



## Board Meeting Minutes

### **Date and Location**

Wednesday February 27, 2019  
11:30 am  
Damar Services, Inc.  
6067 Decatur Blvd  
Indianapolis, IN 46241

### **Board Members Present**

Carlos Alexander, Chair  
Lyle Coleman  
Patty Edwards  
Tifini McClyde  
Karen Snyder  
Allyson Strother  
Joey Wright

### **Board Members Absent**

Charles Ellis

### **Others Present (Staff, Public)**

Dr. Jim Dalton, DCA Superintendent  
Aimee Brown, DCA School Leader  
Elaine Showalter, Damar CFO  
Julie Gurule, DCA  
Cora Collier, DCA  
Ken File, Damar Foundation  
Katie McCoy, Damar CEA

### **Approval of Minutes**

Formal review and approval of minutes will occur at the 4-24-19 Board Meeting.

### **Record of Public Comments**

None

### **Summary of Discussions**

The meeting was brought to order at 11:30 am by Carlos Alexander. Members and staff were welcomed, and all enjoyed lunch. The minutes from the December 2018 meeting were approved.

### **School Operations/Activities**

Damar Charter Academy began its second semester on Tuesday, January 8<sup>th</sup>. Prior to that, all DCA staff participated in a full day of professional development on January 7<sup>th</sup>, covering topics including curriculum, programming, technology updates, and trauma-informed care.

The start of the new year has brought several weather delays, as well as two additional cancellations, for a total of three cancellations so far this school year. One snow make-up day was held on Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup> (President's Day). A second will be held on Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, and finally a third on Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>.

DCA hosted parent-teacher conferences on Thursday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, from 3-7 pm. The additional opportunity to meet was well received by families, as evidenced by a nearly 25% parent participation rate. As part of an ongoing initiative to increase parent communication and engagement, plans to hold additional parent-teacher conferences next school year are in the works.

Graduation is planned for Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, at 6:00pm in the Damar Services Gymnasium.

### **Curriculum**

DCA continues to partner with Nancy Washburn to engage our students in meaningful career planning to help with the seamless transition from high school to employment or post-secondary training. Nancy serves in a grant-funded position as a pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS) provider in conjunction with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services. Through this program, Nancy meets weekly with each of our high school vocational and diploma track classes to provide classroom guidance lessons focused on the core topics. In addition to reaching those 75 students in a group capacity, she also meets weekly with numerous

individuals and their families to develop personalized transition plans, attend job fairs, schedule interviews, and enhance their post-secondary transition preparedness. In the coming year, we plan to engage Nancy's expertise in developing our comprehensive career education program for all students, as laid out in our Lilly Endowment Counseling Initiative Implementation Grant.

The Youth Connection Curriculum Based Support Groups (CBSG) have begun and are off to a promising start. As you may recall, two teachers (Shay Daily and Joy Patterson) and two administrators (Aimee Brown and Julie Gurule) attended an all-day training in November to become certified facilitators for the CBSG program. This research and evidence-based curriculum is being delivered in a small group setting of 6 students per group and focuses on a wide variety of social/emotional topics, including drug and alcohol prevention. The facilitators have conducted 3 of the 12-week sessions, all with positive feedback. We are encouraged by this extra opportunity to support and educate our students on reducing their risks for negative life outcomes.

### **School Safety**

Aimee Brown and Matt Hohman, DCA's School Safety Specialist, concluded their certification training on Monday, February 25<sup>th</sup>. Previously, they attended the IDOE's School Safety Academy Basic Training in November, followed by online training modules in January. As a result, they are now versed in applicable laws, prevention efforts, implementing an emergency preparedness plan, and effective training drills. A policy for implementing the metal detector wand for the 2019-2020 school year will be drafted. Additionally, DCA hopes to have the key-card access system for the main entrance and the two interior doors in the lobby area, as well as the intercom system for initial access into the school installed prior to the start of next school year.

### **Fundraising/Grants**

A portion of the Damar Foundation's \$150,000 technology grant to DCA has now been expended. The first phase of new technology implementation has been completed with the purchase and installation of interactive projectors in each classroom and the cafeteria. Thus far, they have proven to be user-friendly and a welcomed upgrade from the previous Smartboards. Phase two will target the purchase of Chromebooks for several of DCA's classrooms, and the third and final phase will cover any outstanding software, etc. needs. The goal remains to have all the new technology in place by this summer, so that staff may be trained prior to the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year.

## **Personnel/Leadership**

Aimee Brown recently participated in a panel presentation at the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) annual conference. This national event was hosted in Indianapolis throughout the end of January and the beginning of February and was attended by thousands of special educators and other stakeholders from across the country, and even around the world! It was a wonderful opportunity to share both the successes and challenges that face a unique school like DCA.

DCA teacher, Shay Daily, will be honored at the upcoming Annual Teachers' Treasures Gala on March 7<sup>th</sup>. After undergoing an intensive panel interview, Shay was selected as one of three finalists to be recognized and to receive a cash prize. The final placing will be announced the night of the event, and we could not be prouder of Shay and his accomplishments.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Speducators Symposium, hosted in part by DCA, will be held next month on March 15<sup>th</sup>, at Marian University. Currently there are over 200 registrants signed up for the conference. The symposium will provide free professional development to attendees from public, private, and charter schools around the state, all focused on better serving students with disabilities. In addition, the Speducators hosted a round-table discussion, in conjunction with the Indiana Charter School Network, for charter school leaders on January 24<sup>th</sup>. The event was so successful that a second round-table has been planned for April 18<sup>th</sup>!

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addictions (DMHA), along with the Indiana School Mental Health Initiative (ISMHI) at Indiana University will be hosting Indiana's first "Educating the Whole Child Summit." Julie Gurule will be attending this two-day workshop on February 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> in Bloomington, Indiana. Expected outcomes include:

## **Accountability/Performance**

A-F Accountability Senate Bill 434 is authored by Senator Houchins. It requires the state board of education to develop alternative benchmarks, performance indicators and accountability standards to be used in the assessment of schools that focus primarily on providing academic programs for students with developmental, intellectual or behavioral challenges. The bill also provides that a school corporation or school may petition the state board for review of the school corporation's category or designation of school performance based on objective factors that the school corporation considers relevant because the annual assessment does not accurately reflect, as applicable, school performance, growth or multiple measures – and allows the state board of education to revise the category or designation of the school. Also provides that an alternative diploma option be considered for a student when all other options have been determined to be inappropriate for the student. In these cases, schools may request a waiver of the 1% limitation in this regard if the student's case conference committee determines that the alternative diploma is appropriate.

The Indianapolis Mayor's Office of Education Innovation has approved two research fellows to conduct and present a project on behalf of Damar Charter Academy this spring. The fellows will be focusing on providing comprehensive data and information regarding alternative accountability measures used and endorsed across the nation that may be applicable to our population. This will allow DCA to be better equipped and informed when developing and approving the accountability system that is required to be developed with us/for us through the board of education.

- Courtney Kezlarian

Courtney is set to complete her graduate degree in Arts Administration from the School of Public and Environmental Affairs – Indiana University, Bloomington in December of 2020.

- Estela Lopez

Estela is set to complete her graduate degree in International Development from the School of Public and Environmental Affairs – Indiana University, Bloomington in May of 2019.

Courtney and Estela will be working closely with Aimee Brown, Carlos Alexander and Jim Dalton as they complete the project. We expect a final presentation in late Spring.

### **Governance**

Board members Karen Snyder and staff member Julie Gurule will represent the school at the Board Recruitment Event sponsored by the Mayor's Office that is set for March 14<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Joe Hogsett will be the guest speaker for the event – located at the Rathskeller. This event is exclusive to Mayor Sponsored Charter School board and staff leaders as an opportunity to identify top talent in Indianapolis as potential board members. Fields identified include communications/public relations, education, finance, fundraising, IT/software development, law, and marketing. The event has been marketed to The Mind Trust, Eli Lilly and Company, Leadership Indianapolis, Salesforce, and others.

### **Finance**

For the month ending January 31, 2018, DCA had a negative margin from operations of about \$19K. However, the overall annual margin is at nearly \$150K (more than 100K above budget). The one-month negative operating margin is an exception and is mainly due to timing of grant expenses and corresponding payments.

The balance sheet has remained stable and adequately liquid.

The end of the first semester marked our second and final funding count for the school year, the Special Education Count. After final calculations, Damar Charter Academy anticipates receiving \$1,317,420.00 in special education funding. The following table summarizes the various eligibility categories by grade (three students did not qualify for special education services at the time of the count):

# Primary Exceptionalities Report

Excep.	PW	PK	KG	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	Total
00 Not Applicable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
01 Multiple Disabilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	7
02 Orthopedic Impairment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
03 Blind or Low Vision	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
04 Deaf or Hard of Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
05 Emotional Disability (Full Time)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2	4	10	9	6	2	0	41
06 Emotional Disability (Other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
07 Specific Learning Disability	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	1	1	0	9
08 Developmental Delay (Ages 3-5A only)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
08 Developmental Delay (Ages 5B-8 only)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
09 Language/Speech Impairment	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
10 Mild Cognitive Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	0	17
11 Moderate Cognitive Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	3	5	4	4	0	22
12 Severe Cognitive Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14 Deaf-Blind	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 Autism Spectrum Disorder	0	0	1	5	1	2	3	4	5	5	8	5	8	7	17	0	71
16 Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
17 Other Health Impairment	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1	3	3	3	0	3	2	1	0	21
	0	0	1	6	3	5	7	13	13	16	21	24	30	23	29	0	191

## Secondary Exceptionalities Report

Excep.	PW	PK	KG	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	Total
00 Not Applicable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
01 Multiple Disabilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
02 Orthopedic Impairment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
03 Blind or Low Vision	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
04 Deaf or Hard of Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
05 Emotional Disability (Full Time)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	6
06 Emotional Disability (Other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
07 Specific Learning Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
08 Developmental Delay (Ages 3-5A only)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
08 Developmental Delay (Ages 5B-8 only)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
09 Language/Speech Impairment	0	0	0	6	1	4	4	8	11	11	14	12	16	14	17	0	118
10 Mild Cognitive Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	1	0	6
11 Moderate Cognitive Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
12 Severe Cognitive Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
14 Deaf-Blind	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 Autism Spectrum Disorder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16 Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
17 Other Health Impairment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	3	1	1	0	12
99 No secondary exceptionality	0	0	1	0	2	1	2	5	1	3	6	3	9	3	8	0	44
	0	0	1	6	3	5	7	13	13	16	21	24	30	23	29	0	191

### Votes/Motions

None

### Executive Session

None

End of Minutes