



Student & Parent
Handbook
2026-2027

www.DamarCharterAcademy.org

Dr. James L. Dalton, Superintendent

Damar Charter Academy believes that well-informed students and parents promote a positive school environment. Consistent with this philosophy, we are providing this Student & Parent Handbook so that you have the opportunity to become acquainted with various aspects of school life. In this Handbook, we have included specific information regarding some of the school's policies and procedures, and general information to help students and families enjoy a pleasant and productive school year. Parents and students are encouraged to review this Handbook together and use it as a reference during the school year. Any questions should be directed to the school.

This Handbook does not represent a contractual commitment to any student or family, but simply reflects the status of some of the Damar Charter Academy Board policies and school rules. The policies and other information provided in this Handbook are subject to change as the result of Federal or State law, Board or school administrative action. If any policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after August 2012, the language in the most current policy or guideline shall prevail. Copies of current Board policies are available in the school office.

All policies and guidelines adopted by Damar Charter Academy are intended to be fair, reasonable, and for the good of the school and of the students. All are intended to comply with Federal and State law, and constitutional rights of individuals. Race, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, and disability will not be grounds for denying participation in classes or programs for which a student is otherwise eligible. Complaints of such discrimination must be made in writing to the Principal of the school by parents on behalf of their children or by adult students on their own behalf. The Principal will respond within ten school days to properly made complaints. Complaints not settled by the Principal may be appealed in writing to the Superintendent, 6067 Decatur Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46241.

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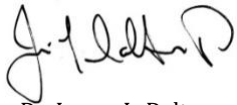
Welcome to Damar Charter Academy

Damar Charter Academy is a very special community, and students and parents are among the very best of our assets. Students bring their unique challenges, experiences and gifts. They have enormous energy and desire to do creative things. Parents offer their tireless dedication and involvement in the education process. Together, you have a great hand in creating the culture of this school that has been shaped over the past several years, since its inception in 2011.

It is our hope that the very best in you will thrive as you take full advantage of so much our school has to offer. Our entire staff is committed to your success. We all want you to find a sure and confident path to a successful future that is unique to you and your family's hopes, dreams and goals.

Welcome to this priceless academic year. We wish you the very best and will do all that we can to help you achieve it.

Go Dragons!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. L. Dalton', written in a cursive style.

Dr. James L. Dalton
Superintendent





DAMAR CHARTER ACADEMY

Mission

"Damar Charter Academy successfully prepares students with developmental, intellectual and behavioral challenges for a lifetime of learning."

History and Vision

Damar Charter Academy (DCA) emerged in 2011 as the result of a successful collaboration between Damar Services, Inc. and the City of Indianapolis' Office of Education Innovation. In January 2010, Damar convened the Damar Charter Academy Staff Advisory Council and participated in an extensive formal application process culminating with the City-County Council's vote on February 28, 2011 to approve the school's charter.

From its inception, Damar Charter Academy has received the support and encouragement of education leaders throughout the state. As a public charter school, it offers parents from across Indiana a much needed, free educational alternative for their children with special needs. DCA is designed to meet the criteria for excellence identified by its sponsor — the Mayor of Indianapolis' Office of Education Innovation — and adheres to the standards established for all public schools in the state of Indiana. Damar Charter Academy operates under the advisement of its education management organization (EMO), Damar Services, Inc.

Among the school's goals are plans to influence state legislation that would adopt an alternate accountability model for measuring student achievement and growth. DCA remains committed to seeking out and implementing programs and services that translate to successful outcomes for all students served.

Board of Directors



Joey Keller Wright
Board Chair



Lyle Coleman
Member



Amber Field
Member



Brittney Kalmas
Member



Dr. Sam Moya
Member



Julie Pitts
Member

Allyson Strother
Member

Berenice Torres
Member

Quality, dedicated leadership is the cornerstone of any school's success, and Damar Charter Academy makes no exception. The school is governed by a Board of Directors, an elected body of dedicated community stewards who offer their time, talents and vision to ensure that Damar Charter Academy achieves the highest standard of excellence.

The Board of Directors consists of nine members who are responsible for establishing policy, advocating Damar Charter Academy's mission and providing strategic guidance to the school.

The Board holds regular public meetings at Damar Services, Inc. located at 6067 Decatur Boulevard in Indianapolis, Indiana. The agendas and minutes of each Board meeting are available at the school office and on the website at www.damarcharteracademy.org.



DAMAR CHARTER ACADEMY

School Hours: Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

School Directory

TITLE	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Director of Operations	Aimee Brown	aimeeb@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Director of Student Services	Julie Fenton	julief@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Instruction and Accountability Director	Cora Collier	corac@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Administrative Assistant	Johnnie Adams-Thornton	johnniet@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Speech/Language Therapist	Amanda Brindle	amandab@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Occupational Therapist	Megan Treesh	megant@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
School Nurse	Mackenzie Bray	mackenziebr@damar.org	455-2400
Social Emotional Learning Specialist	Bella Williams	isabellab@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Laura Berning	laurab@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Elizabeth Chupp	elizabethc@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Laura Hinz	laurahinz@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Shayna Hyatte	shaynah@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Andrea Jakresky	andrea@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Luke Koch	lukek@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Sarah McDaniel	sarahm@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Joy Patterson	joys@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Dila Shannon	dilas@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Vanessa True	vanessat@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Tyler Trueblood	thomast@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400
Teacher	Andrea True-Landis	andreatl@damarcharteracademy.org	455-2400

School Calendar

[Calendar – Damar Charter Academy](#)

Residency & Eligibility

To attend school at Damar Charter Academy, students must live in Indiana (have legal settlement as defined in the Indiana Code) with a parent or legal guardian.

In general, a child should be age five (5) on or before August 1 to be eligible for kindergarten and age six (6) on or before September 1 to be eligible for first grade.

Selection & Enrollment

Student Lottery

In accordance with Board policy, student selection occurs by public lottery and the resulting student waiting list.

1. To apply for enrollment, a parent or guardian must complete the form available on the school website. Applications are accepted year-round. However, only those received by the annual lottery application deadline will be included in the lottery process. Incomplete and duplicate applications will not be accepted. Late applications will be added to the waiting list in the order received by the school and recorded behind those applications included in the lottery process.
2. As openings occur in a particular class, grade level or academic program, eligible applicants on the waiting list will be contacted in rank order and given the opportunity to enroll. An applicant cannot defer an offer and keep his/her spot on the waiting list. If an offer is declined, the applicant is removed from the waiting list and the opening is offered to the next eligible applicant.
3. The waiting list will roll over each school year.

Enrollment

Parents/guardians must provide the following information and/or documentation directly to the school by the pre-established deadline to enroll a student in Damar Charter Academy:

1. Completed Online Student Enrollment
2. Authentic student birth certificate
3. Proof of Residency
4. Student immunization history/shot records
5. Student's latest report card/transcript (if available)
6. Student's Individual Education Program (IEP) and/or 504 Accommodation Plan (if applicable and available)

Pick-Up & Drop-Off

Students may arrive at school as early as 8:15 a.m. to go to their classrooms. Car riders should be dropped off at the school's back entrance and the staff will escort them to their classrooms. Students should arrive at school no later than 8:25 a.m. Classes begin promptly at 8:30 a.m.

Students will be dismissed from classrooms at 3:00 p.m. If you are picking up your child from school, please arrive at the school's back entrance as early as 2:45 p.m., but no later than 3:00 p.m. The school will notify you if your child has not been picked up by 3:20 p.m.

Child Care Services

Damar Charter Academy does not currently offer in-house before- or after-school childcare programs. Please make the appropriate childcare arrangements for your child. If recommendations are needed, please contact the school.

Using Staff for Childcare, Respite and Transportation Services

Due to the family atmosphere fostered at Damar Charter Academy and the needs of the students, the staff may become well-acquainted with the parents and guardians. While such relationships are wholly acceptable, and are in fact necessary to successful education, professional integrity and confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

In keeping with this standard, staff may not be hired by a family or volunteer to babysit, provide respite care, or transport students in their own vehicles.

Student Schedules

In general, Damar Charter Academy will operate five days a week, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 pm. This will allow for a six-hour instructional day. Students will be organized into classes in the school based on age, grade level and their educational track.

Class schedules will be adjusted for each semester to meet the needs of the students and reflect any changes in individual student plans.

Emergency Contact & Health Information Forms

Upon student enrollment, all parents/guardians are required to provide personal and emergency contact information, as well as student health information. It is important that Damar Charter Academy has the most current information on file at all times. If your personal or emergency contact information or student health information changes during the school year – including individuals authorized to pick up your child from school – please contact the school office immediately.

Emergency School Closings & Delays

It is our intention to hold school as scheduled according to the yearly calendar. Only inclement weather or other emergency conditions that could impact the health or safety of students and/or staff will warrant the closing of school, a delayed start to the school day or early dismissal of school.

Decisions about school closings and schedule changes will be made by the Superintendent and announced as early as possible via the following major area television and radio stations broadcasts and websites:

[G E N E R A L I N F O R M A T I O N]

- WRTV Channel 6 — theindychannel.com
- WTHR Channel 13 — wthr.com
- WISH Channel 8 — wishtv.com
- WXIN FOX 59 — fox59.com

In addition, parents may choose to receive automated communications from the school regarding closings, delays, and other important information.

If school is closing early or dismissing late, the school will contact you using the information you provided in the Harmony student information system. If any parent or emergency contact information changes during the school year – including individuals authorized to pick up your child from school – please contact the school office immediately.

Emergency Drills

In accordance with State law, Damar Charter Academy will conduct regular lockdown, fire and tornado drills during the school year. Students will be instructed on the proper procedures for each drill and learn the importance of following the directions of teachers and staff.

Lost & Found

A Lost and Found Box is located in the school office. Please check this area periodically to reclaim items that have been misplaced. Labeling student clothing and belongings helps in the return of items that have been lost. Items left may be donated to charity at the end of each semester.

School PR, Marketing & Promotion

Damar Charter Academy receives requests for student photos, artwork, interviews or other information from the news media, colleges and universities, civic organizations and other parties. Although the school does not release student information to external parties without permission from the parent or guardian, such information is needed for school publicity or for academic purposes. Parents and/or guardians will have the opportunity to indicate their preferences on the Marketing/Media Release Form provided during student enrollment. Please contact the school office immediately if your preferences change.

Money

Any money sent to school should be placed in a sealed envelope with the student's full name and the teacher's name on the envelope, and a note indicating how the money is to be used. Please caution your child(ren) NOT to open the envelope. Separate checks should be issued for the cafeteria, book rental and any other school-related activity or expense. Be advised that change is not always available, so please send the correct amount. Students should not bring articles of great value or large amounts of money to school.

Use of Video Cameras

Damar Charter Academy uses video surveillance in many areas of the school for the safety and protection of individuals, property/equipment and other valuables.



Complaints, Comments or Concerns

Damar Charter Academy welcomes constructive criticism that is intended to improve the quality of the educational program and related services by encouraging parent and citizen participation while protecting the rights of staff and others.

If appropriate, parents should first address any complaints, comments or concerns related to student interactions, classroom activities, curriculum and instruction with the classroom teacher or the principal. Concerns that are not resolved informally may be submitted in writing to the Superintendent as follows:

Damar Charter Academy
Office of the Superintendent
6067 Decatur Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46241

At the Superintendent's discretion, a committee may be appointed to review the matter in question and submit a written decision to the Superintendent. Any appeal of decisions made will be made through the Superintendent, then the Board of Directors for final decision.

Withdrawal from School

Parents are responsible for notifying the school office as soon as possible when a student will be withdrawing from school. When a student withdraws from school, please provide a forwarding address. Student records will be forwarded to the new school when a request for records has been received.

Attendance

The State of Indiana and Damar Charter Academy share the opinion that school attendance is vital to student success in the classroom as well as in community settings, and recognize the importance of parents/guardians in ensuring regular school attendance. Attending school is necessary and required by law.

Students are expected to be in school every school day. Consequences of absences include but are not limited to student's poor academic growth and development, out-of-school alternatives and legal implications placed upon the student and/or the parent/legal guardian.

General Attendance Guidelines

1. An absence will be documented for any day a student is not in attendance.
2. Student absences must not exceed ten (10) days per year (excused and/or unexcused). All absences other than those listed in the *Absences Not Counted* section will count toward the ten (10)-day limit.
3. Every effort should be made to schedule medical, dental or other such appointments outside the regular school day. Such appointments resulting in a full-day absence at the school will count toward the ten (10)-day limit. Students visiting a doctor, dentist, etc. during part or all of the day must bring an official appointment form from the physician upon return to school. The form must indicate the time and date of the appointment to be considered excused.
4. Vacations should be scheduled at times when school is not in session. School days missed due to vacations will count toward the ten (10)-day school limit for all grade levels.
5. Missed schoolwork, including class assignments and tests, will be provided to the student at the discretion of the teacher and based upon the length and nature of the absence, and in accordance with the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), if applicable.

Absences Not Counted

The following events are exempt from being counted as absences, tardiness or early departure from school in accordance with Indiana law and Damar Charter Academy Board Policy and must be prearranged by the parent/guardian calling the school with specific times and dates:

- a. Serving as a page for or honoree of the Indiana General Assembly;
- b. Subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding;
- c. Serving on the precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or to a political party, on the date of each general, city or town, special, and primary election at which the student works;
- d. Ordered to active duty with the Indiana National Guard (no more than ten (10) days per school year);
- e. Serving with the Civil Air Patrol (up to five (5) days per school year).
- f. Participating in an authorized, school-sponsored activity that is consistent with and promotes the educational philosophy and goals of the school
- g. Juvenile or criminal justice system detention

Absences Recognized as Excused by the School

1. Based upon Damar Charter Academy's education and community needs, values and priorities, the school has determined that absences, tardiness and early departures will be considered excused if due to the following reasons:
 - a. Maternity leave.
 - b. Death of family member.
 - c. Medical, dental and clinic appointments documented by physician's office.



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- d. Absence due to quarantine.
 - e. Exclusion from school because of exposure to contagious disease.
 - f. Absence as a result of the student being sent home by the school nurse or administration due to illness. The student will receive an excused absence for that day only. In order for additional days to be counted as excused, a physician's note must be received from parent/guardian.
 - g. Illness documented by a physician's note.
 - h. Absence for part-time religious instruction with an established church or group of churches. The student must be properly registered and a copy of such registration must be filed with the Principal. The time for release for religious instruction or education shall be arranged by the Principal and must not exceed 120 minutes per week per Indiana law.
 - i. College visitations approved at the discretion of the Principal upon the presentation of a prearranged appointment letter or phone call by a college admissions representative to administration. Upon return the student must present his prearranged excused absence form accompanied by university personnel signature in order to receive an excused admit. College visitations may be limited to students who maintain a 95% attendance rate for the current school year.
 - j. Absence related to deployment and return of military connected families.
 - k. Military examinations. Appropriate military notification required.
 - l. Other absences as approved by the Principal.
2. Only absences, tardiness or early departures approved by school administration, documented by a physician or otherwise meeting the criteria of excused absences will be recorded as excused. An absence, tardiness or early departure from school that is not covered by any of the reasons listed above is considered unexcused. See *Truancy* below.

Reporting Absences

School begins at 8:30am and ends at 3:00pm. **Parents should call or email the school office at 317-455-2400 (option #1) or attendance@damarcharteracademy.org before 9:00 a.m. to report or verify an absence, tardiness or early departure of a student.** Voicemail is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Please call the school EACH DAY the student is absent unless prior arrangements have been made. Be prepared to provide your name and relationship to the student, the student's name and grade level, the reason for the absence, date of the absence, and a contact phone number. ***Informing the teacher directly is welcomed, but the front office MUST be notified to ensure proper documentation of the absence.*** Automated calls will be going out to families for any absence not verified.

Truancy

Absences that are unverified (no note or phone call) within 48 hours will be recorded as unexcused and the student will be considered truant. Truancy is any absence from school without parental consent under circumstances not covered by law or recognized by the school. In such cases, the School Attendance Officer will contact the parent/guardian.

Indiana law requires Damar Charter Academy to report truancy for children under age 18. To that end, the following policies will be strictly enforced:

1. When a student has accumulated six (6) or more days of unexcused absences, the school will send written notification.
2. If a student has accumulated eight (8) or more days of unexcused absences, the school will attempt to schedule a parent/guardian conference to review educational and attendance concerns, develop attendance intervention strategies, and identify local community resources to abate truancy and improve school attendance.
3. If a student accumulates ten (10) or more days of unexcused absences, Damar Charter Academy will refer the student to the School Resource Officer.

4. If unexcused absences continue to accumulate and reach fifteen (15) days or more, Damar Charter Academy will refer the child to Child Protective Services (CPS). Damar Charter Academy may choose to file a petition of truancy and court intervention.

Tardiness

Any student arriving to class after the scheduled start time is considered tardy. All instances of tardiness will be documented by the classroom teacher. If necessary, the school will attempt to schedule a parent/guardian conference to review attendance concerns and develop intervention strategies to help improve school attendance.

