

# DPA Board Meeting

March 22, 2023 – 3:30 to 5:00pm

*Zoom*



# AGENDA

- Board Approvals
  - December Board Minutes
- CEO Updates & Discussion
- Finance Updates & Discussion
- DPA Five Year Strategic Plan
- Upcoming Board Meeting Dates



## MISSION

Digital Pioneers Academy's mission is to **develop the next generation of innovators**. We prepare scholars to meet the highest academic standards, while cultivating the strengths of character necessary to both graduate from 4-year **colleges** and thrive in 21st century **careers**.



## DPA Scholar

- ★ Innovators
- ★ CEOs
- ★ College graduates
- ★ Professionals with high paying high demand jobs
- ★ Community builders

# Board Approvals

**Minutes December 8, 2022 (1 of 2)**  
**Board Meeting (Zoom)**  
**3:00pm**

**Attendance**

Board Present: Mary Wells, Orlena Nwokah Blanchard, Kevjorik Jones, Mashea Ashton, Sara Batterton, Henry Higgs  
Board Absent: Legand Burge, Paul O'Neill, Simone Scott

DPA Members Also Present: Sarah Hanson, Katie Thaeader  
EdOps Members Present: Elizabeth Pillion, Nick Bryant

**Action Items**

- The board voted unanimously to approve the October 6 board meeting minutes.
- The board voted unanimously to approve the draft FY22 audit report as received

The meeting started with an approval of the board minutes from the 10/6 meeting. The action was motioned by Henry Higgs and seconded by Orlena Blanchard.

The meeting then moved to discussing the FY22 audit. Richard Jones of KPJ introduced himself as auditor and outlined the process for the annual audit. Share that the board can rely on the financial from the audit to make management decisions and that he has confidence in the financial statements cleaned throughout the year by EdOps. DPA subject to single audit this (as in previous year). As a firm, KPJ applies internal control testing as well as compliance testing. Richard shared that they have issued a clean opinion as it relates to DPA's financial statements, and complimented the work of management and EdOps.

Richard did share that the audit determined DPA needed to pay outstanding property tax refunds to ESP Warehouse, which DPA did during the audit. He also shared that auditors like to see less than 15% of expenses go towards general administration and fundraising. For DPA, the percentage of expenses towards those activities was 7%. He was pleased by this. He also noted that schools have seen increases in revenue over the past couple of years due to COVID funding. Additionally, Richard shared that DPA spent more than total revenue due to leasehold improvements last year. Finally, Richard shared that he recommends DPA move away from working with a PTO. The Board Treasurer and DPA have already begun exploring this option.

**Minutes December 8, 2022 (2 of 2)**  
**Board Meeting (Zoom)**  
**3:00pm**

After the audit discussion, Elizabeth Pillion of EdOps reviewed DPA's quarterly financials. She reminded the board that DPA is projecting 511 students, which the school has been planning for. As a result, school is projecting \$813,000 less in revenue, and 40 days of cash at year end (looking for opportunities to get to 45 days). The school is also projecting a 2.5% gross margin and continues to be diligent about grant invoicing. Sara Batterton asks about how much of projected revenue due to fundraising is guaranteed. Elizabeth estimated about \$1M of \$1.2M is guaranteed. She is confident in Mashea Ashton's ability to fundraise, but noted the school does have \$100,000 contingency in budget.

Mashea Ashton then thanked the board for their continued support during a really challenging time. She did share that the basketball teams, homecoming, and the Woodland Tigers' competing for national football championship are bright spots for the school. The Tigers are playing in memory of Jakhi Snider.

Sara Batterton asked when DPA is going through its charter renewal and it will be in February 2023.

The board meeting concluded with a vote to approve draft audit as it was received. Mary Wells moved to vote and Sara Batterton seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve.

The next board meeting is on January 19th.

# CEO Updates + Discussion



# DPA 5 Year Charter Renewal!

- DPA approved for a five year charter renewal :)
  - Two conditions
    - Academic Improvement Plan
      - Annual reporting could be lifted within a year pending academic results
    - Annual Quality Site Reviews
      - Condition could be lifted pending findings of next two visits
      - First QSR scheduled for 4/3 to 4/14 of this year
- Questions?





