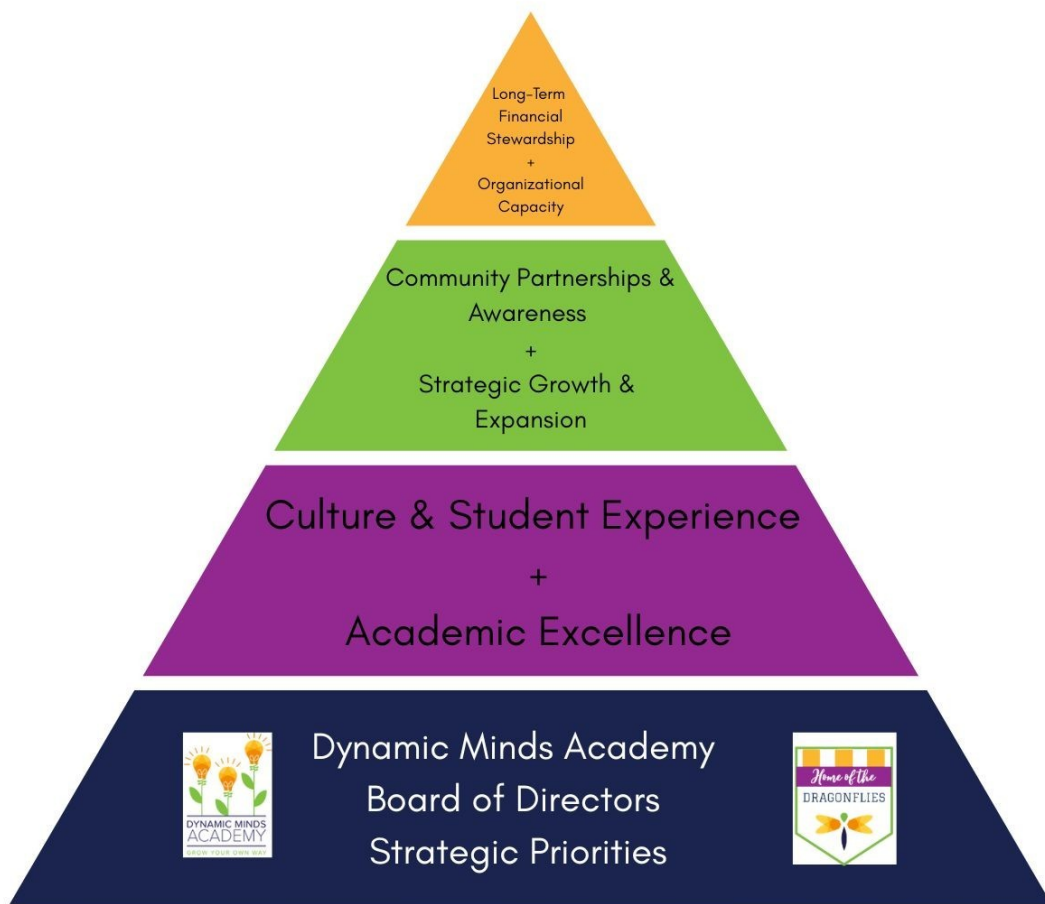


DYNAMIC MINDS ACADEMY

STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE REPORT

Board Direction for 2026-2029



Prepared through the Dynamic Minds Academy Strategic Planning Process

Facilitated by Kevin L. Davis | Indiana Charters LLC | July 2026

BOARD REPORT

Purpose and Status

This report captures the direction established by the Dynamic Minds Academy Board of Directors and leadership during the July 2026 Strategic Governance Retreat. It is intentionally concise. It is not an operational plan and does not prescribe how school leadership must accomplish the Board's priorities. In this report, "school leadership" refers to the school leader and the leadership team operating under the school leader's direction.

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION

Review the report, confirm that it accurately reflects the retreat, and adopt it as the Board's strategic governance framework for 2026-2029.

