School Annual Education Report (AER) Cover Letter
Detroit Achievement Academy

February 15th, 2023

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2021-22 educational progress for the Detroit Achievement Academy. The AER addresses the complex reporting information required by federal and state laws. The school’s report contains information about student assessment, accountability, and teacher quality. If you have any questions about the AER, please contact Alexa O’Brien for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following web site linked here or you may review a copy in the main office at your child’s school.

For the 2021-22 school year, schools were identified based on previous years’ performance using definitions and labels as required in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school is one that had at least one underperforming student subgroup in 2021-22. An Additional Targeted Support (ATS) school is one that had a student subgroup performing at the same level as the lowest 5% of all schools in the state in 2021-22. A Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school is one whose performance was in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state or had a graduation rate at or below 67% in 2021-22. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no label is given.

Our school has not been given one of these labels.

We are proud to have spearheaded initiatives to retain experienced teachers and continue to fund continuing education for teachers. Maintaining highly qualified staff with low teacher turnover will continue to accelerate student achievement and close persistent gaps in achievement. We have emphasized math instruction in our middle grades, creating additional small group and intervention opportunities to encourage student mastery of math, particularly for our 8th graders’ grade level content. Current (Fall 2022) NWEA-MAP data shows a schoolwide average of 50% of students scoring at or above the 50th percentile in ELA, and 45% of students scoring at or above the 50th percentile in Math. Our Upper School students in grades 5-8 averaged 150% expected growth on the Winter 2022 NWEA-MAP Math assessment.

While our definition of student success is much, much broader than a simple analysis of test scores, we continue to strive for our vision that proficiency on standardized tests is the floor
and equitable, multi-faceted achievement is the ceiling. To that end, we are working to provide more MStep aligned practice for students and training and support for teachers. Teachers participate in weekly work sort protocols to analyze standards proficiency. Instructional staff will also participate in Data Days every 6-8 weeks to analyze NWEA assessment data along with our updated standards-based gradebook on the PowerSchool platform to analyze strengths and gaps and adjust instruction accordingly. Finally, there are two full-time instructional support staff members accelerating instruction in kindergarten through fourth grade, and two full-time instructional support staff supporting fourth through sixth grade (in addition to the lead teacher) to double down on research-based best practices in instruction with our highest need learners.

State law requires that we also report additional information.

1. Enrollment:
   a. Requirements - Section 504 of the Revised School Code states that public school academies shall neither charge tuition nor discriminate in pupil admissions policies or practices on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a handicapped person, or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a Michigan public school district. Academy enrollment shall be open to all individuals who reside in Michigan. Except for a foreign exchange student who is not a United States citizen, a public school academy shall not enroll a pupil who is not a Michigan resident. Academy admissions may be limited to pupils within a particular age range/grade level or on any other basis that would be legal if used by a Michigan public school district. The Academy Board may establish a policy providing enrollment priority to siblings of currently enrolled pupils. The Academy shall allow any pupil who was enrolled in the immediately preceding academic year to re-enroll in the appropriate age range/grade level unless that grade is not offered. No students may be denied participation in the application process due to lack of student records. If the Academy receives more applications for enrollment than there are spaces available, pupils shall be selected for enrollment through a random selection drawing.
   b. Application Process - The application period shall be a minimum of two weeks in duration, with evening and/or weekend times available. The Academy shall accept applications all year. If openings occur during the academic year, students shall be enrolled. If openings do not exist, applicants shall be placed on the official waiting list. The waiting list shall cease to exist at the beginning of the next application period. In the event there are openings in the class for which students have applied, students shall be admitted according to the official waiting list. The position on the waiting list shall be determined by the random selection drawing. If there is no waiting list, students shall be admitted on a first-come, first-served basis. The Academy may neither close the application period nor hold a random selection drawing for unauthorized grades.
   c. Legal Notice - The Academy shall provide legal notice of the application and enrollment process in a local newspaper of general circulation. At a minimum, the legal notice must include:
i. The process and/or location(s) for requesting and submitting applications.

ii. The beginning date and the ending date of the application period.

iii. The date, time, and place the random selection drawing(s) will be held, if needed.

iv. The legal notice of the application period shall be designed to inform individuals that are most likely to be interested in attending the Academy.

v. The Academy, being an equal opportunity educational institution, shall be committed to good-faith affirmative action efforts to seek out, create and serve a diverse student body.

