

Application: Brownsville Ascend Charter School

Camille McQueen - camille.mcqueen@ascendlearning.org
2022-2023 Annual Report

Summary

ID: 0000000202

Status: Annual Report Submission

Last submitted: Nov 1 2023 10:15 PM (EDT)

Labels: SUNY Trustees

Entry 1 School Info and Cover Page

Completed - Aug 1 2023

Instructions

Required of ALL Charter Schools

Each Annual Report begins with a completed School Information and Cover Page. The information is collected in a survey format within the [Annual Report Portal](#). When entering information in the portal, some of the following items may not appear, depending on your authorizer and/or your responses to related items.

Entry 1 School Information and Cover Page

(New schools that were not open for instruction for the 2022-2023 school year are not required to complete or submit an annual report this year).

Please be advised that you will need to complete this cover page (including signatures) before all of the other tasks assigned to you by your school's authorizer are visible on your task page. While completing this cover page task, please ensure that you select the correct authorizer (**as of June 30, 2023**) or you may not be assigned the correct tasks.

BASIC INFORMATION

a. SCHOOL NAME

(Select name from the drop down menu)

BROWNSVILLE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL 800000064233

a1. Popular School Name

Brownsville Ascend Charter School

b. CHARTER AUTHORIZER (As of June 30th, 2023)

Please select the correct authorizer as of June 30, 2023 or you may not be assigned the correct tasks.

SUNY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

c. School Unionized

Is your charter school unionized?

No

d. DISTRICT / CSD OF LOCATION

CSD #23 - BROOKLYN

e. Date of Approved Initial Charter

Jan 13 2008

f. Date School First Opened for Instruction

Sep 1 2009

g. Approved School Mission and Key Design Elements

(Regents, NYCDOE and Buffalo BOE authorized schools only)

N/A

h. School Website Address

<http://ascendlearning.org>

i. Total Approved Charter Enrollment for 2022-2023 School Year

1020

j. Total Enrollment on June 30, 2023 - excluding Pre-K program enrollment

793

k. Grades Served

Grades served during the 2022-2023 school year (exclude Pre-K program students):

Use the CTRL button to select multiple grades to accurately capture every grade level served.

Responses Selected:

k
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

I. Charter Management Organization

Do you have a [Charter Management Organization?](#)

Yes

I1. Charter Management Organization Name

Ascend Learning

I2. Charter Management Organization Email Address

info@ascendlearning.org

I3. Charter Management Organization Email Phone Number

347-464-7600

FACILITIES INFORMATION

m. FACILITIES

Will the school maintain or operate multiple sites in 2023-2024?

	No, just one site.
--	--------------------

School Site 1 (Primary)

m1. SCHOOL SITES

Please provide information on Site 1 for the upcoming school year.

	Physical Address	Phone Number	District/CSD	Grades to be Served at Site for previous year (K-5, 6-9, etc.)	Grades to be Served at Site for coming year (K-5, 6-9, etc.)	Receives Rental Assistance for Which Grades (If yes, enter the appropriate grades. If no, enter No).
Site 1	1501 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11212	347-294-2650	NYC CSD 23	K-8	K-8	6-8

m1a. Please provide the contact information for Site 1.

	Name	Title	Work Phone	Alternate Phone	Email Address
School Leader	Curtis Durham	Principal			curtis.durham@ascendlearning.org .
Operational Leader	Dana Evans-Muller	Managing Director			dana.evansmuller@ascendlearning.org .
Compliance Contact	Ashley Williams	Senior Legal Counsel			ashley.williams@ascendlearning.org .
Complaint Contact	Danique Day	Chief Schools Officer			Danique.Day@ascendlearning.org .
DASA Coordinator	Stefanny Andujar	Manager of Student Support Systems			stefanny.andujar@ascendlearning.org .
Phone Contact for After Hours Emergencies	Maryann Li	Chief Operations Officer			maryann.li@ascendlearning.org .

m1b. Is site 1 in public (co-located) space or in private space?

Private Space

IF LOCATED IN PRIVATE SPACE IN NYC OR IN DISTRICTS OUTSIDE NYC

m1d. Upload a current Certificate of Occupancy (COO) and the annual Fire Inspection Report for school site 1 if located in private space in NYC or located outside of NYC .

Certificate of Occupancy and Fire Inspection. Provide a copy of a current and non-expired certificate of occupancy (if outside NYC or in private space in NYC). For schools that are not in district space (NYC co-locations), provide a copy of a current and non-expired certificate of occupancy, and a copy of the current annual fire inspection results, which should be dated on or after July 1, 2023.

- Fire inspection certificates must be updated annually. For the upcoming school year 2023-2024, submit a current fire inspection certificate.
- If the fire inspection certificate is dated after the August 1, 2022 submission of the Annual Report, please submit the new certificate with the Annual Report entries due on November 1, 2023.

Site 1 Certificate of Occupancy (COO)

[Pitkin_CofoDocumentContentServlet Final.pdf](#)

Filename: Pitkin_CofoDocumentContentServlet Final.pdf Size: 39.2 kB

Site 1 Fire Inspection Report

This is required, marked optional for administrative purposes.

[Pitkin.pdf](#)

Filename: Pitkin.pdf Size: 2.1 MB

n. List of owned, rented, leased facilities not used to educate students

Separate by semi-colon (;)

N/A

CHARTER REVISIONS DURING THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

o. Were there any revisions to the school's charter during the 2022-2023 school year? (Please include approved or pending material and non-material charter revisions).

Please note, listing the revisions here does not constitute a request. Schools are advised to seek revision requests through their authorizer directly.

No

ATTESTATIONS

p. Individual Primarily Responsible for Submitting the Annual Report. (To write type in a phone number with an extension, please use this format: 123-456-7890-3. The dash and number 3 at the end of the phone number refers to the individual's phone extension. Do not type in the work extension or the abbreviation for it - just the dash and the extension number after the phone number).

Name	Camille McQueen
Position	Network Director of Operations
Phone/Extension	347-200-4652
Email	camille.mcqueen@ascendlearning.org

q. Our signatures (Executive Director/School Leader/Head of School and Board President) below attest that all of the information contained herein is truthful and accurate and that this charter school is in compliance with all aspects of its charter, and with all pertinent Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and rules. We understand that if any information in any part of this report is found to have been deliberately misrepresented, that will constitute grounds for the revocation of our charter. Click **YES to agree and then use the mouse on your PC or the stylus on your mobile device to sign your name).**

Responses Selected:

Yes

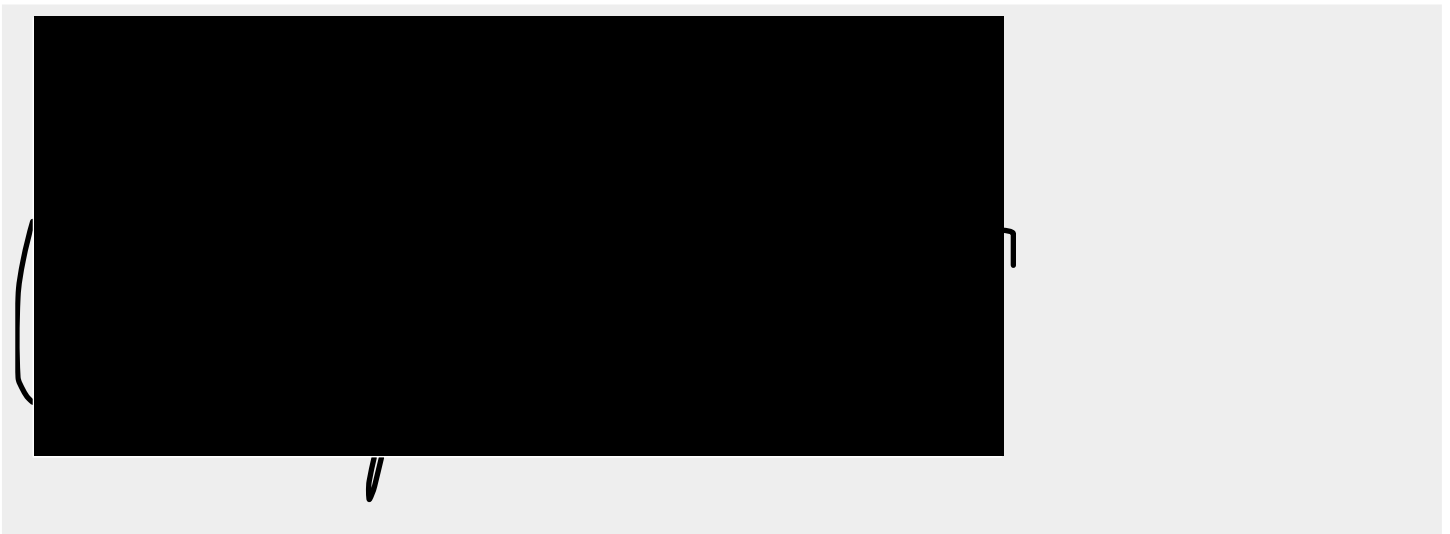
As outlined in ENTRY 10:

Our signatures (Executive Director/School Leader/Head of School and Board President) below attest that our school has reviewed, understands and will comply with the employee clearance and fingerprint requirements as outlined in Entry 10 and found in the [NYSED CSO Fingerprint Clearance Oct 2019 Memo](#). Click **YES** to agree.

Responses Selected:

Yes

Signature, Head of Charter School



Signature, President of the Board of Trustees



Date

Jul 28 2023



Thank you.

Entry 2 Links to Critical Documents on School Website

Completed - Aug 1 2023

Instructions

Required of ALL Charter Schools noting that SUNY-authorized charter schools are not required to submit item 5: Authorizer-approved DASA policy and NYSED-Approved School Discipline Policy

By law, each charter school is required to maintain certain notices and policies listed on its website. Please insert the link from the school's website for each of the items:

1. Current Annual Report (i.e., 2021-2022 Annual Report);[\[1\]](#)
2. Board meeting notices, agendas and documents;
3. New York State School Report Card;
4. Authorizer-approved DASA Policy and NYSED-Approved School Discipline Policy **(For Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE-Authorized Charter Schools ONLY)**;
5. District-wide safety plan, not a building level safety plan (as per the September 2021 [Emergency Response Plan Memo](#);
6. Authorizer-approved FOIL Policy; and
7. Subject matter list of FOIL records. (Example: See [NYSED Subject Matter List](#))

[\[1\]](#) Each charter school is required to make the Annual Report publicly available by August 1 and to post on their respective charter school website. Each school should post an updated and complete version to include

accountability data and financial statements that are not or may not be available until after the August deadline (i.e., Report when financials have been submitted in November.)

Form for Entry 2 Links to Critical Documents on School Website

School Name: Brownsville Ascend Charter School

Required of ALL Charter Schools noting that SUNY-authorized charter schools are not required to submit item

4: Authorizer-approved DASA policy and NYSED-Approved School Discipline Policy

By law, each charter school is required to maintain certain notices and policies listed on its website. Please insert the **link** from the school's website for each of the items:

[New York State Report Card](#)

[Emergency Response Plan Memo](#)

[NYSED Subject Matter List](#)

	Link to Documents
1. Current Annual Report (i.e., 2022-2023 Annual Report)	https://www.ascendlearning.org/governance
2. Board meeting notices, agendas and documents	https://www.ascendlearning.org/governance
3. New York State School Report Card	https://www.ascendlearning.org/governance
4. Authorizer-approved DASA Policy and NYSED-Approved School Discipline Policy (For Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE-Authorized Charter Schools ONLY)	
5. District-wide safety plan, not a building level safety plan (as per the September 2021 Emergency Response Plan Memo	https://www.ascendlearning.org/governance
6. Authorizer-approved FOIL Policy	https://www.ascendlearning.org/governance
7. Subject matter list of FOIL records. (Example: See NYSED Subject Matter List)	https://www.ascendlearning.org/governance

Thank you.



Entry 3 Progress Toward Goals

Incomplete - Hidden from applicant

Instructions

Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE-Authorized Charter Schools ONLY

The following tables reflect formatting in the online portal required for Board of Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE authorized charter schools only. These charter schools should report all Progress Toward Charter Goals as per their currently approved charters no later than **November 1, 2023**.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a required task, and it is marked optional for administrative purposes only.

Entry 3 Progress Toward Goals

PROGRESS TOWARD CHARTER GOALS

Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE-Authorized Charter Schools ONLY

Complete the tables provided. List each goal and measure as contained in the school's currently approved charter, and indicate whether the school has met or not met the goal. Please provide information for all goals no later than November 1, 2023.

1. ACADEMIC STUDENT PERFORMANCE GOALS

Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE-Authorized Charter Schools ONLY

The following tables reflect formatting in the online portal required for Board of Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE authorized charter schools only. These charter schools should report all Progress Toward Charter Goals as per their currently approved charters no later than **November 1, 2023**.

2022-2023 Progress Toward Attainment of Academic Goals

	Academic Student Performance Goal	Measure Used to Evaluate Progress Toward Attainment of Goal	Goal - Met, Not Met or Unable to Assess	If not met, describe efforts the school will take to meet goal. If unable to assess goal, type N/A for Not Applicable
Academic Goal 1				
Academic Goal 2				
Academic Goal 3				
Academic Goal 4				
Academic Goal 5				
Academic Goal 6				
Academic Goal 7				
Academic Goal 8				
Academic Goal 9				
Academic Goal 10				

2. Do have more academic goals to add?

(No response)

2022-2023 Progress Toward Attainment of Academic Goals

	Academic Student Performance Goal	Measure Used to Evaluate Progress Toward Attainment of Goal	Goal - Met, Not Met or Unable to Meet	If not met, describe efforts the school will take to meet goal. If unable to assess goal, type N/A for Not Applicable
Academic Goal 21				
Academic Goal 22				
Academic Goal 23				
Academic Goal 24				
Academic Goal 25				
Academic Goal 26				
Academic Goal 27				
Academic Goal 28				
Academic Goal 29				
Academic Goal 30				
Academic Goal 31				
Academic Goal 32				
Academic Goal 33				
Academic Goal 34				
Academic Goal 35				
Academic Goal 36				
Academic Goal 37				
Academic Goal 38				
Academic Goal 39				
Academic Goal 40				
Academic Goal 41				

Academic Goal 42				
Academic Goal 43				
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Academic Goal 59				
Academic Goal 60				
Academic Goal 61				
Academic Goal 62				
Academic Goal 63				
Academic Goal 64				
Academic Goal 65				
Academic Goal 66				
Academic Goal 67				
Academic Goal 59				

Academic Goal 60				
Academic Goal 61				
Academic Goal 62				

4. ORGANIZATION GOALS

For the 2022-2023 school year, any organization goals that cannot be evaluated due to school closure resulting in a lack of data and changes in testing, surveying, and other usual practices should be reported as “N/A”.

2022-2023 Progress Toward Attainment of Organization Goals

	Organizational Goal	Measure Used to Evaluate Progress	Goal - Met, Not Met, or Unable to Assess	If not met, describe efforts the school will take to meet goal. If unable to assess goal, type N/A for Not Applicable
Org Goal 1				
Org Goal 2				
Org Goal 3				
Org Goal 4				
Org Goal 5				
Org Goal 6				
Org Goal 7				
Org Goal 8				
Org Goal 9				
Org Goal 10				
Org Goal 11				
Org Goal 12				
Org Goal 13				
Org Goal 14				
Org Goal 15				
Org Goal 16				
Org Goal 17				
Org Goal 18				
Org Goal 19				
Org Goal 20				

5. Do have more organizational goals to add?

(No response)

6. FINANCIAL GOALS

2022-2023 Progress Toward Attainment of Financial Goals

	Financial Goals	Measure Used to Evaluate Progress	Goal - Met, Not Met, or Partially Met	If not met, describe efforts the school will take to meet goal.
Financial Goal 1				
Financial Goal 2				
Financial Goal 3				
Financial Goal 4				
Financial Goal 5				

7. Do have more financial goals to add?

(No response)

2021-2022 Progress Toward Attainment of Financial Goals

	Financial Goals	Measure Used to Evaluate Progress	Goal - Met, Not Met, or Partially Met	If not met, describe efforts the school will take to meet goal.
Financial Goal 6				
Financial Goal 7				
Financial Goal 8				
Financial Goal 9				
Financial Goal 10				

Thank you.

Entry 3 Accountability Plan Progress Reports

Completed - Nov 1 2023

Instructions

SUNY-Authorized Charter Schools ONLY- Complete Template and Upload to Epicenter

SUNY-authorized charter schools must download an Accountability Plan Progress Report template at [Accountability Plan Progress Report](#). After completing, SUNY-authorized charter schools must upload the document into the Annual Report Portal, **and** into the SUNY Epicenter document management system by September 15, 2023.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a required task, and it is marked optional for administrative purposes only.

Brownsville Ascend APPR 2023

Filename: Brownsville_Ascend_APPR_2023.docx Size: 173.7 kB

Entry 4 - Audited Financial Statements

Completed - Dec 4 2023

Required of ALL Charter Schools

ALL SUNY-authorized charter schools must upload the financial statements and related documents in PDF format into the [Annual Report Portal](#) and into the SUNY Epicenter document management system no later than **November 1, 2023**. **SUNY-authorized charter schools** are asked to ensure that security features such as password protection are turned off.

ALL Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE-authorized charter schools must upload final, audited financial statements to the [Annual Report Portal](#) no later than **November 1, 2023**. Upload the independent auditor's report, any advisory and/or management letter, and the internal controls report as one submission, combined into a PDF file, ensuring that security features such as password protections are removed from all school uploaded documents.

PLEASE NOTE: This task appears as visible and optional task in the online portal until August 1 2023 but will be identified as a required task thereafter and due on November 1, 2023. This is a required task, and it is marked optional for administrative purposes only.

Ascend Charter Schools FST with Mgmt Ltr

Filename: Ascend_Charter_Schools__FST_with_M_Q8aScNW.pdf Size: 891.6 kB

Entry 4a – Audited Financial Report Template (SUNY)

Completed - Dec 4 2023

Instructions - SUNY-Authorized Charter Schools ONLY

SUNY-authorized schools must download the Excel spreadsheet entitled “Audited Financial Statement Template” at <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/fiscal/>. After completing, schools must upload the document into the [Annual Report Portal](#) and into the SUNY Epicenter document management system no later than **November 1, 2023**.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a required task, and it is marked optional for administrative purposes only.

Brownsville Ascend-Audited-Financial-Statement-Template

Filename: Brownsville_Ascend-Audited-Financ_5MaOWiJ.xlsx Size: 175.0 kB

Entry 4b – Audited Financial Report Template (BOR/NYC/BOE)

Incomplete - Hidden from applicant

Instructions - Regents-Authorized Charter Schools ONLY

Regents-authorized schools must download and complete the Excel spreadsheet entitled "Audited Financial Report Template" from the online portal or the [2022-2023 Annual Reports](#) webpage. Upload the completed file in Excel format and submit by **November 1, 2023**.

Please complete one spreadsheet at the Education Corporation level and submit the same spreadsheet for each of the schools.

EDUCATION CORPORATIONS WITH MORE THAN ONE SCHOOL SHOULD COMPLETE THE EXCEL SPREADSHEET FOR THE EDUCATION CORPORATION AS A WHOLE, NOT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS. PLEASE SUBMIT THE SAME EXCEL SPREADSHEET FOR EACH OF THE SCHOOLS.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a required task, and it is marked optional for administrative purposes only.

Entry 4c – Additional Financial Documents

Incomplete - Hidden from applicant

Regents, NYCDOE and Buffalo BOE authorized schools must upload financial documents and submit by **November 1, 2023**. The items listed below should be uploaded, with an explanation if not applicable or available. For example, a "federal Single Audit was not required because the school did not expend federal funds of more than the \$750,000 Threshold."

1. Advisory and/or Management letter
2. Federal Single Audit
3. Agreed-Upon Procedure Report
4. Evidence of Required Escrow Account for each school^[1]
5. Corrective Action Plan for Audit Findings and Management Letter Recommendations

^[1] Note: For BOR schools chartered or renewed after the 2017-2018 school year, the escrow account per school is \$100,000.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a required task, and it is marked optional for administrative purposes only.

Entry 4d - Financial Contact Information

Incomplete - Hidden from applicant

Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE authorized schools should enter financial contact information directly into the form within the portal by **November 1, 2023**.