The report is designed to serve four purposes:

1. Preserve the mission, culture, educational model, and student experience that make DMA distinct.
2. Establish three connected areas of sustained Board attention.
3. Clarify the respective roles of the Board and school leadership.
4. Create a practical lens for major decisions and annual review.

Document Status

- Draft for Board review and adoption.
- Based on the strategic planning survey, retreat materials, and the full retreat discussion.
- Intended to guide the next three years while remaining flexible as circumstances change.

AT A GLANCE

Executive Summary

DMA is not searching for a new identity. The Board's strategic task is to protect a successful and highly differentiated model while preparing it to serve more students with greater organizational and financial strength.



THE BOARD'S CENTRAL COMMITMENT

Protect what makes DMA unmistakably DMA; expand opportunity without weakening the model; and build the capacity and financial resilience necessary to sustain the mission over time.

Three-year picture of success

- Students experience safety, individualization, high expectations, and meaningful academic and postsecondary progress.
- More families and community partners understand DMA's model, and responsible growth expands access.
- Leadership, staffing, systems, facilities, and finances are strong enough to support growth without sacrificing quality.

HOW WE GOT HERE

The Strategic Planning Process

The Board's direction emerged from a process designed to surface shared beliefs, test priorities, and distinguish governance from management.

Inputs

- Strategic planning survey completed by Board and leadership participants
- Preliminary and emerging-theme summaries
- Strategic Governance Retreat presentation and facilitator guide
- July 2026 retreat transcript and participant discussion
- Authorizer participation and perspective from Education One

Retreat Questions

- What makes DMA special?
- What must never change?
- What would success look like in July 2029?
- Which priorities deserve sustained Board attention?
- What is the governance question behind each issue?

The process produced strong alignment.

Participants consistently described DMA as mission-driven, student-centered, academically ambitious, individualized, and strengthened by the integration of education and therapeutic support. The discussion moved quickly from identity to stewardship because the group already shared a clear understanding of what DMA is.

FOUNDING VISION

The Vision That Brought DMA to Life

Dynamic Minds Academy did not begin as a conventional plan to create another school. It grew from the vision and work of Julie Gordon, MSW, LCSW, Founder and Owner of The Hope Source and Founding Visionary of Dynamic Minds Academy.

Through Julie's leadership and The Hope Source's work with children and families, a powerful need became clear. Students required more than educational services delivered alongside behavioral supports. They needed an environment designed around the understanding that learning, communication, behavior, relationships, emotional development, and independence are deeply connected.

Julie believed students could flourish when educators and behavior specialists worked together as one coordinated team. That belief became foundational to DMA. The integration of education and evidence-based behavioral support was not added after the school was created; it was central to the vision that brought DMA to life.

The Board's Responsibility

The Board's role is not to preserve every organizational structure or operating practice exactly as it exists today. Circumstances, funding, services, and partnerships will evolve.

FOUNDING PRINCIPLE

Students achieve their greatest potential when education and therapeutic support work together in service of the whole child.

That principle should remain visible whenever the Board considers growth, partnerships, facilities, finances, or changes to DMA's educational model.

WHAT WE HEARD

Shared Findings

- DMA has a clear and valued identity.
- The integrated educational and therapeutic model is central to student success.
- Culture, relationships, safety, individualization, and high expectations must be protected.
- Growth is both the greatest opportunity and a major governance challenge.
- Community awareness and partnerships are essential to enrollment, opportunity, and long-term influence.
- Financial stewardship and organizational capacity must develop alongside growth.
- Success for DMA students cannot be reduced to a single standardized outcome.

A defining observation

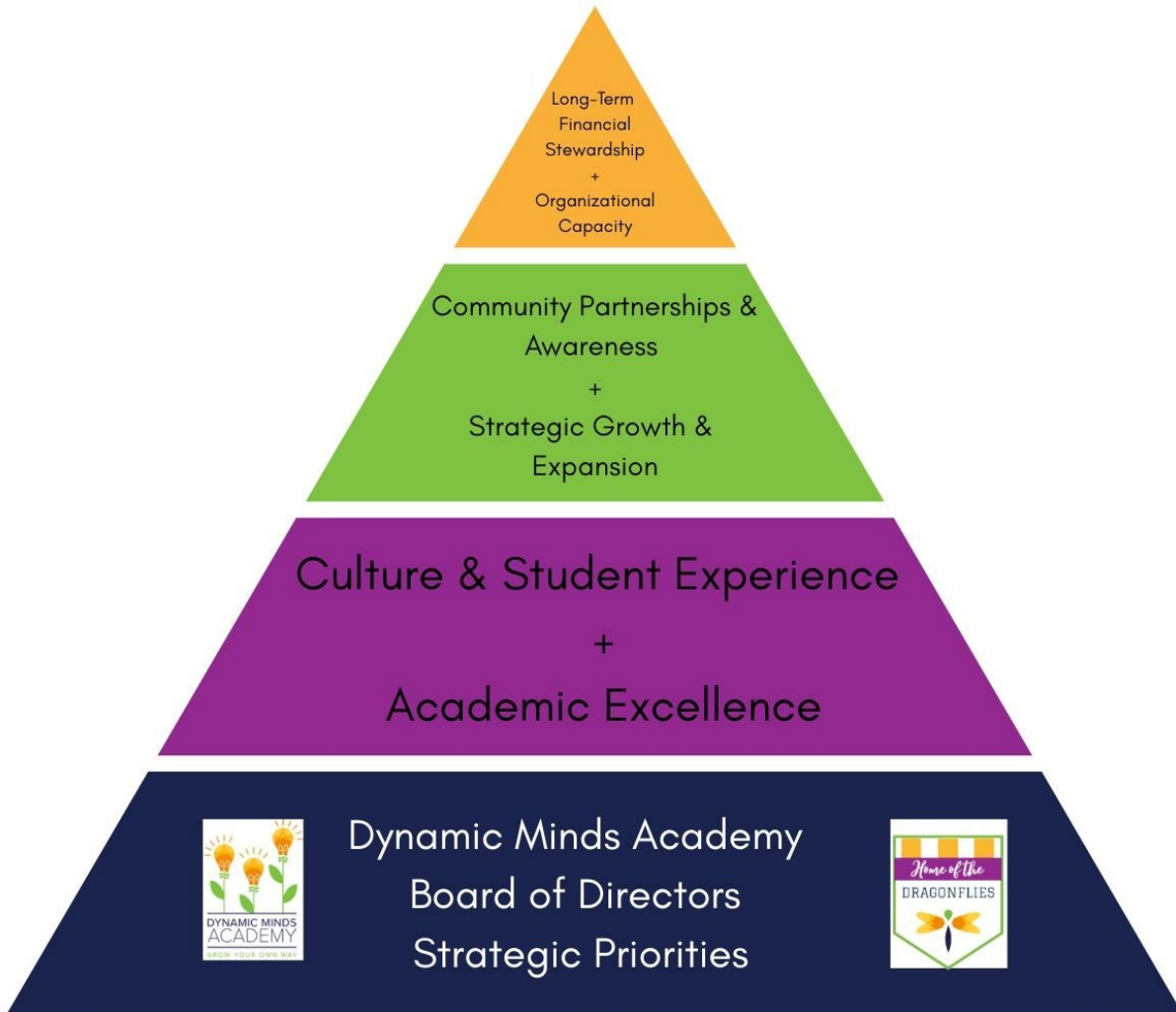
The retreat did not reveal a school attempting to redefine itself. It revealed a Board asking how to steward a successful model through its next stage of development.

DMA exists to provide an intentionally different educational model—one designed around the needs, strengths, and potential of its students.

External systems naturally push schools toward common structures and measures. The Board must preserve DMA's distinct mission while continuing to meet public accountability expectations.

THE BOARD'S COMPASS

The Strategic Governance Pyramid



The pyramid was created during the retreat to show the relationship among the Board's priorities. It is not a list of six unrelated goals. Each layer supports the next.

