

Date and Location

Wednesday April 27, 2022
11:30 AM
6067 Decatur Blvd
Indianapolis, IN 46241

Board Members Present

Lyle Coleman
Amber Fields
Sam Moya
Joey Wright

Others Present (Staff, Public)

Aimee Brown, DCA, School Leader
Dr. Jim Dalton DCA, Superintendent
Cora Collier, DCA
Julie Gurule, DCA
Aaron Teater, Mayors Office
Octavius Molton, Chief Financial Officer
Katie McCoy, Chief Executive Assistant

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the February 2022 meeting were approved.

Operation Highlights

Damar Charter Academy began the fourth quarter on Monday, April 4th, following a two-week spring break. The last day of school will be held on Friday, May 27th.

DCA's 11th graduating class will participate in a ceremony to be held in the Damar Services' gymnasium on Friday, May 20th, at 6:30pm. Per stakeholder feedback, the start time has been adjusted by 30 minutes to make it easier for families and other guests to arrive on time. A cake and punch reception will follow. All board members are invited to attend and support our students! To date, we are expecting over 25 graduates for the 2021-2022 school year.

The Damar Prom, will be held on Thursday, May 19th, at the CRG Event Center (2499 Perry Crossing Way, Suite 205, Plainfield, IN 46168). Students will be transported via limo from Damar Services and will enjoy an evening of dinner and dancing, while awaiting the announcement of the 2022 Prom King and Queen. Board members are welcome to attend and share in this heartwarming experience!

The second special education count was held on Friday, April 1st. As a reminder, this count was for informational purposes only, not funding.

DCA's annual lottery will be held virtually on Wednesday, May 4th, at 4:00pm. At that time, all current waiting list entries will be randomly assigned a number via an excel formula and then ranked according to that number. After adjusting for sibling preference, the new waiting list will be established. All new enrollments for the 2022-2023 school year will utilize this waiting list order. Notifications to selected families will begin shortly after and will continue throughout the summer, until all openings are filled. Any remaining students will continue to be on the waiting list for the year until an opening becomes available.

Curriculum and Programming

DCA students have begun taking the state's accountability assessments. IREAD, a reading test for 3rd graders, was successfully completed prior to Spring Break, along with the SAT for diploma-track 11th graders and the WIDA for English Learners. Students in grades 3-8 will be assessed primarily in the areas of math and language arts via ILEARN or IAM (alternate assessment). Results will hopefully be released over the summer and used toward calculating DCA's academic achievement results.

Following the success of DCA's December Title I Family Literacy Night, a Title I Math Day is being planned for Wednesday, May 25th. The plan is to host a cookout for students and parents, and to provide them with academic resources to utilize with their children over the summer. More information will be forthcoming as details are finalized.

As previously noted, funds from the recently awarded School Improvement (SIG) Grant will be used to improve instruction in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) through the addition of an official "makerspace" for creative, hands-on learning. Following several meetings and email communications, 1st Maker Space prepared a proposal for curriculum, equipment, and materials, as well as a design for the former computer lab space that will now house both the Dragon Press (print shop), and the newly created makerspace. Funds have now been issued to Makerspace, and DCA's order is being processed. A team of teachers will participate in professional development over the summer and will then be prepared to train all remaining teachers on how to safely and effectively use the materials and equipment beginning next school year.

School Safety

DCA participated in the statewide tornado drill on March 15th. Appropriate procedures and precautions were reviewed with staff and students.

The School Safety Committee will be meeting again this spring to discuss annual requirements and areas of concern. Topics will again include monthly safety drills, the development of a backpack policy for the coming school year, and community incidents to be aware of per the School Resource Officer.

Leadership/Personnel

To date, four new teachers have now been hired this year, filling the openings for our current 12 classrooms:

- Laura Ralph High School Diploma Track Class
- Andrea Jakresky High School Life Skills Class
- Lori Murray High School Vocational Class
- Katie Johnson High School Vocational Class

They have acclimated quickly to our setting and seem to be successfully establishing themselves as an integral part of our DCA team!

Grants/Fundraising

Bi-weekly meetings have been occurring 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, and IDEA 611 and 619. DCA will also be seeking reimbursement for the previously awarded COVID relief grants (ESSER II and ESSER IV).

Approximately \$100K of the original \$150K Damar Foundation Technology grant remains after purchasing a new PA system, laptops for all teachers and admin, and upgrades to the back door entry system. DCA Admin have worked diligently with Damar's Director of Facilities, Donnie McCoy, and the IT department to move forward with purchasing additional laptops and tablets for students. The new technology should be in place for the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

Governance

The Mayor's Office Board Recruitment event was held on March 16th at the Tinker House in Indianapolis. More than 100 interested professionals participated. DCA had about 9 participants indicate interest and a desire for follow-up. After outreach and discussion by the Superintendent, there are 2 participants who are participating in more formal DCA follow-ups this month. Thanks to Jordan Maitland, Aimee Brown, and Allyson Strother for representing DCA. Also, thanks to Allie Price, Damar's Special Events Coordinator, for assisting in set up for the event. As applicants spend time and learn more, the Governance Committee will update the Board. Chair Joey Wright will meet with one of the candidates to further vet her interest.

The board discussed the members and membership. All members will have a three year seat beginning in August. New members will have a start date beginning the month that they are voted in. **Motion was made by Amber Fields and seconded by Sam Moya. All members agreed to the terms listed above.**

Current DCA Board Roster

Community at Large

Allyson Strother

Joey Wright

Jordan Maitland

Lyle Coleman

Open

Damar Services Appointed

Karen Snyder

Patricia Edwards*

Sam Moya

Amber Fields

Ms. Edwards has resigned her Board seat to be able to fulfil additional responsibilities to the Damar Services Board. She has agreed to remain on the board (but be mostly inactive) until a replacement approved and appointed.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.