Form for "Financial Contact Information"

1. School Based Fiscal Contact Information

	School Based Fiscal Contact Name	School Based Fiscal Contact Email	School Based Fiscal Contact Phone

2. Audit Firm Contact Information

	School Audit Contact Name	School Audit Contact Email	School Audit Contact Phone	Years Working With This Audit Firm
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3. If applicable, please provide contact information for the school's outsourced financial services firm.

	Firm Name	Contact Person	Mailing Address	Email	Phone	Years With Firm

Entry 5 – Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget

Completed - Oct 18 2023

SUNY-authorized charter schools should download the [2023-2024 Budget and Quarterly Report Template and the 2023-2024 Budget Narrative Questionnaire](#) from the SUNY website and upload the completed templates into the Annual Report Portal and into the Epicenter document management system. **Due November 1, 2023.**

Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE authorized charter schools should upload a copy of the school's FY22 Budget using the [2023-2024 Budget Template](#) into the Annual Report Portal or from the Annual Report website. **Due November 1, 2023.**

The Assumptions column should be completed for all revenue and expense items unless the item is self-explanatory. Where applicable, reference the page number or section in the application narrative that indicates the assumption being made. For instance, student enrollment would reference the applicable page number in Section I, C of the application narrative.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a required task, and it is marked optional for administrative purposes only.

[2023-24 Budget-Narrative-Questionnaire Final](#)

Filename: 2023-24_Budget-Narrative-Questionn_rRvVM1H.pdf Size: 38.4 kB

[2023-24 Budget and Quarterly Report Template Brownsville](#)

Filename: 2023-24_Budget_and_Quarterly_Repo_3e6ZCWc.xlsx Size: 527.0 kB

Entry 6 – Board of Trustees Disclosure of Financial Interest Form

Completed - Aug 1 2023

Required of ALL Charter Schools

Each member of the charter school's Board of Trustees who served on a charter school education corporation governing one or more charter schools for any period during the 2022-2023 school year must complete and sign a Trustee [Disclosure of Financial Interest Form](#) is due on August 1, 2023. Acceptable signature formats include:

- Digitally certified PDF signature (i.e., DocuSign)
- Manual signature (1. download to print, 2. manually sign, 3. scan signed document to PDF, and 4. upload into portal)

All completed forms must be collected and uploaded in .PDF format for each individual member. **The education corporation is responsible for ensuring that each member who served on the board during the 2022-2023 school year completes the form.**

Charter schools **must** submit the latest version of the form. Forms completed from past years will not be accepted.

Trustees serving on an education corporation that governs more than one school are not required to complete a separate disclosure for each school governed by the education corporation. In the Trustee Disclosure of Financial Interest Form, trustees must disclose information relevant to any of the schools served by the governing education corporation.

[Disclosure of Financial Interest Forms Signed by BOT](#)

Entry 7 BOT Membership Table

Completed - Aug 1 2023

Instructions

Required of ALL charter schools

ALL charter schools or education corporations governing multiple schools must complete the Board of Trustees Membership Table within the online portal. Please be sure to include and identify parents who are members of the Board of Trustees and indicate whether parents are voting or non-voting members.

Entry 7 BOT Table

1. SUNY-AUTHORIZED charter schools are required to provide information for VOTING Trustees only.
2. REGENTS, NYCDOE, and BUFFALO BOE-AUTHORIZED charter schools are required to provide information for all --VOTING and NON-VOTING-- trustees.

Authorizer:

Who is the authorizer of your charter school?

SUNY

1. 2022-2023 Board Member Information (Enter info for each BOT member)

	Trustee Name	Trustee Email Address	Position on the Board	Committee Affiliations	Voting Member Per By-Laws (Y/N)	Number of Completed Terms Served	Start Date of Current Term (MM/DD/YYYY)	End Date of Current Term (MM/DD/YYYY)	Board Meetings Attended During 2022- 2023
1	Emmanuel Fordjour	[REDACTED]	Secretary	Academic Committee	Yes	2	7/1/2022	6/30/2025	9
2	Gamal Walker	[REDACTED]	Trustee/ Member	Academic Committee; Finance Committee	Yes	2	7/1/2022	6/30/2025	7
3	Jackie Wilson	[REDACTED]	Trustee/ Member	Hiring Committee; Nominating Committee	Yes	2	7/1/2022	6/30/2025	10
4	Janai Jeter	[REDACTED]	Trustee/ Member	Academic Committee; Hiring Committee; Nominating Committee	Yes	2	7/1/2022	6/30/2025	10
5	Nadine Sylvester	[REDACTED]	Chair	Academic Committee	Yes	5	7/1/2022	6/30/2023	10

6	Stanley Taylor	[REDACTED]	Vice Chair	Academic Committee; Finance Committee	Yes	3	7/1/2022	6/30/2023	11
7	Shelly Cleary	[REDACTED]	Treasurer	Academic Committee; Finance Committee	Yes	5	7/1/2022	05/17/2023	9
8									
9									

1a. Are there more than 9 members of the Board of Trustees?

No

2. INFORMATION ABOUT MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. SUNY-AUTHORIZED charter schools provide response relative to VOTING Trustees only.
2. REGENTS, NYCDOE, and BUFFALO BOE-AUTHORIZED charter schools provide a response relative to all trustees.

a. Total Number of BOT Members on June 30, 2023	4
b.Total Number of Members Added During 2022-2023	0
c. Total Number of Members who Departed during 2022-2023	3
d.Total Number of members, as set in Bylaws, Resolution or Minutes	7

3. Number of Board meetings held during 2022-2023

12

4. Number of Board meetings scheduled for 2023-2024

12

Total number of Voting Members on June 30, 2023:

4

Total number of Voting Members added during the 2022-2023 school year:

0

Total number of Voting Members who departed during the 2022-2023 school year:

3

Total Maximum Number of Voting members in 2022-2023, as set by the board in bylaws, resolution, or minutes:

7

Thank you.

Entry 8 Board Meeting Minutes

Completed - Aug 1 2023 - Hidden from applicant

Instructions - Required of Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE Authorized Schools ONLY

Schools must upload a complete set of monthly board meeting minutes (July 2022-June 2023), which should match the number of meetings held during the 2022-2023 school year, as indicated in the above table. The minutes

provided must be the final version approved by the school's Board of Trustees and may be uploaded individually or as one single combined file. Board meeting minutes must be submitted by **August 1, 2023**.

[Board Meeting Minutes SY22-23](#)

Filename: Board_Meeting_Minutes_SY22-23.pdf **Size:** 1.7 MB

Entry 9 Enrollment & Retention

Completed - Aug 1 2023

[Instructions for submitting Enrollment and Retention Efforts](#)

Required of ALL Charter Schools

Describe the good faith efforts the charter school has made in 2022-2023 toward meeting targets to attract and retain the enrollment of Students with Disabilities (SWDs), English Language Learners (ELLs), and students who are economically disadvantaged. In addition, describe the school's plans for meeting or making progress toward meeting its enrollment and retention targets in 2023-2024.

***SUNY-authorized charter schools**

The education corporation must include a plan for the charter to meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets established by the SUNY Trustees for students with disabilities, ELLs, and students who are eligible to participate in the FRPL program. See the [enrollment and retention target calculator](#) to find specific targets.

Entry 9 Enrollment and Retention of Special Populations

Good Faith Efforts to Meet Recruitment Targets (Attract)

	Describe Recruitment Efforts in 2022-2023	Describe Recruitment Plans in 2023-2024
Economically Disadvantaged	<p>In school year 2022-23, our strategy focused on improving recruitment and increasing yield.</p> <p>Communication with potential applicants and current families is the foundation of Ascend's approach to student recruitment. School and network staff work together closely to recruit and retain students. School staff bring a deep understanding of each respective community, creating a local, grassroots recruitment structure through which school leaders leverage their familiarity with families. The network's Student Recruitment and Enrollment team also conducts focus groups with families and students to understand perspectives on Ascend and amplify the strengths noted by our families to the broader community.</p> <p>The network's Student Recruitment and Enrollment team provides infrastructure support for recruitment activities; they create marketing materials, guide systematic outreach efforts, and coordinate with school leaders to arrange events. Ascend Charter Schools maintains an engaging website where families can learn about Ascend's mission and core values and gain more information about curriculum and school culture. Beyond the website, Ascend uses several social media tools to keep families informed and engaged. We use a variety of digital, audio, print, and mailing ads</p>	<p>In school year 2023-24 we will continue to implement our current recruitment strategies and remain flexible and innovative in the way in which we ensure that these populations make up a significant portion of our applications. Ascend Public Charter Schools remains committed to serving all students, regardless of ability, English language learner (ELL) status, or economic disadvantage. We will continue to focus on improving recruitment and increasing yield.</p> <p>Communication with potential applicants and current families is the foundation of Ascend's approach to student recruitment. School and network staff work together closely to recruit and retain students. School staff bring a deep understanding of each respective community, creating a local, grassroots recruitment structure through which school leaders leverage their familiarity with families. The network's Student Recruitment and Enrollment team also conducts focus groups with families and students to understand perspectives on Ascend and amplify the strengths noted by our families to the broader community.</p> <p>The network's Student Recruitment and Enrollment team provides infrastructure support for recruitment activities; they create marketing materials, guide systematic outreach</p>

to promote Ascend schools, advertising on buses, in newspapers, through direct mailing, and at local community events.

To increase yield, the team has expanded its support to families to guide them through the application process, including individual calls, emails, and text messages to families to answer their questions, verify required documents, and help them enroll with Ascend. Schools also send welcome emails, hold tours, and host yield events. For the 2022-23 school year, the student registration process was updated to align with Ascend's DEIA efforts by modifying the phrasing of certain questions, application requirements, and application explanations.

Within this recruitment strategy, Ascend takes steps to reach out to parents of students in special populations in particular and support them in enrolling their children at Ascend schools.

To improve outreach to and communication with families of ELL students, the Student Recruitment and Enrollment team creates and circulates marketing materials in three languages that are dominant among non-English speakers in the communities Ascend serves: Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Bengali. Materials produced in multiple languages include school signage, social media marketing, printed collateral, outdoor advertising, and our student application. Community outreach associates who speak Spanish and Haitian Creole are available to assist

efforts, and coordinate with school leaders to arrange events. Ascend Charter Schools maintains an engaging website where families can learn about Ascend's mission and core values and gain more information about curriculum and school culture. Beyond the website, Ascend uses several social media tools to keep families informed and engaged. We use a variety of digital, audio, print, and mailing ads to promote Ascend schools, advertising on buses, in newspapers, through direct mailing, and at local community events.

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Ascend distributes marketing materials that share our services for students with IEPs. A succinct one-page flyer explains what supports families can expect if they enroll their child in an Ascend school. The Student Recruitment and Enrollment team maintains contact with local early childhood education centers, after-school programs, family medical centers, shelters, and community centers to connect with families of economically disadvantaged students.

Ascend's Student Recruitment and Enrollment team adapted its recruiting efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic. The team held virtual information sessions for interested families, created virtual tour videos, and replaced door-to-door canvassing with phone calls. In the absence of in-person events, Ascend reallocated resources to follow up with applicants from the past two years who are not attending Ascend schools. These adaptations have enabled us to maintain a robust enrollment pipeline even through the difficulties of the pandemic.

Economically disadvantaged residents constitute the highest population concentration in the neighborhoods surrounding Ascend schools. We expect that through the

	<p>efforts outlined above, we will continue reaching and recruiting from this population. This is particularly important following the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had large negative effects on economically disadvantaged families.</p>	
English Language Learners	<p>In school year 2022-23, our strategy focused on improving recruitment and increasing yield.</p> <p>Communication with potential applicants and current families is the foundation of Ascend's approach to student recruitment. School and network staff work together closely to recruit and retain students. School staff bring a deep understanding of each respective community, creating a local, grassroots recruitment structure through which school leaders leverage their familiarity with families. The network's Student Recruitment and Enrollment team also conducts focus groups with families and students to understand perspectives on Ascend and amplify the strengths noted by our families to the broader community.</p> <p>The network's Student Recruitment and Enrollment team provides infrastructure support for recruitment activities; they create marketing materials, guide systematic outreach efforts, and coordinate with school leaders to arrange events. Ascend Charter Schools maintains an engaging website where families can learn about Ascend's mission</p>	<p>In school year 2023-24 we will continue to implement our current recruitment strategies and remain flexible and innovative in the way in which we ensure that these populations make up a significant portion of our applications. Ascend Public Charter Schools remains committed to serving all students, regardless of ability, English language learner (ELL) status, or economic disadvantage. We will continue to focus on improving recruitment and increasing yield.</p> <p>Communication with potential applicants and current families is the foundation of Ascend's approach to student recruitment. School and network staff work together closely to recruit and retain students. School staff bring a deep understanding of each respective community, creating a local, grassroots recruitment structure through which school leaders leverage their familiarity with families. The network's Student Recruitment and Enrollment team also conducts focus groups with families and students to understand perspectives on Ascend and amplify the strengths noted by our families to the broader community.</p>

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Students with Disabilities	<p>In school year 2022-23, our strategy focused on improving recruitment and increasing yield.</p> <p>Communication with potential applicants and current families is the foundation of Ascend's approach to student recruitment. School and network staff work together closely to recruit and retain students. School staff bring a deep understanding of each respective</p>	<p>In school year 2023-24 we will continue to implement our current recruitment strategies and remain flexible and innovative in the way in which we ensure that these populations make up a significant portion of our applications. Ascend Public Charter Schools remains committed to serving all students, regardless of ability, English language learner (ELL) status, or economic disadvantage. We will</p>

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Good Faith Efforts To Meet Enrollment Retention Targets

	Describe Retention Efforts in 2022-2023	Describe Retention Plans in 2023-2024
Economically Disadvantaged	<p>Ascend's most important assets for retaining students from special populations are the continued use of robust programs for at-risk populations, the capable staff that support these programs, and the school's strong reputation among families and stakeholders. Once families join Ascend and for those who will remain with us, we maintain our commitment to serving their diverse needs. Ascend is committed to creating an inclusive and integrated space for all students, and we have developed systems and procedures that target and support students with academic, emotional, and behavioral challenges. Our goal is to ensure that students with challenges are educated alongside their typically developing peers. Through our intervention programming, we are able to provide comprehensive support to students even before they receive an IEP. Our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) team develops plans to support students who are struggling academically through Tier I and Tier II interventions. If these plans are not effective and parents consent to evaluation, the CSE evaluates the student to determine if they have a disability. Ascend employs innovative strategies to support our diverse learners in a remote environment while providing parents with knowledge and skills to buttress the learnings and methods at home.</p>	<p>In school year 2023-24, we will continue to implement our current retention strategies and enhance them, to ensure that these populations make up a significant portion of our applications.</p> <p>Ascend's most important assets for retaining students from special populations are the continued use of robust programs for at-risk populations, the capable staff that support these programs, and the school's strong reputation among families and stakeholders. Once families join Ascend and for those who will remain with us, we maintain our commitment to serving their diverse needs. Ascend is committed to creating an inclusive and integrated space for all students, and we have developed systems and procedures that target and support students with academic, emotional, and behavioral challenges. Our goal is to ensure that students with challenges are educated alongside their typically developing peers. Through our intervention programming, we are able to provide comprehensive support to students even before they receive an IEP. Our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) team develops plans to support students who are struggling academically through Tier I and Tier II interventions. If these plans are not effective and parents consent to evaluation, the CSE evaluates the</p>

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English Language Learners	<p>Ascend's most important assets for retaining students from special populations are the continued use of robust programs for at-risk populations, the capable staff that support these programs, and the school's strong reputation among families and stakeholders. Once families join Ascend and for those who will remain with us, we maintain our commitment to serving their diverse needs. Ascend is committed to creating an inclusive and integrated space for all students, and we have developed systems and procedures that support multilingual learners.</p> <p>Ascend schools aim to train all teachers on techniques for detecting new English Language Learners and on communicating with students designated as an MLL to ensure the faculty are equipped to apply these skills. The school tests any student thought to have limited English proficiency to determine whether services are appropriate. The student support advisory team is careful to ensure that English language learners are not inappropriately designated as having special education needs; they document how long the student has been in the country and investigate whether any language challenges are related to typical MLL stages of development.</p>	<p>Ascend's most important assets for retaining students from special populations are the continued use of robust programs for at-risk populations, the capable staff that support these programs, and the school's strong reputation among families and stakeholders. Once families join Ascend and for those who will remain with us, we maintain our commitment to serving their diverse needs. Ascend is committed to creating an inclusive and integrated space for all students, and we have developed systems and procedures that support multilingual learners.</p> <p>Ascend schools aim to train all teachers on techniques for detecting new English Language Learners and on communicating with students designated as an MLL to ensure the faculty are equipped to apply these skills. The school tests any student thought to have limited English proficiency to determine whether services are appropriate. The student support advisory team is careful to ensure that English language learners are not inappropriately designated as having special education needs; they document how long the student has been in the country and investigate whether any language challenges are related to typical MLL stages of development.</p>

Ascend uses the state education department's process for identifying students who are MLLs, employing an approved Home Language Questionnaire to screen all new students for potential limited English proficiency. If the student's home or native language is not English, staff conduct an informal interview in the student's home language and in English. If the student speaks only a language other than English, the school administers the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL). A score below the designated cut score for the student determines eligibility for services. In accordance with state and federal regulations, testing and program placement occur within 30 days of school opening for those students who are enrolled on the first day of school and within 15 days for students who are enrolled after the first day of school.

The schools use ENL methodology and aspects of the general education curriculum, designed to focus on phonics, reading, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and other English language fundamentals. Students are placed in English language instruction using the Freestanding ENL Program, where they are educated alongside other ELLs. The school determines each student's exit based on individual students' needs and in accordance with SED requirements.

A key focus of the ENL program is improving students' ability not only

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A key focus of the ENL program is improving students' ability not only

	<p>to speak and understand spoken English, but also to read and write in the language. This enables students to advance quickly to a level of proficiency at which they can successfully complete grade-level coursework in English. The cognitive level or grade appropriateness of the content is not altered. Ascend ENL teachers work collaboratively with general education and special education teachers, who receive professional development to help them communicate with students designated as ELL. The school meets the English language development requirement by having the ENL teacher work with all ELLs on a pull-out basis or push in basis based on their proficiency level.</p> <p>In accordance with federal law, the school does not exclude ELLs from curricular and extracurricular activities because of their inability to speak and understand the language of instruction. In addition, the school does not assign national-origin minority students to classes for the disabled because of their lack of English skills. Notices and other information are distributed in languages that families with limited English proficiency can understand.</p>	<p>to speak and understand spoken English, but also to read and write in the language. This enables students to advance quickly to a level of proficiency at which they can successfully complete grade-level coursework in English. The cognitive level or grade appropriateness of the content is not altered. Ascend ENL teachers work collaboratively with general education and special education teachers, who receive professional development to help them communicate with students designated as ELL. The school meets the English language development requirement by having the ENL teacher work with all ELLs on a pull-out basis or push in basis based on their proficiency level.</p> <p>In accordance with federal law, the school does not exclude ELLs from curricular and extracurricular activities because of their inability to speak and understand the language of instruction. In addition, the school does not assign national-origin minority students to classes for the disabled because of their lack of English skills. Notices and other information are distributed in languages that families with limited English proficiency can understand.</p>
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diverse needs. Ascend is committed to creating an inclusive and integrated space for all students, and we have developed systems and procedures that target and support students with academic, emotional, and behavioral challenges.

Our goal is to ensure that students with challenges are educated alongside their typically developing peers. Through our intervention programming, we are able to begin providing comprehensive support to students even before they receive an IEP. Ascend leverages Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to provide early intervention for students experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties to ensure we are not overidentifying students with disabilities. Students receive interventions within the general education (Tier I) or small-group pull-out (Tier II) settings. Only those students whose challenges persist through these interventions are considered for evaluation for special education (Tier III) services. If the MTSS team, including the family, agrees on this step, the CSE conducts an evaluation to determine if the student has a disability.