Excessive tardiness can result in student disciplinary action among other consequences. Please contact the school immediately if there are any problems impacting your child's school attendance.

Late Arrivals & Early Dismissals

From time to time, compelling circumstances require that a student be late to school or dismissed before the end of the school day. Parents should provide the school with advanced notice and the reason for the absence.

Any student arriving late to school or returning after being out for part of the day must be accompanied by an adult to the school office and signed in.

Parents/guardians and others picking up students before or after regular dismissal time are required to report to the school office, show photo identification and document the students' release by completing the appropriate student sign-out form.

A parent/guardian who has been awarded custody of the student by a court must provide the school with a copy of the custody order and inform the school in writing of any limitations in the rights of a non-custodial parent/guardian. The school will validate the information presented. Absent such notice, the school will presume that the student may be released into the care of either parent/guardian.

No student with a developmental, intellectual or medical challenge; illness or injury presumed to be incapacitating will be permitted to leave school unless accompanied by an authorized adult.

No student shall be released to anyone or excused from school unless parental authorization is on file in the school building.

Dress Code

Damar Charter Academy recognizes that each student's dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style, individual preference and in some cases individual ability. Students are expected to dress neatly and appropriately for school and to maintain a proper level of personal hygiene.

Under no circumstances should student dress and grooming:

- Present a hazard to the health or safety of the student himself/herself or to others in the school;
- Interfere with school work, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program;
- Cause excessive wear or damage to school property; or
- Prevent the student from achieving his/her own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement.



Technology

Damar Charter Academy is pleased to provide Internet services to its students. This computer technology promotes educational excellence in our school by providing them with the opportunity to develop the resource sharing, innovation, and communication skills and tools that are essential to both life and work.

While the school's intent is to make Internet access available in order to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials. In addition, it is possible to purchase certain goods and services via the Internet that could result in unwanted financial obligations for which a student's parent or legal guardian would be liable. Although the school has implemented the use of technology protection measures which are specific technologies that will protect against access to materials that are harmful to minors, it is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the Internet to information and communications that some people may find inappropriate.

Even so, the school believes that the benefits to students of access to the Internet exceed any disadvantages. Ultimately, however, parents and guardians are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. As such, Damar Charter Academy makes the school's complete Internet policy and procedures available on request to parents, legal guardians and other members of the community; and provides parents and legal guardians the option of requesting for their minor children alternative activities not requiring Internet use.

The purpose of school-provided Internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. To remain eligible as users, students' use must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of Damar Charter Academy. Access is a privilege, not a right, and entails responsibility.

All information downloaded to Damar Charter Academy computers, no matter what the source, belongs to the school. Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers will always be private. The school staff may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and insure that users are acting responsibly.

Students and staff can assist in our efforts to keep the Internet available to the school by following these guidelines:

- Students utilizing school-provided Internet access must first have the permission of and must be supervised by Damar Charter Academy's staff.
- Students utilizing school-provided Internet access are responsible for good behavior on-line just as they are in a classroom or other area of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply.
- Any personal logon password that may be issued to a student is confidential and known only by the student and teacher. Usage of any other student's password to log on is a violation of the Damar Charter Academy policies. Students should protect their personal passwords and either log off or lock the computer when leaving the computer.

School-provided Internet access is meant for school work and projects. The following uses of school-provided Internet access are not permitted:

- To access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene, abusive, sexually explicit or other unauthorized material;
- To transmit obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, or threatening language;
- To violate any local, state, or federal statute;
- To vandalize, damage, or disable the property of another individual or organization;
- To access school or another individual's materials, information or files without permission; and,
- To violate copyright or otherwise use the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission.

Any violation of school policy and rules may result in the student's loss of school-provided access to the Internet. Additional disciplinary action may be determined by the principal in keeping with existing procedures and

practices regarding inappropriate language or behavior. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

Visitors

Damar Charter Academy welcomes the active interest of parents and/or guardians and citizens in the school, and invites the community to visit, chaperone a student field trip or special event, or volunteer at any time. However, since the school is a place of work and learning and must be secure, certain limits must be set to visits.

For these reasons, the following policy applies to visitors to the school:

- Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a “visitor”.
- Any visitor to the school must report to the school office upon arrival at the school, present the appropriate identification, and sign in before going any other place in the building or on campus.
- Any visitor who is picking up a student early from school must report to the school office and complete the appropriate sign-out form.
- Any visitor bringing a student to school after school has begun must accompany the student to the school office and complete the appropriate sign-in form.
- Parents or citizens who wish to observe a classroom while school is in session are expected to arrange such visits in advance with the teacher and inform the principal.
- Teachers should not be expected to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.

If your child forgets something at home, please bring it to the school office and we will take the item to the student.

Volunteers & Chaperones

Damar Charter Academy recognizes the valuable contributions of school volunteers in all aspects of educational and extracurricular school programming, and encourages the active involvement and participation of parents and other members of the community, subject to certain requirements and procedures.

To provide the safest educational environment possible for students and staff, the school requires any volunteer who will be in the school on a regular basis, have direct contact with students or be associated with any school program in any capacity to submit an official volunteer form which includes a criminal background check.

Anyone interested in volunteering should call the school office or visit the school website at www.damarcharteracademy.org.

Non-Custodial Parent Rights

When parents of a student are estranged, separated, or divorced, unless restricted or prohibited by a court order, both parents shall have the following rights:

- View the child’s records
- Receive school progress reports
- Visit the child at school
- Pick up the child from school
- Participate in Parent-Teacher-Conferences
- Accompany the child on field trips

Upon request, the school shall provide announcements, notices, and newsletter to both custodial and non-custodial parents.



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The parent with whom the student resides is known as the educational custodial parent, unless a legal document of signed parental agreement indicates otherwise. Unless restricted or prohibited by court order, both parents may request to receive copies of student report cards, and they may attend Parent-Teacher Conference together or separate conferences may be held in special circumstances.

It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide to the school with current and accurate information about the custodial status of the child. Efforts should be made to keep the school informed as soon as possible about changes in custody and about all revisions or new court orders that are relevant to this matter.

No Smoking

In order to protect students and staff, the Board of Damar Charter Academy prohibits the use of tobacco products on school property at all times. Such prohibition applies to school buildings, parking lots, grounds; in school vans or school owned vehicles; and at any school-related event.

Care of School Property

Students, to the best of their ability, are expected to demonstrate respect for school property and for the belongings of others. Parents/Guardians and school staff alike are expected to teach students respect for property, which can be done in connection with the care of textbooks and the proper use of school materials and equipment.

Students who cause damage to or destroy school property, including equipment, apparatus, supplies, musical instruments, library materials, textbooks, facilities, etc., are subject to disciplinary, criminal and/or legal action.

Personal Property at School

Teachers and administrators must often make judgment calls as to the disruptive or potentially harmful nature personal items – jewelry, dolls, toys, cameras, video games and other electronic devices, laser pens, keepsakes and items – brought to school by students. Such items may be confiscated at any time without warning and excluded from any/all school premises, vehicles, or sites of any school event, field experience, or other school sponsored activity.

It is not our intent to separate students from their personal property. Most items confiscated will be returned to the student's parent/guardian.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their personal property. Damar Charter Academy and the Damar Charter Academy Board assume no responsibility for theft, loss, damage, or vandalism to personal property brought into school buildings or onto school property.

Cell Phones and Other Wireless Communication Devices

Purpose

This policy establishes clear expectations for the possession and use of wireless communication devices during the school day to ensure a safe, focused, and academically productive learning environment. This policy is in accordance to Indiana's Senate Enrolled Act 78 (SEA 78).

1. Prohibition on Student Use or Possession

Students are **prohibited from using or possessing any personal wireless communication device** during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Mobile phones
- Smartwatches
- Tablets
- Wireless earbuds or headphones
- Any device capable of sending, receiving, or storing digital communication

“School day” includes all instructional periods, passing periods, lunch, recess, and any other time students are under school supervision, unless otherwise authorized by the school administration.

2. Teacher-Directed Educational Use

When wireless communication devices are required for instructional purposes:

- **Only school-supplied wireless communication devices may be used.**
- Teachers may not direct or permit the use of personal devices for academic activities.
- School-issued devices must be used in accordance with classroom expectations, the school’s acceptable use policy, and all district technology guidelines.

3. Required Device Management Policy

The school will implement a Secure Storage Policy

Secure Storage Policy

- Students who bring personal wireless communication devices to school must store them in a **school-approved secure storage system** (e.g., locked pouches, lockers, or administrative storage) upon arrival.
- Devices must remain secured and inaccessible until the end of the school day.
- Accessing, tampering with, or attempting to bypass secure storage procedures will result in disciplinary action.

4. Exceptions

Exceptions may be granted only for:

- Documented medical needs requiring device access



- Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 accommodations
- Emergency situations as determined by school administration

5. Enforcement

Violations of this policy may result in:

- Confiscation of the device
- Parent/guardian notification
- Progressive disciplinary consequences as outlined in the student handbook

The school is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to personal devices brought to school in violation of this policy.

6. Communication

This policy will be:

- Included in the student handbook
- Communicated to families annually
- Reviewed with students at the start of each school year

Student Records

In order to provide appropriate educational services and programming, the school must collect, retain, and use information about individual students. Simultaneously, the school recognizes the need to safeguard students' privacy and restrict access to students' personally identifiable information.

Student "personally identifiable information" includes, but is not limited to: the student's name; the name of the student's parent or other family members; the address of the student or student's family; a personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record; other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name; other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or information requested by a person who the Corporation reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

A social security number of a student contained in the records of the Corporation may be disclosed if the record is specifically required by a State or a Federal Statute or is ordered by a court under the rules of discovery.

Personally identifiable information concerning students shall be protected against theft, unauthorized access, alteration, disclosure, misuse, or invasion of privacy. Unless specifically authorized by the Superintendent or produced pursuant to a request under the Indiana Access to Public Records Act, personally identifiable information concerning students shall not be left unprotected, shared or transferred from Corporation records

[BOARD POLICIES]

to any place not within the control of the Corporation. This includes any laptop computer or portable storage medium.

The school is responsible for maintaining records of all students attending classes in this corporation. In addition to records mandated by the Federal Government, the State of Indiana requires that the corporation record or include in the official high school transcript for each high school student the following information:

- Attendance records;
- Any secondary level and postsecondary level certificates of achievement earned by the student;
- Immunization information from the student's immunization record.
- The school also authorizes the collection of other student information including, but not limited to:
- Observations and ratings of individual students by professional staff members acting within their sphere of competency;
- Samples of student work;
- Information obtained from professionally acceptable standard instruments of measurement such as interest inventories and aptitude tests, vocational preference inventories, achievement tests, and standardized intelligence tests;
- Verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns;
- Rank in class and academic honors earned;
- Psychological tests;
- Custodial arrangements.

In all cases, permitted, narrative information in student records shall be objectively-based on the personal observation or knowledge of the originator.

Student records shall be available only to students and their parents, eligible students, designated school officials and designated school personnel, who have a legitimate educational interest in the information, or to other individuals or organizations as permitted by law.

The term "parents" includes legal guardians or other persons standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the welfare of the child). The term "eligible student" includes any student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older, or who is enrolled in a postsecondary institution regardless of his/her age.

In situations in which a student has both a custodial and a noncustodial parent, both shall have access to the student's educational records unless stated otherwise by court order. In the case of an eligible student, that is a student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older, parents will be allowed access to the records without the student's consent, provided the student is considered a dependent under Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code.

A "school official" is a person designated by the Board as an administrator, supervisor, teacher/instructor (including substitutes), or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the Board has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, or medical consultant); school psychologist, a contractor, consultant, volunteer or other party to whom the Board has outsourced a service otherwise performed by Corporation employees (e.g. a therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks (including volunteers). "Designated school personnel" could include, but not be limited to agents of an insurance carrier providing a defense to the Corporation or its employees or agents.

"Legitimate educational interest" shall be defined as a "direct or delegated responsibility for helping the student achieve one (1) or more of the educational goals of the Corporation" or if the record is necessary in order for the designated school personnel official to perform an administrative, supervisory or instructional task for the Corporation or to perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family. The Board directs that reasonable and appropriate methods (including but not limited to physical and/or technological access controls) are utilized to control access to student records and to make certain that school officials obtain access to only those education records in which they have legitimate educational interest.



The Board authorizes the administration to:

- Forward student records including disciplinary records with respect to suspensions and expulsions upon request to a private or public school or school corporation in which a student of this Corporation seeks or intends to enroll, or is instructed to enroll, on a full-time or part-time basis, upon condition that the student's parent be notified of the transfer, receive a copy of the record if requested and have the opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the record;

Provide "personally-identifiable" information to appropriate parties, including parents of an eligible student, whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals, if there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, considering the totality of the circumstances;

- Request each person or party requesting access to a student's record to abide by the Federal regulations concerning the disclosure of information to a third party;
- Report a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities and to transmit copies of the student's special education and disciplinary records to the authorities for their consideration;
- Disclose personally identifiable information from education records, without consent, to organizations conducting studies "for, or on behalf of" the Corporation for purposes of developing, validating or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, or improving instruction;
- Disclose or report educational records to a State or local juvenile agency when the disclosure or reporting relates to the ability of the juvenile justice system to serve, before adjudication, the student whose records are being released; and the juvenile justice agency receiving the information certifies, in writing, that the agency or individual receiving the information has agreed not to disclose it to a third party, other than another juvenile justice agency, without the consent of the child's parent, guardian or custodian.

A disclosure or reporting of educational records concerning a child who has been adjudicated as a delinquent child shall be treated as related to the ability of the juvenile justice system to serve the child before adjudication if the agency provides documentation to the Corporation that the agency seeks the information in order to identify and intervene with the child as a juvenile at risk of delinquency rather than to obtain information solely related to the supervision of the child as an adjudicated delinquent child.

The juvenile court may grant a school access to all or a portion of the juvenile court records of a child who is a student at the school if the Superintendent submits a written request establishing that the juvenile court records are necessary for the school to serve the educational needs of the child whose records are requested or to protect the safety or health of a student, an employee, or a volunteer at the school.

The school shall keep the records confidential. However, the confidentiality order does not prohibit the school from forwarding the juvenile records to another school or a person if a parent, guardian, or custodian of the child consents to the release of the juvenile court records to the person.

The Corporation will comply with a legitimate request for access to a student's records within a reasonable period of time but not more than thirty (30) days after receiving the request or within such shorter period as may be applicable to students with disabilities. Upon the request of the viewer, a record shall be reproduced, unless said record is copyrighted, and the viewer may be charged a fee equivalent to the cost of handling and reproduction. Based upon reasonable requests, viewers of education records will receive explanation and interpretation of the records.

The Corporation shall maintain a record of those persons to whom information about a student has been disclosed. Such disclosure records will indicate the student, person viewing the record, information disclosed, date of disclosure, and date parental/eligible student consent was obtained (if required).

Only "directory information" regarding a student shall be released to any person or party, other than the student or his/her parent, without the written consent of the parent; or, if the student is an eligible student, the written consent of the student, except those persons or parties stipulated by the Corporation's policy and administrative guidelines and/or those specified in the law.

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Immunization

Indiana law requires that all students at Damar Charter Academy provide the school with a complete record of their immunizations, or a current medical or religious objection. This must be completed and accurate before the student is allowed to attend classes. The School Immunization Requirements chart below lists the number of doses each student must have before attending classes. Damar Charter Academy may grant an immunization waiver for up to 20 days. Failure to show proper immunization documentation may result in a student being removed from school.

School Immunization Requirements				
	AGES 3-5	GRADES K-2	GRADES 3-5	GRADES 6-12
DTaP/DTP/DT/Td	4	5	5	5
Polio	3	4	4	4
Measles	1	2	2	2
Mumps	1	2	2	2
Rubella	1	2	2	2
Hepatitis B	3	3	3	3
Varicella	1	2	1	2
Tdap	-	-	-	1
Meningococcal (MCV4)	-	-	-	1

Hep B – Two dose alternative adolescent schedule (Recombivax HB® given at age 11-15 years x 2 doses) is acceptable if properly documented.

DTaP – Four doses of DTaP/DTP/DT are acceptable if 4th dose was administered on or after child's fourth birthday.

Polio – The 4th dose of polio vaccine must be administered on or after child's fourth birthday. This applies only to kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades for 2012-2013. Three doses of polio vaccine are acceptable if 3rd dose was administered on or after child's fourth birthday and the doses are all IPV or all OPV.

MMR – If given as single antigen, 2 Measles, 2 Mumps and 1 Rubella required.

Varicella – Physician documentation of disease history, including month and year, is proof of immunity for children entering preschool through 2nd grade. A signed statement from the parent/guardian indicating history of disease, including month and year is required for children in grades 3-12. Two doses of varicella vaccine separated by at least 3 months are recommended for all elementary-aged students.

Tdap – A Tdap booster can be given as early as 1 year after a Td vaccination.

Student Illness

Health regulations require that a child with a contagious illness, a severe cold, sore throat or cough, or who has a badly upset stomach must be kept home. A child with a fever must be kept at home for 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal.

Damar Charter Academy should be immediately informed regarding a child who has a contagious illness or infection.

Illness or Injury at School

Damar Charter Academy provides a full-time nursing staff. Any student who becomes ill or injured during the school day will be taken to the nurse's office for evaluation. You will be called to pick up your child if he/she exhibits symptoms of a significant injury or contagious illness, or if the nurse believes your child is sick and should not be at school. Please make arrangements to pick up your child as soon as possible.

If you cannot be reached, the school will attempt to contact the individuals listed on your Emergency Contact Information form.

If an accident or illness requires immediate care and we cannot reach you, we will call 911 and a school staff member will accompany your child to a medical treatment facility. Please keep your personal and emergency contact information up to date.

Prescriptions and Medications

Damar Charter Academy does not provide prescription or non-prescription medications for student use. To request that prescription or over-the-counter medication be administered to your child during the school day at school, you must complete and submit a Medication Authorization form (DCA-009).

For your child's safety, all medications must be brought to school by the parent. Students are not allowed to bring medication to school, keep it in their possession or administer medication to themselves or others.

Prescriptions

Prescription medication must be brought to school by a parent or legal guardian in the original doctor or pharmacy labeled container, labeled with the student's name, the name of the medication, the amount to be given, the time of day to be taken, and a parent or guardian's consent. It must be accompanied by a Medication Authorization form (DCA-009) AND a signed Physician Statement form (DCA-018), or a signed physician's authorization letter documented on official letterhead. Photocopies will not be accepted unless faxed or mailed directly from the physician's office. Both forms are available in the school office.

The Medication Authorization form must be completed for any student to receive over-the-counter (OTC) medication or prescription medication during school hours. This form may be completed at any time during the school year. Medications must be brought to school by the parent. Students are not allowed to bring medication to school or keep it in their possession.

Over-the-Counter Medications

Over-the-Counter Medication must be brought to school by a parent/guardian in its original, sealed box or container. Opened medications will not be accepted. The medication must be accompanied by a signed Medication Authorization form (DCA-009).

Special Health Considerations

Treatment of Chronic Conditions

If you have a child who requires a nursing procedure such as g-tube feedings or suctioning, or who has chronic health condition such as asthma or diabetes, please notify the school immediately. Additional medical documentation and authorizations are required to ensure that proper procedures are developed to assist your child.

Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases and Pests

Because the school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's administration has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a highly-transient pest such as lice or a casual contact communicable disease such as diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the local and state health departments. Any removal from school will be limited to the student's contagious period.

Control of Non-Casual Contact Communicable Diseases and Pests

Damar Charter Academy has an obligation to protect staff and students from non-casual-contact communicable diseases, which include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, ARC-AIDS Related Complex, HIV, Hepatitis B, and other diseases specified by local and state health departments. When such a disease is suspected, the staff or student's health will be reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department.

Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the person affected and others with whom they come in contact. The person affected will be permitted to remain in the school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Health Information Notes

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Meals

Damar Charter Academy supports a healthy lifestyle for all students. To assist with student academic achievement, **the school will once again provide nutritious meals in a safe and nurturing environment to all students, free of charge.** Students receive cold breakfasts and hot lunches which are prepared daily in a USDA-approved kitchen.

Our Dietary department staff can also prepare special lunches for students on special dietary restrictions. Students on special dietary restrictions must have a doctor's order specifying the nature of the medical necessity in order to have a specially prepared meal.

Parents are welcome to visit the school to have lunch with students. Food may be brought in or guests may purchase a meal from the school. To ensure that the cafeteria staff prepares the appropriate amount of meals, parents and other visitors are advised to call the school office by 9 a.m. if they plan to visit for lunch. Payment for adult lunches is expected at the time of service. Lunch times are determined by the Principal.

Transportation

As a parent/guardian, it is primarily your responsibility to provide student transportation to and from school each day.

The school will provide transportation for school field trips and school-sponsored activities.

School-provided transportation service is a privilege and not a right. All safety instructions given to students must be followed in order to protect the health and well-being of students and adults. A student who fails to follow the transportation rules may be denied the privilege of riding the school bus/van.

Indoor Air Quality

Donnie McCoy *Damar Charter Academy Indoor Air Quality Specialist* 317-856-5201



Managing Student Behavior

Damar Charter Academy is committed to serving children with severe developmental, intellectual and behavioral challenges and dedicated to providing students with the necessary supports to deal with day-to-day behavior issues. We will not call parents/guardians to pick up students unless it is deemed necessary for medical or safety reasons.

However, there may be times when we feel we cannot provide the intensity of service that a child requires on an ongoing basis. If your child's need exceed the scope of the school's available services and resources, we will schedule an IEP meeting with you to discuss other placement options and recommendations.

It is the philosophy of Damar Charter Academy to foster productive student behavior. Toward this goal, school staff members are expected to provide:

- Clear rules for student conduct;
- Collegiality among staff members;
- A pervasive caring for students;
- Effective instruction; and
- A focus on providing positive reinforcement and options for students.

Effective methods for responding to disruptive student behavior at Damar Charter Academy include:

- Using positive redirection and reinforcement whenever appropriate.
- Developing positive personal relationships with students that indicate high teacher expectations and respect for students.
- Closely monitoring performance and behavior.
- Using brief, non-disruptive interventions.
- Handling conflicts calmly and avoiding engaging in power struggles.
- Clarifying students' choices so that options are clear and students are responsible for the consequences of their choices.
- Using effective listening skills to help students identify problems and gain insight.

Assessment and Intervention

When a student exhibits serious behavioral difficulties, his/her Educational Support Team may develop a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). These tools enable us to focus on one or two specific student behaviors that need to change in order for the student to have a successful school experience, identify the causes of the behaviors, and implement appropriate intervention strategies. This information is shared with school staff and parents/guardians, and documented in the student's permanent record.

Damar Charter Academy staff members are trained in appropriate restraint techniques, if necessary. Only trained staff members are allowed to intervene using restraint techniques. Physical intervention is used only as a matter of last resort when someone is a danger to themselves or others. Parents must be notified if a restraint is utilized and a behavior plan must be developed.

Behavior Management

The Damar Charter Academy strictly prohibits:

- Deprivation of drinking water or food necessary to meet daily nutritional needs
- Denial of the use of toilet facilities
- Any action humiliating, degrading or abusive
- Deprivation of health care, including counseling
- Intrusive aversive therapy
- Use of drug or chemical restraint
- Use of mechanical restraints or seclusion rooms

Corporal Punishment

Corporal (physical) punishment will never be administered by any staff member of the school. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the school will contact Child Protective Services (CPS) and immediately notify the student's parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian objects, the child will not be interviewed. This does not apply if the parent/guardian is the suspect. In such a case, CPS may interview the child without consent from the parent or guardian.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint may be used on a student in rare circumstances in which a staff member reasonably believes that application of a restraint on the student is necessary in response to a physical risk of harm to the student or others. It will not be used in cases where there is an identified medical contradiction to its use, and it is not permitted to be used with the intention of using physical pain to achieve control of a student's behavior or punish misconduct.

Physical restraint will only be applied and supervised by a staff member who has been trained in the safe application and supervision of the specific means of restraint applied. Application of physical restraint to a student with a disability will take into consideration the Individual Education Plan and any Behavior Intervention Plan established for the student.

Time Out

Time-out may be implemented on several levels, ranging from the student taking time-out at his or her desk (non-exclusionary time-out) to removing the student to a separate area (exclusionary time-out).

Due Process

The following represents Damar Charter Academy policies affecting the conduct of student due process. The School has adopted many of the State of Indiana statutes (IC 20-33-8-1 et seq.) as they relate to policies affecting the conduct of students.)

Basis for Policies Affecting Students

The purpose of establishing rules and guidelines for student conduct shall be the promotion of learning and knowledge in an orderly and efficient educational system consistent with the statement of philosophy for the Damar Charter Academy and in accordance with applicable Indiana law.

Student supervision and the desirable behavior of students are responsibilities shared by students, parents, and teachers subject to the control of the Principal and the supervisory authority of the school's administrative staff. Standards of conduct apply in general to behavior in the classroom, on the school grounds, at all school-sponsored functions and to any behavior outside of school which causes a substantial and material disruption of the school purposes or an educational function. Rules or guidelines pertaining to student conduct are intended as a basis for the development of positive attitudes on the part of students interacting with parents, teachers, administrators and others rather than a structure only for punitive measures.

In all matters relating to the discipline and conduct of students, Corporation personnel stand in the relation of parents and guardians to the students of the school corporation.

