**

## **7. ACTION ITEMS**

- a. 2nd Interim Budget 2024-2025 [LINK](#) [Slides](#)**
  - i. Approval reports the financial health and effectiveness of its budget management**

*Cory Cavanaugh presents the 2nd interim report.*

Approval Motion: 1st\_Marcella Nino      2nd: Joseph Cipres Ayes: all

### Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *absent*

## **b. Summer School Budget [LINK](#)**

- i. Approval establishes summer school funding**

*James Mays presents a summer budget to focus on writing for the elementary and middle school group and credit recovery for high school. Joseph Cipres asks if the summer program will be capped. James Mays explains that we overestimate enrollment and make projections based on last summer school.*

Approval Motion: 1st\_Joseph Cipres      2nd: Marcella Nino      Ayes: all

### Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*  
Joseph Cipres - *aye*  
Gary McCloskey- *absent*

**c. School Safety Plan 2024-2025 [LINK](#)**

**i. Approval establishes plan**

*[Alex Soriano](#) reports the safety plan has legal counsel recommendations. Special Education disaster procedures are added. The Homelessness policy was removed.*

Approval Motion: 1st\_Marcella Nino                      2nd: Joseph Cipres   Ayes: all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*  
Debra Webb - *aye*  
Joseph Cipres - *aye*  
Gary McCloskey- *absent*

**d Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Policy [LINK](#) LINK**

**i. Approval establishes clear expectations for students and families regarding plagiarism, the use of Artificial Intelligence, and the consequences of not adhering to the policy**

*Alex Soriano presents the recommended policy by legal counsel. Debra Webb asks for clarification on the alternate policy in the board folder. Alex Soriano explains that it is more of an internal process that she is referring to.*

Approval Motion: 1st Marcella Nino                      2nd: Joseph Cipres   Ayes: all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*  
Debra Webb - *aye*  
Joseph Cipres - *aye*  
Gary McCloskey- *absent*

**e. Paid Time Off Adjustment [LINK](#)**

**i. Approval adjusts PTO based on days worked per year**

*Alex Soriano presents a PTO plan for the next school year. PTO will be based on the contracted days.*

Motion: 1st Marcella Nino 2nd: Joseph Cipres Ayes: All

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *absent*

**f. Employee Handbook [LINK](#)**

**i. Approval establishes the handbook for the 2025-2026 school year**

*Alex Soriano presents adjustments to the handbook. Changes include updated PTO, 13 holidays, and clarification of start of benefits for new employees.*

Motion: 1st: Joseph Cipres 2nd: Marcella Nino

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *absent*

**g. Infinity Kids, LLC Contract [LINK](#)**

**i. Approval establishes additional Special Education support**

*Celeste Danner points out that Infinity Kids was approved last board meeting and this is actually for OC Speech Services that is active on the link. Alex Soriano states that this will be designated on the minutes.*

Motion: 1st Marcella Nino 2nd: Joseph Cipres

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *absent*

**h. BEABLE AI Contract [LINK](#)**

**1. Approval renews partnership agreement to increase literacy development**

*James Mays presents the need to continue partnering with this literacy learning program. It is designated for MS and HS students.*

Motion: 1st Marcella Nino

2nd: Joseph Cipres

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *absent*

**8. BOARD COMMENTS:**

*Marcella Nino states that she appreciates listening to different staff members during board meetings.*

**9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

*James Mays thanks the staff for their efforts in preparing for the board meeting. He states that we will need to find a location to hold the June board meeting since the graduation location does not have a meeting area.*

*Alex Soriano appreciates the staff collaboration to make the program continuously improve.*

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Upcoming BEST Academy Board Meetings:**

- August 21, 2024 Organizational Meeting

- October 2, 2024, Brown Act Training
- November 6, 2024
- December 4, 2024
- February 5, 2025
  - *February 26, 2025, added*
- *March 5, 2025 Canceled*
- April 2, 2025
- May 7, 2025
- June 4, 2025
- June, 2025 Graduation

Debra Webb *asks for a motion.*

**Approval Motion:** Joseph Cipres    **Second:** Marcella Nino **Ayes:** all

Meeting Adjourned at 11:53 am

Marcella Nino - aye

Joseph Cipres - aye

Debra Webb - aye

Gary McCloskey - absent