For students entering with an existing IEP, the school directly provides services as outlined in the IEP approved by the CSE of the student's district of residence. The school provides Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS), Integrated Co-teaching (ICT), and school counseling. The school arranges the provision of related services, and contracts with related

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	<p>service providers through the CSE.</p> <p>SETSS is a service through which students with disabilities are educated in the general education setting with small-group, pull-out, or push-in support. In this way, they receive targeted and individualized support while remaining in their least restrictive environment.</p> <p>ICT is a model through which students with disabilities are educated with their peers in the general education classroom, with the full-time support of a special education teacher to assist in adapting and modifying instruction. In this co-teaching model, the general education students also benefit from smaller-group instruction and modification throughout the day.</p>	<p>service providers through the CSE.</p> <p>SETSS is a service through which students with disabilities are educated in the general education setting with small-group, pull-out, or push-in support. In this way, they receive targeted and individualized support while remaining in their least restrictive environment.</p> <p>ICT is a model through which students with disabilities are educated with their peers in the general education classroom, with the full-time support of a special education teacher to assist in adapting and modifying instruction. In this co-teaching model, the general education students also benefit from smaller-group instruction and modification throughout the day.</p>
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Entry 10 – Teacher and Administrator Attrition

Completed - Aug 1 2023

Form for "Entry 10 – Teacher and Administrator Attrition" Revised to Employee Fingerprint Requirements Attestation

A. TEACH System – Employee Clearance

Required of ALL Charter Schools

Charter schools must ensure that all prospective employees^[1] receive clearance through [the NYSED Office of School Personnel Review and Accountability](#) (OSPRA) prior to employment. **This includes paraprofessionals and other school personnel who are provided or assigned by the district of location, or related/contracted service providers.** After an employee has been cleared, schools are required to maintain proof of such clearance in the file of each employee. For the safety of all students, charter schools must take immediate steps to terminate the employment of individuals who have been denied clearance. Once the employees have been terminated, the school must terminate the request for clearance in the TEACH system.

In the Annual Report, charter schools are asked to confirm that all employees have been cleared through the NYSED TEACH system; and, if denied clearance, confirm that the individual or employee has been removed from the TEACH system, and is not employed by the school.

1. Emergency Conditional Clearances

Charter schools are **strongly discouraged** from using the emergency conditional clearance provisions for prospective employees. This is because the school must request clearance through NYSED TEACH, and the school's emergency conditional clearance of the employee terminates automatically once the school receives notification from NYSED regarding the clearance request. Status notification is provided for all prospective employees through the NYSED TEACH portal within 48 hours after the clearance request is submitted. Therefore, at most, a school's emergency conditional clearance will be valid for only 48 hours after approval by the board.

Schools are not permitted to renew or in any way re-establish a prospective employee's emergency conditional clearance after status notification is sent by NYSED through the TEACH portal.

Schools are asked to attest that they have reviewed and understand these requirements. More information can be found in the memo at [NYSED CSO Employee Clearance and Fingerprint Memo 10-2019](#).

^[1] Employees who must be cleared include, but are not limited to, teachers, administrative staff, janitors, security personnel and cafeteria workers, and other staff who are present when children are in the school building. **This includes paraprofessionals and other school personnel that are provided or assigned by the district of location, as well as related/contracted service providers.** See NYSED memorandum dated October 1, 2019 at <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/charter-schools/employeeefingerprintoct19.pdf> or visit the NYSED website at: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tsei/ospra/fingerprintingcharts.html> for more information regarding who must be fingerprinted. Also see, 8 NYCRR §87.2.

B. Emergency Conditional Clearances

Emergency Conditional Clearances

Charter schools are **strongly discouraged** from using the emergency conditional clearance provisions for prospective employees. This is because the school must request clearance through NYSED TEACH, and the school's emergency conditional clearance of the employee terminates automatically once the school receives notification from NYSED regarding the clearance request. Status notification is provided for all prospective employees through the NYSED TEACH portal within 48 hours after the clearance request is submitted. Therefore, at most, a school's emergency conditional clearance will be valid for only 48 hours after approval by the board.

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Attestation

Responses Selected:

I hereby attest that the school has reviewed, understands, and will comply with these requirements.

Entry 11 Percent of Uncertified Teachers

Incomplete - Hidden from applicant

Instructions

Required of Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE Authorized Charter Schools ONLY

The table below reflects the information collected through the online portal for compliance with New York State Education Law 2854(3)(a-1) for teaching staff qualifications. Uncertified teachers are those not certified pursuant to the State Certification Requirements established by the NYSED Commissioner of Education.

Enter the relevant full-time equivalent (FTE) count of teachers in each column. For example, a school with 20 full-time teachers and 5 half-time teachers would have an FTE count of 22.5.

Entry 11 Uncertified Teachers

School Name:

Instructions for Reporting Percent of Uncertified Teachers

Required of Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE Authorized Charter Schools ONLY

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If more than one line applies to a teacher, please include in only one FTE uncertified category. Please do not include paraprofessionals, such as teacher aides.

CATEGORY A. 30% OR 5 UNCERTIFIED TEACHERS WHICHEVER IS LESS

	FTE Count
i. FTE count of uncertified teacher with at least three years of elementary, middle or secondary classroom teaching experience (as of June 30, 2023)	
ii. FTE count of uncertified teachers who are tenured or tenure track college faculty (as of June 30, 2023)	
iii. FTE count of uncertified teachers with two years of Teach for America experience (as of June 30, 2023)	
iv. FTE count of uncertified teachers with exceptional business, professional, artistic, athletic, or military experience (as June 30, 2023)	
Total Category A: 5 or 30% whichever is less	0

CATEGORY B. PLUS FIVE UNCERTIFIED TEACHERS IN MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, COMPUTER SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY OR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

	FTE Count
i. Mathematics	
ii. Science	
iii. Computer Science	
iv. Technology	
v. Career and Technical Education	
Total Category B: not to exceed 5	0

CATEGORY C: PLUS 5 ADDITIONAL UNCERTIFIED TEACHERS

	FTE Count
i. FTE count of uncertified teacher with at least three years of elementary, middle or secondary classroom teaching experience (as of June 30, 2023)	
ii. FTE count of uncertified teachers who are tenured or tenure track college faculty (as of June 30, 2023)	
iii. FTE count of uncertified teachers with two years of Teach for America experience (as of June 30, 2023)	
iv. FTE count of uncertified teachers with exceptional business, professional, artistic, athletic, or military experience (as June 30, 2023)	
Total Category C: not to exceed 5	0

TOTAL FTE COUNT OF UNCERTIFIED TEACHERS (Sum of Categories A, B AND C)

(Include teachers who do not fit in one of these categories or if did fit would exceed the numerical limits for that category)

	FTE Count
Total	

CATEGORY D: TOTAL FTE COUNT OF UNCATEGORIZED, UNCERTIFIED TEACHERS

(Include teachers who do not fit in one of these categories or if did fit would exceed the numerical limits for that category)

	FTE Count
Total Category D	

CATEGORY E: TOTAL FTE COUNT OF CERTIFIED TEACHERS

	FTE Count
Total Category E	

CATEGORY F: TOTAL FTE COUNT OF ALL TEACHERS

Please do not include paraprofessionals, such as teacher aides.

	FTE Count
Total Category F	



Thank you.

Entry 12 Organization Chart

Incomplete - Hidden from applicant

[Instructions](#)

Required of Regents, NYCDOE, and Buffalo BOE Authorized Charter Schools ONLY

Upload the 2022-2023 **Organization Chart**. The organization chart should be a graphic representation (A list will not be accepted.) and should include position titles and reporting (hierarchical) relationships. Employee names should **not** appear on the chart.

Entry 13 School Calendar

Completed - Aug 1 2023

[Instructions for submitting School Calendar](#)

Required of ALL Charter Schools

If the charter school has a tentative calendar based on available information and guidance at the time, please submit with the August 1, 2023 submission. Charter schools must upload a final school calendar into the portal and may do so at any time but no later than **September 15, 2023**.

School calendars must meet the [minimum instructional requirements](#) as required of other public schools "... *unless the school's charter requires more instructional time than is required under the regulations.*"

Board of Regents-authorized charter schools also are required to submit school calendars that clearly indicate the start and end date of the instructional year AND the number of instructional hours and/or instructional days for each month (also used to align to schools with extended days/years referenced in their mission statements/key design elements). See an example of a calendar showing the requested information. Schools **must** use a calendar format and ensure there is a monthly tally of instructional days.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a required task, and it is marked optional for administrative purposes only.

K-12 Academic Calendar SY 22-23

Filename: K-12_Academic_Calendar_SY_22-23_hXkRvpp.pdf Size: 15.3 kB

Entry 14 Staff Roster

Incomplete - Hidden from applicant

INSTRUCTIONS

Required of Regents and NYCDOE-authorized Charter Schools ONLY

Please click on the MS Excel [Faculty/Staff Roster Template](#) and provide the following information for **ANY and ALL** instructional and non-instructional employees (all faculty and staff employed by the school during the 2022-2023 school year).

Use of the 2022-2023 Annual Report Faculty/Staff Roster Template is required. Each of the data elements, with the exception of the Notes, are required, and use of the drop-down options, when provided, is also required.

Reminders: Please use the Notes section provided to add any additional information as deemed necessary. Failure to adhere to the guidelines and validations in the Faculty/Staff Roster Template will result in a resubmission of a fully corrected roster.

Here is the complete list of data elements in the roster template and an explanation of what information is required to correctly complete this task.

Roster Data Elements	Explanations
Authorizer	Select your school's authorizer from the drop-down list first , before completing the roster.
NOTE: MUST BE DONE FIRST	
School Name and Institution ID	Select your school's name from the drop-down list .
Faculty/Staff First Name	Enter the first name of the Faculty/Staff person.
Faculty/Staff Last Name	Enter the last name of the Faculty/Staff person.
TEACH ID	Enter the 7 digit TEACH ID for the Faculty/Staff person.
Role in School	Select the best choice of role of the Faculty/Staff person from the drop-down list .

CPR/AED Certification Status	Select the appropriate choice from the drop-down list .
Hire Date	Enter the date that the Faculty/Staff person was hired.
Start Date	Enter the date that the Faculty/Staff person actually began employment in this school.
Total Years' Experience in this Role	Enter Total Years of Experience that the Faculty/Staff person has in their current role.
Total Years at this School	Enter the Total Years that the Faculty/Staff person has been employed in this school.
Out-of-Certification Justification	Select the appropriate choice from the drop-down list .
Subject Taught	Select the appropriate choice from the drop-down list .
Notes	Optional

Optional Additional Documents to Upload (BOR)

Incomplete

Ascend Charter Schools

Financial Statements and
Uniform Guidance Schedules
Together With Independent Auditors' Reports

June 30, 2023 and 2022

Ascend Charter Schools
Financial Statements and
Uniform Guidance Schedules
Together With Independent Auditors' Reports

June 30, 2023 and 2022

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Independent Auditors' Report

Board of Trustees
Ascend Charter Schools

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Ascend Charter Schools (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statements of financial position as of June 30, 2023 and 2022, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Ascend Charter Schools as of June 30, 2023 and 2022, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of Ascend Charter Schools and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Change in Accounting Policy

As discussed in Note 2 to the financial statements, Ascend Charter Schools adopted Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") Topic 842, *Leases*, which resulted in the recognition of right of use assets and related lease liabilities effective July 1, 2022. Our opinion is not modified with respect to that matter.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Ascend Charter Schools' ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards*, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Ascend Charter Schools' internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Ascend Charter Schools' ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

Report on Supplementary Information

Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The accompanying schedules of activities and functional expenses by school, for the year ended June 30, 2023 on pages 20 through 29 are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements. The accompanying schedule of expenditures of federal awards on pages 30 and 31 as required by Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*, is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Other Reporting Required by *Government Auditing Standards*

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated November 28, 2023, on our consideration of Ascend Charter Schools' internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of Ascend Charter Schools' internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering Ascend Charter Schools' internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

[REDACTED]

Harrison, New York
November 28, 2023

Ascend Charter Schools

Statements of Financial Position

	June 30,	
	2023	2022
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 9,575,298	\$ 12,128,307
Certificates of deposit	7,674,900	15,013,898
Grants and contracts receivable	15,994,676	10,274,467
Due from related party	4,675,447	2,468,211
Prepaid expenses	186,955	590,625
Total Current Assets	38,107,276	40,475,508
Right of use assets - operating leases, net	369,024,004	-
Property and equipment, net	16,776,732	14,933,943
Security deposits	549,030	532,545
Restricted cash	325,451	325,296
	<u>\$ 424,782,493</u>	<u>\$ 56,267,292</u>
 LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 2,222,279	\$ 3,563,036
Accrued payroll and payroll taxes	4,701,122	4,129,421
Refundable advances	306,372	1,790,602
Loan payable, current portion	145,572	136,774
Operating lease liabilities, current portion	15,411,567	-
Deferred rent, current portion	-	1,931,928
Due to related party	1,480,749	4,187,541
Total Current Liabilities	24,267,661	15,739,302
Loan payable	1,802,184	1,939,040
Operating lease liabilities	384,791,872	-
Deferred rent	-	28,355,955
Total Liabilities	410,861,717	46,034,297
Net assets, without donor restrictions	<u>13,920,776</u>	<u>10,232,995</u>
	<u>\$ 424,782,493</u>	<u>\$ 56,267,292</u>

See notes to financial statements

Ascend Charter Schools

Statements of Activities

	Year Ended June 30,	
	2023	2022
OPERATING REVENUE		
State and local per pupil operating revenue		
General and special education	\$ 108,329,707	\$ 106,041,716
Facilities	16,385,234	14,237,165
Federal grants	14,520,848	14,223,586
Federal E-Rate and IDEA	3,359,710	2,132,471
State grants	614,703	572,852
	<u>143,210,202</u>	<u>137,207,790</u>
EXPENSES		
Program Services		
Regular education	103,384,132	92,689,844
Special education	17,150,413	19,232,277
Total Program Services	120,534,545	111,922,121
Supporting Services		
Management and general	25,410,975	23,743,462
	<u>145,945,520</u>	<u>135,665,583</u>
(Deficit) Surplus from Operations	<u>(2,735,318)</u>	<u>1,542,207</u>
SUPPORT AND OTHER REVENUE		
Contributions from Ascend Learning, Inc.	3,500,000	-
Contributions and private grants	201,066	6,940
Rental income	68,831	200,000
Interest and other revenue	544,219	26,952
Gain on transfer of lease to related party	2,108,983	-
Total Support and Other Revenue	<u>6,423,099</u>	<u>233,892</u>
Change in Net Assets	3,687,781	1,776,099
NET ASSETS, WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS		
Beginning of year	<u>10,232,995</u>	<u>8,456,896</u>
End of year	<u>\$ 13,920,776</u>	<u>\$ 10,232,995</u>

See notes to financial statements

Ascend Charter Schools

Statement of Functional Expenses Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	125	\$ 6,151,128	\$ 1,130,531	\$ 7,281,659	\$ 6,369,681	\$ 13,651,340
Instructional personnel	521	40,429,336	6,470,731	46,900,067	-	46,900,067
Non-instructional personnel	22	-	-	-	357,747	357,747
Total Personnel Services Costs	668	46,580,464	7,601,262	54,181,726	6,727,428	60,909,154
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		8,923,585	1,648,255	10,571,840	1,444,817	12,016,657
Professional fees		817,112	149,805	966,917	1,062,976	2,029,893
Management fees		5,912,285	905,135	6,817,420	9,810,430	16,627,850
Consultants - education		4,077,444	38,810	4,116,254	-	4,116,254
Legal fees		-	-	-	1,304	1,304
Curriculum and classroom supplies		3,625,495	494,697	4,120,192	-	4,120,192
Office supplies		-	-	-	716,212	716,212
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		255,338	50,653	305,991	43,617	349,608
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		598,069	113,108	711,177	100,122	811,299
Communications		3,583,763	649,211	4,232,974	592,781	4,825,755
Occupancy		22,028,914	4,320,270	26,349,184	3,803,451	30,152,635
Insurance		590,136	111,912	702,048	97,975	800,023
Repairs and maintenance		1,037,344	156,744	1,194,088	163,168	1,357,256
Security		1,425	316	1,741	266	2,007
Marketing and recruiting		229,726	42,723	272,449	34,073	306,522
Staff development		972,964	99,679	1,072,643	101,643	1,174,286
Travel and meals		393,815	75,228	469,043	65,951	534,994
Postage, printing and copying		57,972	9,940	67,912	9,777	77,689
Dues and subscriptions		635,955	123,145	759,100	106,157	865,257
Depreciation and amortization		2,968,280	537,387	3,505,667	502,315	4,007,982
Interest		94,046	22,133	116,179	19,171	135,350
Miscellaneous		-	-	-	7,341	7,341
Total Expenses		\$ 103,384,132	\$ 17,150,413	\$ 120,534,545	\$ 25,410,975	\$ 145,945,520

See notes to financial statements

Ascend Charter Schools

Statement of Functional Expenses Year Ended June 30, 2022

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	125	\$ 4,637,986	\$ 1,082,502	\$ 5,720,488	\$ 5,369,543	\$ 11,090,031
Instructional personnel	521	37,519,821	7,941,104	45,460,925	-	45,460,925
Non-instructional personnel	23	-	-	-	996,317	996,317
Total Personnel Services Costs	669	42,157,807	9,023,606	51,181,413	6,365,860	57,547,273
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		8,876,649	2,134,495	11,011,144	1,502,945	12,514,089
Professional fees		2,315,938	319,510	2,635,448	1,028,633	3,664,081
Management fees		5,671,336	907,272	6,578,608	9,466,776	16,045,384
Consultants - education		584,454	242,115	826,569	-	826,569
Legal fees		-	-	-	33,325	33,325
Curriculum and classroom supplies		4,281,895	423,637	4,705,532	-	4,705,532
Office supplies		-	-	-	482,216	482,216
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		278,657	62,362	341,019	47,377	388,396
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		431,708	105,208	536,916	74,377	611,293
Communications		3,366,789	465,480	3,832,269	338,529	4,170,798
Occupancy		18,858,075	4,308,266	23,166,341	3,266,267	26,432,608
Insurance		467,212	112,021	579,233	75,537	654,770
Repairs and maintenance		789,922	145,976	935,898	135,190	1,071,088
Security		1,605	233	1,838	252	2,090
Marketing and recruiting		161,740	41,392	203,132	21,797	224,929
Staff development		359,991	52,880	412,871	21,891	434,762
Travel and meals		911,443	164,309	1,075,752	90,197	1,165,949
Postage, printing and copying		76,991	20,017	97,008	14,063	111,071
Dues and subscriptions		575,862	139,154	715,016	97,628	812,644
Depreciation and amortization		2,423,733	544,521	2,968,254	424,282	3,392,536
Interest		98,037	19,823	117,860	17,370	135,230
Miscellaneous		-	-	-	238,950	238,950
Total Expenses		\$ 92,689,844	\$ 19,232,277	\$ 111,922,121	\$ 23,743,462	\$ 135,665,583

See notes to financial statements

Ascend Charter Schools

Statements of Cash Flows

	Year Ended June 30,	
	2023	2022
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Change in net assets	\$ 3,687,781	\$ 1,776,099
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash from operating activities		
Depreciation and amortization	4,007,982	3,392,536
Amortization of right of use assets - operating leases	17,177,193	-
Gain on transfer of lease to related party	(2,108,983)	-
Deferred rent	-	2,740,149
Changes in operating assets and liabilities		
Grants and contracts receivable	(5,720,209)	(6,808,819)
Due from related party	(2,207,236)	(1,617,106)
Prepaid expenses	403,670	(79,939)
Security deposits	(16,485)	(200,000)
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	(1,340,757)	1,660,521
Accrued payroll and payroll taxes	571,701	230,247
Operating lease liabilities	(14,176,658)	-
Refundable advances	(1,484,230)	1,756,260
Due to related party	(2,706,792)	3,049,196
Net Cash from Operating Activities	<u>(3,913,023)</u>	<u>5,899,144</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of property and equipment	(5,850,771)	(4,344,641)
Redemption of certificates of deposit	7,338,998	-
Purchase of certificates of deposit	-	(10,012,147)
Net Cash from Investing Activities	<u>1,488,227</u>	<u>(14,356,788)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITY		
Principal payments of loan payable	<u>(128,058)</u>	<u>(127,235)</u>
Net Change in Cash, Cash Equivalents and Restricted Cash	(2,552,854)	(8,584,879)
CASH, CASH EQUIVALENTS AND RESTRICTED CASH		
Beginning of year	<u>12,453,603</u>	<u>21,038,482</u>
End of year	<u>\$ 9,900,749</u>	<u>\$ 12,453,603</u>
SUPPLEMENTAL CASH FLOW INFORMATION		
Cash paid during the year for interest	\$ 135,350	\$ 135,230
Cash paid for amounts included in the measurement of operating lease liabilities	26,969,744	-

See notes to financial statements

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

1. Organization and Tax Status

Ascend Charter Schools (collectively the “School”) is a New York State, not-for-profit educational corporation that was incorporated to operate a Charter School pursuant to Article 56 of the Education Law of the State of New York. The School’s mission is to equip its students with the knowledge, confidence and character to succeed in college and beyond.

