

Date and Location

Wednesday February 22, 2023

11:30 AM

6067 Decatur Blvd

Indianapolis, IN 46241

Board Members Present

Lyle Coleman

Joey Wright

Allyson Strother

Brittney Kalmas

Sam Moya

Karen Snyder

Others Present (Staff, Public)

Dr. Jim Dalton, Superintendent

Aimee Brown, DCA, School Leader

Julie Fenton, Director of Student Services

Cora Collier, DCA

Octavius Molton, CFO Damar Services

Katie McCoy, Chief Executive Assistant

Julie Pitts, Guest

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the December 2022 meeting were approved.

Operation Highlights

DCA hosted its annual Title I Family Engagement evening on Wednesday, December 14th, from 5:30-8:00pm. Activities included signing up for library cards, writing letters to Santa, decorating cookies, enjoying pizza, hot chocolate and popcorn, and watching a Christmas movie. Over 150 people were in attendance for this fun-filled family event!

The second semester kicked off on January 3rd with Damar Charter Academy staff returning for Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) training presented by Damar and child trafficking and abuse prevention from the Indiana Center for Prevention of Youth Abuse and Suicide. Students returned to class on January 4th.

The second membership (ME) census occurred on Wednesday, February 1st, 2023. The targeted enrollment goal of 180 students was successfully met. The second special education (SE) count will occur April 1st. As a reminder, that collection is for informational purposes only. All SE funding is calculated based on the December 1st data.

Teachers and students have been steadily increasing the use of the LU interactive projector system, the Makerspace and the STEM Lab. The Makerspace houses the glowforge, 3D printers, programmable robots, and various other STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) kits teaching circuitry, geometry, physics, etc. The STEM Lab includes various building and craft supplies, hands-on activities, and space for students to enhance their critical thinking skills and creativity. It also serves as the location for a weekly art class taught by an outside artist from the ArtReach program. Together, these resources are helping DCA achieve its goal to improve instruction in the areas of STEM and to provide dedicated makerspaces throughout the building for creative, hands-on learning and problem solving that engages the students and encourages learning through making.

- DCA continues to utilize the following curriculum resources:
 - **Into Math/Reading** (elementary)
 - **Imagine Learning (formerly 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**

DCA students working toward their high school diploma will once again have the opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test on February 23rd as an option for meeting the Post-Secondary Readiness Competencies requirement for Graduation Pathways. Of the nine students who previously tested, four of them received a score meeting the minimum requirement (31) for the graduation pathway (this does not in any way obligate the students to enlist). We are hopeful that more students will meet or exceed the threshold during this administration. Returning students will have an opportunity to retest again in subsequent years if needed.

School Safety

The School Safety Committee continues to meet and has worked to address areas of concern. The committee plans to review current safety policies and procedures to identify any areas in need of updates for next school year.

Leadership/Personnel

DCA is pleased to announce that the former open teaching position has now successfully been filled after months of searching! Elizabeth Crupp has joined the team and has acclimated well as the teacher for the middle school academic-track classroom.

Allyson Cookenour, Teaching Assistant for the high school girls' vocational classroom, recently resigned from her position. Though DCA is disappointed to see her go, we wish her the best in her next endeavor. Hiring has begun for her replacement, and two candidates have already been interviewed.

Governance Committee

Members present

Joey Wright, Jim Dalton and Aimee Brown.

Members have met with Julie Pitts to replace the seat of Patricia Edwards. The committee is recommending that she be slated as a candidate for the seat. There will be one additional vacant seat on the board that the committee is pursuing. The committee suggests a local business leader with ties to the Hispanic community.

The Governance Committee is reviewing a rough draft of the DCA Board Manual. This Manual is expected to assist new Board Members in their acclimation to the Board and includes information on DCA's mission and vision, DCA values, the relationship with and duties of DCA's Sponsor, important polices and procedures, and Board Member expectations. If approved by the Board Chair, members may be asked to review the Manual and provide timely feedback toward the final and formal copy of the Manual.

Julie Pitts attended the Board Meeting as a guest. After introductions Julie was elected to a seat on the board.

The Governance Committee recommended Mrs. Julie Pitts for a seat on the DCA Board of Directors. Motion was made by Karen Snyder and seconded by Sam Moya and all members agreed to Julie Pitts joining the DCA Board of Directors.

Finance Committee

Members present

Octavius Molton, Jim Dalton, Lyle Coleman

The Finance Committee met to review the school's budget, performance to budget, and financial status during this reporting period. This information is provided to the Board and recorded in the minutes. End of the year projections were discussed including the variables of grants, student counts, and other funding opportunities – including direct fundraising.”

Financials continue to stay over budget.

The audit has wrapped up and the Finance Committee recommends to the board to accept as presented. Motion was made by Lyle Coleman and seconded by

Advocacy Committee

Members present

Karen Snyder, Julie Fenton, Brittney Kalmas, Amber Fields

Meeting Focus: to identify ways the committee can support DCA

- Suggestions
 - Organizing the sponsoring of families at Christmas
 - Attending one of our parent-led Family Engagement Group meetings and hearing directly from them what they would like to see/know/have access to/etc.
 - Helping compile a list of community resources and/or helping families connect to them
 - Hosting a community resource fair for families
 - Assisting with our EOY family engagement event
 - Developing partnerships with businesses that would like to donate money, resources, and/or the opportunity for students to become employed
 - Helping DCA promote the Dragon Works program and increase its scope... and also helping DCA to develop an actual enterprise out of student made products (similar to Purposeful Design <https://pdindy.com/>)
 - Assisting with fundraising efforts and/or donor connections to eventually provide DCA with new or additional space to grow programs

- Additional discussion/follow-up
 - Amber suggested providing blankets to families as next year's Family Night take-away
 - Amber will contact Guild member, Linda, to see if she may be able to assist
 - Amber would like to see the Guild be more involved with DCA
 - Amber will provide an email introduction with Guild President, Jeannie, to initiate communication (update: intro made 12/9/22; Julie sent another email 2/21/23 after not hearing anything more; Jeannie responded on 2/22/23 that they were not interested in assisting DCA at this time, but might be in the future)
 - We discussed the possibility of having the Guild assist with DCA's EOY family event, a teacher supply drive, etc.
 - Karen suggested DCA securing a vendor booth at local professional conferences and various craft fairs to sell Dragon Works items
 - She also suggested setting up a booth at the Gala
 - Brittney suggested working with Meijer (a new Damar partner) for donations and employment opportunities
 - Brittney will look at providing a resource list for services (update: provided 12/15/22)
 - Amber shared that Providence Cristo Rey sends out a large number of students for employment each week
 - Amber will reach out to a contact there to see if we could meet and get ideas (update: intro made 12/8/22; Julie sent follow up email 2/21/23; no response yet)
 - She will also reach out to a contact at the Chamber of Commerce
 - The committee would like DCA to survey the families to identify specific needs

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm.