

DIGITAL PIONEERS

ACADEMY

Annual Report

School Year 2019-2020

Digital Pioneers Academy PCS
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Annual Report Narrative

School Description

Mission Statement

The mission of Digital Pioneers Academy (DPA) is to develop the next generation of innovators. We prepare students to meet or exceed the highest academic standards, while cultivating the strength of character necessary to both graduate from four-year colleges and persist in 21st century careers.

School Program

DPA will ultimately be a college preparatory middle and high school (6th-12th grade) for students from Ward 7 and 8 in Washington, DC. Beginning with sixth grade and adding one grade per year, DPA will provide a unique, personalized educational experience that integrates best practices from schools across the country, preparing students to be innovators and active citizens in our technology-driven world. DPA's learning model will leverage a curriculum built around traditional subjects with the critical inclusion of Computer Science as a core content area. Through core classes and personalized, project-based work, students will develop computational thinking skills, a set of capabilities that can be flexibly applied to succeed in four-year college and in a variety of fields. In addition to rigorous academics and project-based learning, our innovative approach focuses on character building and developing the social and emotional capacities of our students.

Computer Science is not just about teaching students to code. As the foundation for all computing, computer science is defined as “the study of computers and algorithmic processes, including their principles, their hardware and software designs, their applications, and their impact on society.” Through helping students understand why and how computers work, computer science provides the basis for a deep understanding of computer use and the relevant rights, responsibilities, and applications. Computer Science builds on computer literacy, educational technology, digital citizenship, and information technology.

Based on the model at the Brooke Charter School, our classrooms are “semi self-contained.” All students have their core academic instruction in a self-contained classroom with co-teachers. The benefit of the two-teacher model is that we can have the best of both worlds. Two adults can share the rigors of deep instruction over the course of the day. One teacher in the classroom will be a math, science, and computer science expert; the other teacher will be an expert in English language arts and social studies. By having this “semi self-contained” model, our teachers can be deep content experts, while forging meaningful, lasting relationships with adolescents, who most need that sort of attention. In addition, the teachers will be able to be special education teachers, teachers across the grade level, and administration to provide appropriate interventions for students who are struggling or may have special education needs.

There may be up to 30 total students in each classroom, and the student to teacher ratio will be 15:1.

Digital Pioneers Academy views families as partners in our school community. Families are constantly engaged for feedback and support. Whether it is deciding our uniform policies, giving feedback on school events, or supporting the design of our proposed high school, we engage our founding families as equal partners in our journey together. DPA has organized and is preparing to launch a Parent Committee that will not only work to increase parent involvement, but also make essential decisions for school policies, norms, events, and growth. DPA has an open door policy for all family engagements that do not create intrusions to the learning environment. Despite the interruptions of COVID-19, DPA has been able to conduct digital home visits with 99% of our families, host monthly community meetings, and set the expectation for teachers to make at least 2 outreaches weekly to their scholars' parents or guardians. We are also piloting different platforms that will be a hub for families to connect with DPA and with one another, staying in the loop with important information and having the agency to create a Known-Loved-Respected community among families.

In mid-March, the coronavirus pandemic led to citywide school closures in Washington, D.C. DPA's mission and vision guided us to ensure that our scholars and families thrive academically and socio-emotionally during the pandemic, so we created a rigorous, long-term remote learning program that maintained the essential aspects of our in-person model. For DPA, that meant that every scholar had the technology to access online classes, families had the food and basic necessities to be able to support their scholars' learning, and that the spirit of the school community continued to be cultivated. DPA's plan to transition to the remote world succeeded beyond expectations - 81% of scholars attended all of their daily classes (3+ hours of live instruction), 91% of scholars completed their final exams, 100% of scholars had a device, 95% of scholars had internet access, and assessment data demonstrates that substantive learning happened. While there were early growing pains with Remote School, DPA collaborated and communicated with parents to refine our methods, ending the year with a blueprint that prepares for a successful Year 3 that will begin virtually.

DPA's effectiveness in transitioning to remote learning was reflected in a 94% family satisfaction rate among those who completed a survey. DPA entered the summer building on that momentum, partnering with the National Summer School Institute to support over 80 scholars to stay on track towards their academic goals. The partnership provided DPA with new programmatic platforms and best practices that informed an even more comprehensive remote learning program for Year 3, as well as local and national interest in how we have designed our remote program.

School Performance

Performance and Progress

Digital Pioneers Academy has made substantive progress towards our mission of developing the next generation of innovators. In SY19-20, we introduced a new class of 120 6th graders, bringing our total enrollment to 240 scholars. Our model is designed to prepare scholars to graduate high school having met or exceeded the highest academic expectations and demonstrating the character strengths to thrive in 21st century careers, and our early success with enrolling our first two founding classes is promising to build out our entire 6-12 cohorts.

To prepare scholars to meet the highest academic standards, we have partnered with leading curriculum providers nationally to train our staff and implement our core curriculum of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Computer Science. Complementarily, we use the NWEA MAP and ANET assessments to measure both academic growth and scholars' grade levels in reading and math. Although we could not administer these assessments to their totality because of the disruption of the pandemic, our diligence in transferring our rigorous curriculum online during the Spring resulted in demonstrable learning gains.

To cultivate the strengths of character necessary to thrive in 21st century careers, we have established a Known-Loved-Respected community rooted in our core values of Innovation, Integrity, Growth, Results, Optimism, and Empathy. Our community stands out in our strength of scholar-teacher relationships and developing efficacy, as reflected in our Panorama survey results. Among peer schools, our school culture was a leader in Cultural and Linguistic Competence, Engagement, Learning Strategies, Rigorous Expectations, Sense of Belonging, and Teacher-Student Relationships. Our school culture is the heart of our progress towards our mission, equipping scholars with the support network, intrinsic values, and high expectations for self to be leaders.

DPA has accepted the Performance Management Framework (PMF) as its adopted goals and metrics, and DPA also uses the DC STAR Framework to evaluate comparative performance across all DC schools. In our first year of operation, DPA was given a PMF score of 56.0%, which would have ranked us among the upper echelon of Tier 2 PK-8 schools. For the same year, we were given a STAR rating of 3 stars. Due to the disruptions of the pandemic, we did not have official PMF or STAR ratings for SY19-20. However, a third-party analysis from EmpowerK12 confirmed that given our assessment data we were able to gather prior to the pandemic and academic data following the transition to remote learning, DPA would have likely scored 64.8 or 65.4 points on the PMF depending on the analysis methodology. This would have put us right at a Tier 1 rating. Furthermore, with 81% scholar attendance between March - May 2020, 100% of scholars having access to a device, 95% of scholars having access to reliable internet, and 91% of scholars completing final assessments, DPA is confident that our premier remote learning program not only preventing learning disruptions but *continued to push* learning and academic growth.

PARCC Scores

The COVID-19 pandemic prevented DPA from administering PARCC for SY19-20, so the following data is from SY18-19. For ELA, 27% of DPA scholars were meeting or exceeding expectations and 56% received a 3+ on their scores. For Math, 24% of DPA scholars were meeting or exceeding expectations and 49% received a 3+ on their scores. While we have not reached our goals of 60% we are working towards growing to these results.

Unique Accomplishments

In our first year of operation, our National Society of Black Engineers, Jr. club won the DC KidWind competition - a city-wide competition that resulted in our scholars being invited to the national competition in Houston, Texas.

List of Donors with Gifts Equalling or Exceeding \$500

Individual Donors

- Carolyn Rogan
- Christopher Demuth
- Henry Hipps
- Mary K. Wells
- Mashea M. Ashton
- Orlena Nwokah Blanchard
- Paul O'Neill
- Priya Jones
- Raymond Evans
- Sara Batterton
- Stig Leschly

Organizations/Foundation

- Charter School Growth Fund
- CityBridge Education
- Education Forward DC
- James & Alice B. Clark Foundation
- The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation
- NewSchools Venture Fund
- Players' Coalition

School Year (SY) 2019-20 Annual Report

*A note on SY 2019-20: The COVID-19 pandemic caused DC public and public charter schools to transition to remote learning after **March 13, 2020**. Schools were not required to report daily attendance or discipline events during this initial period of remote learning. Therefore, it is important to note that the data for SY 2019-20 effectively end on March 13, 2020.*

Campus Data Report

Source	Data Point
PCSB	LEA Name: Digital Pioneers Academy PCS
PCSB	Campus Name: Digital Pioneers Academy PCS
PCSB	Grades served: 6--7

PCSB	Overall Audited Enrollment: 242
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Enrollment by grade level according to OSSE's Audited Enrollment Report

Grade	PK3	PK4	KG	1	2	3	4	5	6
Student Count	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	119
Grade	7	8	9	10	11	12	Altern-ative	Adult	SPED*
Student Count	123	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Note: This field is only filled in for St. Coletta Special Education PCS as it is the only charter LEA that exclusively serves students with disabilities.

Student Data Points

School	Total number of instructional days: 175
PCSB	Suspension Rate: 11.6%
PCSB	Expulsion Rate: 0.00%
PCSB	Instructional Time Lost to Out-of-School Suspensions: 0.22%
PCSB	In-Seat Attendance: 92.4%*
PCSB	<p>Average Daily Attendance: 86.6%</p> <p>The SRA requires annual reports to include a school's average daily membership.</p> <p>To meet this requirement, PCSB will provide following verified data points: (1) audited enrollment; (2) mid-year withdrawals; and (3) mid-year entries. (No action necessary.)</p>
PCSB	Midyear Withdrawals: 5.0% (12 students)*
PCSB	Midyear Entries: 2.1% (5 students)*

PCSB	Promotion Rate (LEA): 100.0%
PCSB (SY18-19)	College Acceptance Rate: Not Applicable
PCSB (SY18-19)	College Admission Test Score: Not Applicable
PCSB (SY18-19)	Graduation Rate: Not Applicable

Faculty and Staff Data Points

School	Teacher Attrition Rate: 72%
School	Number of Teachers: 35
School	Teacher Salary: 1. Average: \$70,994.27 2. Range -- Minimum: \$57,000 Maximum: \$100,0082
School	Total Executive Compensation: Mashea Ashton, CEO & Principal: \$235,000 Shelby Stanley, STEM Teacher: 100,082

***Notes:**

- *The provided in-seat attendance rates align to the in-seat attendance rates through March 13, 2020 available in OSSE's SY19-20 Authoritative Attendance Qlik application as of August 2020. However, the validated rates that schools will confirm with OSSE during Metric Calculation Confirmation this fall may vary slightly.*
- *Unvalidated MYW and MYE rates are provided based on examining student movement between 10/6 and 3/13 in SY 2019-20, attempting to mimic the DC School Report Card business rules as closely as possible. However, the validated student mobility rates that schools will confirm with OSSE during Metric Calculation Confirmation this fall may vary slightly.*

Appendices

Board Roster

Mary Wells - Board Chair, non- DC resident
Orlena Nwokah Blanchard - Vice Chair, non- DC resident
Sara Batterton - Treasurer - DC Resident
Dr. Legand Burge - Voting Board Member, DC Resident
Henry Hipps - Voting Board Member, DC Resident

Kevjorik Jones - Voting Board Member, DC Resident
 Paul O'Neill - Voting Board Member, non- DC Resident
 Johnny Taylor, Jr. - Voting Board Member, DC Resident

Staff Roster

Last Name	First Name	Staff Member's Title	Highest Education Attained	Highest Degree Field/Major
Abusam	Azmi	STEM Teacher	Master's	Education and Curriculum Design
Adenrele	Katie	Director of Talent	Master's	Communication and Educational Leadership
Ashton	Mashea	CEO/Principal	Master's	Special Education
Awelewa	Olajide	STEM Teacher	Bachelor's	Religion
Balanda	Alexis	Humanities Teacher	Bachelor's	Speech Pathology
Baron	Jacqueline	Humanities Teacher	Master's	Master Of Social Work
Blue	Demetrius	SPED Teacher	Master's	Education Leadership
Brown	Norma	Director of Operations	Bachelor's	Engineering
Buyck	Terell	Electives/Attendance	Bachelor's	Social Work
Caldwell	DeVante	Enrichment Coordinator	Master's	Computer Science
Cann	Nana Konadu	STEM Teacher	Master's	Education, Culture and Society
Chrea	Vicki	STEM Teacher	Bachelor's	Human Development
Cowans	Betty	Humanities Teacher	Master's	Elementary Education/Special Education
Cross	Alison	Humanities Teacher	Bachelor's	Sociology
Cumberlander	Khalen	Electives / Attendance	Bachelor's	Communications
Dudley	Jerry	STEM Teacher	Master's	Educational Leadership
Farshchi	Nima	Director Of Operations	Master's	Business Administration
Fleming	Brittany	STEM Teacher	Master's	Engineering
Gibbs	Delonna	Humanities Teacher	Master's	Social Work
Goldstein	Emily	STEM Teacher	Bachelor's	Social Psychology
Goslee	Trenisha	STEM Teacher	Master's	Educational/Instructional Technology
Green	Re'Shae	ELA Teacher	Bachelor's	English
Hammond-Awitta	Barbara	Director Of Special Populations	Master's	Speech Pathology
Hilliard	Gwendolyn	Dean Of Social Emotional Learning	Master's	Administration
Holloman	Kiyah	Associate Dean Of Social Emotional Learning	Bachelor's	English
Howard	Miya	Humanities Teacher	Master's	English Education
Johnson	Jordan	Associate Dean Of Social Emotional Learning	Bachelor's	Entrepreneurial Management
Jones	Brandon	Electives / Attendance	Other	Marketing
Kelly	Keia	Teacher Aide	Bachelor's	Education
Kelly	Kayla	Teacher Aide	Bachelor's	Economics
Lancaster	Sherree	Community Relations Coordinator	Other	N/A
McDowell	Alicia	Operations Manager	Master's	Education Leadership
Miller	Tarneil	Associate Dean Of Social Emotional Learning	Master's	Education Leadership
Motolenich Torres	Jenifer	Special Assistant to the CEO	Master's	Educational Equity and Cultural Diversity
Nguyen	Lam	Special Assistant to the CEO	Bachelor's	Political Science
Pettway	Ashley	STEM Teacher	Master's	Master Of Science In Counseling
Rogan	Carolyn	SPED Teacher	Bachelor's	English
Siegel	Zachary	Humanities Teacher	Master's	History
Stanford	April	SPED Teacher	Master's	Special Education
Stanley	Shelby	STEM Teacher	Master's	Computer Science
Uechi	Emily	Teacher Aide	Bachelor's	History
Washington	Antonio	Operations Associate	Other	N/A
Williams	Alexa	STEM Teacher	Bachelor's	Theater, Criminal Justice
Williams	Nyshayla	Humanities Teacher	Master's	Elementary And Special Education
Williams	Aliss	Associate Dean Of Social Emotional Learning	Master's	Special Education

Unaudited 2019-20 Financial Statement

Income Statement

Digital Pioneers Academy

July 2019 through June 2020

	Year-To-Date
Income Statement	Actual
Revenue	
State and Local Revenue	4,797,210
Federal Revenue	534,226
Private Grants and Donations	870,157
Earned Fees	20,469
Total Revenue	6,222,062
Expenses	
Salaries	2,755,217
Benefits and Taxes	794,480
Contracted Staff	175,921
Staff-Related Costs	202,551
Rent	989,705
Occupancy Service	351,771
Direct Student Expense	524,677
Office & Business Expense	495,212
Contingency	0
Total Expenses	6,289,534
Operating Income	(67,471)
Extraordinary Expenses	
Interest	35,734
Depreciation and Amortization	238,913
Total Extraordinary Expenses	274,646
Net Income	(342,118)
Cash Flow Statement	Actual
Net Income	(342,118)
Cash Flow Adjustments	
Add Depreciation	(296,843)
Operating Fixed Assets	(263,130)
Other Operating Activities	346,339
Per-Pupil Adjustments	(0)
Suspense	370
Facilities Project Adjustments	1,367,509
Total Cash Flow Adjustments	1,154,246
Change in Cash	812,128

Balance Sheet
Digital Pioneers Academy
Jun-20

Balance Sheet	6/30/20
Assets	Year End
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	924,526
Accounts Receivable	74,728
Other Current Assets	72,138
Intercompany Transfers	0
Total Current Assets	1,071,392
Noncurrent Assets	
Facilities, Net	583,055
Operating Fixed Assets, Net	357,989
Total Noncurrent Assets	941,044
Total Assets	2,012,436
Liabilities and Equity	Year End
Liabilities and Equity	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	319,506
Other Current Liabilities	51,174
Accrued Salaries and Benefits	3,825
Total Current Liabilities	374,504
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	132,992
Net Income	(342,118)
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	0
Total Equity	(209,126)
Long-Term Liabilities	
Senior Debt	1,852,108
Subdebt	0
Other Long-Term Liabilities	(5,050)
Total Long-Term Liabilities	1,847,058
Total Liabilities and Equity	2,012,436

Approved 2020-21 Budget

FY21 Budget

Digital Pioneers Academy

		SY20-21
Revenue		
	State and Local Revenue	7,023,577
	Federal Revenue	1,468,296
	Private Grants and Donations	1,200,624
	Earned Fees	26,688
	Revenue Total	9,719,186
Expenses		
	Salaries	4,708,618
	Benefits and Taxes	1,146,101
	Contracted Staff	96,000
	Staff-Related Costs	130,642
	Rent	959,821
	Occupancy Service	441,065
	Direct Student Expense	879,664
	Office & Business Expense	604,829
	Contingency	27,651
	Expenses Total	8,994,389
NET ORDINARY INCOME		724,796
Extraordinary Expenses		
	Depreciation and Amortization	236,748
	Interest	38,471
	Extraordinary Expenses Total	275,219
TOTAL EXPENSES		9,269,608
NET INCOME		449,578