The accompanying financial statements include the following charter schools collectively forming the School:

Brooklyn Ascend Charter School (“Brooklyn Ascend”) – Brooklyn Ascend was granted a provisional charter on January 15, 2008 valid for a term of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Brooklyn Ascend obtained a renewal to its charter expiring on July 31, 2024.

Brownsville Ascend Charter School (“Brownsville Ascend”) – Brownsville Ascend was granted a provisional charter on January 13, 2009 valid for a term of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Brownsville Ascend obtained a renewal to its charter expiring on July 31, 2024.

Bushwick Ascend Charter School (“Bushwick Ascend”) – Bushwick Ascend was granted a provisional charter on February 9, 2010 valid for a term of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Bushwick Ascend obtained a renewal to its charter expiring on July 31, 2024.

Canarsie Ascend Charter School (“Canarsie Ascend”) – Canarsie Ascend was granted a provisional charter on September 13, 2011 valid for a term of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Canarsie Ascend obtained a renewal to its charter expiring on July 31, 2024.

Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School (“Central Brooklyn Ascend”) – Central Brooklyn Ascend was granted a provisional charter on January 1, 2013 valid for a term of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Central Brooklyn Ascend obtained a renewal to its charter expiring on July 31, 2024.

Cypress Hills Ascend Charter School (“Cypress Hills Ascend”) – Cypress Hills Ascend was granted a provisional charter on July 19, 2017 valid for a term of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Cypress Hills Charter will expire on July 31, 2024.

East Brooklyn Ascend Charter School (“East Brooklyn Ascend”) – East Brooklyn Ascend was granted a provisional charter on July 19, 2017 valid for a term of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. East Brooklyn Charter will expire on July 31, 2024.

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

1. Organization and Tax Status (*continued*)

East Flatbush Ascend Charter School ("East Flatbush Ascend") – East Flatbush Ascend was granted a provisional charter on October 19, 2018 valid for terms of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. East Flatbush Charter will expire on July 31, 2024.

Flatbush Ascend Charter School ("Flatbush Ascend") – Flatbush Ascend, previously named Lefferts Gardens Ascend, was granted a provisional charter on October 19, 2018 valid for terms of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Flatbush Charter will expire on July 31, 2024.

On March 8, 2019, the School was granted a provisional charter to operate Brooklyn Ascend Charter School 6, valid for a term of five years and renewable upon expiration by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. The School received an extension with its Authorizer to extend the provisional charter through July 31, 2024.

The School provided education to approximately 5,690 students in kindergarten through twelfth grades during the 2022-2023 academic year.

The School used outside vendors to serve breakfast and lunch to its students and files for reimbursement of expenses through the New York State and Federal school food program. The School covers the cost of breakfast and lunch for families who experience hardship and who do not qualify for free or reduced meals. The Office of Pupil Transportation provides free transportation to some of the students.

Except for taxes that may be due for unrelated business income, the School is exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and from state and local income taxes under comparable laws.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Presentation and Use of Estimates

The accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America ("U.S. GAAP"), which requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Accordingly actual results could differ from those estimates.

Adoption of New Accounting Pronouncement

Leases

The School adopted Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") *Topic 842, Leases* ("Topic 842"), using the effective date method with July 1, 2022 as the date of initial adoption, with certain practical expedients available.

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Adoption of New Accounting Pronouncement (continued)

Leases (continued)

The School elected the available practical expedients to account for its existing operating leases as operating leases, under the new guidance, without reassessing whether the contracts contain leases under the new standard, whether classification of capital (now finance) leases or operating leases would be different in accordance with the new guidance, or whether the unamortized initial direct costs before transition adjustments would have met the definition of initial direct costs in the new guidance at lease commencement.

As a result of the adoption of the new lease accounting guidance on July 1, 2022, the School recognized operating lease liabilities of \$414,405,606 that represent the present value of the remaining operating lease payments of \$572,162,592, discounted with risk free interest rates using the treasury bond rate ranging from 2.88% to 3.28% depending on the lease term, and right of use ("ROU") assets of \$386,201,197 that represent the discounted operating lease liabilities of \$414,405,606, with the ROU assets adjusted for deferred rent of \$28,204,410.

The adoption of Topic 842 had a material impact on the School's statement of financial position but did not have a material impact on its statements of activities and cash flows. The most significant impact was the recognition of ROU assets and lease liabilities for operating leases.

Net Assets Presentation

Resources for various purposes are classified for accounting and reporting purposes into net asset categories established according to nature and purpose as follows:

Net assets without donor restrictions - consist of resources available for the general support of the School's operations. Net assets without donor restrictions may be used at the discretion of the School's management and/or the Board of Trustees.

Net assets with donor restrictions – represents amounts restricted by donors for specific activities of the School or to be used at a future date. The School records contributions as net assets with donor restrictions if they are received with donor stipulations that limit their use either through purpose or time restrictions. When a donor restriction expires, that is, when a time restriction ends or a purpose restriction is fulfilled, net assets with donor restrictions are reclassified to net assets without donor restrictions and reported in the statements of activities as net assets released from restrictions. The School had no net assets with donor restrictions at June 30, 2023 and 2022.

Cash Equivalents

The School considers all cash-on-hand, cash in banks, and other short-term securities with maturities of three months or less at time of purchase to be cash and cash equivalents.

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (*continued*)

Restricted Cash

Under the provisions of its charter, the School established an escrow account to pay for legal and audit expenses that would be associated with a dissolution, should it occur.

The following table provides a reconciliation of cash and restricted cash reported within the statements of financial position to the amounts presented in the statements of cash flows at June 30:

	2023	2022
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 9,575,298	\$ 12,128,307
Restricted cash	<u>325,451</u>	<u>325,296</u>
	<u>\$ 9,900,749</u>	<u>\$ 12,453,603</u>

Certificate of Deposit

Certificate of deposit are carried at cost plus accrued interest.

Property and Equipment

The School follows the practice of capitalizing all expenditures for property and equipment with costs in excess of \$5,000 and a useful life in excess of one year. Leasehold improvements are amortized over the shorter of the term of the lease, inclusive of all renewal periods, which are reasonably assured, or the estimated useful life of the asset. Purchased property and equipment are recorded at cost at the date of acquisition. Maintenance and repairs are expensed as incurred. All property and equipment purchased with government funding is capitalized, unless the government agency retains legal title to such assets, in which case such assets are expensed as incurred.

Depreciation and amortization is recognized on the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of such assets as follows:

Computers and technology	3 years
Equipment	3 and 5 years
Furniture and fixtures	5 and 7 years
Software	3 years
Website development	3 years

Property and equipment are reviewed for impairment if the use of the asset significantly changes or another indicator of possible impairment is identified. If the carrying amount of the asset is not recoverable, the asset is written down to its fair value. There were no asset impairments for the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022.

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (*continued*)

Leases

The School accounts for leases under Topic 842. The School determines if an arrangement is a lease at inception. Operating leases are included in operating right-of-use ("ROU") assets and lease liabilities in the statements of financial position. All leases are recorded on the statements of financial position except for leases with an initial term less than 12 months for which the School made the short-term lease election.

ROU assets represent the right to use an underlying asset for the lease term and lease liabilities represent the obligation to make lease payments arising from the lease. Operating lease ROU assets and lease liabilities are recognized at the lease commencement date based on the present value of the lease payments over the lease term. When leases do not provide an implicit borrowing rate, the School uses a risk-free rate based on the information available at the commencement date in determining the present value of lease payments. The operating lease ROU assets includes any lease payments made and excludes lease incentives. The lease terms may include options to extend or terminate the lease when it is reasonably certain that the School will exercise that option. Lease expense for lease payments is recognized on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The School's lease agreements do not contain any material residual value guarantees or material restrictive covenants. The School has lease agreements with lease and non-lease components, which are generally accounted for separately.

The School's lease agreements do not contain any variable lease components. The School applies the short-term lease exemption to all of its classes of underlying assets. For the year ended June 30, 2022, U.S. GAAP guidance stated rent shall be charged to expense over the lease term as it became payable.

If rental payments are not made on a straight-line basis, rental expense shall be recognized on a straight-line basis unless another systematic and rational basis is more representative of the time pattern in which use benefit is derived from the leased property, in which case that basis shall be used. The difference between the straight-line rent expense and rent paid is reflected as a deferred rent liability in the statement of financial position as of June 30, 2022.

Refundable Advances

The School records certain government grants and contracts as refundable advances until the related services are performed, at which time it is recognized as revenue.

Revenue and Support

Revenue from state and local governments resulting from the School's charter status and based on the number of students enrolled is recorded when services are performed in accordance with the charter agreement. Federal and other state and local funds are recorded when expenditures are incurred and billable to the government agency.

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Revenue and Support (continued)

Contributions are recognized when the donor makes a promise to give to the School that is, in substance, unconditional. Grants and other contributions of cash are reported as net assets with donor restrictions if they are received with donor stipulations. Restricted contributions and grants that are made to support the School's current year activities are recorded as net assets without donor restrictions. Contributions of assets other than cash are recorded at their estimated fair value at the date of donation.

Marketing and Recruiting

Marketing and recruiting costs are expensed as incurred for staff and student recruitment. Accordingly, all costs in marketing and recruitment are allocated to program and management and general expenditures and expensed as incurred. Marketing and recruiting expense for the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022 was \$306,522 and \$224,929.

Measure of Operations

The statements of activities reports all changes in net assets, including changes in net assets from operating and non-operating activities. Operating activities consist of those items attributable to the School's ongoing services. Non-operating activities include revenue and support from non-governmental and other sources that include contributions revenue, rental income, contributions from Ascend Learning, Inc., return on investments and other activities considered to be of a non-recurring nature.

Functional Expense Allocation

The majority of expenses can generally be directly identified with the program or supporting service to which they relate and are charged accordingly. Other expenses, such as personnel services cost, employee benefits and payroll taxes, occupancy expense, communications, and repairs and maintenance have been allocated among program and supporting services classifications on the basis of periodic time and expense studies and other basis as determined by management of the School to be appropriate.

Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes

The School recognizes the effect of income tax positions only if those positions are more likely than not to be sustained. Management has determined that the School had no uncertain tax positions that would require financial statement recognition or disclosure. The School is no longer subject to examinations by the applicable taxing jurisdictions for years prior to June 30, 2020.

Subsequent Events Evaluation by Management

Management has evaluated subsequent events for disclosure and/or recognition in the financial statements through the date that the financial statements were available to be issued, which date is November 28, 2023.

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

3. Grants and Contracts Receivable

Grants and contracts receivable consist of federal, state, city entitlements and grants. The School expects to collect these receivables within one year. Management has assessed the need for an allowance and has determined that such an allowance is not necessary.

4. Related Party Transactions (not disclosed elsewhere)

The School contracts with Ascend Learning, Inc. ("Ascend"), a New York State not-for-profit corporation, to serve as the School's charter management organization. The School entered into a one year agreement with Ascend on July 1, 2022 which calls for Ascend to design, select and implement the School's educational program as well as the professional development activities for all the School personnel; recruit, supervise and evaluate the School's director; propose employment policies and practices relating to School personnel; and manage the School's business administration.

For the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022, each charter school paid Ascend an annual fee of 13.25% of the School's per pupil operating revenue, per pupil facilities revenue and federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act revenue. The management fee for the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022 amounted to \$16,627,850 and \$16,045,384.

The School entered into a sublease agreement with Ascend on July 1, 2011. There are two amendments to the agreement. The terms of the agreement permit Ascend to use the 6th floor of one of the buildings that the School occupies. Ascend increased use of the floor over the term of the lease, and rent increased accordingly. Rental income for the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022 amounted to \$200,000.

The School is related to of Friends of Ascend Charter Schools, Inc. ("FOA"), a New York State not-for-profit corporation, by common management. FOA's purpose is to support the operation of the School by managing the School's real estate and facilities-related needs, and by raising funds and resources that will enable FOA to provide support to the School and to enhance the experience of the School's students. The School entered into various sublease agreements with FOA for classroom facilities (Note 10). A lease agreement for a facility used by the School during the year ended June 30, 2023 was transferred to FOA and a new sublease agreement was entered into between FOA and the School. As a result of the transfer, an unamortized deferred rent liability was written off resulting in a non-operating gain of \$2,108,983 which is reported as gain on transfer of lease to related party on the statements of activities.

For operational efficiency and purchasing power, the School shares certain operating expenses with Ascend and FOA. The net balance due from/(to) the related parties consisted of the following at June 30:

	2023	2022
Ascend	\$ (1,480,749)	\$ (4,187,541)
FOA	4,675,447	2,468,211
	<u>\$ 3,194,698</u>	<u>\$ (1,719,330)</u>

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

5. Property and Equipment

Property and equipment consist of the following as of June 30:

	2023	2022
Computers and technology	\$ 11,368,348	\$ 9,718,495
Equipment	1,511,271	1,384,073
Furniture and fixtures	5,431,171	4,761,068
Software	219,000	219,000
Website development	143,277	143,277
Leasehold improvements	16,035,842	12,747,862
Construction in progress	2,743,772	2,628,135
	<u>37,452,681</u>	<u>31,601,910</u>
Accumulated depreciation and amortization	<u>(20,675,949)</u>	<u>(16,667,967)</u>
	<u>\$ 16,776,732</u>	<u>\$ 14,933,943</u>

Construction in progress at June 30, 2023 and 2022 is primarily comprised of costs related to the Rockaway Parkway facility which is expected to be placed into service during the year ending June 30, 2024 (See Note 10).

6. Liquidity and Availability of Financial Assets

Financial assets available for general expenditure, that is, without donor or other restrictions limiting their use within one year of the statement of financial position date, are comprised of the following at June 30:

	2023	2022
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 9,575,298	\$ 12,128,307
Certificates of deposit	7,674,900	15,013,898
Grants and contracts receivable	15,994,676	10,274,467
Due from related party	4,675,447	2,468,211
	<u>\$ 37,920,321</u>	<u>\$ 39,884,883</u>

As part of the School's liquidity management plan, the status of grants and contracts receivable is monitored regularly and any excess cash is held in savings accounts and other liquid instruments until it is required for operational use. The School will continue to rely on funding received from the New York City Department of Education to cover its future operating costs (See Note 9).

7. Employee Benefit Plan

The School maintains a pension plan qualified under Internal Revenue Code 403(b), for the benefit of its eligible employees. Under the plan, the School will match employee contributions ranging from 1% to 5% of annual compensation. Total employer match for the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022 was \$318,729 and \$946,803.

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

8. Concentration of Credit Risk

Financial instruments that potentially subject the School to concentrations of credit and market risk consist principally of cash, cash equivalents, and certificates of deposit on deposit with financial institutions, which from time to time may exceed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("FDIC") limit. The School does not believe that a significant risk of loss due to the failure of a financial institution presently exists. At June 30, 2023 and 2022, approximately \$17,193,000 and \$26,630,000 of cash was maintained with an institution in excess of FDIC limits.

9. Concentration of Revenue and Support

The School receives a substantial portion of its revenue and support from the New York City Department of Education. For the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022, the School received approximately 83% and 88% of total revenue and support from the New York City Department of Education. If the charter school laws were modified, reducing or eliminating these revenues, the School's finances could be materially adversely affected.

10. Commitments

School Facilities

Brooklyn Ascend

On March 19, 2008, Brooklyn Ascend entered into an agreement to lease property at 205 Rockaway Parkway, Brooklyn, New York for a period of 15 years. The landlord has renovated the facility to conform to the School's specifications in phases. As of June 30, 2023, Brooklyn Ascend has reimbursed the landlord a total of \$3,508,850 for these renovations which are classified as leasehold improvements under property and equipment in the statements of financial position. Pursuant to the fourth lease amendment, annual fixed rent will be reduced for years 8 through 15 due to deletion of certain projects. On July 28, 2016, Brooklyn Ascend signed a fifth amendment to renew the lease for 10 years.

On January 19, 2011, Brooklyn Ascend entered into an agreement to lease property at 123 East 98th Street, Brooklyn, New York for a period of 20 years. This location became the home of Brooklyn Ascend Middle School starting with the 2012-2013 academic year.

Pursuant to each facility lease agreement, the School will also reimburse the landlords for the proportionate share of the real estate taxes and any other costs associated with the leasing of the premises.

Subleases With FOA

Beginning in September 2017, the School began entering into sublease agreements with FOA for classroom and office space under non-cancelable leases for multiple schools. All properties are currently exempt from real estate taxes, but the School will be responsible for any real estate taxes arising out the of the School's occupancy.

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

10. Commitments *(continued)*

School Facilities *(continued)*

Subleases With FOA *(continued)*

The following is the summary of the locations and terms of the sublease agreements the School had with FOA at June 30, 2023:

Charter	School	Location	Effective Date	Termination Date
Brooklyn Ascend	Brooklyn Ascend High School	1501 Pitkin Avenue	7/1/2022	6/30/2032
Brownsville Ascend	Brownsville Ascend Lower and Middle	1501 Pitkin Avenue	7/1/2022	6/30/2032
Bushwick Ascend	Bushwick Ascend Lower	751 Knickerbocker Avenue	7/1/2017	6/30/2045
Bushwick Ascend	Bushwick Ascend Middle	2 Aberdeen Street	7/1/2017	6/30/2045
Canarsie Ascend	Canarsie Ascend Lower	9719 Flatlands Avenue	7/1/2022	6/30/2033
Canarsie Ascend	Canarsie Ascend Middle	744 East 87th Street	7/1/2017	6/30/2047
Central Brooklyn Ascend	Central Brooklyn Ascend Lower	465 East 29th Street	7/1/2017	6/30/2045
Central Brooklyn Ascend	Central Brooklyn Ascend Middle	1886 Nostrand Avenue	7/1/2017	6/30/2045
Cypress Hills Ascend	Cypress Hills Ascend Lower and Middle	396 Grant Avenue	7/1/2018	6/30/2048
East Brooklyn Ascend	East Brooklyn Ascend Lower	260 Shepherd Avenue	7/1/2019	6/30/2048
East Flatbush Ascend	East Flatbush Ascend Lower	870 Albany Avenue	7/1/2019	6/30/2048
Flatbush Ascend	Flatbush Ascend Lower	123 Linden Boulevard	7/1/2021	6/30/2039
Flatbush Ascend	Flatbush Ascend Middle	1833 Nostrand Avenue	7/1/2023	6/30/2055

Occupancy expense for the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022 was \$30,152,635 and \$26,432,608.

Right of use assets consist of the following at June 30, 2023:

ROU assets - operating lease	\$ 386,201,197
Accumulated amortization	(17,177,193)
	<u>\$ 369,024,004</u>

Weighted average remaining lease term	19.1 years
Weighted average discount rate	3.16%

Future minimum lease payments are as follows for the years ending June 30:

2024	\$ 27,729,235
2025	28,219,468
2026	28,708,943
2027	29,419,790
2028	30,178,132
Thereafter	400,937,280
Total minimum lease payments	545,192,848
Present value discount	(144,989,409)
Present value of operating lease liability	400,203,439
Current portion	(15,411,567)
Operating lease liabilities, less current portion	<u>\$ 384,791,872</u>

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022

11. Loan Payable

On October 17, 2019, the School entered into a \$2,500,000 loan agreement with Nonprofit Finance Fund ("NFF") for the purpose of financing the cost of renovations and improvements to the building previously leased by the School at 1501 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn, NY. The loan matures on November 1, 2026, at which time the School can either pay the outstanding balance on the loan in full or refinance. The loan is payable on a monthly basis in the amount of \$21,872 commencing on July 1, 2020 and the loan bears interest at 6.25% per annum. The loan is guaranteed by the School and secured by the leasehold interests of the School in the building. In addition, the School has granted a security interest in all of its other assets to secure the loan. Loan payments will be due on the first day of each succeeding month thereafter, until all amounts due under the loans are paid in full. The loan is a commitment that cannot be assigned without prior written approval from NFF.