Therefore, the staff members of the Corporation have the right – subject to suspension, expulsion, and student discipline – to take any reasonable and necessary disciplinary action to promote student conduct that conforms to an orderly and effective educational system. (IC 20-33-8-8)

Delegation of Authority

In carrying out the school purposes of the school corporation, the following grants of authority are hereby made:



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1. Each teacher and any of the other school personnel shall, when students are under his/her charge, have the right to take any action which is then reasonably necessary to carry out or to prevent an interference with the education function of which s/he is then in charge. (IC 20-33-8-9)
2. The Principal may take any action concerning the school or any school activity within his/her jurisdiction that is reasonably necessary to carry out or prevent interference with an educational function or school purpose. (IC 20-33-8-10)
3. Such action may include establishing written rules and standards to govern student conduct. Similarly, the Superintendent or administrative staff designee may take any action with respect to all schools within the Superintendent's jurisdiction which is reasonably necessary to carry out or prevent interference with an educational function or school purpose. (IC 20-33-8-11)
4. The governing body may make written rules and establish written standards concerning student conduct which are reasonably necessary to carry out, or to prevent interference with carrying out an educational function or school purpose. (IC 20-33-8-12)
5. The governing body may make such other delegations of rule-making, disciplinary and other authority, as are reasonably necessary in carrying out the school purposes of the school corporation.
6. The terms "Superintendent" and "Principal" shall include their respective designees. (IC 20-33-8-1 & IC 20-33-8-6)

Limitation of Delegation

Delegation of authority shall be subject to the following limitations:

1. Delegated authority shall be in conformance with applicable statutes of the State of Indiana and with the Constitution of Indiana and the United States.
2. Rules, standards, or actions shall not be discriminate against any student or class or students, but the number of schools or students to which they apply shall not be determinative of whether they discriminate.

Any handbook or other written rule, standard or policy applying to students generally or to any group of students shall not be effective until they are reviewed and approved by the Superintendent and until they shall be presented to the Board of Directors for Damar Charter Academy.

Revisions or additions to the policies affecting students shall not be effective until they are reviewed and approved by the Superintendent and until they shall be presented to the Board of Education.

Rules and standards of conduct shall not apply to students generally, or to any group of students, until a written copy is made available to the student or his parents, or is otherwise given general publicity within any school to which it applies. This limitation shall be satisfied in any case where a good faith effort has been made to disseminate such rules and standards of conduct to students or parents.

Conduct Constituting an Interference with School Purposes or an Educational Function

Conduct constituting an interference with school purposes or an educational function shall mean any conduct which causes, or which can reasonably be foreseen to cause, a substantial disruption or material interference in the carrying out of a school purpose or an educational function. Undifferentiated fear or apprehension of disturbance, disruption, or interference shall not alone constitute grounds to support a determination that such conduct exists.

Damar Charter Academy Behavior Management Guide

BEHAVIOR	DEFINITION	RANGE OF CONSEQUENCES
Assault/Threat	Threatening to physically harm an individual, bringing any weapon to school or threatening to use any against a student or staff member. Using words that arouse alarm in others through the use of language that is discriminatory, abusive, threatening, or obscene.	Verbal counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, refer to Law Enforcement
Battery on an Individual	Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury and/or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to any person.	Staff intervention Refer to Law Enforcement, suspension, expulsion
Disruptive Behavior	An action which creates turmoil or disorder. Any action that causes a disruption in or around the learning environment or one that constitutes an interference with school purposes.	Verbal reminder, staff support, counseling, time-out, parent conference, Positive Behavior Supports Plan, suspension
Drugs / Alcohol	Possessing, using, selling, consuming, transmitting, or being under the influence of drugs, alcohol or any substance represented to be drugs or alcohol or anything used or designed to be used primarily for the storage, processing, delivery or consumption of a controlled substance. *See Expanded Definition	This offense carries a minimum 5 days suspension. Refer to Law Enforcement, 5-10 day expulsion
Failure to Follow Directions/ Insubordination	The failure to comply with directions of teachers/administrators or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under their supervision.	Verbal reminder, staff support, counseling, time-out, parent conference Positive Behavior Supports Plan
Extreme Disrespect	Highly inappropriate gestures, language and/or actions that can be viewed as obscene or rude to a peer, staff member or adult in authority.	Verbal counseling, parent conference, suspension, Verbal counseling, parent conference, suspension
False Alarm	Making a report, attempting to call or pull, or calling or pulling an alarm for fire or bomb when it does not exist.	Verbal counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, refer to Law Enforcement
Fighting	Engaging in a physical contact or struggle with one or more students. A disagreement between two or more students in which physical contact occurs, punches are thrown, or any part of the body is used either aggressively or in retaliation. (This could include but is not limited to throwing fists, kicking, or pulling hair.)	Verbal counseling, parent conference, Positive Behavior Supports Plan, suspension, expulsion, refer to Law Enforcement
Gang Activity	Wearing or displaying any gang symbol, insignia, emblems, shirts or clothing. Any act or speech showing gang affiliation and/or any conduct in the furtherance of gang activity.	Verbal counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, refer to Law Enforcement
Habitual Offender	Repeatedly violating school rules or regulations. Previous interventions have not been successful in modifying student behavior.	Verbal counseling, parent conference, Positive Behavior Supports Plan, suspension, expulsion, refer to Law Enforcement
Highly Inappropriate Language	The use of offensive or inappropriate language through written word, gestures, or speaking. Engaging in speech or conduct including clothing, jewelry, or hair style which is profane, indecent, lewd, vulgar, or offensive to school purposes.	Verbal counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion
Improper Sexual Behavior/ Sexual Harassment	The act of making improper, unacceptable sexual advances/contact/exposure or sexual harassment which includes verbal statements, gestures or physical contact; an act not in accord with propriety, modesty, or good manners. This would include possession or distribution of pornographic materials, or the accessing of pornographic materials through technology.	Positive Behavior Supports Plan
Inappropriate Use of Technology	An action that would violate copyright provisions. Accessing unauthorized school records or technology files. Accessing pornographic or inappropriate Internet sites. Posting or publishing derogatory or inappropriate information. Any action constituting an interference with school purposes or educational function. Any violation of written Board technology policy(ies).	Verbal counseling, time-out, Loss of computer privileges, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, refer to Law Enforcement
Intimidation/Bullying	Any attempt to make an individual fearful. Overt, repeated acts or gestures, including but not exclusive to; verbal or written communication, physical acts or behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, extort, intimidate or harm the other student. To make an individual fearful of an act.	Verbal counseling, time-out, parent conference, restitution (if applicable), suspension, expulsion
Stealing / Knowingly Possessing Stolen Goods	The act of taking or knowingly possessing an item (property) of the school or of another person.	Verbal counseling, time-out, parent conference, restitution (if applicable), suspension, expulsion



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Student Misrepresentation	The willful act of using school materials to deceive school officials. This includes, but is not limited to adding name(s) to hall passes, theft or possession of stolen hall passes, using another student's ID, giving another student your ID, altering or defacing an ID, giving the wrong name or ID number.	Verbal counseling, time-out, parent conference, restitution (if applicable), suspension
Terrorism	The use of violent threats which cause others to be afraid for their lives and/or overwhelmed with extreme fear, panic or terror. Such threat may be used to intimidate and coerce individuals into submitting to demands of the terrorist. Such threatening acts violate the right of students, staff and community to a peaceful and safe environment and endanger the well-being and safety of all.	Expulsion, refer to Law Enforcement
Trespassing	Unauthorized or illegal intrusion of a building or grounds before, during or after school.	Verbal counseling, time-out, parent conference
Truancy (from class or school)	The willful non-attendance of a student from school without parent/guardian permission. Habitual tardiness may be considered truancy.	Counseling, refer to Principal, parent conference, referral to Habitual Offender
Use, Possession, Transmission or Sale of Tobacco Products, Matches, Lighters or Fireworks	Using any form of tobacco products. Having in one's actual and physical control any form of tobacco. Possessing, transmitting, using or selling any tobacco product, lighter, firecracker, matches or item that is flammable or could cause fire. *See Expanded Definition.	Counseling, refer to Principal, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, refer to Law Enforcement
Vandalism / Arson	Willful or malicious destruction or defacement of property. Intentionally setting fire to any school building or property.	Refer to Law Enforcement, suspension, expulsion
Weapons / Instruments of Offensive or Defensive Combat	Possession, handling, using, transmitting or selling any object that could be used to intimidate, inflict pain, or cause injury. Any weapon or form of firearm that could cause injury to another individual. *See Expanded Definition	Refer to Law Enforcement, suspension, expulsion

Suspension & Expulsion

1. Expulsion (IC 20-33-8-3) shall mean a disciplinary action whereby a student:
 - a. Is separated from school attendance for a period in excess of ten (10) days.
 - b. Is separated from school attendance for the balance of the current semester, balance of the school year, or first semester of the following school year or one calendar year unless said student is permitted to complete required examinations in order to receive credit for courses taken in the current semester or school year.