# DPA Student SY23-24 Enrollment Update

Given enrollment challenges across DC, we are excited by the volume of applications received ahead of lottery deadline...and we are ready for the work ahead to meet our enrollment goals!

SY23-24 Grade	SY22-23 Current Enrollment	SY23-24 Current Target Enrollment	SY23-24 Apps Received as of 3/1 Lottery Deadline
6th	98	120	100 (81)
7th	107	120	29 (20)
8th	94	120	30 (17)
9th	113	105	207 (95)
10th	84	105	49 (21)
11th		90	31(16)
<b>Total</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>446 (250)</b>

## Headlines

- We received an overwhelming number of HS applications. We don't plan to backfill many 10th and 11th graders.
- We are seeing interest among students who have left DPA to return at HS level.
- Alfred (DOO) is leading our enrollment and re-enrollment efforts, and has events and plans to enroll students when lottery is run on 4/1.

**\*(#) is number of applications ranking DPA in top 3**



## DPA Memorial Event in February

Honoring those we've lost and moving forward





# Launching DPA Football

## Coming Fall 2023: DPA Pythons Inaugural Football Season

*Launched in Honor and Memory of Antione Manning, Jakhi Snider and Keenan Anderson*



- Athletics are a critical component of our enrichment programming and character building efforts.
- Our students and families have repeatedly asked for a DPA Football Program, especially following the successful launch of our boys and girls basketball and cheer programs this year.
- Next year, we will offer competitive football for the first time in honor of three community members we lost this year.
- We are working to fundraise in support of the launch.



# Inaugural National Honor Society Induction



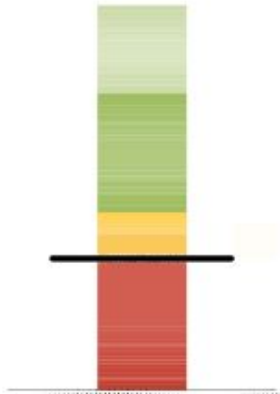
# Finance Updates + Discussion



# December Financials: Key Indicators

## Days of Cash

*Cash balance at year-end divided by average daily expenses*

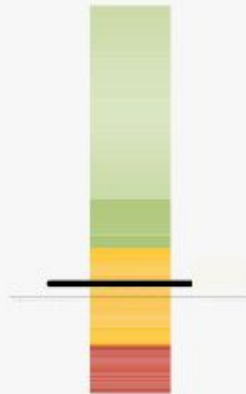


### 45 DAYS OF CASH AT YEAR'S END

The school will end the year with 45 days of cash. This is below the recommended 60 days, and 1 more day than last month.

## Gross Margin

*Revenue less expenses, divided by revenue*

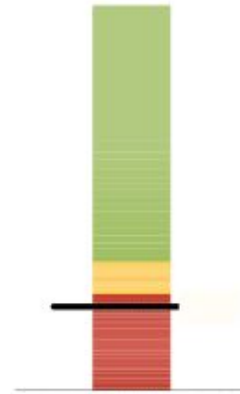


### 1.3% GROSS MARGIN

The forecasted net income is \$228k, which is \$286k below the budget. It yields a 1.3% gross margin.

## Grants Invoiced

*Federal grants requested divided by federal grants awarded.*

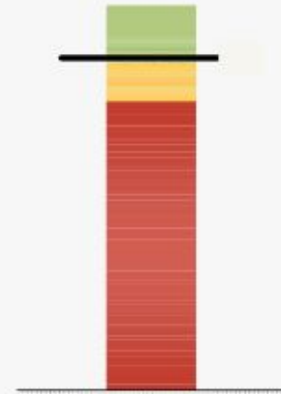


### 22% GRANTS INVOICED

Additional drawdowns will occur after SOAR, ESSER and IDEA grants are approved by OSSE.

## Forecasted FAR

*Forecasted calculation of PCSB's Financial Audit Review (FAR) at year-end*



### FORECASTED FAR SCORE: 86

The Financial Audit Review (FAR) is the PCSB's annual evaluation of the school's financial and operational position. This may decrease further depending on our final cash position.



## Employee Retention Credit

- DPA plans to apply for Employee Retention Credit, with the support of ADP; if awarded, would expect to receive credit in FY24
- Our auditor is supportive of DPA and other schools applying for this credit.