The School must maintain five financial performance covenants all of which were assessed starting with the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020. For the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022, the School is in compliance with all financial covenants.

Future minimum principal payments on the loan are as follows for years ending June 30:

2024	\$ 145,572
2025	154,935
2026	164,901
2027	<u>1,482,348</u>
	1,947,756
Current portion	<u>(145,572)</u>
	<u>\$ 1,802,184</u>

12. Contingency

Certain grants and contracts may be subject to audit by the funding sources. Such audits might result in disallowances of costs submitted for reimbursement. Management is of the opinion that such cost disallowances, if any, will not have a material effect on the accompanying financial statements. Accordingly, no amounts have been provided in the accompanying financial statements for such potential claims.

From time to time and in the ordinary course of business, the School may be subject to various claims, charges, and litigation. In the opinion of management, final judgement from such pending claims, charges, and litigations, if any, against the School would not have a material adverse effect on the School's financial position, results of operations or cash flows.

* * * * *

Ascend Charter Schools

Supplementary Information

June 30, 2023

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Activities by School
Year Ended June 30, 2023

	Brooklyn Ascend	Brownsville Ascend	Bushwick Ascend	Canarsie Ascend	Central Brooklyn Ascend	Cypress Hills Ascend	East Brooklyn Ascend	East Flatbush Ascend	Flatbush Ascend	Total
OPERATING REVENUE										
State and local per pupil operating revenue										
General and special education	\$ 26,054,206	\$ 16,183,063	\$ 15,159,484	\$ 17,838,402	\$ 14,635,268	\$ 7,297,745	\$ 2,000,191	\$ 4,502,735	\$ 4,658,613	\$ 108,329,707
Facilities	2,326,105	1,703,462	1,464,734	3,384,287	2,930,459	1,510,927	541,056	1,229,858	1,294,346	16,385,234
Federal grants	3,375,261	2,123,850	1,973,544	2,740,655	2,167,380	752,828	267,860	541,029	578,441	14,520,848
Federal E-Rate and IDEA	710,227	442,473	420,504	404,462	401,962	214,328	104,034	131,042	530,678	3,359,710
State and city grants	<u>137,225</u>	<u>194,780</u>	<u>84,088</u>	<u>92,837</u>	<u>71,631</u>	<u>8,236</u>	<u>1,489</u>	<u>15,138</u>	<u>9,279</u>	<u>614,703</u>
Total Operating Revenue	<u>32,603,024</u>	<u>20,647,628</u>	<u>19,102,354</u>	<u>24,460,643</u>	<u>20,206,700</u>	<u>9,784,064</u>	<u>2,914,630</u>	<u>6,419,802</u>	<u>7,071,357</u>	<u>143,210,202</u>
EXPENSES										
Program Services										
Regular education	26,506,548	14,385,156	13,894,581	15,067,310	13,544,566	6,708,932	4,125,262	4,163,950	4,987,827	103,384,132
Special education	<u>2,374,031</u>	<u>3,894,638</u>	<u>3,160,385</u>	<u>1,645,373</u>	<u>1,715,380</u>	<u>1,858,166</u>	<u>315,536</u>	<u>805,038</u>	<u>1,381,866</u>	<u>17,150,413</u>
Total Program Services	28,880,579	18,279,794	17,054,966	16,712,683	15,259,946	8,567,098	4,440,798	4,968,988	6,369,693	120,534,545
Supporting Services										
Management and general	<u>5,644,438</u>	<u>4,415,710</u>	<u>3,288,422</u>	<u>3,876,359</u>	<u>3,123,618</u>	<u>1,750,145</u>	<u>828,773</u>	<u>1,280,354</u>	<u>1,203,156</u>	<u>25,410,975</u>
Total Expenses	<u>34,525,017</u>	<u>22,695,504</u>	<u>20,343,388</u>	<u>20,589,042</u>	<u>18,383,564</u>	<u>10,317,243</u>	<u>5,269,571</u>	<u>6,249,342</u>	<u>7,572,849</u>	<u>145,945,520</u>
Surplus (Deficit) from Operations	<u>(1,921,993)</u>	<u>(2,047,876)</u>	<u>(1,241,034)</u>	<u>3,871,601</u>	<u>1,823,136</u>	<u>(533,179)</u>	<u>(2,354,941)</u>	<u>170,460</u>	<u>(501,492)</u>	<u>(2,735,318)</u>
SUPPORT AND OTHER REVENUE										
Contributions from related party	835,996	517,163	490,004	597,342	471,641	231,848	63,094	142,916	149,996	3,500,000
Contributions and private grants	48,450	26,600	26,000	33,816	26,200	14,000	5,200	9,400	11,400	201,066
Rental income	68,831	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	68,831
Interest and other revenue	126,549	78,643	76,534	90,423	66,093	40,012	19,422	21,714	24,829	544,219
Gain on transfer of lease to related party	<u>663,718</u>	<u>1,445,265</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,108,983</u>
Total Support and Other Revenue	<u>1,743,544</u>	<u>2,067,671</u>	<u>592,538</u>	<u>721,581</u>	<u>563,934</u>	<u>285,860</u>	<u>87,716</u>	<u>174,030</u>	<u>186,225</u>	<u>6,423,099</u>
Change in Net Assets	(178,449)	19,795	(648,496)	4,593,182	2,387,070	(247,319)	(2,267,225)	344,490	(315,267)	3,687,781
NET ASSETS (DEFICIT), WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTION										
Beginning of year	<u>3,252,320</u>	<u>7,617,077</u>	<u>4,306,492</u>	<u>6,834,863</u>	<u>2,555,095</u>	<u>(2,002,235)</u>	<u>(5,168,904)</u>	<u>(2,179,055)</u>	<u>(4,982,658)</u>	<u>10,232,995</u>
End of year	<u>\$ 3,073,871</u>	<u>\$ 7,636,872</u>	<u>\$ 3,657,996</u>	<u>\$ 11,428,045</u>	<u>\$ 4,942,165</u>	<u>\$ (2,249,554)</u>	<u>\$ (7,436,129)</u>	<u>\$ (1,834,565)</u>	<u>\$ (5,297,925)</u>	<u>\$ 13,920,776</u>

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Functional Expenses
Brooklyn Ascend Charter School
Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	34	\$ 1,772,759	\$ 165,786	\$ 1,938,545	\$ 1,440,711	\$ 3,379,256
Instructional personnel	124	10,883,454	903,938	11,787,392	-	11,787,392
Non-instructional personnel	3	-	-	-	180,593	180,593
Total Personnel Services Costs	<u>161</u>	<u>12,656,213</u>	<u>1,069,724</u>	<u>13,725,937</u>	<u>1,621,304</u>	<u>15,347,241</u>
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		2,341,024	215,171	2,556,195	326,119	2,882,314
Professional fees		48,556	12,637	61,193	169,850	231,043
Management fees		1,357,032	196,615	1,553,647	2,235,735	3,789,382
Consultants - education		1,007,963	16,194	1,024,157	-	1,024,157
Curriculum and classroom supplies		1,011,541	118,060	1,129,601	-	1,129,601
Office supplies		-	-	-	162,239	162,239
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		48,440	4,530	52,970	6,866	59,836
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		151,935	14,209	166,144	21,535	187,679
Communications		964,985	89,977	1,054,962	136,372	1,191,334
Occupancy		4,499,531	420,791	4,920,322	637,762	5,558,084
Insurance		155,013	14,581	169,594	21,739	191,333
Repairs and maintenance		622,717	58,236	680,953	88,264	769,217
Security		541	51	592	77	669
Marketing and recruiting		65,662	6,502	72,164	8,309	80,473
Staff development		264,174	14,080	278,254	19,228	297,482
Travel and meals		82,908	7,803	90,711	11,614	102,325
Postage, printing and copying		6,644	621	7,265	942	8,207
Dues and subscriptions		157,249	14,706	171,955	22,288	194,243
Depreciation and amortization		1,029,937	96,318	1,126,255	145,983	1,272,238
Interest		34,483	3,225	37,708	4,888	42,596
Miscellaneous		-	-	-	3,324	3,324
Total Expenses		<u>\$ 26,506,548</u>	<u>\$ 2,374,031</u>	<u>\$ 28,880,579</u>	<u>\$ 5,644,438</u>	<u>\$ 34,525,017</u>

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Functional Expenses Brownsville Ascend Charter School Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	20	\$ 840,244	\$ 266,736	\$ 1,106,980	\$ 1,106,515	\$ 2,213,495
Instructional personnel	86	5,216,055	1,314,309	6,530,364	-	6,530,364
Non-instructional personnel	7	-	-	-	87,800	87,800
Total Personnel Services Costs	113	6,056,299	1,581,045	7,637,344	1,194,315	8,831,659
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		1,199,920	365,200	1,565,120	275,871	1,840,991
Professional fees		38,491	10,556	49,047	166,099	215,146
Management fees		820,199	157,713	977,912	1,407,240	2,385,152
Consultants - education		458,617	3,902	462,519	-	462,519
Curriculum and classroom supplies		416,342	70,334	486,676	-	486,676
Office supplies		-	-	-	85,464	85,464
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		44,256	14,049	58,305	10,613	68,918
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		88,004	27,937	115,941	21,104	137,045
Communications		403,664	127,478	531,142	96,296	627,438
Occupancy		3,857,875	1,224,684	5,082,559	925,122	6,007,681
Insurance		85,493	27,096	112,589	20,417	133,006
Repairs and maintenance		72,343	22,965	95,308	17,348	112,656
Security		612	194	806	147	953
Marketing and recruiting		38,051	11,586	49,637	8,179	57,816
Staff development		82,505	20,633	103,138	14,319	117,457
Travel and meals		75,091	23,751	98,842	17,842	116,684
Postage, printing and copying		6,968	2,212	9,180	1,671	10,851
Dues and subscriptions		80,230	25,469	105,699	19,239	124,938
Depreciation and amortization		500,633	158,926	659,559	120,052	779,611
Interest		59,563	18,908	78,471	14,283	92,754
Miscellaneous		-	-	-	89	89
Total Expenses		\$ 14,385,156	\$ 3,894,638	\$ 18,279,794	\$ 4,415,710	\$ 22,695,504

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Functional Expenses
Bushwick Ascend Charter School
Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	16	\$ 689,986	\$ 180,978	\$ 870,964	\$ 884,079	\$ 1,755,043
Instructional personnel	82	6,130,839	1,350,743	7,481,582	-	7,481,582
Non-instructional personnel	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	8,536	8,536
Total Personnel Services Costs	<u>100</u>	6,820,825	1,531,721	8,352,546	892,615	9,245,161
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		1,316,399	334,542	1,650,941	194,955	1,845,896
Professional fees		22,229	6,551	28,780	148,151	176,931
Management fees		773,129	137,114	910,243	1,309,862	2,220,105
Consultants - education		342,520	-	342,520	-	342,520
Curriculum and classroom supplies		342,756	50,588	393,344	-	393,344
Office supplies		-	-	-	100,059	100,059
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		44,908	11,779	56,687	6,864	63,551
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		84,595	22,189	106,784	12,931	119,715
Communications		471,151	123,009	594,160	71,684	665,844
Occupancy		2,920,097	765,920	3,686,017	446,342	4,132,359
Insurance		76,577	20,058	96,635	11,656	108,291
Repairs and maintenance		101,839	26,712	128,551	15,566	144,117
Security		272	71	343	42	385
Marketing and recruiting		27,417	6,864	34,281	3,602	37,883
Staff development		152,463	19,073	171,536	12,368	183,904
Travel and meals		33,333	8,701	42,034	5,019	47,053
Postage, printing and copying		3,623	950	4,573	554	5,127
Dues and subscriptions		97,528	25,581	123,109	14,907	138,016
Depreciation and amortization		262,920	68,962	331,882	40,188	372,070
Miscellaneous		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	1,057	1,057
Total Expenses		<u>\$ 13,894,581</u>	<u>\$ 3,160,385</u>	<u>\$ 17,054,966</u>	<u>\$ 3,288,422</u>	<u>\$ 20,343,388</u>

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Functional Expenses Canarsie Ascend Charter School Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	16	\$ 886,832	\$ 116,143	\$ 1,002,975	\$ 851,267	\$ 1,854,242
Instructional personnel	72	5,744,153	593,163	6,337,316	-	6,337,316
Non-instructional personnel	5	-	-	-	35,372	35,372
Total Personnel Services Costs	93	6,630,985	709,306	7,340,291	886,639	8,226,930
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		1,283,190	158,595	1,441,785	198,245	1,640,030
Professional fees		103,189	12,535	115,724	204,321	320,045
Management fees		1,046,788	111,291	1,158,079	1,666,503	2,824,582
Consultants - education		894,108	-	894,108	-	894,108
Legal fees		-	-	-	1,304	1,304
Curriculum and classroom supplies		527,546	55,559	583,105	-	583,105
Office supplies		-	-	-	168,920	168,920
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		47,245	6,187	53,432	7,734	61,166
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		88,623	11,606	100,229	14,508	114,737
Communications		618,747	80,792	699,539	100,991	800,530
Occupancy		2,932,309	384,026	3,316,335	480,036	3,796,371
Insurance		96,450	12,623	109,073	15,734	124,807
Repairs and maintenance		99,255	12,999	112,254	16,249	128,503
Marketing and recruiting		25,513	3,242	28,755	3,518	32,273
Staff development		81,411	9,101	90,512	13,280	103,792
Travel and meals		74,812	9,784	84,596	12,157	96,753
Postage, printing and copying		29,579	3,874	33,453	4,842	38,295
Dues and subscriptions		99,532	13,035	112,567	16,294	128,861
Depreciation and amortization		388,028	50,818	438,846	63,522	502,368
Miscellaneous		-	-	-	1,562	1,562
Total Expenses		\$ 15,067,310	\$ 1,645,373	\$ 16,712,683	\$ 3,876,359	\$ 20,589,042

See independent auditors' report

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Functional Expenses Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	16	\$ 743,264	\$ 108,345	\$ 851,609	\$ 707,048	\$ 1,558,657
Instructional personnel	69	5,302,698	674,846	5,977,544	-	5,977,544
Non-instructional personnel	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>21,246</u>	<u>21,246</u>
Total Personnel Services Costs	<u>87</u>	<u>6,045,962</u>	<u>783,191</u>	<u>6,829,153</u>	<u>728,294</u>	<u>7,557,447</u>
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		1,231,554	176,243	1,407,797	163,890	1,571,687
Professional fees		72,749	12,154	84,903	255,304	340,207
Management fees		840,436	120,088	960,524	1,382,216	2,342,740
Consultants - education		945,383	379	945,762	-	945,762
Curriculum and classroom supplies		564,398	74,074	638,472	-	638,472
Office supplies		-	-	-	77,382	77,382
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		39,887	5,814	45,701	5,407	51,108
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		91,274	13,305	104,579	12,372	116,951
Communications		494,011	71,771	565,782	66,740	632,522
Occupancy		2,511,516	366,101	2,877,617	340,440	3,218,057
Insurance		75,458	10,999	86,457	10,191	96,648
Repairs and maintenance		22,599	3,294	25,893	3,063	28,956
Marketing and recruiting		33,348	4,851	38,199	4,033	42,232
Staff development		154,621	11,706	166,327	16,740	183,067
Travel and meals		69,960	10,186	80,146	8,918	89,064
Postage, printing and copying		5,884	858	6,742	798	7,540
Dues and subscriptions		80,864	11,787	92,651	10,961	103,612
Depreciation and amortization		264,662	38,579	303,241	35,875	339,116
Miscellaneous		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>994</u>	<u>994</u>
Total Expenses		<u>\$ 13,544,566</u>	<u>\$ 1,715,380</u>	<u>\$ 15,259,946</u>	<u>\$ 3,123,618</u>	<u>\$ 18,383,564</u>

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Functional Expenses
Cypress Hills Ascend Charter School
Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	8	\$ 470,905	\$ 150,004	\$ 620,909	\$ 554,889	\$ 1,175,798
Instructional personnel	38	2,865,440	815,816	3,681,256	-	3,681,256
Non-instructional personnel	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	3,573	3,573
Total Personnel Services Costs	<u>47</u>	3,336,345	965,820	4,302,165	558,462	4,860,627
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		665,049	207,046	872,095	119,719	991,814
Professional fees		229,550	39,067	268,617	37,162	305,779
Management fees		412,707	68,550	481,257	692,540	1,173,797
Consultants - education		85,249	18,206	103,455	-	103,455
Curriculum and classroom supplies		200,277	27,830	228,107	-	228,107
Office supplies		-	-	-	35,414	35,414
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		8,045	2,563	10,608	1,482	12,090
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		36,598	11,658	48,256	6,741	54,997
Communications		210,558	66,877	277,435	38,670	316,105
Occupancy		1,095,161	348,858	1,444,019	201,719	1,645,738
Insurance		37,352	11,879	49,231	6,857	56,088
Repairs and maintenance		7,133	2,272	9,405	1,314	10,719
Marketing and recruiting		17,584	5,250	22,834	2,814	25,648
Staff development		145,875	11,794	157,669	6,293	163,962
Travel and meals		17,092	5,400	22,492	3,094	25,586
Postage, printing and copying		1,247	397	1,644	230	1,874
Dues and subscriptions		61,974	19,741	81,715	11,415	93,130
Depreciation and amortization		141,136	44,958	186,094	25,996	212,090
Miscellaneous		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	223	223
Total Expenses		<u>\$ 6,708,932</u>	<u>\$ 1,858,166</u>	<u>\$ 8,567,098</u>	<u>\$ 1,750,145</u>	<u>\$ 10,317,243</u>

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Functional Expenses
East Brooklyn Ascend Charter School
Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	3	\$ 291,602	\$ 20,168	\$ 311,770	\$ 195,983	\$ 507,753
Instructional personnel	6	1,058,645	64,834	1,123,479	-	1,123,479
Non-instructional personnel	1	-	-	-	6,382	6,382
Total Personnel Services Costs	<u>10</u>	<u>1,350,247</u>	<u>85,002</u>	<u>1,435,249</u>	<u>202,365</u>	<u>1,637,614</u>
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		242,043	16,506	258,549	39,297	297,846
Professional fees		7,285	1,663	8,948	16,928	25,876
Management fees		113,821	24,813	138,634	199,498	338,132
Consultants - education		54,044	-	54,044	-	54,044
Curriculum and classroom supplies		164,860	35,431	200,291	-	200,291
Office supplies		-	-	-	13,821	13,821
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		1,582	109	1,691	261	1,952
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		17,272	1,195	18,467	2,844	21,311
Communications		120,088	8,288	128,376	19,731	148,107
Occupancy		1,817,271	125,690	1,942,961	299,231	2,242,192
Insurance		18,004	2,028	20,032	2,099	22,131
Repairs and maintenance		9,507	658	10,165	1,565	11,730
Marketing and recruiting		7,178	651	7,829	1,011	8,840
Staff development		34,780	1,913	36,693	2,598	39,291
Travel and meals		10,531	747	11,278	1,714	12,992
Postage, printing and copying		766	53	819	126	945
Dues and subscriptions		17,605	1,218	18,823	2,899	21,722
Depreciation and amortization		<u>138,378</u>	<u>9,571</u>	<u>147,949</u>	<u>22,785</u>	<u>170,734</u>
Total Expenses		<u>\$ 4,125,262</u>	<u>\$ 315,536</u>	<u>\$ 4,440,798</u>	<u>\$ 828,773</u>	<u>\$ 5,269,571</u>