Expulsion may result in a loss of all credits for the current semester.

When a student is separated from school attendance the first semester, such separation shall terminate by the end of the school year. When the separation from school takes place during the second semester, said separation shall remain in effect for summer school and may remain in effect for the first semester of the following school year. When the separation is for a period of at least one (1) calendar year, the student will return at the beginning of the first semester after the end of the one (1) year period.

2. Suspension (IC 20-33-8-7) shall mean any disciplinary action whereby a student is separated from school attendance for a period of not more than ten (10) days (IC 20-33-8-18) which does not constitute an expulsion. Suspension shall not include situations in which a student is assigned a special course of study, enrolled in special classes or given homebound instruction as authorized or required by law, or removed from athletic activities, noncredit school activities, or school-provided transportation.

Grounds for Expulsion or Suspension

1. A student may be suspended or expelled for either misconduct or substantial disobedience which occurs when a student is:
 - a. On school grounds immediately before and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
 - b. Off grounds at a school activity, education function (IC 20-33-8-2), or any event sponsored by the school; or
 - c. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function or event.
2. The following are examples of behavior constituting student misconduct or substantial disobedience, but are not exclusive examples:
 - a. Use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other comparable conduct, constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct or possessing any firearm, explosive or any other instrument of offensive or defensive combat. The following enumeration is illustrative of the type of conduct prohibited by this subsection:
 - b. Occupying any school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
 - c. Blocking the entrance or exits of any school building or corridor or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from or of use of the building or corridor or room.
 - d. Setting fire to or substantially damaging any school building or property.
 - e. Possessing, firing, displaying, or threatening use of firearms, explosives, or other instruments of offensive or defensive combat on the school premises for any unlawful purpose.
 - f. Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued function of any school or educational function or of any lawful meeting or assembly on school property.
 - g. Continuously and intentionally making noise or acting in any manner or conspiring so as to interfere seriously with the ability of any teacher or any of the other school personnel to conduct the educational function under his supervision.



- h. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, stealing or attempting to steal school property of value or repeated damage or theft involving school property of small value.
- i. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property or stealing or attempting to steal private property, or repeatedly damaging or stealing private property.
- j. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to any person.
- k. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student.
- l. Possessing, handling or transmitting any object that can reasonably be considered firearms, explosives, fireworks/firecrackers, any knife, but excluding school supplies such as pencils or compasses where such items have reasonable use in connection with an educational function.
- m. Knowingly possessing, using, consuming, transmitting tobacco products or knowingly possessing, using, consuming, transmitting or being under the influence of any prescription drug, narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind, or any substance represented to be any of the aforesaid substances, or anything used or designed to be used primarily for the storage, processing, delivery, or consumption of controlled substances.

As an alternative to expulsion in disciplinary actions involving the possession, consumption, or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, students enrolled in Damar Charter Academy are given a one-time option of waiving the right to an expulsion meeting where multiple charges are brought against a student or where such charges involve the delivery or transmission of alcohol or drugs. (See *Alternative to Expulsion Program Involving Drugs or Alcohol* section)

- n. Engaging in the unlawful selling of narcotics or other violation of criminal law which constitutes a danger to other students, or constitutes an interference with school purposes of an educational function.
- o. Failing in a substantial number of instances to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when he/she is properly under their supervision, where such failure constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
- p. Engaging in any activity that may reasonably constitute an interference with school purposes or an education function.
- q. Violating or repeatedly violating of any rules validly adopted.
- r. Engaging in gang activity or wearing or displaying any gang paraphernalia.

In addition to the grounds for expulsion or suspension already mentioned, a student may be expelled or suspended for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or educational function or the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property; including an unlawful activity during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions. (IC 20-33-8-15)

Expanded Definitions

1. Drugs/Alcohol

- a. Possessing, using, selling, consuming, transmitting, or being under the influence of drugs, alcohol or any substance represented to be drugs or alcohol or anything used or designed to be used primarily for the storage, processing, delivery, or consumption of a controlled substance.
- b. Possessing – Having in one's actual and physical control.
- c. Using – Employing or availing ones' self.
- d. Selling - The act of transferring or the offer to transfer (written or oral), to another person in a contract of sale. Selling applies to any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine,

barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind, or any substance represented by any of the substances listed.

- e. Consuming – Having taken or eaten or drunk.
- f. Transmitting – To pass from one person to another.
- g. Being under the influence – Indulging in any degree to deprive one of that clearness of intellect and control which he/she would otherwise possess.
- h. Anything used or designed to be used for storage, processing, delivery, or consumption (paraphernalia).

PLEASE NOTE: Letters *a-g* apply to any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind, or any substance represented to be any of the substances listed above.

2. Tobacco Products / Matches / Lighters / Fireworks

- a. Using any form of tobacco products. (This includes but is not limited to smoking cigarettes, cigars, pipes, or chewing tobacco.) Having in one's actual and physical control any form of tobacco. (This includes but is not limited to chewing tobacco or other smokeless tobacco, cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco.)
- b. Possessing – Having in one's actual and physical control.
- c. Using – Employing or availing one's self of.
- d. Transmitting – To pass from one person to another.
- e. Selling – Transferring the property in a contract of a sale.
- f. Fireworks/Firecrackers – A device for producing a reaction (as of light, noise, or smoke) by combustion or flammable composition.

3. Weapons / Instruments of Offensive or Defensive Combat

- a. Possessing, handling, using, transmitting, or selling any object than can reasonably be considered an instrument which could be used to intimidate, inflict pain, or cause injury. An instrument of offensive or defensive combat, any firearm or deadly weapon. (This would include any knife, but exclude school supplies such as pencils or compasses where such items have reasonable use in connection with an educational function.)
- b. Possessing – Having in one's actual and physical control.
- c. Handling – The act of holding.
- d. Using – Employing or availing one's self of.
- e. Transmitting – To pass from one person to another.
- f. Selling – Transferring the property in a contract of a sale.
- g. No student shall possess, handle or transmit any deadly weapon, firearm or destructive device on school property.
- h. The following devices are considered to be a firearm as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code:
 - Any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive.
 - The frame or receiver of any weapon described above.
 - Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer.
 - Any destructive devise which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or any similar device.
 - Any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter.
 - Any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.



- Any explosive, incendiary or other pressure device that is shaped as a bomb, grenade, rocket or a weapon that may be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant.

Suspension Procedures

1. When a Principal (or designee) determines that a student should be suspended, the following procedures will be followed:
 - a. A meeting will be held prior to the suspension of any student. At this meeting the student will be entitled to:
 - A written or oral statement of the charges;
 - If the student denies the charges, a summary of evidence against the student will be presented;
 - b. The student will be provided an opportunity to explain his or her conduct. The meeting shall precede suspension of the student except where the nature of the misconduct requires immediate removal. In such situations, the meeting will follow the suspension as soon as reasonably possible following the date of the suspension.
2. Following the suspension, the parents/legal guardians/legal custodians of suspended students will be notified in writing. The notification will include the dates of the suspension; describe the student's misconduct, and the action taken by the Principal.

Expulsion Procedures

1. The Superintendent (or designee) may conduct an expulsion meeting or appoint one of the following to conduct the expulsion meeting:
 - a. Legal counsel;
 - b. A member of the administrative staff who did not expel the student during the current school year and was not involved in the events giving rise to the expulsion.
2. An expulsion will not take place until the student and the student's parent are given notice of their right to appear at an expulsion meeting with the Superintendent or the person designated above. Failure by student or a student's parent to request and appear at an expulsion meeting after the receipt of notice of the right to appear at an expulsion meeting forfeits all rights administratively to contest and appeal the expulsion.
3. Notice of the right to appear at an expulsion meeting shall be made by certified mail or by personal delivery, contain the reason for the expulsion, and contain the procedures for requesting an expulsion meeting.
4. At the expulsion meeting, the Principal (or designee) will present evidence to support the charges against the student. The student or parent will have the opportunity to answer the charges against the student and to present evidence to support the student's position. An attorney may not represent the student at the expulsion meeting; the attorney may be available for consultation outside the meeting room during the course of the meeting.
5. If an expulsion meeting is held, the person conducting the expulsion meeting will make a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting, take any action found to be appropriate, and give notice of the action taken to the student and the student's parent.

Except for expulsion for possession of a deadly weapon or firearms and the battery of staff members, the student or parent has the right to appeal the decision of the person conducting the expulsion meeting to the Board within ten (10) calendar days of the receipt of notice of the action taken.

