

Damar Charter Academy
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, October 23, 2013
11:30a.m.
Damar Charter Academy
5125 Decatur Blvd., Suite D
Indianapolis, IN 46241

Attendance: Dr. Jim Dalton, Leta Echelbarger, Elaine Showalter, Dr. Van Tassel, Paul Dennison, Rich Harcourt, Julie Gurule, Aimee Brown, Doug Stewart, Chris Wilkes

The meeting was called to order by Rich Harcourt at 11:46

Packets with the following information were mailed to all attendees:

1. Board Agenda
2. August 28, 2013 Board Minutes

Welcome

Rich noted that we only have 4 voting members present and Elaine was checking the bylaws to determine whether this was enough to vote on any new motions. Rich also introduced Julie Gurule, the school guidance and admissions counselor.

Rich asked that if board members have time following the meeting if they could stop by the school and look at the new vocational program.

Paul found in the bylaws that a majority of the directors in office immediately before meeting would constitute a quorum. We have 3 officers and 2 directors present. All agreed that due to the current openings that a vote could take place because there was a majority of directors present.

Review and approval of board minutes: Rich made a motion and Doug seconded. All were in agreement.

Board recruitment – Rich shared that the Damar Services board met last week to make some changes and to approve Dr. Dalton’s new role as CEO and President of Damar Services. He wanted to make sure that the DCA board was aware of this due to the relationship between Damar Services and Damar Charter Academy.

Election of board chair-Doug stated that he feels it only makes sense to elect Rich as our board chair. His experience and role make him an ideal candidate. He put forward this motion and Chris seconded.

Open seats-3 open seats at this time. One is Greg Johnson’s seat, which is an appointment by Damar Services Board. They have put forth Nicole Conrad as someone they would like to nominate. She is on Damar Services Board, served in the Mayor’s Office during our approval process, serves on the programs and services committee at Damar Services and is extremely familiar with both Damar Services

and Damar Charter Academy. She has been approached about this and welcomes the idea but would like to have some time to consider and at least 60 days before starting.

Janette Hill is another candidate for one of the open seats. She is a member of the general counsel for Citizens.

The third candidate recommended is a parent of a student at Damar Charter Academy. His name is Lyle Coleman. He has a son that attends the elementary life skills program at DCA. He transports his son daily from Trafalger, IN and is very involved in his sons education success. He has been approached by Leta about the possibility of this and seems positive. Dr. Dalton asked the board how they would like to proceed with this. Chris recommended that a small group of board members meet him for lunch and invite him to the next board meeting in order to make sure he is fully committed and has the time needed for such an undertaking.

Rich will have Katie McCoy contact Mr. Harrison in order to set up a lunch meeting and notify the board members for their availability as well.

Current Environment

At this time, much is still the same as last board meeting. Last night, it was noted that Superintendent Ritz has filed a lawsuit against the State Board of Education surrounding the A-F accountability model. In better news, Dr. Dalton and Leta have been working diligently with the Mayor's office on an alternative accountability measurement and are close to finalizing this. Leta expressed that the Mayor's office has been extremely willing to work with leadership at DCA and the support has been great. A meeting took place last week with Kristen, from the Mayor's office. She will be making the final additions and corrections to the plan and will send the product to the team at DCA.

Chris asked about specifics surrounding A-F. Dr. Dalton explained that standards for all schools (attendance rates, achievement, etc.) are set and then scored. These scores translate into a grade A-F. At DCA, many of these standards do not fit with the special population that we serve. This includes things such as retention rate, percentage of students graduating in 4 years and others. Because of this, an alternate accountability is being proposed because DCA wants to have a rigorous way to measure progress and success.

Finance Report

Current financials – Rich informed that we are 2 months into the year. The budget is right on target for where it was expected to be. DCA has yet to be reimbursed by the state for the common school loan. \$430,000 is still owed. Schools that are owed money have asked that all schools in this position meet in an attempt to get this reimbursement.

Programs

Dr. Dalton discussed that at this time our waiting list is compiled of many students with severe Autism and our classrooms serving this population are full. We have less students on the waiting list (that we know of) that have mild disabilities. DCA is looking at some strategies to help make room for some of these students with more severe Autism. Looking forward we would like to look at how we can meet this need.

Dr. Dalton and Aimee discussed the potential of looking at enhancing the programming for the students in the 18-22 age range by expanding their community based instruction. This is still in the infancy of planning and hopefully more information will be available at the next board meeting.

Leta discussed a new partnership with Cathedral High School. DCA and Cathedral will be working together on a program called Lemonade Day. This is a program that will pair a special needs student with a pro-social peer and they will design and make a lemonade stand. They will then have a day in the spring where the lemonade is sold.

Leta also discussed the new PAES (Practical Assessment Exploration System) curriculum that was purchased this year and the training that took place prior to Fall Break. This curriculum is vocationally based and will provide vocational experiences for our students in the school setting and generate a report to note progress in the areas of :

Business/Marketing
Computer/Technology
Construction/Industrial
Processing/Production
Consumer/Service

Members of the board plan to visit the PAES lab following the meeting.

No further updates, agenda items or discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 12:45