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Functional Expenses
East Flatbush Ascend Charter School
Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	7	\$ 263,394	\$ 59,259	\$ 322,653	\$ 373,879	\$ 696,532
Instructional personnel	20	1,576,461	296,429	1,872,890	-	1,872,890
Non-instructional personnel	-	-	-	-	2,823	2,823
Total Personnel Services Costs	<u>27</u>	<u>1,839,855</u>	<u>355,688</u>	<u>2,195,543</u>	<u>376,702</u>	<u>2,572,245</u>
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		311,075	67,670	378,745	71,667	450,412
Professional fees		18,204	3,102	21,306	20,301	41,607
Management fees		274,003	38,604	312,607	449,848	762,455
Consultants - education		130,571	-	130,571	-	130,571
Curriculum and classroom supplies		169,144	22,604	191,748	-	191,748
Office supplies		-	-	-	24,854	24,854
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		12,250	2,756	15,006	2,919	17,925
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		19,845	4,465	24,310	4,729	29,039
Communications		169,087	37,957	207,044	40,199	247,243
Occupancy		990,756	222,902	1,213,658	236,071	1,449,729
Insurance		22,935	5,153	28,088	5,444	33,532
Repairs and maintenance		37,490	8,435	45,925	8,933	54,858
Marketing and recruiting		8,316	1,770	10,086	1,694	11,780
Staff development		31,717	4,989	36,706	6,271	42,977
Travel and meals		9,139	2,043	11,182	2,141	13,323
Postage, printing and copying		928	209	1,137	221	1,358
Dues and subscriptions		17,885	4,024	21,909	4,262	26,171
Depreciation and amortization		100,750	22,667	123,417	24,006	147,423
Miscellaneous		-	-	-	92	92
Total Expenses		<u>\$ 4,163,950</u>	<u>\$ 805,038</u>	<u>\$ 4,968,988</u>	<u>\$ 1,280,354</u>	<u>\$ 6,249,342</u>

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Functional Expenses
Flatbush Ascend Charter School
Year Ended June 30, 2023

	No. of Positions	Program Services			Management and General	Total
		Regular Education	Special Education	Total		
Personnel Services Costs						
Administrative staff personnel	5	\$ 192,142	\$ 63,112	\$ 255,254	\$ 255,310	\$ 510,564
Instructional personnel	24	1,651,591	456,653	2,108,244	-	2,108,244
Non-instructional personnel	1	-	-	-	11,422	11,422
Total Personnel Services Costs	<u>30</u>	<u>1,843,733</u>	<u>519,765</u>	<u>2,363,498</u>	<u>266,732</u>	<u>2,630,230</u>
Employee benefits and payroll taxes		333,331	107,282	440,613	55,054	495,667
Professional fees		276,859	51,540	328,399	44,860	373,259
Management fees		274,170	50,347	324,517	466,988	791,505
Consultants - education		158,989	129	159,118	-	159,118
Curriculum and classroom supplies		228,631	40,217	268,848	-	268,848
Office supplies		-	-	-	48,059	48,059
Non-capitalized furniture and equipment		8,725	2,866	11,591	1,471	13,062
Leased equipment, furniture and fixtures		19,923	6,544	26,467	3,358	29,825
Communications		131,472	43,062	174,534	22,098	196,632
Occupancy		1,404,398	461,298	1,865,696	236,728	2,102,424
Insurance		22,854	7,495	30,349	3,838	34,187
Repairs and maintenance		64,461	21,173	85,634	10,866	96,500
Marketing and recruiting		6,657	2,007	8,664	913	9,577
Staff development		25,418	6,390	31,808	10,546	42,354
Travel and meals		20,949	6,813	27,762	3,452	31,214
Postage, printing and copying		2,333	766	3,099	393	3,492
Dues and subscriptions		23,088	7,584	30,672	3,892	34,564
Depreciation and amortization		<u>141,836</u>	<u>46,588</u>	<u>188,424</u>	<u>23,908</u>	<u>212,332</u>
Total Expenses		<u>\$ 4,987,827</u>	<u>\$ 1,381,866</u>	<u>\$ 6,369,693</u>	<u>\$ 1,203,156</u>	<u>\$ 7,572,849</u>

Uniform Guidance
Schedules and Reports

June 30, 2023

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards Year Ended June 30, 2023

Federal Grantor/Pass-Through Grantor/ Program or Cluster Title	Federal Assistance Listing Number	Pass-Through Entity Identifying Number	Provided to Subrecipients	Total Federal Expenditures
U.S. Department of Education				
Pass-Through New York State Education Department:				
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010	0021-23-4395	\$ -	\$ 661,857
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010	0021-23-4585	-	429,620
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010	0021-23-4780	-	383,740
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010	0021-23-4965	-	471,472
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010	0021-23-5170	-	353,090
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010	0021-23-5430	-	182,185
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010	0021-23-5565	-	55,063
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010	0021-23-5555	-	109,050
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010	0021-23-5570	-	116,833
			-	2,762,910
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Formerly Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	84.367	0147-23-4395	-	80,746
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Formerly Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	84.367	0147-23-4585	-	52,219
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Formerly Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	84.367	0147-23-4780	-	43,556
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Formerly Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	84.367	0147-23-4965	-	57,568
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Formerly Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	84.367	0147-23-5170	-	43,388
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Formerly Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	84.367	0147-23-5430	-	22,308
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Formerly Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	84.367	0147-23-5565	-	6,690
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Formerly Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	84.367	0147-23-5555	-	13,365
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Formerly Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	84.367	0147-23-5570	-	14,244
			-	334,084
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	84.424	0204-23-4395	-	47,485
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	84.424	0204-23-4585	-	32,452
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	84.424	0204-23-4780	-	30,678
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	84.424	0204-23-4965	-	28,541
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	84.424	0204-23-5170	-	21,475
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	84.424	0204-23-5430	-	10,000
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	84.424	0204-23-5565	-	10,000
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	85.424	0204-23-5555	-	10,000
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	84.424	0204-23-5570	-	10,000
			-	200,631

See independent auditors' report and notes to schedule of expenditures of federal awards

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (continued) Year Ended June 30, 2023

Federal Grantor/Pass-Through Grantor/ Program or Cluster Title	Federal Assistance Listing Number	Pass-Through Entity Identifying Number	Provided to Subrecipients	Total Federal Expenditures
U.S. Department of Education (continued)				
Pass-Through New York State Education Department: (continued)				
English Language Acquisition State Grants	84.365	0293-23-4780	\$ -	\$ 25,482
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	84.425D	5891-21-4395	-	1,881,679
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	84.425D	5891-21-4585	-	1,380,662
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	84.425D	5891-21-4780	-	1,434,347
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	84.425D	5891-21-4965	-	1,214,267
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	84.425D	5891-21-5170	-	1,085,207
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	84.425D	5891-21-5430	-	403,785
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	84.425D	5891-21-5565	-	165,462
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	84.425D	5891-21-5555	-	239,472
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	84.425D	5891-21-5570	-	257,277
			-	8,062,158
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP	84.425U	5880-21-4395	-	684,972
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP	84.425U	5880-21-4585	-	228,897
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP	84.425U	5880-21-4780	-	54,982
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP	84.425U	5880-21-4965	-	968,807
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP	84.425U	5880-21-5170	-	665,145
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP	84.425U	5880-21-5430	-	134,550
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP	84.425U	5880-21-5565	-	30,645
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP	84.425U	5880-21-5555	-	168,729
COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP	84.425U	5880-21-5570	-	179,630
			-	3,116,357
Total U.S. Department of Education			-	14,501,622
Department of Homeland Security				
Pass-Through New York State Homeland Security and Emergency Services:				
Disaster Grants - Public Assistance				
(Presidentially Declared Disasters)	97.036	4480-DR-NY	-	19,226
Total Expenditures of Federal Awards			\$ -	\$ 14,520,848

See independent auditors' report and notes to schedule of expenditures of federal awards

Ascend Charter Schools

Notes to Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards Year Ended June 30, 2023

1. Basis of Presentation

The accompanying schedule of expenditures of federal awards (the "Schedule") includes the federal award activity of Ascend Charter Schools (the "School"), under programs of the federal government for the year ended June 30, 2023. The information in this Schedule is presented in accordance with the requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). Because the Schedule presents only a selected portion of the operations of the School, it is not intended to and does not present the financial position, changes in net assets or cash flows of the School.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Expenditures reported on the Schedule are reported on the accrual basis of accounting. Such expenditures are recognized following the cost principles contained in the Uniform Guidance, wherein certain types of expenditures are not allowable or are limited as to reimbursement.

3. Indirect Cost Rate

The School has elected not to use the 10-percent de minimis indirect cost rate allowed under the Uniform Guidance.

**Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters
Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With *Government
Auditing Standards***

Independent Auditors' Report

**Board of Trustees
Ascend Charter Schools**

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of Ascend Charter Schools (the "School") (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as of June 30, 2023, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated November 28, 2023.

Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the School's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the School's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the School's internal control.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. We identified a deficiency in internal control, described in the accompanying schedule of findings and questioned costs as item 2023-001 that we consider to be a significant deficiency.

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the School's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

The School's Response to Finding

Government Auditing Standards requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the School's response to the finding identified in our audit and described in the accompanying schedule of findings and questioned costs. The School's response was not subjected to the other auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and, accordingly, we express no opinion on the response.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the organization's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the organization's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

[REDACTED]

Harrison, New York
November 28, 2023

**Report on Compliance for Each Major Federal Program and Report on Internal Control
Over Compliance Required by the Uniform Guidance**

Independent Auditors' Report

**Board of Trustees
Ascend Charter Schools**

Report on Compliance for Each Major Federal Program

Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

We have audited Ascend Charter Schools (the "School") compliance with the types of compliance requirements identified as subject to audit in the OMB *Compliance Supplement* that could have a direct and material effect on each of the School's major federal programs for the year ended June 30, 2023. The School's major federal programs are identified in the summary of auditors' results section of the accompanying schedule of findings and questioned costs.

In our opinion, the School complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs for the year ended June 30, 2023.

Basis for Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

We conducted our audit of compliance in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and the audit requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). Our responsibilities under those standards and the Uniform Guidance are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance section of our report.

We are required to be independent of the School and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion on compliance for each major federal program. Our audit does not provide a legal determination of the School's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above.

Responsibilities of Management for Compliance

Management is responsible for compliance with the requirements referred to above and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of effective internal control over compliance with the requirements of laws, statutes, regulations, rules, and provisions of contracts or grant agreements applicable to the School's federal programs.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether material noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above occurred, whether due to fraud or error, and express an opinion on the School's compliance based on our audit. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, *Government Auditing Standards*, and the Uniform Guidance will always detect material noncompliance when it exists. The risk of not detecting material noncompliance resulting from fraud is higher than for that resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above is considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, it would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user of the report on compliance about the School's compliance with the requirements of each major federal program as a whole.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, *Government Auditing Standards*, and the Uniform Guidance, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material noncompliance, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the School's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.
- Obtain an understanding of the School's internal control over compliance relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the School's internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and any significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in internal control over compliance that we identified during the audit.

Report on Internal Control Over Compliance

A deficiency in internal control over compliance exists when the design or operation of a control over compliance does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program on a timely basis. A *material weakness in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance, such that there is a reasonable possibility that material noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program that is less severe than a material weakness in internal control over compliance, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control over compliance was for the limited purpose described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance section above and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over compliance that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over compliance that we consider to be material weaknesses, as defined above. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance may exist that were not identified.

Our audit was not designed for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

The purpose of this report on internal control over compliance is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over compliance and the results of that testing based on the requirements of the Uniform Guidance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

[REDACTED]

Harrison, New York
November 28, 2023

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs Year Ended June 30, 2023

Section I - Summary of Auditors' Results

Financial Statements

Type of report the auditor issued on whether the financial statements audited were prepared in accordance with U.S. GAAP:

Unmodified

Internal control over financial reporting:

Material weakness(es) identified?

_____ yes X no

Significant deficiency(ies) identified?

X yes _____ no

Noncompliance material to the financial statements noted?

_____ yes X no

Federal Awards

Internal control over major federal programs:

Material weakness(es) identified?

_____ yes X no

Significant deficiency(ies) identified?

_____ yes X none reported

Type of auditors' report issued on compliance for major federal programs:

Unmodified

Any audit findings disclosed that are required to be reported in accordance with 2 CFR 200.516(a)?

_____ yes X no

Identification of major federal programs:

Federal Assistance Listing Number(s)

Name of Federal Program or Cluster

84.425D

COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II

84.425U

COVID-19 Education Stabilization Fund/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund ARP

Dollar threshold used to distinguish between Type A and Type B programs:

\$750,000

Auditee qualified as low-risk auditee?

X yes _____ no

Ascend Charter Schools

Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs (*continued*) Year Ended June 30, 2023

Section II – Financial Statement Findings

2023-001- General Ledger Maintenance and Account Analysis (*repeat finding 2022-001*)

Criteria

An effective financial closing process provides the School with accurate and timely financial statements. All significant accounts should be reconciled timely and regularly to ensure that financial records are accurate and to facilitate the preparation of financial statements at year end.

Condition

Although management has made significant improvements in the financial statement closing process to address the accuracy and timeliness of the School's year-end financial reporting during the 2023 audit, account analysis schedules for revenue and payroll were not fully reconciled before the start of the audit. We also noted that improvements are needed in the financial statement closing process to address the accuracy and timeliness of the School's year-end financial reporting.

Cause

The finance department has experienced significant turnover and appears to be understaffed. Continual training is required to enable a good understanding of effective internal controls.

Effect

The School's system of internal control is not effective for managing its resources and resulted in difficulties with meeting external deadlines for submission of the audited financial statements.

Recommendation

We recommend that the School assess the adequacy of resources in the finance department in relation to its periodic and year end reporting responsibilities. The School may consider an increased level of financial analysis of significant accounts on a regular basis, as well as providing additional support to the finance department in the area of financial reporting.

Views of Responsible Officials

See management corrective action plan in Appendix A.

Section III – Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs

During our audit, we noted no material instance of noncompliance and none of the costs tested which were reported in the federal financially assisted programs are questioned or recommended to be disallowed.

November 28, 2023

2023-001- General Ledger Maintenance and Account Analysis

To Whom it may concern:

In FY22 and FY23 Ascend saw continued transition within the finance team however within the year made significant progress in improving the accounting process.

Many of the areas of weaknesses identified last year were improved during the course of FY23; however due to turnover in key positions certain account analyses were not complete before the FY23 audit began. This year to mitigate any future challenges we have done the following to address any internal weaknesses:

1. Created a comprehensive monthly close checklist that the entire finance team will own
2. Clarified roles and responsibilities for existing and new staff
3. Expanded the financial, planning, and analysis team by 1 FTE to provide additional oversight in school activity and identify problems areas well in advance
4. Added capacity to the accounting team to support month-end activity, schedules, and balance sheet reconciliations and hired and onboarded a new Controller. This additional capacity will ensure that important audit schedules are reconciled monthly and where applicable quarterly.

Everything outlined above will allow the Ascend Learning finance team to report up-to-date financial information to internal and external stakeholders. Additionally, it will better prepare us for the FY24 audit.

The newly hired Controller Ahmed Saleh is responsible for corrective action. The anticipated completion date for the corrective action is June 30th, 2024.

Thank you,



Roberto Carlos Zayas
Interim Chief Financial Officer

205 Rockaway Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11212

Tel: 347-464-7600

ascendlearning.org

Ascend Charter Schools

November 28, 2023

To Whom it may concern:

SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS [Year Ended June 30, 2023]:

2022-001- General Ledger Maintenance and Account Analysis

Condition

Account analysis schedules were not fully reconciled and supported by all the backup documentation. We also noted that improvements are needed in the financial statement closing process to address the accuracy and timeliness of the School's year-end financial reporting.

Recommendation

Our Auditors recommended that the School assess the adequacy of resources in the finance department in relation to its periodic and year end reporting responsibilities. The School may consider an increased level of financial analysis of significant accounts on a regular basis, as well as providing additional support to the finance department in the area of financial reporting.

Status

Partial of the condition still exists at June 30, 2023 as mentioned in **2023-001**



Ascend Charter Schools

Independent Auditors' Report on Communication of Internal Control Matters

June 30, 2023

Independent Auditors' Communication on Internal Control Matters

The Board of Trustees Ascend Charter Schools

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements of Ascend Charter Schools (the "School") as of and for the year ended June 30, 2023, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, we considered the School's internal control over financial reporting ("internal control") as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the School's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the School's internal control.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and, therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. However, as discussed below, we identified a deficiency in internal control that we consider to be a significant deficiency.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A material weakness is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the School's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. We did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses.

A significant deficiency is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance. We consider the deficiency in the School's internal control presented in Addendum A to be a significant deficiency.

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of management, audit committee, board of Trustees, The State Education Department of the State University of New York, and others within the School, and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the courtesy and assistance extended to us by School personnel during the course of our audit.

[REDACTED]

Harrison, New York
November 28, 2023

Addendum A

Deficiencies in Internal Control that We Consider to be Significant Deficiencies

1. Financial Statement Closing Process and Increase in Financial Resources (*repeat finding*)

Although we noted that management has made significant improvements in the financial statement closing process to address the accuracy and timeliness of the School's year-end financial reporting during the 2023 audit, we noted that account analysis schedules for revenue and payroll were not fully reconciled before the start of the audit. We also noted that improvements are needed in the financial statement closing process to address the accuracy and timeliness of the School's year-end financial reporting.

We recommend that the School assess the adequacy of resources in the finance department in relation to its periodic and year end reporting responsibilities. The School may consider an increased level of financial analysis of significant accounts on a regular basis, as well as providing additional support to the finance department in the area of financial reporting.

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
Budget Narrative

Education Corporation Name:

Fiscal Contact:

Date:

Name:

Email:

1. What steps has the education corporation taken to ensure it has enacted a conservative budget?

2. How much of the education corporation's tier two of the ESSER funds would be spent by September 30, 2023? How much of the tier three ESSER funds does the education corporation plan to spend by September 30, 2024?

3. How does the education corporation ensure the sustainability of programs enacted through the use of ESSER funding once ESSER funding period ends?

Disclosure of Financial Interest by a Current or Former Trustee
--

Trustee Name:

Name of Charter School Education Corporation:

1. List all positions held on the education corporation Board of Trustees ("Board") (e.g., chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, parent representative, etc.).

2. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person employed by the school and/or education corporation?

Yes No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and the person's position, job description, and other responsibilities with the school.

3. Are you related by blood, or marriage, or legal adoption/guardianship to any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the education corporation?

Yes No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if the student could benefit from your participation.

4. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person that could otherwise benefit from your participation as a board member of the education corporation?

Yes No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if this person could benefit from your participation.

5. Are you a past, current, or prospective employee of the charter school, education corporation, and/or an entity that provides comprehensive management services ("CMO"), whether for-profit or not-for-profit, which contracts, or may contract, with the charter school or education corporation; or do you serve as an employee, officer, or director of, or own a controlling interest in, a business or entity that contracts, or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, education corporation, and/or a CMO, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, including, but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the said entities?

Yes No

If **Yes**, please provide a description of the position(s) you hold, your responsibilities, your salary and your start date.

6. Identify each interest/transaction (and provide the requested information) that you, any of your immediate family members, and/or any persons who you reside with have held or engaged in with the charter school(s) operated by the education corporation during the time you have served on the Board, and in the six months prior to such service. If there has been no such interest or transaction, check **None**.

None

Date(s)	Nature of financial interest / transaction	Steps taken to avoid a conflict of interest, (e.g., did not vote, did not participate in discussion)	Name of person holding interest or engaging in transaction and relationship to you

-
7. Identify each individual, business, corporation, union association, firm, partnership, franchise holding company, joint-stock company, business or real estate trust, non-profit organization, or other organization or group of people doing business with the school(s) operated by the education corporation **and** in which such entity, during the time of your tenure as a trustee, you and/or your immediate family member(s) or person(s) you reside with had a financial interest or other relationship. If you are a member, director, officer, or employee of an organization formally partnered with and/or doing business with the school(s) through a management or services agreement, please identify only the name of the organization, your position in the organization, and the relationship between such organization and the school(s). If there was no financial interest, check **None**.


None

Organization conducting business with the school(s)	Nature of business conducted	Approximate value of the business conducted	Name of Trustee and/or immediate family member of household holding an interest in the organization conducting business with the school(s) and the nature of the interest	Steps taken to avoid conflict of interest

-

This document is considered a public record and, as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. The personal contact information provided below will be redacted.