\textbf{d. Re-enrolling Students -} The Academy shall notify parents or guardians of all enrolled students of the deadline for notifying the Academy that they wish to re-enroll their child. If the Academy Board has a sibling preference policy, the re-enrollment notice must also request that the parent or guardian indicate whether a sibling(s) seeks to enroll for the upcoming academic year. An enrolled student who does not re-enroll by the specified date can only apply to the Academy during the application period for new students. An applicant on the waiting list at the time a new application period begins must reapply as a new student. After collecting the parent or guardian responses, the Academy must determine the following:

i. The number of students who have re-enrolled per grade or grouping level.

ii. The number of siblings seeking admission for the upcoming academic year per grade.

iii. If space is unavailable, the Academy must develop a waiting list for siblings of re-enrolled students.

iv. The number of spaces remaining, per grade, after enrollment of current students and siblings.

\textbf{e. Random Selection Drawing -} A random selection drawing is required if the number of applications exceeds the number of available spaces. Prior to the application period, the Academy shall:

i. Establish written procedures for conducting a random selection drawing.

ii. Establish the maximum number of spaces available per grade or grouping level.

iii. Establish the date, time, place and person to conduct the random selection drawing.

iv. The Academy shall use a credible, neutral “third party” to conduct the random selection drawing. Further, the Academy shall:

1. Conduct the random selection drawing at a public meeting where parents, community members and the public may observe the process.

2. Use number, letters, or another system that guarantees fairness and does not give an advantage to any applicant.
3. The Academy shall notify applicants not chosen in the random selection drawing that they were not selected and that their name has been placed on the Academy’s official waiting list for openings that may occur during the academic year. Students shall appear on the official waiting list in the order they were selected in the random selection drawing.

2. School Improvement Plan Status: Each year, Detroit Achievement Academy creates a Work Plan to set goals and create a plan for success.
   a. For the 2014-2015 school year, we used data from our first year to form our priorities for the second year. We determined goals that would allow us to build on our current success and address areas of growth. Our four Work Plan goals for 2014-2015 were as follows:
      i. 85% of students at DAA will score at proficient or above according to the 6+1 Writing Traits Rubric for their grade level band
      ii. We will implement structures for students to communicate about their achievement through goal setting, student led conferences and high quality portfolios.
      iii. Students will create 2 high quality products for an authentic audience as part of their expeditions.
      iv. 85% of students at DAA will be score at proficient or above according to the DAA Habits of Character Rubrics
      v. Based on our data indicators, we met our Year 2 Work Plan goals.
   b. For the 2015-2016 school year, we used data from our second year to form our priorities for the third year. We determined goals that would allow us to build on our current success and address areas of growth. Our four Work Plan goals for 2015-16 were:
      i. DAA students, staff, and leadership will regularly use the results of multiple, meaningful assessments to inform the effectiveness of instruction and student proficiency toward meaningful, year-end goals of all learners.
      ii. All students will produce portfolios of excellent work that will travel with them through 8th grade as documentation of the knowledge, skills, and habits of character they have developed throughout their time at DAA.
      iii. We will authentically welcome and prepare parents to engage in their child’s learning at DAA through meaningful and culturally relevant activities, learning opportunities and high quality student led conferences.
      iv. DAA students, families, staff, and leadership will observe consistent expectations and practices that support both relational and performance character development and continue to build a school community and culture in which students are on a mission to do good work—“work that is good in quality, good for the soul, and good for the world.
      v. Based on our data indicators, we met these goals.
c. For the 2016-2017 school year, we used data from our first three years to form our priorities for the third year. We determined goals that would allow us to build on our current success and address areas of growth. Our three Work Plan goals for 2016-17 were:

i. 100% of DAA students will show 100% expected growth in one year, 90% of students will show 140% of growth for one year in reading and math.