The student or parent appeal to the Board of Directors must be in writing. If an appeal is properly made, the board must consider the appeal. If the Board hears the appeal, it will consider the written

summary of the expulsion meeting and the arguments of the school administration and the student and/or the student's parent. The Board will then take any action deemed appropriate.

PLEASE NOTE: No expulsion of a student shall be for a longer period than the remainder of the school year in which it took effect if the misconduct occurs during the first semester. However, whenever the expulsion takes place during the second semester, the expulsion remains in effect for summer school or intersession and may remain in effect for the first semester of the following school year. (This does not include students who are expelled for possession of a deadly weapon, firearm, or destructive device.)

Other Remedies

Action in addition to suspension and/or expulsion that is necessary to insure a safe, orderly and effective educational environment may include the following:

1. A reciprocal agreement in regard to expulsion or suspension shall be in effect with all extension schools and/or training programs that enroll students from Damar Charter Academy.
2. The Superintendent, Principal, or other administrative personnel, or teachers shall be authorized to take any action in connection with student behavior in addition to the actions specifically provided which may be reasonable, desirable or necessary to help a student, or further school purposes, or to prevent interference or disruption including such actions as:
 - a. Counseling with a student or group of students;
 - b. Conferencing with a parent or group of parents;
 - c. Assigning students additional work;
 - d. Rearranging class schedules;
 - e. Requiring a student to remain after regular school hours to do additional work, or for counseling, or for detention;
 - f. Restricting extracurricular activities;
 - g. Removal of a student by a teacher from that teacher's class for a period not to exceed five (5) class periods (subject to approval of Principal);
 - h. Assigning (by the Principal) the student to a special course of study or an alternative educational program or school;
 - i. Removal of a student from school-sponsored transportation;
 - j. Referring the student to the juvenile court having jurisdiction over the student;
 - k. The possible referral to an alternative educational setting;
 - l. Requiring a student to adhere to an individualized behavioral contract.
3. Transfers
 - a. The continuation of behavior management consequences will follow the student to any extension schools and/or training programs that enroll students from Damar Charter Academy.
 - b. The behavior management consequences remain in effect for the entire school year.
4. Administrators may use the following alternatives to suspension at their discretion. If not successfully completed, suspension will be mandated. Alternatives may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Natural consequences;
 - b. Restitution;
 - c. Community service;
 - d. Loss of driving privileges;



Bullying

Damar Charter Academy is committed to providing a safe, positive, and respectful learning environment for all students. Bullying in any form is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This policy outlines the expectations for behavior, the procedures for reporting and investigating incidents, and the consequences for violations, in accordance with Indiana state law.

Definition of Bullying (IC 20-33-8-0.2)

Bullying is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors that are:

- Committed by a student or group of students against another student;
- Intended to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student;
- And create a hostile school environment:
 - By placing the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to their person or property,
 - Has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health,
 - Substantially interferes with the student's academic performance,
 - Or substantially interferes with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.

Types of Bullying

- Physical bullying: Hitting, kicking, pushing, or other physical aggression.
- Verbal bullying: Name-calling, teasing, threats, or inappropriate comments.
- Social/Relational bullying: Spreading rumors, exclusion, or embarrassing someone in public.
- Cyberbullying: Using digital platforms (texts, social media, websites, etc.) to harass or intimidate.

Reporting Procedures

- Any student, staff member, or parent/guardian who believes that bullying has occurred should report it to a school administrator, counselor, or other trusted staff member.
- Reports can be made in person, in writing, or via phone to the school or superintendent.
- Staff who witness or receive a report of bullying are required to report it to administration within 24 hours.
- School will make reasonable attempt to notify the parents of both the targeted student and the alleged perpetrator in the bullying incident before the end of the next school day after the school becomes aware of the possible incident.

Investigation

- All reports of bullying will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by school administration or designee.
- Investigations may include interviews with involved parties, witnesses, and review of documentation or digital evidence.
- Findings will be documented, and appropriate disciplinary or remedial action will be taken based on the outcome.

Consequences

Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal warning
- Parent/guardian notification
- Loss of privileges

- Detention or suspension
- Counseling or behavioral interventions
- In severe or repeated cases, expulsion or referral to law enforcement

Consequences will be age-appropriate and consistent with the school's Code of Conduct and state law.

Retaliation and False Reporting

- Retaliation against anyone who reports bullying or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
- Knowingly making a false report of bullying is also prohibited and may result in consequences.

Prevention and Education

- The school will provide annual education to students and staff, on bullying prevention and response.
- Staff will receive training on recognizing and intervening in bullying situations.
- The school promotes a positive school climate through character education, social-emotional learning, and respect-based programs.

Legal Compliance

This policy complies with the Indiana Anti-Bullying Law (IC 20-33-8-13.5) and related state requirements. It will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

A Solid Academic Foundation

Damar Charter Academy will help all students reach their highest potential and greatest level of independence by focusing on the student's practical situation (meeting the student where they are) through rigorous, standards-based, individualized education plans that will focus on these core areas:

1. Academics
2. Behavior
3. Communication
4. Social Functioning
5. Independence
6. Vocational Skills

All education and behavior intervention plans will be individualized to the needs of each student and allow each student and their Damar Education Support Team (EST) to focus on their greatest areas of need. Students will cover basic requirements to meet their individual education plan goals towards a Certificate of Completion or a high school diploma through a general education credit recovery/knowledge mastery service learning program.

Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

The Multi-tiered System of Supports is a framework for prevention, advancement, and early intervention, which involves determining whether all students are learning and progressing optimally academically, socially, emotionally, and behaviorally when provided with high quality instruction. MTSS offers the opportunity to collaborate across all educational initiatives to ensure we prepare all students for their futures. Interventions and support are provided for students and monitored closely to ensure ongoing growth and success.



Assessment

Each student that enrolls in Damar Charter Academy will have a review conducted of their practical situation, taking into account the student's previous educational history, records and assessments. All educational programs address the Indiana state academic standards for curriculum and instruction.

School personnel will analyze and review each student's progress on all levels at regular intervals and adjust the student's education and support plan accordingly. Goals will be set for students to achieve a Certificate of Completion or a high school diploma.

Curriculum & Instruction

Special Education

A case conference committee meeting will be convened to review and update the student's IEP (Individual Education Plan) with practical, rigorous, outcomes-based and standards-based goals. Each student will be placed in an appropriate classroom setting where relevant individualized curriculum will be implemented through differentiated, direct and explicit instruction. This will enable students to take part in standards-based K-12 curriculum in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

Parents will receive additional information about the curriculum and instruction model from their student's classroom teacher.

General Education

School personnel will identify the most appropriate placement for each student in a K-12 setting. General education students will complete standards based curriculum, and those in grades 9-12 grade will also have the opportunity to complete high school credits in pursuit of a high school diploma.

Parents will receive additional information about the curriculum and instruction model from their student's classroom teacher.

Special Outings and Activities

Community-Based Instruction and Field Trips

Damar Charter Academy offers many opportunities for students to participate in community-based instruction (CBI). These small-group outings supplement and enrich classroom instruction and can be as simple as walking or taking a short ride to a library or other nearby location.

CBI outings are well-planned, organized and executed by teachers and staff. They help students relate school experiences to the reality of the world outside of school; bring community resources – natural, artistic, industrial, commercial, governmental and educational – within the students' learning experiences; and give students the opportunity to study real things and real processes in their actual environment. Generally, community-based instruction is tied directly to a theme or lesson taught in the classroom.

Parents/guardians must complete a Community-Based Instruction (CBI) Permission form in order for their child to participate in these outings. Verbal authorization will not be accepted.

Permission forms for large-group, school field trips will be sent home at least one week prior to each trip, and will include information about the destination, mode of transportation and parent/volunteer chaperone opportunities.

Student participation in community based outings/field trips is a privilege that is earned through good behavior. Each student is expected to behave appropriately and follow school rules and instructions at all times. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary consequences and/or lost privileges.

Case Conferences

The academic success of a student is shared by students, parents/guardian, and the school. Damar Charter Academy will hold case conferences with students and parents whenever it appears useful and appropriate.

Since teachers are responsible for student groups throughout the day, it is best to pre-arrange conferences by calling the school. Formal case conferences are scheduled several times during the school year.

Progress Reports

The progress report is one of several forms of communicating to the parent about their child's development. Parents are encouraged to review progress report with their child so that everyone has an understanding of the academic progress made throughout the school year.

This ongoing form of communication will be one of the tools used to provide support for student achievement growth and the celebration of student successes. Progress Reports will be sent home at the end of each grading period.



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