- The Foundation defines who DMA is and the experience it must protect.
- The Growth layer expands opportunity through awareness, partnerships, and responsible expansion.
- The Sustainability layer ensures that the people, systems, and finances can carry the mission forward.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Foundation: Culture, Student Experience, and Academic Excellence

DMA's culture and student experience are not separate from academic excellence. The retreat discussion established that students must first experience safety, regulation, dignity, belonging, and individualized support so that they can be challenged academically.

BOARD DIRECTION

Protect and strengthen the integrated model and the culture that allow each student to progress from their individual starting point toward the most meaningful and ambitious future available to them.

What the Board is protecting

- A safe and regulated learning environment
- High expectations without a one-size-fits-all definition of success
- Integration of education and therapeutic support
- Individualized pathways, including diploma and postsecondary options
- Respectful relationships with students and families
- A culture in which students are known and challenged

PRIORITY 1

What Success Looks Like by 2029

Student Experience

- Students consistently experience DMA as safe, supportive, individualized, and academically purposeful.
- Growth does not dilute relationships, family trust, or the collaborative model.
- New sites and programs remain recognizably DMA.
- Students are supported toward increasing independence and meaningful adulthood outcomes.

Academic Excellence

- The Board sees credible evidence of growth appropriate to DMA's student population.
- Academic rigor remains visible alongside behavioral and therapeutic support.
- Graduation pathways and graduating classes continue to strengthen.
- Post-graduation outcomes become a meaningful part of the definition of success.

Evidence may include

- Education One performance reporting and differentiated local measures
- Student growth and assessment evidence
- IEP goal progress and other individualized indicators
- Graduation, credential, transition, employment, training, and postsecondary outcomes
- Family and student experience information

PRIORITY 1

Questions the Board Should Keep Asking

DECISION LENS

Does this decision protect or strengthen the student experience and academic purpose that make DMA distinct?

- Are students safe, supported, challenged, and known?
- Does the decision strengthen the integration of education and therapeutic support?
- Are expectations ambitious and individualized rather than uniform?
- How will students benefit - during enrollment and after leaving DMA?
- Are we relying only on state measures, or also defining success in ways appropriate to DMA's chartered model?
- Could growth, efficiency, or compliance unintentionally weaken the culture?
- What evidence would convince the Board that the model is working as intended?

Governance boundary

The Board defines the expected student experience and outcomes. Leadership determines curriculum, staffing, schedules, interventions, instructional methods, and the operational means of achieving them.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Growth: Community Partnerships, Awareness, and Strategic Expansion

The Board believes DMA's model should reach more students and families. Retreat participants also recognized that growth must be disciplined: the right opportunity at the wrong time can still weaken the organization.

BOARD DIRECTION

Expand awareness, partnerships, enrollment, programs, and access in ways that extend DMA's mission while protecting quality, culture, and organizational readiness.

Growth means more than enrollment

- More families know that DMA exists and understand what it offers.
- Students gain broader academic, community, transition, and postsecondary opportunities.
- Community and institutional relationships add expertise, credibility, access, and support.
- Facilities and programs expand when they strengthen - rather than redefine - the mission.
- DMA becomes a recognized model from which others may learn.

PRIORITY 2

What Success Looks Like by 2029

Awareness & Partnerships

- DMA is better known among families, autism-service networks, educators, community organizations, and potential supporters.
- Partnerships create meaningful student opportunities before and after graduation.
- Relationships support enrollment, workforce development, credibility, and financial opportunity.
- DMA's distinct model is clearly communicated.

Strategic Growth & Expansion

- The Egis expansion and other growth decisions advance the mission and produce positive student outcomes.
- Enrollment grows sustainably rather than simply rapidly.
- The high-school and transition experience becomes increasingly attractive and effective.
- The organization is positioned for future geographic or programmatic expansion when ready.

A central retreat insight

Community awareness and strategic growth were viewed as parallel lines. Greater awareness can increase enrollment, partnerships, resources, and influence; successful growth, in turn, creates more evidence and stories worth sharing.

PRIORITY 2

Principles for Responsible Growth

1. Mission first. Growth must expand student opportunity and remain consistent with DMA's defining model.
2. Readiness before commitment. Leadership, staffing, systems, facilities, finances, and culture must be considered together.
3. Quality before size. Enrollment or square footage alone does not establish success.
4. Learn before making permanent commitments. Use pilots, milestones, and scheduled review points to evaluate significant initiatives. Preserve the ability to pause, modify, or discontinue an initiative when the evidence supports doing so.
5. Partnership without surrender. External relationships should strengthen DMA without weakening governance responsibility or identity.
6. Adapt tactics, preserve strategic direction. Changing or discontinuing a particular site, program, partnership, or approach does not mean abandoning the underlying strategic goal.

BOARD QUESTION

Does this opportunity extend the mission, or merely enlarge the organization?

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Sustainability: Financial Stewardship and Organizational Capacity

Sustainability is the capacity to continue fulfilling the mission through changing circumstances. It requires both financial resilience and an organization capable of carrying increased responsibility.

BOARD DIRECTION

Build the financial strength, leadership depth, workforce, systems, and operational capacity needed to sustain DMA's mission and support responsible growth over the long term.

The balance the Board must protect

Invest Today

- Meet the needs of current students
- Protect program quality and staffing
- Support growth and new opportunities
- Respond to changing student and service needs

Prepare for Tomorrow

- Maintain financial resilience
- Develop leadership and workforce capacity
- Strengthen systems and facilities
- Prepare for enrollment and funding volatility

PRIORITY 3

What Success Looks Like by 2029

Financial Stewardship

- DMA remains capable of fulfilling its mission through funding, enrollment, and facility changes.
- Budgets reflect both student investment and appropriate resilience.
- The Board evaluates multi-year direction rather than treating annual cash growth as the only measure of stewardship.
- Financial choices support responsible expansion without exposing DMA to undue risk.

Organizational Capacity

- Leadership capacity is not concentrated in one person.
- DMA can recruit, develop, and retain people needed for its model.
- Systems, roles, reporting, and decision rights are clear enough to support growth.
- Facilities and operations enable rather than constrain quality.

Context matters

The retreat recognized that reserves may grow in some years and remain flat or decline during responsible periods of investment, transition, or macro-level challenge. The Board's task is to evaluate whether the organization remains resilient and mission-capable over time.

PRIORITY 3

Questions the Board Should Keep Asking

- Are we investing enough in current students while maintaining adequate resilience?
- What risks could disrupt the mission, and how prepared is DMA to absorb them?
- Does growth exceed the capacity of leadership, staff, systems, or facilities?
- What leadership depth and succession capacity are being developed?
- Are workforce challenges affecting quality, culture, or expansion readiness?
- Does the budget reflect the Board's strategic priorities?
- Are financial indicators being interpreted in context and over multiple years?
- What would become vulnerable if enrollment, Medicaid reimbursement rates, ABA service limits or caps, or other public funding conditions changed?

Governance boundary

The Board establishes risk tolerance, long-term expectations, and strategic priorities. Leadership prepares budgets, staffing plans, organizational structures, and operational recommendations within those guardrails.

GOVERNANCE PRACTICE

The Board Owns the Destination

1. DIRECTION

The Board defines mission, priorities, desired outcomes, and acceptable risk.

2. JOURNEY

The school leader, working with the leadership team, develops operational plans, budgets, staffing structures, systems, and execution strategies within the direction and guardrails established by the Board.

3. EVALUATION

The Board asks how well DMA is progressing and holds leadership accountable.

"The Board owns the destination. Management owns the journey. The Board evaluates whether the destination is being reached."

This distinction does not make the Board passive. The Board remains responsible for direction, oversight, resource allocation, risk, school-leader support and evaluation, and accountability. It avoids directing daily execution because doing so blurs responsibility and weakens accountability.

GOVERNANCE PRACTICE

How Will vs. How Well

Leadership Owns: HOW WILL

- How will programs be designed?
- How will staff be assigned?
- How will growth be phased?
- How will budgets and schedules be structured?
- How will partnerships be developed?
- How will student outcomes be improved?

The Board Owns: HOW WELL

- How well are students progressing?
- How well is the culture being protected?
- How well is growth advancing the mission?
- How well is leadership managing risk?
- How well is the organization building capacity?
- How well is DMA maintaining financial resilience?

CORE REDIRECT

That is an important operational issue. What is the governance question behind it?

The goal is not to silence useful expertise. It is to translate that expertise into Board-level direction and oversight.

BOARDROOM TOOL

The Decision Lens

For any major decision, the Board should pause and work from the bottom of the pyramid upward.

FOUNDATION	Does this protect culture, student experience, and academic excellence?
GROWTH	Does this strengthen partnerships, awareness, access, and responsible expansion?
SUSTAINABILITY	Does this build or preserve financial resilience and organizational capacity?
GOVERNANCE	Are we defining the destination and evaluating results - or directing the operational journey?

FINAL TEST

Does this decision move Dynamic Minds Academy closer to the future the Board agreed to create?

USING THE REPORT

Monitoring Without Creating Shelfware

The framework should remain visible and useful without creating a redundant planning bureaucracy or a new monthly reporting burden.

1. Use the pyramid and decision lens during major Board decisions.
2. Connect existing school-leader, financial, personnel, academic, and authorizer reports to the three priorities.
3. Conduct one focused annual strategic review.
4. Review whether the annual budget materially reflects the Board's stated direction.
5. Revise the framework only when the strategic direction changes - not whenever an operational tactic changes.

Recommended annual review questions

- What meaningful progress occurred in each layer?
- Where is progress slower than expected, and what does leadership believe is causing it?
- What new risks or opportunities have emerged?
- Do the priorities remain the right priorities?
- What should the Board emphasize during the coming year?

IMPLEMENTATION

First-Year Board Actions

The framework is designed to guide leadership rather than constrain it. The Board's first-year actions should therefore focus on adoption, alignment, and disciplined oversight.

1. Adopt this report as the Board's strategic governance framework.
2. Ask leadership to present its high-level approach for advancing each priority, without requiring a separate lengthy strategic plan.
3. Identify the small set of existing indicators that best help the Board evaluate progress.
4. Confirm that the FY 2026-27 and future budgets reflect the framework.
5. Use the decision lens for major expansion, facility, partnership, program, and financial decisions.
6. Include the framework in new Board-member orientation.
7. Schedule the first annual strategic review before July 2027.

AVOID

Creating detailed Board-owned action plans, assigning operational work to individual Board members, or building a duplicate dashboard that competes with existing school and Education One reporting.

BOARD COMMITMENT

A Shared Standard of Stewardship

By adopting this report, the Board commits to govern in a manner that protects DMA's mission, gives leadership clear direction and appropriate operating space, and keeps long-term student and organizational outcomes at the center of its work.

- We will protect what makes DMA distinct.
- We will pursue growth that expands opportunity without compromising identity.
- We will expect financial discipline without reducing stewardship to cash accumulation.
- We will support the development of leadership, staffing, systems, and organizational capacity.
- We will use evidence to evaluate how well the organization is progressing.
- We will distinguish Board direction and oversight from operational execution.
- We will help one another remain focused on the strategic questions only the Board can answer.

"Lead us forward, but keep informing us."

ADOPTION

Board Review and Adoption

The Dynamic Minds Academy Board of Directors adopted this Strategic Governance Report as its statement of strategic direction for 2026-2029 at a duly noticed public meeting held on August 20, 2026.

The Board affirms the following three connected priorities:

- Foundation: Culture & Student Experience + Academic Excellence
- Growth: Community Partnerships & Awareness + Strategic Growth & Expansion
- Sustainability: Long-Term Financial Stewardship + Organizational Capacity

Adoption of this report is documented in the official minutes of the Board meeting.

CLOSING THOUGHT

Every significant decision should move Dynamic Minds Academy in the direction the pyramid points.

Prepared by Kevin L. Davis, Indiana Charters LLC