ii. DAA students will consistently demonstrate responsibility and cooperation in service of being effective learners: 75% of students show growth or proficiency (score of 3 or 4) in responsibility and cooperation between Q1 and Q4 report cards; Increased student engagement as evidenced from learning walk indicators and data; Data shows correlation between strong habits grades and meeting learning targets.

iii. DAA students will deepen their ability to create work that demonstrates several of the attributes of craftsmanship: Student work samples from the annual Quality Work Protocol show increased levels of craftsmanship compared to previous work protocols; student reflections in SLC and portfolios demonstrate an understanding of how craftsmanship support quality.

iv. Based on our data indicators, we met our second and third goal, and continued to focus on the first goal during the 2017-18 school year.

d. Our three Work Plan goals for 2017-18 were:

i. 100% of students will show 100% expected growth in one year, 60% of students will show 140% of expected growth for one year in reading and math, as measured by NWEA MAP. 50% of students at or above the 50th percentile in reading and math.

ii. DAA students work to improve their character by reflecting on their actions related to HOC, setting goals, and reflecting on their progress towards becoming ethical people and effective learners. DAA students will consistently demonstrate integrity & compassion.

iii. DAA student work begins to reflect the attributes of complexity and authenticity.

iv. Based on our data indicators, we met our second and third goal, and continued to focus on the first goal during the 2018-19 school year.

e. Our three Work Plan goals for 2018-19 were:

i. 50% of students at or above the 50th percentile in reading and math. 100% of students will show 100% expected growth in one year, 60% of students will show 140% of expected growth for one year in reading and math through mastery of grade level foundational skills measured by NWEA MAP. 3-5 graders will double the proficiency rate of comparable districts measured by M-STEP in two consecutive years.

f. Our three Work Plan goals for 2019-2020 were:

i. 85% of students at or above the 50th percentile in reading and math as measured by NWEA MAP. 100% of students will show 100% expected growth in one year, 60% of students will show 140% of
growth for one year in reading and math. Student work demonstrates an increased ability for students to use their critical thinking skills to solve complex problems based on the critical thinking and problem solving rubric.

ii. Students report a significant increase from BoY to EoY in their sense of belonging (I belong in this academic community) based on the BELE survey. Students become more effective learners through their improved self-regulation, reflecting on and revising personal Habit of Character goals that accurately align with strengths and growth areas that will best impact and serve the broader community. Families are consistently invested in their role and responsibilities as part of the broader crew that supports all students to succeed.

iii. Student work is created for a purpose and an audience beyond the classroom. Student portfolios and our QWP notes and archives show that student work demonstrates the original, creative thinking of students—authentic personal voice and ideas.

g. Our Work Plan goals for 2020-2021 were:

i. 85% of students at or above the 50th percentile in reading and math as measured by NWEA MAP. 100% of students will show 100% expected growth in one year, 60% of students will show 140% of growth for one year in reading and math.

ii. MSTEP proficiency increases by 10%:
   1. 3 - ELA 40%, Math 40%
   2. 4 - ELA 40%, Math 30%
   3. 5 - ELA 43%, Math 33%
   4. 6 - ELA 32%, Math 28%
   5. 7 - ELA 20%, Math 20%
   6. 8 - ELA 30% Math 22%

iii. Student work demonstrates an increased ability for students to use their critical thinking skills to solve complex problems based on the critical thinking and problem solving rubric and discourse rubric/observation tool.
   1. Foundational skills
   2. Cross-curricular On Demand Written Expression
   3. Use of grade level and domain specific vocabulary
   4. Justification of math reasoning through written and oral expression.

h. Our Work Plan goals for 2021-2022 were:

i. 100% of students complete benchmark assessments

ii. 100% of students complete F&P assessments

iii. 100% of students met their NWEA MAP expected growth score in both reading and math

iv. 60% of students met 140% NWEA MAP expected growth score in both reading and math

v. The number of students in the low growth (50th percentile and below)/ low achievement (50th percentile and below) category decreases by 50% from winter.
vi. The number of students in the high growth (51st percentile and above)/ high achievement (51st percentile and above) category increases by 25% from winter.