Business Telephone:

 _____


Business Address:

 _____

E-mail Address:

 _____

Home Telephone:

 _____

Home Address:

 _____



Signature

Date

Acceptable signature formats include:

- Digitally certified PDF signature
- Print form, manually sign, scan to PDF

last revised 04/2022

Disclosure of Financial Interest by a Current or Former Trustee
--

Trustee Name:

Gamal Walker

Name of Charter School Education Corporation:

Ascend Charter Schools

1. List all positions held on the education corporation Board of Trustees ("Board") (e.g., chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, parent representative, etc.).

Interim Co-Chair

Chair-Finance Cmte.

2. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person employed by the school and/or education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and the person's position, job description, and other responsibilities with the school.

3. Are you related by blood, or marriage, or legal adoption/guardianship to any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if the student could benefit from your participation.

4. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person that could otherwise benefit from your participation as a board member of the education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if this person could benefit from your participation.

5. Are you a past, current, or prospective employee of the charter school, education corporation, and/or an entity that provides comprehensive management services ("CMO"), whether for-profit or not-for-profit, which contracts, or may contract, with the charter school or education corporation; or do you serve as an employee, officer, or director of, or own a controlling interest in, a business or entity that contracts, or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, education corporation, and/or a CMO, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, including, but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the said entities?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please provide a description of the position(s) you hold, your responsibilities, your salary and your start date.

6. Identify each interest/transaction (and provide the requested information) that you, any of your immediate family members, and/or any persons who you reside with have held or engaged in with the charter school(s) operated by the education corporation during the time you have served on the Board, and in the six months prior to such service. If there has been no such interest or transaction, check **None**.

☒ **None**

Date(s)	Nature of financial interest / transaction	Steps taken to avoid a conflict of interest, (e.g., did not vote, did not participate in discussion)	Name of person holding interest or engaging in transaction and relationship to you

7. Identify each individual, business, corporation, union association, firm, partnership, franchise holding company, joint-stock company, business or real estate trust, non-profit organization, or other organization or group of people doing business with the school(s) operated by the education corporation **and** in which such entity, during the time of your tenure as a trustee, you and/or your immediate family member(s) or person(s) you reside with had a financial interest or other relationship. If you are a member, director, officer, or employee of an organization formally partnered with and/or doing business with the school(s) through a management or services agreement, please identify only the name of the organization, your position in the organization, and the relationship between such organization and the school(s). If there was no financial interest, check **None**.

☒ **None**

Organization conducting business with the school(s)	Nature of business conducted	Approximate value of the business conducted	Name of Trustee and/or immediate family member of household holding an interest in the organization conducting business with the school(s) and the nature of the interest	Steps taken to avoid conflict of interest

This document is considered a public record and, as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. The personal contact information provided below will be redacted.

Business Telephone:

Business Address:

E-mail Address:

Home Telephone:

Home Address:



07/24/2023

Signature

Date

Acceptable signature formats include:

- Digitally certified PDF signature
- Print form, manually sign, scan to PDF

last revised 04/2022

Disclosure of Financial Interest by a Current or Former Trustee
--

Trustee Name:

Name of Charter School Education Corporation:

1. List all positions held on the education corporation Board of Trustees ("Board") (e.g., chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, parent representative, etc.).

2. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person employed by the school and/or education corporation?

Yes No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and the person's position, job description, and other responsibilities with the school.

3. Are you related by blood, or marriage, or legal adoption/guardianship to any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the education corporation?

Yes No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if the student could benefit from your participation.

4. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person that could otherwise benefit from your participation as a board member of the education corporation?

Yes No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if this person could benefit from your participation.

5. Are you a past, current, or prospective employee of the charter school, education corporation, and/or an entity that provides comprehensive management services ("CMO"), whether for-profit or not-for-profit, which contracts, or may contract, with the charter school or education corporation; or do you serve as an employee, officer, or director of, or own a controlling interest in, a business or entity that contracts, or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, education corporation, and/or a CMO, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, including, but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the said entities?

Yes No

If **Yes**, please provide a description of the position(s) you hold, your responsibilities, your salary and your start date.

6. Identify each interest/transaction (and provide the requested information) that you, any of your immediate family members, and/or any persons who you reside with have held or engaged in with the charter school(s) operated by the education corporation during the time you have served on the Board, and in the six months prior to such service. If there has been no such interest or transaction, check **None**.

None

Date(s)	Nature of financial interest / transaction	Steps taken to avoid a conflict of interest, (e.g., did not vote, did not participate in discussion)	Name of person holding interest or engaging in transaction and relationship to you

-
7. Identify each individual, business, corporation, union association, firm, partnership, franchise holding company, joint-stock company, business or real estate trust, non-profit organization, or other organization or group of people doing business with the school(s) operated by the education corporation **and** in which such entity, during the time of your tenure as a trustee, you and/or your immediate family member(s) or person(s) you reside with had a financial interest or other relationship. If you are a member, director, officer, or employee of an organization formally partnered with and/or doing business with the school(s) through a management or services agreement, please identify only the name of the organization, your position in the organization, and the relationship between such organization and the school(s). If there was no financial interest, check **None**.

None

Organization conducting business with the school(s)	Nature of business conducted	Approximate value of the business conducted	Name of Trustee and/or immediate family member of household holding an interest in the organization conducting business with the school(s) and the nature of the interest	Steps taken to avoid conflict of interest

-

This document is considered a public record and, as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. The personal contact information provided below will be redacted.

Business Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Business Address:

[REDACTED]

E-mail Address:

[REDACTED]

Home Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Home Address:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Signature

Date

Acceptable signature formats include:

- Digitally certified PDF signature
- Print form, manually sign, scan to PDF

last revised 04/2022

**Disclosure of Financial Interest by a Current
or Former Trustee**

Trustee Name:

Jarai Jeter

Name of Charter School Education Corporation:

Ascend Charter Schools.

1. List all positions held on the education corporation Board of Trustees ("Board") (e.g., chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, parent representative, etc.).

Secretary
Parent Representative.

2. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person employed by the school and/or education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and the person's position, job description, and other responsibilities with the school.

3. Are you related by blood, or marriage, or legal adoption/guardianship to any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the education corporation?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if the student could benefit from your participation.

Parent - of Flatbush Ascend Lower School child.

4. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person that could otherwise benefit from your participation as a board member of the education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if this person could benefit from your participation.

5. Are you a past, current, or prospective employee of the charter school, education corporation, and/or an entity that provides comprehensive management services ("CMO"), whether for-profit or not-for-profit, which contracts, or may contract, with the charter school or education corporation; or do you serve as an employee, officer, or director of, or own a controlling interest in, a business or entity that contracts, or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, education corporation, and/or a CMO, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, including, but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the said entities?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please provide a description of the position(s) you hold, your responsibilities, your salary and your start date.

6. Identify each interest/transaction (and provide the requested information) that you, any of your immediate family members, and/or any persons who you reside with have held or engaged in with the charter school(s) operated by the education corporation during the time you have served on the Board, and in the six months prior to such service. If there has been no such interest or transaction, check **None**.

☒ None

Date(s)	Nature of financial interest / transaction	Steps taken to avoid a conflict of interest, (e.g., did not vote, did not participate in discussion)	Name of person holding interest or engaging in transaction and relationship to you

7. Identify each individual, business, corporation, union association, firm, partnership, franchise holding company, joint-stock company, business or real estate trust, non-profit organization, or other organization or group of people doing business with the school(s) operated by the education corporation **and** in which such entity, during the time of your tenure as a trustee, you and/or your immediate family member(s) or person(s) you reside with had a financial interest or other relationship. If you are a member, director, officer, or employee of an organization formally partnered with and/or doing business with the school(s) through a management or services agreement, please identify only the name of the organization, your position in the organization, and the relationship between such organization and the school(s). If there was no financial interest, check **None**.

☒ None

Organization conducting business with the school(s)	Nature of business conducted	Approximate value of the business conducted	Name of Trustee and/or immediate family member of household holding an interest in the organization conducting business with the school(s) and the nature of the interest	Steps taken to avoid conflict of interest

This document is considered a public record and, as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. The personal contact information provided below will be redacted.

Business Telephone:

N/A

Business Address:

N/A

E-mail Address:

[REDACTED]

Home Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Home Address:

[REDACTED]

Signature

[REDACTED]

7/28/23
Date

Acceptable signature formats include:

- Digitally certified PDF signature
- Print form, manually sign, scan to PDF

last revised 04/2022

**Disclosure of Financial Interest by a Current
or Former Trustee**

Trustee Name:

Shelly Cleary

Name of Charter School Education Corporation:

Ascend Charter Schools

1. List all positions held on the education corporation Board of Trustees ("Board") (e.g., chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, parent representative, etc.).

Treasurer

2. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person employed by the school and/or education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and the person's position, job description, and other responsibilities with the school.

3. Are you related by blood, or marriage, or legal adoption/guardianship to any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if the student could benefit from your participation.

6. Identify each interest/transaction (and provide the requested information) that you, any of your immediate family members, and/or any persons who you reside with have held or engaged in with the charter school(s) operated by the education corporation during the time you have served on the Board, and in the six months prior to such service. If there has been no such interest or transaction, check **None**.

☒ **None**

Date(s)	Nature of financial interest / transaction	Steps taken to avoid a conflict of interest, (e.g., did not vote, did not participate in discussion)	Name of person holding interest or engaging in transaction and relationship to you

This document is considered a public record and, as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. The personal contact information provided below will be redacted.

Business Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Business Address:

[REDACTED]

E-mail Address:


[REDACTED]

Home Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Home Address:

[REDACTED]


[REDACTED]
Signature

7/31/23

Date

Acceptable signature formats include:

- Digitally certified PDF signature
- Print form, manually sign, scan to PDF

last revised 04/2022

**Disclosure of Financial Interest by a Current
or Former Trustee**

Trustee Name:

STANLEY J. TAYLOR, JR

Name of Charter School Education Corporation:

ASCEND

1. List all positions held on the education corporation Board of Trustees ("Board") (e.g., chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, parent representative, etc.).

VICE CHAIR

2. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person employed by the school and/or education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and the person's position, job description, and other responsibilities with the school.

3. Are you related by blood, or marriage, or legal adoption/guardianship to any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if the student could benefit from your participation.

4. Are you related, by blood or marriage, to any person that could otherwise benefit from your participation as a board member of the education corporation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe the nature of your relationship and if this person could benefit from your participation.

5. Are you a past, current, or prospective employee of the charter school, education corporation, and/or an entity that provides comprehensive management services ("CMO"), whether for-profit or not-for-profit, which contracts, or may contract, with the charter school or education corporation; or do you serve as an employee, officer, or director of, or own a controlling interest in, a business or entity that contracts, or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, education corporation, and/or a CMO, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, including, but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the said entities?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, please provide a description of the position(s) you hold, your responsibilities, your salary and your start date.

6. Identify each interest/transaction (and provide the requested information) that you, any of your immediate family members, and/or any persons who you reside with have held or engaged in with the charter school(s) operated by the education corporation during the time you have served on the Board, and in the six months prior to such service. If there has been no such interest or transaction, check **None**.

☒ **None**

Date(s)	Nature of financial interest / transaction	Steps taken to avoid a conflict of interest, (e.g., did not vote, did not participate in discussion)	Name of person holding interest or engaging in transaction and relationship to you

7. Identify each individual, business, corporation, union association, firm, partnership, franchise holding company, joint-stock company, business or real estate trust, non-profit organization, or other organization or group of people doing business with the school(s) operated by the education corporation **and** in which such entity, during the time of your tenure as a trustee, you and/or your immediate family member(s) or person(s) you reside with had a financial interest or other relationship. If you are a member, director, officer, or employee of an organization formally partnered with and/or doing business with the school(s) through a management or services agreement, please identify only the name of the organization, your position in the organization, and the relationship between such organization and the school(s). If there was no financial interest, check **None**.

☒ **None**

Organization conducting business with the school(s)	Nature of business conducted	Approximate value of the business conducted	Name of Trustee and/or immediate family member of household holding an interest in the organization conducting business with the school(s) and the nature of the interest	Steps taken to avoid conflict of interest

This document is considered a public record and, as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. The personal contact information provided below will be redacted.

Business Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Business Address:

[REDACTED]

E-mail Address:

[REDACTED]

Home Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Home Address:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Signature

7/28/2023

Date

Acceptable signature formats include:

- Digitally certified PDF signature
- Print form, manually sign, scan to PDF

last revised 04/2022

Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
July 8, 2022
6:00 pm

Location: Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Janai Jeter, Jackie Wilson, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (all via videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Aaron Obrochta, Anastasia Michals, Carlos Zayas, Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Guy Johnson, Holly Curtis, Jonny Masci, Jennifer Bauer, Kate McGrath, Maryann Li, Nichole Benjamin, Nina Blalock, Raul Echeverz, Recy Dunn, Tanneka McIntosh, Vanessa Aird (all via tele- or videoconference)

Public in attendance

Aaron Eastman, Akeshia Craven-Howell, Evan Coughenour, Rochelle Dalton (all via videoconference)

Nadine called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

I. Public comment

No public comment was offered.

II. Public comment update

At June's meeting, Rashida Gillus-Favard, a parent at Central Brooklyn Ascend Lower School, shared her concern with the Board about homework assigned in her son's classroom, as well as her desire for Ascend to offer afterschool and summer programming. Anastasia shared that the school's leadership has connected with Ms. Gillus-Favard and is investigating afterschool and summer programming options for future school years with the support of its' Parent Leadership Council, which they have also invited Ms. Gillus-Favard to join.

III. Consent agenda

Recy took a moment to announce that Holly Curtis, current Director of Student Recruitment and Enrollment, will take on the role of Chief of Staff this summer. Recy also introduced the Board to new members of the Ascend Learning team, including:

- Carlos Zayas, Interim CFO
- Guy Johnson, Interim Controller
- Nichole Benjamin, Director of Development

Nadine presented to the Board the minutes of the June 8, 2022 meeting and executive sessions. Pending minor corrections to the language, Stanley moved to approve the meeting minutes and executive session minutes, Janai seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Nadine presented to the Board the SY22-23 Staff Handbook. Shelly moved to approve the SY22-23 Staff Handbook as written in the pre-read package, Stanley seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Nadine presented to the Board the SY22-23 Family Handbook. Shelly moved to approve the SY22-23 Family Handbook as written in the pre-read package, Stanley seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. School and network updates

Shelly summarized the financial highlights from May 2022, which continue to show strong financial performance. Net income is favorable to the budget and we are tracking favorably against all covenants, SUNY and financial stability metrics.

Danique spoke on behalf of the Academic Committee and Danique shared how we are teaching and encouraging leaders to make data-driven decisions, such as through the School Health Dashboard that was developed this year. It includes data collected daily and throughout the year under four domains: Academics, Student Culture, Staff Culture, and DEIA. Danique also shared an update on the expansion of the Schools team to include additional data- and student-support focused roles. The Board asked about academic target setting, and Danique and Recy offered to provide a future workshop on academic target setting and

Holly updated the Board SY22-23 registrations, which are on-track to meet their goals. Holly informed the Trustees about the Recruitment and Enrollment Team's focus on community-building this summer, including attending several community events in neighborhoods of opportunity.

Aaron spoke to the Board about the SY22-23 recruitment season, sharing a summary of all hires thus far and current vacancies by school and role. Aaron also shared an update with the Board on centralized teacher hiring, which has shifted to being held remotely for the summer. The Board asked questions about SPED vacancies and hiring potential, and requested an update of staffing contingency plans in August's meeting.

V. Summer Institute

Maryann and Danique provided an overview of Summer Institute, which will provide Operations staff, School Leaders, and Teachers each two weeks of training and team building with a focus on problem-solving, leadership, and community. Summer institute will ensure that all staff understand our purpose, mission, values, and are aligned on how to drive student outcomes for SY22-23.

They also shared staff reflections from the first session of Summer Institute, which are largely positive and show excitement about Ascend's community, commitment to DEIA, and the opportunity to partner collaboratively.

VI. Committee Appointments

Prior to the meeting, the Trustees indicated which committees they would like to join for SY22-23. Nadine presented these selections to the Board. Jackie moved to approve SY22-23 committee appointments as listed below, Shelly seconded, and the vote was carried unanimously.

Committee Appointments:

- Emmanuel Fordjour – Academic Committee
- Gamal Walker – Academic Committee; Finance Committee
- Janai Jeter – Academic Committee; Hiring Committee; Nominating Committee
- Jackie Wilson – Hiring Committee; Nominating Committee
- Nadine Sylvester – Academic Committee
- Shelly Cleary – Academic Committee; Finance Committee
- Stanley Taylor – Hiring Committee; Nominating Committee

VII. Executive session: principal hiring

At 7:01 pm, Stanley moved to enter executive session to discuss principal hiring for the 2022-23 school year. Janai seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 7:09 pm, Stanley moved to exit executive session, which Shelly seconded and was unanimously approved.

Jackie moved to approve Katherine Stearns as Principal of East Brooklyn Ascend Charter School. Shelly seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Shelly moved to approve Latasha Williams as Co-Principal of Brooklyn Ascend Charter School. Jackie seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

VIII. Strategic Planning overview

Akeshia Craven-Howell, Evan Coughenour, and Rochelle Dalton, of Bellwether, introduced themselves to the Board and shared an overview of the process to create our five-year Strategic Plan, including the project timeline and key deliverables.

IX. Adjournment

At 7:40 pm, Jackie moved to adjourn the meeting, which Janai seconded and was unanimously approved.

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Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 7/25/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
July 13, 2022
6:00 pm**

Location: Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Janai Jeter, Jackie Wilson, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (all via tele- or videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Recy Dunn (all via video-conference)

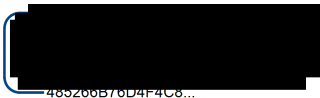
At 7:01 pm, Stanley moved to enter executive session to discuss principal hiring for the 2022-23 school year. Janai seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

I. Executive Session

The hiring committee discussed principal candidates for the 2022-23 school year.

II. Adjournment

At 7:09 pm, Stanley moved to exit executive session, which Shelly seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 7/25/2023

Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
August 10, 2022
6:00 pm

Location: Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, Jackie Wilson, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (all via videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Aaron Obrochta, Anastasia Michals, Carlos Zayas, Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Guy Johnson, Holly Curtis, Inan Barrett, Jennifer Bauer, Jonny Masci, Justin Moorman, Kate McGrath, Maryann Li, Nichole Benjamin, Nina Blalock, Oyindamola Lawal, Raul Echeverz, Raymond Johnson, Recy Dunn, Tanneka McIntosh, Tenille Faria, Vanessa Aird, Zonya Hicks (all via tele- or videoconference)

Public in attendance

Aristha Israel, Autumn Vaughn, Brian Romero, Carolina Aracena, Chakka Assam, Daphne'e Manigat, Evan Coughenour, Fabia Depaula, Fabienne Rolfort, Frantz Louis, Jacinta Nelson, Jean Geraud Pierre, Jerry Charles, Josiely Andrion, Karelyn Hidalgo, Karina Quiceno, Katiana Jules, Kayon MchKenzie, Martin Masse, Martine Masse, Rochelle Dalton, Rose Metellus, Shanise Jenkins, Shaun Pascall, Taifa Johnson, Tricia Knight, Victoria Fleary, Yoanny De Los Santos (all via tele- or videoconference)

Nadine called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

I. Public comment

Victoria Fleary, a Brownsville Ascend Middle School parent, shared concerns with the Board about school security, and asked about any future plans to develop a gifted and talented program or to expand student transportation options.

Shanise Jenkins, a Brownsville Ascend Middle School and Brooklyn Ascend High School parent, shared her concerns with the Board about the high school's capacity and schedule. She asked the Board about funding for extracurricular activities; supports for students' academic outcomes and post-graduation planning; and teacher retention. She also asked about opportunities for students at the high school to earn college credits.

Shaun Pascall, Jacinta Nelson, and Autumn Vaughn signed up in advance for public comment, but did join the floor when called.

II. Public comment update

No public comment was offered at July's meeting.

