

Date and Location

Wednesday June 23, 2021

11:30 AM

Damar Services, Inc.

6067 Decatur Blvd

Indianapolis, IN 46241

Board Members Present

Lyle Coleman

Patricia Edwards

Jordan Maitland

Allyson Strother

Joey Wright

Others Present (Staff, Public)

Aimee Brown, DCA, School Leader

Dr. Jim Dalton DCA, Superintendent

Cora Collier, DCA

Julie Gurule, DCA

Elaine Showalter, CFO

Ken File, President Damar Foundation

Katie McCoy, Chief Executive Assistant

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the May 2021 meeting were approved.

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT/ACTIVITIES

Operation Highlights

DCA celebrated the end of the year with Graduation and Prom.

The 2021-2022 school calendar has been published.

DCA first day of school is August 4, 2021.

DCA is hosting a Back to School Night on August 3rd from 3 pm to 6 pm.

Curriculum and Programming

The state's 2020-2021 accountability assessments are well underway. The second round of NWEA testing was completed, along with the WIDA assessment for English

Learners. IREAD was administered in mid-March, and ILEARN and IAM testing began April 19th. Schools anticipate being held harmless from test results for state accountability purposes once again, but were required to participate in the assessments for federal requirements. More guidance is expected to be issued.

Students in grades K-6, along with some in middle school, began weekly lessons utilizing Kuder Galaxy, an online career exploration program purchased through the Lilly Counseling Grant, after returning from Spring Break. The remaining middle school and high school diploma-track students have begun using the 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, employability, and daily living skills.

School Safety

DCA has developed an official School Safety Committee to meet monthly and review issues and best practices surrounding safety procedures, protocols, and policies. The committee will consist of School Safety Specialist, Matt Hohman, the administration, and teacher, Joy Patterson.

In light of the recent tragedy that occurred after-hours near the school at the Fed-Ex facility, active shooter protocols have been reviewed amongst the School Safety Committee, and additional training for staff is being planned. As a reminder, DCA utilizes the "I Love U Guys" Standard Response Protocol (SRP) for emergency situations. Per the organization's website, "A uniform, planned, and practiced response to any incident is the foundation of a safe school. The SRP is action-based, flexible, and easy to learn. It rationally organizes tactics for response to weather events, fires, accidents, intruders and other threats to student safety."

DCA is thrilled to have an updated PA system in place throughout the entire building. The new system is user-friendly and will add an additional layer to the school's safety measures. Additional paging devices have been purchased to ensure each administrative staff, along with the administrative assistant, nurse, and safety specialist, all have quick access to announce Standard Response Protocols if necessary in the event of an emergency.

New door handles were installed on all classroom, etc. doors throughout the school over Spring Break. These handles allow the doors to automatically lock when shut, so there is no need to use a key to ensure they are secured.

An additional staff ID card reader is being installed on the interior of the back door to the school to help control the flow of traffic and to provide an additional level of security.

Leadership/Personnel

DCA had its first ever "onsite" monitoring visit for Title I, II, III, and IV programming and the federal funds received through each. The audit, conducted by the federal grants team from DOE, was done virtually on December 9th with the DCA administration and Paul Dennison, the Program Administrator. Information was submitted to DOE for review and discussed during the visit. Subsequently, a report

was issued on January 7th, and all corrective actions/documentation were submitted for review. A final report has now been issued from IDOE stating that all initial findings have been resolved. Weekly meetings are now occurring to ensure all program requirements continue to be adhered to going forward.

DCA does have one teaching position posted and the goal is to have it filled by the opening of school on August 4, 2021.

Grants/Fundraising

The DOE released the preliminary allocations for the second round of COVID/CARES act related funding (ESSER). The first round was almost \$60k, after an additional \$10k reallocation, and the second round is currently anticipated to be upwards of \$165,000! The application for funding was recently submitted, and DCA hopes to receive information regarding its final application soon. According to the DOE, this funding may be used to support all things COVID-related, including personnel expenses, maintenance upgrades, additional technology, and social-emotional resources, to name a few. In addition, Senate Bill 414, if passed, would require each school corporation to: (1) adopt and implement an Internet use policy; and (2) use hardware or install software on computers and other technology related devices owned by the school corporation or charter school to filter or block Internet access to materials that are harmful to minors by January 1st, 2022. The possibility of covering this requirement using ESSER funds may also be explored.

Ken File, Foundation President will be retiring at the end of the month. The board thanked him for his actions in assisting with fundraising and for his leadership and dedication to DCA.

A-F Accountability

DCA continues to work closely with our registered lobbyist at Barnes and Thornburg to establish an accepted alternative accountability framework. Members of the State Board of Education continue to consider Damar's submitted framework and are continuing discussions. Presently, HB 1514 proposes to change the current accountability system with some caveats – including the publishing of certain information on a public dashboard (online). Discussions continue with BJ Watts and Pat Mapes to ensure that the changes and expectations work for Damar. Representatives from the Department of Education are expected to meet with Damar's lobbyist group and members of the State Board of Education to further refine. Damar Charter Academy will be participating in a conference call the week of 4-26-21 to further discuss and vet next steps.

Governance

Members discussed and are looking at options to communicate with long time board member Charles Ellis. Attempts to reach him over the year have not worked. Dr. Dalton will attempt one more time to reach out to him through certified mail. There is one open seat on the board and a possible two if Charles resigns or cannot be reached.

Chair Joey Wright will contact all members of the board to discuss future terms on the board. Dr. Dalton and Chair Joey Wright are recommending a Damar staff be a part of the board of Directors. A resume will be sent to members to introduce them to the candidate and discussion will take place at the next board meeting in August.

Finance

The financials continue to be ahead of budget.

The budget for the 2021-2022 year was presented. Motion was made by Allyson Strother and seconded by Jordan Maitland to accept the budget as presented. All members agreed.

Dr. Dalton announced the planned retirement of CFO Elaine Showalter. Elaine will retire before the end of 2021.

Committees

Committees will begin to meet before the next BOD meeting. Chairs will reach out to members to schedule times.

Chair Joey Wright shared the survey results from the EMO. Committees will discuss actions for the outcomes.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:55 pm.