



Board Meeting Minutes

Date and Location

Wednesday December 18, 2019
6:00 PM
CLASS Services
5125 Decatur Blvd
Indianapolis, IN 46241

Board Members Present

Lyle Coleman
Patricia Edwards
Chuck Ellis
Karen Snyder
Jordan Maitland
Allyson Strother
Joey Wright

Others Present (Staff, Public)

Aimee Brown, DCA, School Leader
Dr. Jim Dalton DCA, Superintendent
Cora Collier, DCA
Paul Dennison, Damar , Finance Director
Elaine Showalter, CFO
Ken File, Damar Foundation President
Katie McCoy, Chief Executive Assistant
Melodie Coleman, Parent

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the October 2019 meeting were approved.

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT/ACTIVITIES

Damar Charter Academy will be wrapping up the second quarter of the first semester on Thursday, December 19th. Students will observe Winter Break from Friday, December 20th through Monday, January 6th. Teachers will have a work day on Friday, December 20th, along with their annual holiday pitch-in, and again on Monday, January 6th, during which time they will participate in a full day of professional development. Topics will include the newly required “Stop the Bleed” training (HB 1063) and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) recertification.

As usual, the first semester was extremely busy with new enrollments and move-in case conferences, in addition to the annual case conferences required for those students who were previously enrolled at DCA. In total, **68 new students were enrolled**. This resulted in a total of 198 (**196 special education; 2 general education**) students enrolled for the annual special education funding count day on December 2nd, 2019. As a reminder, the target enrollment for DCA is 195 students. The school’s charter states it will maintain an enrollment of 180 students each year, with a +/- 10% allowance. The summary of students by special education eligibility is also included for review. Pending the publishing of final numbers, DCA anticipates receiving a total of **\$1,421,148.00** in special education funding, based on this count.

Curriculum and Programming

Mandatory annual instruction on child abuse and child sexual abuse for students in kindergarten through 12th grade (SEA 355) has begun. This year, all students will receive developmentally appropriate lessons from the Safer, Smarter Kids or the Safer, Smarter Teens curriculum series. Depending on the grade level, lessons consist of 5-7 weeks of instruction on topics related to personal safety, including peer pressure, being assertive, body boundaries, cyber bullying, safe/unsafe secrets and touches, self-esteem, recognizing red flags, healthy relationships, dating violence, and sexual abuse.

DCA will begin implementing Kuder Galaxy, an online career exploration program geared toward elementary students, next semester. The high school diploma-track students will be using Kuder’s Indiana Career Explorer program to research potential careers, assess work skills and attitudes, and develop a portfolio consisting of a

resume, cover letter, and various artifacts related to college and career readiness. High school vocational students will continue working on transition and employability skills, with progress recorded via ULS.

DCA Administration recently met with Emily Watson, school social worker/Damar Services' behavioral therapist to discuss ways to implement more social/emotional learning within the classrooms and to better support all students. Emily will soon be credentialed to bill private insurance for students who do not qualify for Medicaid, thereby increasing the number of students receiving individual counseling services. In addition, DCA hopes to utilize Title IV grant funds to pay Emily to lead small group counseling sessions and whole classroom guidance lessons. A needs assessment will be sent to the teachers to help determine the most critical topics to cover.

A team of administrators and teachers recently toured the Charles R. Drew Transition Center in Detroit Michigan. The center offers vocational training to nearly 600 special education students ages 18-25 from the Detroit Public Schools. Students there participate in a variety of hands-on training opportunities, including agriculture, floriculture, food service, fashion and design, finance, retail management, clerical, woodworking, and more. In addition, over 100 students are placed in various paid positions throughout the city. The DCA team was truly inspired by the program and has already begun making plans to increase the scope of vocational training opportunities offered to our students.

School Safety

Aimee Brown and Matt Hohman, DCA's School Safety Specialist, attended the Marion County Safe Schools Commission monthly meeting at Decatur Central High School on December 11th. The roundtable format included school administrators, resource officers, and safety specialists as attendees. Topics covered included applicable laws, prevention efforts, implementing emergency preparedness plans, and effective training drills. Aimee and Matt will continue attending these meetings and will complete their annual school safety certification training via online modules and another face-to-face meeting in February.

Grants/Fundraising

As previously mentioned, DCA is working to increase social/emotional learning throughout the school with the assistance of Title IV grant funds.

- The Lilly Comprehensive Counseling Grant is currently in year two of three for the award cycle. Feedback from grant reviewers encouraged DCA to expend more resources this year than last year, in order to stay on track with the proposal originally outlined within the grant application. Additional curriculum and resources have been recently purchased with grant funds, and plans are being developed for the expenditure of the remaining funds prior to the end of year three.
- DCA Administration will be meeting with the Damar Foundation in mid-January to review the needs of the school and to create a strategic fundraising plan.

Leadership/Personnel

- As of the end of the first semester, there have been no changes in leadership or teaching staff. Planning continues to be underway for the 5th Annual SPEDucators Symposium, hosted in part by DCA leaders. The conference will be held on March 6th, 2020, at Marian University and will provide free professional development to attendees from public, private, and charter schools around the state, all focused on better serving students with disabilities.

A-F Accountability

The IDOE recently shared school accountability data for the 2018-19 year with schools DCA was given an “F” on the report card. Consequently, DCA will need to complete the process to appeal for a waiver.

In addition, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires the Indiana Department of Education, Office of Special Education (IDOE/OSE) to determine if each local educational agency (LEA) meets the requirements of Part B of the IDEA. Based on an LEA’s score on a number of criteria, the LEA is ranked in one of four

categories of determination: meets requirements, needs assistance, needs intervention, and needs substantial intervention. The process by which the IDOE/OSE makes determinations has changed. To determine if each LEA meets the requirements of Part B of the IDEA, IDOE/OSE has implemented *Results Driven Accountability (RDA)*.

RDA includes three elements. Results Elements, including federal results indicators and other assessment data, Timely Data Elements, and as in prior years, Compliance Elements. Data from these elements are then calculated, resulting in an RDA score, which in turn is used to make the determination. The chart below details the score range for each determination category, the LEA score, and the resulting determination category.

Based on the combined score of the RDA Compliance and Data Matrices, DCA has been placed in: **Needs Assistance**. NOTE: In order to qualify for "Meets Requirements," an LEA must score above 41.56 in the Results Matrix. Further information about correction of noncompliance and the LEA level of support will be forthcoming.

Financials

The Audit results were presented. All members accepted the results.

The balance sheet remains stable.

Governance

Due to the resignation of Tifini McClyde as Chair. Joey Wright was nominated to serve as Chair of the DCA Board of Directors. Motion was made by Karen Snyder and Seconded by Patricia Edwards and all members agreed.

Other News

The members and guests were gifted a DCA Jacket.

The next Board of Directors Meeting will be February 26, 2020 at 11:30 am at Damar Services.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 so that members could take part in the holiday event at DCA. Members coordinated a food and gift drive for families in need.