III. Consent agenda

Stanley presented to the Board the minutes of the July 13, 2022 meeting and executive sessions. Jackie moved to approve the meeting minutes and executive session minutes, Gamal seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. Financial report and covid stimulus funds update

Shelly summarized the financial highlights from June 2022, which continue to show strong financial performance. Net income is favorable to the budget, and we are tracking favorably against all covenants, SUNY and financial stability metrics.

V. School reopening

Recy shared Ascend's latest promotional video with the Board, which highlights on Ascend's new purpose, mission, and values statements.

Maryann shared a review of Summer Institute on Danique's behalf due to technical difficulties. At each Institute, staff had the opportunity to learn and practice community building and problem-solving skills with their colleagues, with an additional focus on instructional and performance management. Leaders also spent time digging into data from Ascend's work with The New Teacher

Project and hearing from Kim Scott, author of *Radical Candor*. The board asked about learnings from institute that will be carried into SY22-23.

Maryann then spoke to the Board about Ascend's preparation for school reopening. As we enter SY22-23, we are setting ambitious goals for the first 6 weeks of the year, recommitting to Responsive Classrooms, ensuring classroom libraries are well appointed and that tools to connect with families, such as ParentSquare, are high-functioning and being utilized well throughout the year.

In preparation for reopening, operations staff are ensuring that school buildings are ready, training staff on all school procedures and systems, finalizing student filing and data systems, and working with key food, health, and facilities vendors.

Raul shared a brief real estate update. The future site of Brownsville Ascend Lower School, 1620 Pitkin Avenue, is on track to open in June 2024. The future site of Cypress Hills Ascend Middle School, which is currently co-located with Cypress Hills Ascend Lower School, is on track to open in June 2023. Construction for the future site of Flatbush Ascend Middle School is expected to begin in September.

Maryann discussed SY22-23 student enrollment, which is on track to meet annual goals. The student recruitment and enrollment team is working to align enrollment with teacher hiring.

Maryann then reviewed several technology updates that have been implemented to streamline parent communications and application management; and to improve school connectivity and cybersecurity.

She also reminded the Board that an updated staff handbook was rolled out in July, and announced that HR was able to prepare for benefits open enrollment a month earlier than in past years with additional capacity and expertise through several new hires.

Aaron spoke to the Board about the SY22-23 recruitment season, which has resulted in over 450 hires so far. Anastasia and Zonya, both Managing Directors of schools, spoke about contingency for classroom staffing, sharing that they are confident in current staffing numbers, and that any safety concerns have been addressed through alignment with the student enrollment and talent teams. The Board asked about nationwide talent trends and strategic solutions.

VI. FAMS update

The Flatbush Ascend Middle School update was skipped for time. Ascend will share the updates with the Board at a future date.

VII. Strategic planning update

Rochelle Dalton reviewed the goals and deliverables for Phase 1 with the Board and shared a summary of their stakeholder engagement and artifact review thus far.

VIII. Executive session: principal hiring

At 7:10 pm, Stanley moved to enter executive session to discuss legal updates and principal hiring for the 2022-23 school year. Jackie seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 7:24 pm, Jackie moved to exit executive session, which Emmanuel seconded and was unanimously approved.

Jackie moved to approve Jahkia Sanders as Principal of Canarsie Ascend Middle School. Nadine seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IX. Adjournment

At 7:26 pm, Stanley moved to adjourn the meeting, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 12/13/2022

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
August 10, 2022
6:00 pm**

Location: Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, Jackie Wilson, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (all via tele- or videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Katherine McGrath, Recy Dunn (all via video-conference)

At 7:10 pm, Stanley moved to enter executive session to discuss legal updates and principal hiring for the 2022-23 school year. Jackie seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

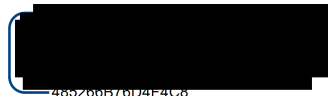
I. Executive Session

Kate shared legal updates with the Board.

Recy spoke with the Board about principal candidates for SY22-23.

II. Adjournment

At 7:24 pm, Jackie moved to exit executive session, which Emmanuel seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 12/13/2022

Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
September 14, 2022
6:00 pm

Location: Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Gamal Walker, Jackie Wilson, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (all via videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Aaron Obrochta, Anastasia Michals, Carmen Maldonado, Carlos Zayas, Crystal Washington, Dana Evans Muller, Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Jonny Masci, Guy Johnson, Justin Moorman, Kate Stewart, Kate McGrath, Korena Johnson, Livia Angiolillo, Maryann Li, Nichole Benjamin, Raul Echeverz, Recy Dunn, Tenille Faria, Zonya Hicks, (all via tele- or videoconference)

Public in attendance

Agaja Reddy, Andrew Holder, Akeshia Craven-Howell, Evan Coughenour, Pamela McRae, Rochelle Dalton, Roxanne McRae, Stephanie Sandeus, Sajous Soy, Taifa Johnson (all via tele- or videoconference)

Stanley called the meeting to order at 6:02. Stanley welcomed staff, Trustees, and families to the meeting and reminded attendees of the purpose and protocol of Public Comment.

I. Public comment

Andre Holder, a parent of two students at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, asked about grading practices, particularly around class participation. He also raised concerns about students not being offered enough independence during the school day, for example, during class transitions.

II. Public comment update

At August's meeting, Victoria Fleary, a Brownsville Ascend Middle School parent, shared concerns with the Board about school security, and asked about any future plans to develop a gifted and talented program or to expand student transportation options.

Dana confirmed that several measures were taken this year to increase the safety and security of school buildings, including upgraded camera systems; increased security presence throughout the building; and conflict resolution, intervention, and de-escalation training for security staff.

Korena shared that although there is no current plan to develop a gifted and talented program, scheduling adjustments were made this year to allow for more 1:1 teaching opportunities. Additionally, middle school students take Algebra 1, allowing them to take regents exams before high school. The Schools team is exploring many exciting partnerships to further enrich Ascend's curriculum, such as an upcoming partnership with Hello World.

Maryann spoke to Ascend's robust transportation support for students, including busses, student MetroCards, and more. For additional information or resources, parents are encouraged to reach out to their school's operations teams.

Shanise Jenkins, a Brownsville Ascend Middle School and Brooklyn Ascend High School parent, shared her concerns with the Board about the high school's capacity and schedule. She asked the Board about funding for extracurricular activities; supports for students' academic outcomes and post-graduation planning; and teacher retention. She also asked about opportunities for students at the high school to earn college credits.

Livia responded to Shanise's concerns about the high school scheduling, sharing that a truncated school day would not be operationally possible, as the building is shared with two other schools, Brownsville Lower and Middle schools. Additionally, we must meet a certain number of Academic minutes which a shortened school day would not provide.

Zonya and Livia spoke to academic supports for students, which include differentiation blocks allowing for 1:1 and small group instruction; a co-teaching model for all high school core classes; a focus on data-driven instruction; and office hours built into the school day when all core teachers are available for 1:1 instruction.

Zonya and Anastasia also assured Ms. Jenkins that Ascend has taken steps to help mitigate industry-wide burnout, including extended wellness days and additional focus on adult development. Roles have also been added at the network level to help ensure school supports serve all learners and that all school roles have a comprehensive development plan.

Livia shared Ms. Jenkins that Brooklyn Ascend High School is offering more AP classes in SY22 than in any prior year. All BAHS students grades 10-12 are enrolled in at least one AP class, and students who pass an AP exam have the opportunity to earn college credits for that course. In addition, BAHS has expanded its postsecondary planning support for upperclassmen to better serve students in pursuing a life of boundless choice.

In response to Ms. Jenkin's question about extracurricular funding, Carlos shared that Ascend pilots extracurricular partnerships at individual schools with the intention to scale them in years to come if partnerships are successful.

Regarding BAHS' capacity, Maryann confirmed that there are plans in place to continue expanding BAHS' footprint to meet demand.

III. Consent agenda

Stanley presented to the Board the minutes of the August 10, 2022 meeting and executive sessions. Shelly moved to approve the meeting minutes and executive session minutes, Nadine seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. School and network updates

Financial report and covid stimulus funds update

Shelly summarized the financial highlights from July 2022, which continue to show strong financial performance. Net income is favorable to the budget, and we are tracking favorably against all covenants, SUNY and financial stability metrics.

Carmen shared an update on Ascend's plan to refinance leaseholder debt. After vetting various refinancing opportunities and observing interest rates over time, Ascend and the Board agreed to apply to refinance through Equitable Finance Fund (EFF) this month.

Start of school

Danique provided an update on the first several weeks of school, which have focused on community building, love of reading, and preparation and practice. She shared the investments that have been poured into each of these priorities, such as building classroom culture; establishing strong reading routines and celebrating books; and emphasizing students' roles in their communities.

Student enrollment

Maryann updated the Board on enrollment. We are currently under enrolled by 4%, as we've shifted our enrollment timing and strategy to align with teacher vacancies being filled. The enrollment team is working closely with schools to consider the holistic health of school and support strong student enrollment and teacher onboarding.

Talent

Aaron provided a talent update as the SY22-23 recruitment season, which runs October 1 to September 3, ends. He shared a summary of total hires to date for the year and current total school-based vacancies. Aaron guided the Board towards our hiring priorities, noting that we are using data-driven recruitment approaches to focus our talent efforts on schools with most need. The Board asked questions about school staffing structures, talent trends, and Ascend's internal growth pipeline.

V. Strategic planning update

Evan Coughenour updated the Board on progress towards developing Ascend's five-year Strategic Plan, including a high-level overview of feedback from key stakeholders and a preview of potential strategic priorities and goals.

VI. Executive session: legal updates and principal hiring

At 7:21, Nadine moved to enter executive session to discuss legal updates and principal hiring for the 2022-23 school year. Janai seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 7:28, Jackie moved to exit executive session, which Janai seconded and was unanimously approved.

Shelly moved to approve Johanna Alfonzo as Principal of Central Brooklyn Ascend Lower School. Gamal seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

VII. Adjournment

At 7:29, Jackie moved to adjourn the meeting, which Nadine seconded and was unanimously approved.

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Emmanuel Fordjour.

Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 12/13/2022

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
September 14, 2022
6:00 pm**

Location: Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (all via tele- or videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Emily Acuna, Danique Day, Holly Curtis, Maryann Li, Recy Dunn (all via video-conference)

At 7:21, Nadine moved to enter executive session to discuss legal updates and principal hiring for the 2022-23 school year. Janai seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

I. Executive Session

Kate shared legal updates with the Board.

Recy and Danique spoke with the Board about principal candidates for SY22-23.

II. Adjournment

At 7:28, Jackie moved to exit executive session, which Janai seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 12/13/2022

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
October 13, 2022
6:00 pm**

Location: Central Brooklyn Ascend Middle School; Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Stanley Taylor (in person); Jackie Wilson (via videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Agaja Reddy, Alim Uddin, Carlos Zayas, Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Hunter Zwack, Kate McGrath, Korena Johnson, Martyn Ecob, Mia Della Petra, Recy Dunn (in person); Jonathan Masci, Kate Stewart, Leyde St. Leger, Maryann Li, Nichole Benjamin, Raul Echeverz, Ria Mehta (via tele- or videoconference)

Public in attendance

Israel Palacios, Viviane Curiel (in person); Akeshia Craven Howell, Diana Duncan-Ramsden, Danni Hinkinson, Evan Coughenour, Johnny Millien, Shanise Jenkins (via tele- or videoconference)

Nadine called the meeting to order at 6:07pm. Nadine welcomed staff, Trustees, and families to the meeting.

I. Public comment update

At September's meeting, Andre Holder, a parent of two students at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, asked about grading practices, particularly around class participation. He also raised concerns about students not being offered enough independence during the school day, for example, during class transitions.

Korena Johnson shared that this year's rubric has shifted so teachers are giving more direct feedback to students, and so benchmark scores account for 50% of final grade, while the other half is split

between checkpoints and assessment tasks. These changes have increased accountability for student work product. Additionally, schools have placed a focus on building strong systems during the first 6 weeks so students can gain independence throughout the year.

II. Consent agenda

Nadine presented to the Board the minutes of the September 14, 2022 meeting and executive sessions. Stanley moved to approve the meeting minutes and executive session minutes, Gamal seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

III. Real estate update

Kate shared that amendments have been made to rental schedules for FOA leases to reflect higher occupancy costs due to inflation, and to assign the existing Pitkin and CALS leases to FOA and sublease to ACS, in alignment with other school leases.

The Board asked about potential risks; Kate shared there is no indication of risk in the short term.

Nadine presented to the Board the resolution approving certain real estate transactions. Stanley moved to approve the resolution as written in the pre-read package, Janai seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

Shanise Jenkins, a parent at BVMS, shared her concerns with the school's staffing shortages and asked how Ascend is addressing talent concerns. Ms. Jenkins also asked how teachers can be better developed in supporting students with IEPs.

V. School and network updates

Financial report and covid stimulus funds update

Carlos summarized the financial highlights from August 2022, which continue to show strong financial performance. Net income is favorable to the budget, and we are tracking favorably against all covenants, SUNY and financial stability metrics. The Board asked if we are on track to meet refinancing deadlines.

Student enrollment

Maryann updated the Board on student enrollment, which is 5% under budget. She shared that student withdrawals have slowed since the end of September, and that the team is reviewing the annual enrollment budget.

Talent

Recy spoke to Talent updates since September's meeting, noting that we have been thoughtful about the partnership between enrollment and staffing as we consider adjustments to sections to accommodate staffing challenge. Danique offered additional context on tailored adjustments that have been made.

The Board asked about the possibility of inter-school professional development and how it is being messaged to leaders, which Danique confirmed we have implemented at the Pitkin campus between BVMS and BAHS and are socializing with incoming leaders. The Board asked about other retention and staffing initiatives that could be implemented and their tradeoffs.

VI. Academic Outcomes Update

Danique introduced the Academic Outcomes Team, Mia, Korena, Alim, Hunter and Martyn, who shared an overview with the Board of historic state test data and how it has informed curricular and programmatic changes made for SY22-23.

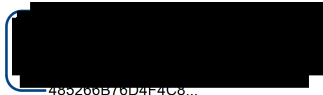
The Board asked about receiving additional AP test result data; how we are making data-driven decisions around post-graduation planning support for students; and how we are sharing academic data with families and supporting at-home conversations about academic outcomes.

VII. Strategic Planning Update

Recy provided a high-level update with the Board on the five-year strategic planning process. As our engagement with Bellwether nears its conclusion, we have aligned on impact goals and are now finalizing the scope of initiatives and key metrics that will drive and measure progress towards them.

I. Adjournment

At 7:31, Stanley moved to adjourn the meeting, which Gamal seconded and was unanimously approved.

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Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 7/21/2023

Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
November 9, 2022
6:00 pm

Location: Flatbush Ascend Lower School; Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary, (in person); Stanley Taylor, Jackie Wilson (via videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Agaja Reddy, Alim Uddin, Carlos Zayas, Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Hunter Zwack, Kate McGrath, Korena Johnson, Maryan Li, Martyn Ecob, Mia Della Petra, Recy Dunn, Ria Mehta (in person)

Public in attendance

Diane Duncan-Ramsden, Early Fleary, Jessica Doolal, Kevon Doolal, Shanelle Loyd (in person)

Nadine called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

I. Public comment

Earl Fleary, a parent at Brownsville Ascend Middle School, shared his concerns with the Board about high teacher turnover and insufficient student discipline, transportation options, and communication from school staff at his daughter's school.

Diana Duncan-Ramsden, a parent at Flatbush Ascend Lower School, shared her concerns with the Board about the safety of the nearby intersection at Linden Boulevard and Rogers Avenue, and requested to add a crossing guard at that intersection for student safety. Ms. Duncan-Ramsden shared that the Principal indicated to parents that Ascend Learning denied the prior request for a crossing guard.

Jessica Doolal, a founding parent at East Brooklyn Ascend Lower School, shared that she feels the school has lacked structure and consistency since last year. Her daughter's classroom has fewer teachers than initially planned, and tutoring services were discontinued. She also has concerns about

benchmark performance and IEP assessment policies. Lastly, Ms. Doolal asked about plans for Ascend's recent gift from Mackenzie Scott.

Shanelle Loyd, a parent at Flatbush Ascend Lower School, spoke to the Board about ensuring there are safe transitions for students within the building and during dismissal. Ms. Loyd also asked about the timeline for sharing test scores with families, and the expectation for family engagement at the school level.

II. Response to public comment

At October's meeting, Shanise Jenkins, a parent at BVMS, shared her concerns with the school's staffing shortages and asked how Ascend is addressing talent concerns. Ms. Jenkins also asked how teachers can be better developed in supporting students with IEPs.

Jessie Ziegler, Managing Director of Student Support Services, shared that BVMS teachers were provided professional development earlier this year to review individualized education plans, and will receive ongoing professional development around student support services. The school has also recently hired a part-time Special Services Coordinator to support teachers and students with IEPs.

Recy Dunn, CEO, noted that in response to the nationwide teacher shortage, Ascend has shifted to year-round talent recruitment. We have also worked with other Ascend schools to bring additional staff into BVMS; are leveraging Assistant Teachers; and have hired a new Managing Director of Talent to support our Talent strategy.

III. Consent agenda

Nadine presented to the Board the minutes of the October 13, 2022 meeting and executive sessions. Janai moved to approve the meeting minutes and executive session minutes, Gamal seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. School and network updates

Financial report and covid stimulus funds update

Shelly summarized the financial highlights from September 2022, which continue to show strong financial performance. Net income is favorable to the budget, and we are tracking favorably against all covenants, SUNY and financial stability metrics. Public attendees asked questions about COVID fund expenditures and public financial packages, which are available on Ascend's website.

Student enrollment

Maryann updated the Board on student enrollment, which is currently 5% under budget. She also shared that the SY23-24 application has been launched, and that application updates will be shared in future meetings. The Board asked about enrollment targets and investments in enrollment incentives. Maryann noted the importance of the balance between staffing and enrollment to maintain a high quality of instruction.

Academic committee

Janai spoke on behalf of the Academic Committee to share updates about initiatives to increase support for scholars and staff, including increased prep time for teachers and school leaders; new phonics programs and staff training in those programs; increased play in kindergarten; and new math and science curricula.

Talent

Ria and Recy shared a summary with the Board of hires since October 1, in addition to an update on school-based vacancies. The Board asked about placement for mid-year hires, which Ria clarified are determined based on school-identified priorities. The Board also asked about Special Education and ELL roles, which Ria and Recy shared are prioritized, especially through philanthropic partnerships that Ascend is pursuing.

Nadine asked if we have been impacted by the influx of immigrants seeking asylum in New York. Maryann spoke to new families at Bushwick Ascend Lower School and the increased support they have there to provide to families, including a high percentage of multilingual staff. Kate added that Ascend will look into additional support or outreach we can provide to migrant families.

V. Adjournment

At 6:44, Stanley moved to adjourn the meeting, which Shelley seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 7/21/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
December 14, 2022
6:00 pm**

Location: Central Brooklyn Ascend Lower School; Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Stanley Taylor (in person); Shelly Cleary (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Agaja Reddy, Emily Acuna, Bernard Washington, Hunter Zwack, Holly Curtis, Jessie Ziegler, Jonny Masci, Kate McGrath, Kevin Gibbs, Leyde St. Leger, Nichole Benjamin, Raymond Johnson, Recy Dunn, Shaneka Cordero, Wintanna Abai (in person); Danique Day, Ria Mehta, Zonya Hicks (via tele- or video-conference)

Public in attendance

Jessica Doolal, Sonia Manzo (in person); Diana Duncan-Ramsden, Nigel Brown (via tele- or video-conference)

Stanley called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

I. Public comment

Sonia Manzo, a parent at East Flatbush Ascend Charter School (EFACS), shared concerns regarding student safety in the building. Her son has experienced incidents of bullying, and Ms. Manzo is unsatisfied with the school's incident reporting and interventions. Ms. Manzo requested that EFACS provide a safety plan to mitigate the situation.

II. Response to public comment

At November's meeting, Earl Fleary, a parent at Brownsville Ascend Middle School (BVMS), shared his concerns with the Board about high teacher turnover and insufficient student discipline, transportation options, and communication from school staff at his daughter's school.

Zonya Hicks informed the Board that that she met with the Fleary family in December to further discuss their concerns. