

Date and Location

Wednesday October 26, 2022

11:30 AM

6067 Decatur Blvd

Indianapolis, IN 46241

Board Members Present

Lyle Coleman

Joey Wright

Allyson Strother

Amber Fields

Brittney Kalmas

Others Present (Staff, Public)

Aimee Brown, DCA, School Leader

Julie Fenton, Director of Student Services

Cora Collier, DCA

Octavius Molton, CFO Damar Services

Katie McCoy, Chief Executive Assistant

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the August 2022 meeting were approved.

Operation Highlights

Damar Charter Academy commenced the end of the first quarter on Friday, October 7th.

Students were on Fall Break October 10th-14th, and returned to class on Monday, October 17th.

The first funding count of the year, Membership Enrollment, occurred on Friday, September 16th. DCA will receive funding for the 181 students who were actively enrolled on that date.

The first Special Education (SE) count day is scheduled for December 1st. As a reminder, DCA's enrollment target is 180 students.

DCA will observe Thanksgiving Break November 23rd-25th.

DCA's winter break for students will be Monday, December 19th-Monday, January 2nd.

December 16th will be a staff only day for closing out first semester records and reports.

January 3rd will be a staff only day, as well, and will include training on Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) presented by Damar and child trafficking and abuse prevention via the Indiana Center for Prevention of Youth Abuse and Suicide.

The DCA Family Engagement Group was created this year in an effort to illicit more parental involvement and sharing of resources and information. They have now had three meetings and are looking forward to partnering with DCA for upcoming activities and initiatives. Feedback from attendees has been extremely positive. In conjunction with this, DCA plans to host another Title I Family Engagement evening on Wednesday, December 14th. More information will be shared as details are finalized.

Curriculum and Programming

The 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 trained over the summer 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. All items have now been received, and the teachers and students are thoroughly enjoying the flexible seating options and endless project and activity possibilities!

DCA continues to utilize the following curriculum resources:

- **Into Math/Reading** (elementary)
- **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**

For the first time ever, DCA students working toward their high school diploma will have the opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test as an option for meeting the Post-Secondary Readiness Competencies requirement for Graduation Pathways. This should provide students with a much simpler way to meet the requirement and does not in any way obligate them to enlist.

School Safety

The School Safety Committee continues to meet and has worked to address areas of concern. Updates needed for the camera software and missing camera views have been made; mandatory emergency drills have begun; sex abuse and child trafficking training for staff and students is in process; the backdoor has been fixed; and the paging system has been updated to correctly connect users to the intended classrooms. The committee will continue meeting at least monthly to review policies and procedures and to develop solutions to any identified safety concerns.

Leadership/Personnel

Teacher Lori Murray resigned, therefore once again creating an open teaching position at the middle school level. A substitute teacher has been covering the class, along with the teaching assistant, while the search continues for a teaching candidate. Two interviews have been held, and DCA is hopeful that the position will soon be filled.

Grants/Fundraising

Bi-weekly meetings have continued between the DCA Admin and Damar's CFO, Octavius Molton. 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.

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

Title II funds are intended to be used for staff development. Administrator Cora Collier and teacher Vanessa True will be attending the Social Thinking annual conference December 1st and 2nd in San Francisco, California. While there, they will learn "strategies for better understanding the unique learning characteristics of (our) students through informal tasks from the Social Thinking® Dynamic Assessment and a handful of strategies for teaching based on this knowledge. They will be provided practical lessons for supporting different types of learners using Social Thinking Vocabulary, visual teaching tools, and evidence-informed strategies" that they can come back and train the rest of the staff on.

In addition, a portion of the Title II funds will be used to cover the cost of the child trafficking and abuse prevention staff training presented by the Indiana Center for Prevention of Youth Abuse and Suicide in partnership with KNOT Today, an organization founded by Colts' Head Coach, Frank Reich, and his wife Linda. KNOT Today's mission is to "generate awareness,

initiate prevention strategies, and assist in the development of innovative healing programs for sexually abused and exploited children.”

DCA hopes to use Title I funds to hire a contracted Social/Emotional Interventionist to provide social/emotional education to all students and serve as a member of a crisis intervention team when needed. An example job description from another school is included below. If implemented, the Social/Emotional Intervention Professional would oversee programs, processes, and/or personnel to meet the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students through a variety of means and methods approved by DCA leadership.

Governance

The Damar Services Board plans to present one or two candidates to the DCA Board for consideration before the end of the calendar year. Current Board make-up includes:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Status</u>
Joey Wright, Chair	Elected by DCA Board
Brittney Kalmas	Elected by DCA Board
Lyle Coleman	Elected by DCA Board
Allyson Strother	Elected by DCA Board
Jordan Maitland	Elected by DCA Board
Sam Moya	Appointed by Damar
Karen Snyder	Appointed by Damar
Patricia Edwards	Appointed by Damar
Amber Fields	Appointed by Damar

As the Board is aware, Ms. Patricia Edwards and Mr. Jordan Maitland will not be candidates for re-election or re-appointment at the end of their terms. Therefore, DCA is considering and recruiting for additional board members.

The board would like to have goals that members are a part of. Different topics will be brought to the table to make decisions on which will work for the members.

All of the committee are meeting the key performance indicators.

Finance

Year-to-date financial performance through August 2022 was presented in the Board meeting. DCA continues to do well with the budget.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 pm.

