

DCA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes August 23, 2023

Date and Location

Wednesday August 23, 2023

11:30 AM

6067 Decatur Blvd

Indianapolis, IN 46241

Board Members Present

Joey Wright

Allyson Strother

Brittney Kalmes

Dr. Sam Moya

Karen Snyder

Lyle Coleman (Phone)

Others Present (Staff, Public)

Aimee Brown, DCA, School Leader

Julie Fenton, Director of Student Services

Cora Collier, DCA

Dr. Jim Dalton, DCA Superintendent

Octavius Molton, CFO Damar Services

Katie McCoy, Chief Executive Assistant

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the June 2023 Meeting were approved.

Operation Highlights

Students returned to DCA on Wednesday, August 2nd. A back-to-school event was held on August 1st. Over 40 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.

New enrollments are well underway, with nearly 30 students added 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 Monday, October 2nd. As a reminder, House Bill 1001 moved the fall ADM count day to October 1, or a date determined by SBOE, to align with the federal pupil enrollment count, eliminate redundant counting of students, and reduce administrative burden on schools. This is a change from the previous date which occurred on the second Friday in September.

Thanks to grant funds, a remodel of the nurse's office occurred over the summer to allow for student access to an additional bathroom. The replacement of carpet in classrooms with new tiling is also in the works. The floors of the other bathrooms, stairway areas, cafeteria, and several classrooms that had old tile were already replaced last summer. Each of these projects is/has been supported by a portion of the ESSER III Covid-relief grant DCA received, which requires the school to use the funds to improve the health and safety and reduce learning loss for students.

Curriculum and Programming

Streamlined K-12 Indiana Academic Standards in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science and Computer Science were approved on Wednesday, June 7, by SBOE. All updated standards are now accessible on [IDOE's Indiana Academic Standards](#) webpage. This update of standards will require yet another change to the state's accountability assessments for the Spring of 2024.

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**

School Safety

The School Safety Committee will resume meetings to discuss any outstanding areas of concern and review safety policies and procedures in need of updates. A new backpack policy was distributed to all families prior to the start of the school year.

The installation of a video intercom system which requires visitors to be buzzed in from outside the front of the building has now been completed. Visiting Damar employees will continue to sign in on paper upon entering the building, and all outside visitors will still need to present

their drivers licenses to be run though the Safe Visitors program which provides an immediate check against the sex offender registry.

Leadership/Personnel

We are excited to introduce a new member of our team who will be offering several different types of services to our students for the 2023-2024 school year. Bella Brown has joined DCA as the Social-Emotional Learning Specialist. Social-emotional learning is the process of developing self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills. To establish and grow these skills, she will be offering individual and small group sessions as well as whole class lessons. Bella comes to us from the field of Applied Behavior Analysis and six years of experience working with children on the Autism spectrum. She can't wait to start building relationships with our students and begin helping them reach their full social-emotional potential!

DCA will once again be evaluated on the Mayor's Office's Accountability Framework **Core Question 4: Is the school providing appropriate conditions for success?** This area of the performance framework examines the results of an external site visit against a rubric performed by an OEI-approved independent evaluator of the school's choosing. During the term of its initial charter, a school contracts with an evaluator to perform a site visit in the second, fourth and sixth years. The fourth-year comprehensive review culminates in a school's mid-charter review, while the sixth-year visit serves to inform charter renewal decisions. In subsequent years, schools are evaluated against Core Question 4 in years three and six. **DCA will be audited by a team from Marion University on October 31st and November 2nd**, and the results will help to inform the school's second renewal (third charter term). Going forward, DCA hopes to be able to take advantage of the newly passed legislature allowing for a 15-year charter term instead of the current 7-year term.

Finance

The Finance Committee met before the Board meeting, Members include Octavius Molton, Dr. Jim Dalton, Lyle Coleman to discuss financials.

The Financials continue to stay on track with the budget. Octavius Molton thanked Julie Fenton for her assistance with the DCA financials.

DCA Admin and Damar's CFO, Octavius Molton, continue to meet monthly. 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, IDEA 611/619, and NESP grants are in process.

Governance

The Governance Committee met, Members include Dr. Jim Dalton, Aimee Brown, Joey Wright, Julie Pitts. Members met and with Ms. Bernice Torres and will present her resume to the members at the August 2023 meeting.

Ms. Bernice Torres has been recommended by the Governance Committee at the August 23rd Board meeting for official board membership. Motion was made by Karen Snyder and seconded by Dr. Sam Moya. All members agree that Ms. Torres will have a seat on the Board of Directors. Her seat would fill the Board to its current maximum member number of 9.

The board packet included a copy of the DCA Board Manual. The Manual provides extensive support to new Board members and provides ongoing structure and information for existing board members. The Manual is scheduled to be revised annually – in May of each year.

DCA Community/Advocacy

The Community and Advocacy Committee met, Members include Julie Fenton, Amber Fields, Brittney Kalmes, Karen Snyder

Meeting Focus: to identify ways the committee can support DCA

Formulate new committee goals that are more reflective of the work the committee is focusing on Potential goals to be discussed further, Contributing info and resources to the DCA monthly newsletter.

Brittney offered to share the newsletter they currently publish.

Increasing family engagement and access to resources during our 3 annual family nights (back-to-school night; December event; year-end event).

Joey would like to see increased board involvement at school events.

Assign specific responsibilities to board members.

Additional discussion/follow-up

Amber would like us to develop an information packet that could be sent to potential business partners, after an initial conversation has been had with them.