



**B.E.S.T. ACADEMY MINUTES:
REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
DIRECTORS APRIL 2, 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 APRIL 2, 2025



VIDEO LINK:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/FFeJpU9pd9y7klu3hFe0p395zBtr3wIBj764xkrU0v9wTPF0L-phXsyDsFMKhFeL.VJplUUljgVMQLmGk>

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

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

Directors Present Via Video Conference: None

Directors Absent: NONE

Also Present: Alex Soriano, James Mays, Joel Manwarren, Cory Cavanaugh, Cassandra Bolden, Chad Leptich, Daniel Crook

1. CALL TO ORDER: Board President Gary McCloskey 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, Gary McCloskey

Absent: None

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

Approval Motion: Debra Webb

Second: Joseph Cipres

Ayes: all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Gary McCloskey - *aye*

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Leads Pledge: *Marcella Nino*

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS / RECOGNITION / REPORTS

Joel Manwarren reports that our English Learner Department has received an award from Summit K12 for our progress in learning with English learners.

James Mays mentions that the Julian USD and BEST Academy attorneys are collaborating on the petition.

Gary McCloskey introduces Cassandra Bolden at this time.

5. CORRESPONDENCE/PROPOSALS/REPORTS/INFORMATION

1. Budget / School Update:

Joel Manwarren presents the rationale for amending the petition from a 2-year to a 5-year petition based on the recently released CA dashboard data. Jim Mays states that the attorneys for Julian and BEST are collaborating.

*Debra Webb points out grammatical corrections that need to be made on the petition.
Gary McCloskey states that it is well written and commends the improvement.*

2. Board Member Candidate: Grady McGuire

Moved to next meeting

3. Nepotism Policy 4112.8 [LINK](#)

Alex Soriano presents the details of the policy that will be on the action item agenda next meeting

4. Board Ethics Training [LINK](#)

a. Must be completed by January 2026

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.

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: Debra Webb **Ayes:** all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - aye

Joseph Cipres - aye

Debra Webb - aye

Gary McCloskey - aye

a. Minutes [LINK](#)

- b. Expense Reports**
- c. Check Register**
- d. Routine Contract Renewals - none**

7. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Vote for Board Member: Cassandra Bolden to a three (3) year term**
 - i. Approval appoints a new board member to initiate board participation immediately**

Alex Soriano introduces Cassandra Bolden and shares a presentation with a summary of her skills.

Joseph Cipres shares the amazing experience and the CCSA conference. He suggests reading over agenda items and documents in the folder before the board meeting.

Debra Webb asks what Cassandra Bolden can bring to the board. She C Bolden responds that she can bring a perspective of working with different populations such as foster care, the legal system or judicial system. C Bolden states she is coming from a social services view.

Approval Motion: 1st_Marcella Nino 2nd: Debra Webb Ayes: all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

- b. Charter Petition Renewal Adjustment [LINK](#)**

Approval amends the charter petition renewal from a 2-year to a 5-year based on recently released assessment growth data

Gary McCloskey asks for a motion to approve.

Approval Motion: 1st_Joseph Cipres 2nd: Debra Webb Ayes: all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

c. 2025-2026 Declaration of Need [LINK](#)

- i. Approval prepared possible teacher credential shortages for the 25-26 school year. The form is submitted to the San Diego County Office of Education.**

[Alex Soriano](#) reports that BEST will report 9 credential needs to the SDCOE.

Approval Motion: 1st_Marcella Nino 2nd: Joseph Cipres Ayes: all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

d Dreambox Proposal [LINK](#)

- i. Approval continues the partnership with the Mathematics intervention and acceleration digital program.**

James Mays presents the contract extension for the Digital Math supplemental program. James reports that new teachers will receive a different training than established teachers with Dreambox experience.

Approval Motion: 1st Debra Webb 2nd: Marcella Nino Ayes: all

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

e. Telework Policy Update BP 4113.5 [LINK](#)

i. Approval updates the working remotely policy

Alex Soriano presents the updates to the policy. He reports adjusting it for clarity and stronger verbiage.

Marcella Nino asks if staff is monitored during the day. Alex reports that administrators visit the classes that are evident in their Google Calendar.

Motion: 1st Joseph Cipres 2nd: Cassandra Bolden Ayes: All

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

f. Employee Offer Letter Update [LINK](#)

i. Approval ensures compliance with applicable law and adds clarification

Alex Soriano presents the changes to the offer letter. The purpose was to improve clarity, compliance, and stronger verbiage.

Motion: 1st: Debra Webb 2nd: Marcella Nino

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

g. Update of Suicide Prevention Policy [LINK](#)

i. Approval establishes the legal counsel's recommendation for the suicide prevention policy, which will be posted on the

school website and in the student/parent handbook.

Alex Soriano presents the adjustments to the policy. The newly formed Crisis team is added to the policy. Marcella Nino asks if any more staff are part of the team. Alex reports that approximately 12 staff are on the team, just not listed on the policy.

Motion: 1st Marcella Nino

2nd: Joseph Cipres

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

h. Ramada Reservation Expenses [LINK](#)

i. Approval funds the reservation of the Ramada for state and benchmark testing in the Spring

James Mays presents the contracts with Ramada to test students on the state tests and internal benchmarks.

Motion: 1st Debra Webb

2nd: Marcella Nino

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

i. MOU with San Diego County Office of Education [LINK](#)

i. Approval continues Livescan support for 5 years. HR Director and Vendor liaison will be added as authorized to review results.

Alex Soriano reports the continued relationship with SDCOE to process

fingerprinting.

Motion: 1st Marcella Nino

2nd: Joseph Cipres

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

j. Travel Policy [LINK](#)

i. Approval updates and clarifies travel, mileage, and reimbursements

Alex Soriano presents the update to provide clarity and the process of reimbursement during business travel.

Motion: 1st Debra Webb

2nd: Marcella Nino

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*

k. Salary Table Update [LINK](#)

i. Approval establishes the salary table for the 25-26 school year

Andrew Corder presents the adjustments to the salaries, retirement benefits and clerical salaries.

Gary McCloskey asks how many employees are taking advantage of the 403 B benefits. James Mays states it is about 60 percent.

Motion: 1st Cassandra Bolden

2nd: Debra Webb

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*
Joseph Cipres - *aye*
Cassandra Bolden - *aye*
Gary McCloskey- *aye*

I. School Pathways Contract Renewal [LINK](#)

i. Approval renews the Student Information System

James Mays presents the continued need to use School Pathways to communicate with the state information system.

Motion: 1st Joseph Cipres

2nd: Marcella Nino

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*
Debra Webb - *aye*
Joseph Cipres - *aye*
Cassandra Bolden - *aye*
Gary McCloskey- *aye*

8. BOARD COMMENTS:

Debra Webb and Marcella Nino are thankful for having attended the CCSA conference in Sacramento. Joseph Cipres communicates some of the suggestions from the workshops presented by legal firms.

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

James Mays presents details of Assembly Bill 84 and the devastating effect it will have on non-classroom based charter schools. James then presents details of Senate Bill 414 that was developed with support from charter school organizations.

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

Gary McCloskey *asks for a motion.*

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

Meeting Adjourned at 11:37 am

Roll Call

Marcella Nino - *aye*

Debra Webb - *aye*

Joseph Cipres - *aye*

Cassandra Bolden - *aye*

Gary McCloskey- *aye*