

**Brownsburg Education Foundation Board
Meeting Minutes August 17, 2026
Bulldog Conference Room**

Attendance

Board Members Present:

Melissa Middleton, Dale Sharpe, Dana Thomas, Kat Fenoglio, HaiQuynh Jamison, Rene Behrend, Dr. Kat Jessup, Dr. Katie Dixon, Jeff Smith, Ben Behrend, Mitch Dotson, Nic Easton, Beth Grant, Brian Petraits, Ken Preston, and Mindy Bingaman

Building Representatives Present:

Donald Gadberry, Heather Jones, Shelby Venable, Judi Adams, and Maggie Curtin

Absent:

Alyssa Lumley, Jayme Adelsperger, and Mo Balogun

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Melissa Middleton calls the meeting to order at **7:01 p.m.**

Board members and building representatives introduce themselves, including new members and representatives.

2. Mission Moment

Leanne Weaver from Brownsburg High School presents an update on the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Aerospace Engineering course, which is being offered with support from a BEF grant.

Grant funding helps provide materials and equipment, including rocket launchers, that allow students to participate in meaningful, hands-on learning activities.

3. Approval of Minutes and Financial Report

April 20, 2026 Meeting Minutes

The Board reviews the minutes from the April 20, 2026 meeting.

Motion: Jeff Smith moves to approve the April 20, 2026 meeting minutes.

Second: Ben Behrend

Vote: Motion passes unanimously.

Financial Report

Kat Fenoglio presents the financial report, including the balance sheet and budget-to-actual report. There are no questions or additional discussion.

4. Committee and Director Reports

Written reports from the **Golf Outing Committee** and **Bags & Barrels Bingo Committee**, as well as the **Director's Report**, are provided to Board members in advance of the meeting.

Melissa Middleton reiterates the value of the scorecard reporting format in evaluating event performance and determining the ongoing viability and effectiveness of BEF events.

5. Superintendent's Corner

Dr. Kat Jessup provides an update on the start of the school year. District enrollment is down, resulting in a corresponding decrease in state funding.

Despite a reduction of 12 staff positions, BCSC hires more than 80 teachers for the new school year and is currently fully staffed with teachers.

6. Strategic Matters

Melissa Middleton reviews the 2026–27 calendar of events and highlights Bags & Barrels Bingo on September 29 as the next major fundraising opportunity. She encourages Board members to attend and actively participate. Board members are also encouraged to support the Ford Drive 4 UR Community event on September 10.

Dale Sharpe encourages Board members to participate in both fundraising and fund-distribution committees. A committee sign-up sheet is circulated.

A separate sign-up sheet is circulated for Board members to indicate which premier fundraising events they can attend during the year, including:

- Drive 4 UR Community
- Bags & Barrels Bingo

- Chip in for the Kids Golf Outing
- Log Cabin Homestead Community Event

Rene Behrend reiterates the expectation that all Board members attend the annual Gala.

Heather Jones proposes adding a raffle prize component to the Drive 4 UR Community fundraiser as an incentive to increase participation. The Board expresses support for exploring and incorporating the concept into this year's event.

Board Retreat Planning

In preparation for the BEF Board Retreat, members are asked to consider the following strategic question:

Five years from now, when someone in Brownsburg hears "Education Foundation," what do you want the first thing out of their mouth to be?

Themes raised during the discussion include:

- Accessibility and ensuring financial barriers do not limit opportunities for lower socioeconomic students;
- Creating an active, participatory community that expands access to opportunities;
- Demonstrating the impact of scholarships in helping students pursue postsecondary education; and
- Establishing a "Bulldogs for Life" concept representing the full life cycle of BEF's impact and influence.
- How BEF is different from BCSC - similar goals, but different roles.

7. Building Representative Feedback

Building representatives meet separately to discuss current building needs, staff awareness of BEF, grant participation, and communication opportunities for the coming year.

Building Needs:

Heather Jones reports a need for additional classroom materials, particularly sensory items, noise-canceling headphones, art supplies, and pencil grips. She also notes that the Care Closet at Harris Academy is not being replenished quickly enough to meet needs.

BEF Awareness:

Building representatives report strong awareness of BEF among teaching staff. Regular

distribution of BEF bulletins by building representatives contributes to this awareness. The consistency of BEF events also helps staff better understand the events and how funds raised are used.

Grant Participation:

Building representatives identify two primary barriers that may prevent teachers from applying for BEF grants:

1. **Timing:** The first grant opportunity occurs early in the school year, before some teachers have identified their classroom needs.
2. **Project Scope:** Some teachers may believe their projects or needs are too small or insufficiently significant to warrant a grant application.

8. Governance Matters

The Board participates in a scenario-based governance exercise designed to clarify Board and staff roles and responsibilities. Discussion focuses on appropriate Board and staff engagement and circumstances in which exceptions or additional collaboration may be appropriate.

9. September 21, 2026 Board Meeting and Strategic Planning

Melissa Middleton reviews plans for the September 21, 2026 Board meeting, noting that attendance is mandatory for Board members.

The meeting will focus on strategic planning with assistance from Hedges. The goal is to complete the strategic planning process by the conclusion of the meeting.

10. 2027 Gala Silent Auction Gift Baskets

The Board discusses the proposed return of the silent auction for the 2027 Gala. The Gala Committee requests that each Board member provide a curated gift basket valued at a minimum of \$100 for the auction.

Each Board member is asked to select a basket theme, with an emphasis on maintaining a diverse selection of basket offerings. Board members seeking donations from local businesses should contact Rene Behrend before making a solicitation.

Motion: Melissa Middleton moves to require each Board member to provide a curated gift basket valued at a minimum of \$100 for the 2027 Gala silent auction.

Second: Beth Grant

Vote: Motion passes 13–1, with Mitch Dotson opposed.

11. Current Volunteer and Event Opportunities

Board members are reminded of the following upcoming opportunities:

- **Drive 4 UR Community:** September 10, 1:00–5:00 p.m.
- **Homecoming Tailgate:** September 25, 5:00–7:00 p.m.
- **Bags & Barrels Bingo:** September 29, 5:00–10:00 p.m.
- **Log Cabin Community Day:** October 3, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

12. Adjournment

Motion: Mitch Dotson moves to adjourn the meeting.

Second: Dale Sharpe

Vote: Motion passes unanimously.

The meeting adjourns at **8:33 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Thomas

August 18, 2026