# Enrichment Programming + St. James Partnership

- **Enrichment Programming Context:** In response to scholar and family feedback, our upper campus has revised schedule to include richer enrichment block (called Python Time!) during school day.
  - Schedule adjustment will have positive impacts on our overall school culture and academic engagement.
  - Courses are being led by a combination of DPA teachers and external vendors.
  - Mindful to not exceed \$25,000 in fees from any of these vendors given we have not gone through the formal PCSB procurement processes.
- **St. James Partnership Context:**
  - Mashea and Sara have relationship with The St. James that present conflicts of interest.
  - We are always actively exploring partners outside of The St. James, but it is the only option we've identified so far that provides a combination of great facilities and great coaching/student engagement.
  - Going forward, we'd like to more actively plan to work with The St. James on a regular basis. Going through procurement process with them now to be able to work closer together remainder of year, and next year.



# DPA Strategic Plan

*We believe the path to economic  
economic equity goes through  
STEM, which is why DPA exists*



## WE BELIEVE THE PATH TO ECONOMIC EQUITY GOES THROUGH STEM... (1 of 2)

...but, access to STEM education and career opportunities is not universal -- which perpetuates the inequities that DPA was created to solve.

- A major barrier to access is the **national teacher shortage**, which is especially critical in the field of STEM
- The **challenge of preparing/ recruiting effective STEM teachers has several interrelated drivers:**
  - STEM teachers need specialized skills and knowledge, especially at the high school level -- **they are scarce.**
  - Individuals who attain these specialized skills and knowledge are eligible for a wide variety of competitive and lucrative careers -- **they are in high demand.**
  - An **investment in an advanced, competitive talent systems is needed to attract such individuals to teaching:** from compensation to professional development/ learning to career advancement opportunities -- **this is expensive.**



## WE BELIEVE THE PATH TO ECONOMIC EQUITY GOES THROUGH STEM...(2 of 2)

**Given this context, DPA has set a 5-year intended impact goal (and designed a plan to achieve it) that will address this challenge**

- The **5-year plan makes an intentional investment in development of the talent that is needed to fulfill our mission and vision.** We need to figure out how to attract the talent, design the program, and implement it -- "**education R&D**"
- And, if done well, that investment has the **potential to be the foundation of a talent pipeline for the DMV region** in the future, which has a growing tech sector
- Building this pipeline would **help more students access STEM education and careers**, ultimately reaching **economic equity**
- And, **it would create another pipeline: a STEM workforce to feed the growing sector**, which would help it continue to flourish and create even more opportunity for our graduates in turn



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- DPA's mission is to **prepare the next generation of innovators** who will catalyze and realize the significant STEM opportunity **in the Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia region**
- DPA brings its mission to life via a **program model founded in culture, curriculum, computer science (CS), and community for ~500 students in grades 6-10**, with plans to fully enroll 6-12 by 2025
- To live into its mission of preparing the next generation of innovators, in the next five years, DPA will work toward three ambitious goals: **1) Fully enrolling its 6-12 model; 2) Building a CS teacher pipeline;** and **3) Strengthening and solidifying its model to prepare for future expanded impact**
- To achieve those goals, DPA will **differentially focus on and invest resources in five priorities that will drive progress:**
  - ▾ Leverage strengths in adult culture/ development to ensure staff is structured, equipped, and supported to deliver **program** with quality/ fidelity across grades 6-12
  - ▾ Evolve **talent** function to effectively recruit, develop, advance, and retain staff via a regional computer science pipeline
  - ▾ Formalize and implement operational **systems** to improve team and organizational sustainability
  - ▾ Explore and establish **partnerships** that will offer students and staff a comprehensive path to college/ career
  - ▾ Explore opportunities for **expansion**
- The work of each priority will be defined by concrete initiatives, whose **implementation will be phased over a five year period to ensure sustainability and quality**
- DPA anticipates that implementation of this plan will require **~\$3.5M million of incremental investment annually**



## We want you to come visit!

- Check out Python Time (2:30-3:45pm M,T,Th,F)
- Attend a parent community meeting (we will share invite)
- Cheer at an upcoming soccer game or pep rally (we will share schedule)
- Support our launch of football! (we will share invite)



## Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

- Thursday, May 4, 2023: 3-5:00pm
- Thursday, June 15, 2023: 3-5:00pm