

Date and Location

Wednesday August 31, 2022

11:30 AM

6067 Decatur Blvd

Indianapolis, IN 46241

Board Members Present

Lyle Coleman

Sam Moya

Joey Wright

Karen Snyder conference call in

Others Present (Staff, Public)

Aimee Brown, DCA, School Leader

Dr. Jim Dalton, DCA, Superintendent

Cora Collier, DCA

Octavius Molton, CFO Damar Services

Katie McCoy, Chief Executive Assistant

Brittney Kalmas, Guest

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the June 2022 were approved.

Operation Highlights

The 2022-2023 school year began on Wednesday, August 3rd, with in-person learning for all students.

Prior to that, all staff participated in two days of professional development. On Monday, August 1st, DCA welcomed guest speaker, Jenni Donnohoo, from the Center for Collective Efficacy, for a half-day of training. DCA was thrilled to combine funds from two outstanding federal Title II grants (allocated for the purpose of providing professional development) to secure Jenni, an internationally-renowned presenter, to start DCA staff off with thought-provoking discussion and reflection this year.

Additional professional development and training included lesson-planning and curriculum map development, IEP goal writing and progress monitoring, and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) recertification.

A Back-to-School Night was held on August 2nd for all new and returning students and their families. Nearly forty families attended and had the opportunity to meet their teachers and acclimate to their classrooms before beginning school the next day. Information regarding DCA's Title I program was provided, as well as assistance with completing the student registration process.

DCA is fortunate to have a husband and wife team who have volunteered to organize a Parent Engagement Group in an effort to illicit more parental involvement and sharing of resources and information. Their first meeting was held on Monday, August 15th, and was attended by 6 other parents. As a result, they have already connected with over 20 other parents, shared information on Special Olympics participation, and have scheduled their next meeting for Monday, September 19th, at 9am at DCA.

For this time of the year, new enrollments are well underway, with the current total being 39 students added already this year. IEP case conferences are in full swing, and students will continue to be added until reaching this year's budgeted capacity of 180 students divided amongst 12 teachers and classrooms. The first Membership Enrollment count will be Friday, September 16th.

Curriculum and Programming

Two new "makerspace" areas have been created for this school year. Funds from the recently awarded School Improvement (SIG) Grant, along with other federal grants, were used to purchase over \$70,000 of curriculum, resources, equipment, furniture, and professional development for staff. The goal is to improve DCA's instruction in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) through the addition of official makerspaces throughout the building for creative, hands-on learning and problem solving that engages the students and encourages learning through making. A group of teachers and administration were recently trained by a representative from 1st Makerspace on all the new equipment, which includes 3D printers and a glowforge laser cutter/engraver, along with dash and dot programmable robots, STEM kits teaching circuitry, geometry, physics, etc., crafting carts, and curriculum. Some items were delayed due to ordering and shipping delays, but teachers have already begun utilizing these spaces with students and exploring the world of making!

A new curriculum, Into Math and Into Reading, has been purchased for use with all K-8 academic track students. According to their site, "*Into Math (and Reading)* makes it easy for teachers to choose the instructional delivery—print, digital, or a combination of both—that fits their teaching style, their school's resource availability, and their students' needs... Assessments are embedded in the program, so teachers can easily monitor, forecast, and accelerate growth. Quality growth data to pinpoint student proficiency is readily available... (They) include targeted differentiation strategies for every lesson in print, digital interactives, and our exclusive Tabletop Flipcharts—allowing teachers to provide the right support for students at the right time." Previously, teachers compiled their own curriculum utilizing numerous resources that aligned with the Indiana Academic Standards. This curriculum will provide the basis for teaching, ensuring both teachers and students have access to a resource that provides the necessary foundation for learning, while still allowing for flexibility to adapt lessons and supplemental activities as needed.

DCA continues to utilize the following curriculum resources:

- **Edgenuity** (*high school diploma-track*)
- **Life-Centered Education** (*high school vocational-track*)
- **Unique Learning System** (*life skills*)
- **Moby Max** (*elementary*)
- **Learning A-Z** (*elementary*)
- **Google classroom** (*various curriculum for all levels*)
- **Community-Based Instruction (CBI)**
- **Onsite Job Skills**

School Safety

The School Safety Committee held their first meeting on Monday, August 22nd. All committee members, including Officer Cox (SRO), were in attendance. Topics discussed included updates needed for the camera software and missing camera views; school security grant funds and intended use; mandatory emergency drills; sex abuse and child trafficking training for staff; active shooter training with IMPD; and general safety reminders (backpack policies, hall passes, etc.) The committee will continue meeting at least monthly to review policies and procedures and to develop solutions to any identified safety concerns.

Leadership/Personnel

DCA had one teacher, Shay Daily, resign over the summer. His middle school position was filled by a newly-hired teacher, Vanessa True, who comes to DCA with previous charter school teaching experience. Vanessa has been a welcome addition and seems to have acclimated extremely well to our students and school environment. In addition, DCA reduced the high school boys' vocational program to two classrooms from three, based on the waiting list and potential enrollees. Lori Murray, a former high school vocational teacher, then moved into the role of a middle school teacher, allowing us to increase our middle school programming from two classes to three, to better accommodate the waiting list demand. A teaching assistant was hired to aid Ms. Lori, and the remaining open TA position is in the process of being filled.

Grants/Fundraising

Bi-weekly meetings have continued between the DCA Admin and Damar's CFO, Octavius. During this time, the budget and financials are reviewed, and all federal and state grants are discussed to ensure deadlines for applications, expenditures, and reimbursements are met. DCA was recently awarded multiple grants, including the SIG, Title I, Title II, Title IV, IDEA 611 and 619, and COVID relief grants (ESSER I, II, and III). These funds, which target specific areas of improvement and are required to be spent on supplemental activities and resources beyond normal operating costs, have been used to enhance DCA's program offerings and to provide staff training.

The 2021-2022 school year marked the fourth and final year of the four-year Lilly Counseling Initiative grant DCA received. The year-end report has been submitted for review, and highlights include an increase in students' awareness of career opportunities, knowledge of employability skills, technical job skills and soft skills. Funds from the grant were used to purchase additional equipment and supplies and to contract a Career Specialist who worked both individually and with groups of students to provide career education and 1:1 transition support to various post-secondary opportunities during the 2021-2022 school year. DCA plans to utilize Title IV grant funds to support the continued employment of the Career Specialist for the 2022-2023 school year.

Applications for the next round of federal Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, IDEA 611/619, and NESP grants are in process. Final allocations have not yet been released, but information will be shared once available.

Governance

Due to an exciting new job opportunity, Jordan Maitland is soon to leave Indianapolis and return to his hometown – Washington DC. Given this move, Jordan has requested to resign from the DCA Board of Directors. His resignation was accepted by our Board Chair and CEO, and he will transition from the Board of Directors over the next month or so.

The DCA Board is expected to vote to approve Brittney Kalmas, LCSW* to the Board of Directors – as recommended by Damar Services. The request is that Brittany be elected by the DCA Board and not appointed by Damar Services. This will allow the Damar Services Board to continue to help the Governance Committee recruit and appoint additional Board members.

Motion was made by Karen Snyder and seconded by Joey Wright. All members were in favor of Brittney Kalmas having an elected seat on the board.

Current Board Structure is as follows:

At Large Members:

Joey Wright – Board Chair
Lyle Coleman
Brittney Kalmas
Lyle Coleman
Allyson Strother

Damar Services Appointed Members:

Karen Snyder
Sam Moya
Amber Fields
Open Seat

Finance

Year-to-date financial performance through June 2022 is presented in the Board meeting. The Finance Committee has approved the 2022 – 2023 DCA budget and will be recommending Board approval. The recommended budget for approval is included in the DCA packet sent out to Board members.

Motion was made by Lyle Coleman and seconded by Karen Snyder to accept the budget as presented.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 pm.