i. Our Academic Work Plan goals for 2022-2023 are:
   i. The number of students on or above grade level in reading in each crew increases by 50% by the end of the 2022-23 school year as measured by the NWEA MAP Reading assessment as measured in aggregate and for all subgroups of pupils broken down by grade level, student demographics, and mode of instruction. (25% by Winter testing cycle, 50% by Spring testing cycle)
   ii. The number of students on or above grade level in math in each crew increases by 50% by the end of the 2022-23 school year as measured by the NWEA MAP Math assessment as measured in aggregate and for all subgroups of pupils broken down by grade level, student demographics, and mode of instruction. (25% by Winter testing cycle, 50% by Spring testing cycle)

j. If you are interested in seeing our entire Work Plan, please ask Mario Lemons for a copy.

3. Mission: Detroit Achievement Academy exists to holistically support the education and development of students who have the determination, drive, and skills to shape their own path of high achievement with the ultimate goal of creating civically engaged, joyful citizens who are ready to change the world.

4. Core Curriculum: Detroit Achievement Academy uses the EL Education Modules for ELA, Science, and Social Studies instruction, FUNdations for foundational reading skills in grades K-3, and EngageNY/Eureka math scope and sequence. We create our own social-emotional curriculum for morning and closing Crew meetings, based on our six habits of character: compassion, cooperation, curiosity & creativity, integrity, perseverance, and responsibility. We modify and supplement our curriculum to meet the needs of our learners and address the Common Core State Standards and Michigan State Standards.

5. Achievement Results: In 2017-2018, DAA students were in the 46th percentile for reading and the 42nd percentile for math for their mean achievement levels nationwide as measured by the NWEA MAP using our fall-to-spring comparison data. Students are in the 21st percentile for reading and the 20th percentile for math for their mean proficiency achievement levels nationwide as measured by the NWEA MAP using our fall-to-spring comparison data from 2018-2019. Our data in 4th and 5th grade is congruent with projected proficiency on the MStep. In 2018-2019, DAA students achieved a mean School Conditional Growth of 50th percentile in reading and 72nd percentile in math. We use the School Conditional Growth percentile based on our small sample size and charter authorizer's analysis. We do not have final data for 2020-2021 due to school closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, mid-year data assessments indicate that students are showing growth from last year's mid-year data. In Winter 2020, 44% of students were at or above the 50th percentile in ELA according to the NWEA MAP assessment. In Winter 2021, this
increased to 48%. In Winter 2022, this increased to 60%. For the 2021-2022 school year, the number of students on grade level in reading from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 increased by 37 percent during Winter 2021-2022 testing. DAA increased this number by 44 percent during Spring 2021-2022 testing. These results are both exciting and promising, and can be attributed to the strong leadership and teaching practices of the current DAA team, and the hard work throughout the pandemic learning environments. We look forward to continued growth and achievement!

6. Student Led Conferences: Our 2016-2017 conference attendance is as follows: October, 2016 41/42 (98%), March, 2017 42/42 (100%), June, 2017 41/42 (98%). Our 2017-2018 conference attendance is as follows: October, 2017 72/74 (97%), March, 2018 72/75 (92%), June, 2018 75/78 (96%). Our 2018-2019 conference attendance is as follows: October, 2018 92/169 (54%), June, 2019 95/169 (56%). Our 2019-2020 conference attendance is as follows: October, 2019 155/184 (84%), June, 2020 145/184 (79%). Our 2020-2021 conference attendance is as follows: Fall 2020, 84%. Our 2021-2022 conference attendance is as follows: Fall 2021, 75%, Spring 2022, 75%.

We are energized and excited about our Annual Education Report for our ninth year and appreciate all of the hard work from our students, staff, and families. It’s the result of our collective dedication and efforts that we were able to create a school that is performing at such high levels. We are so eager for what the future holds for our students and school!

Sincerely,

Mario Lemons, Head of School 
Kyle Smitley, Executive Director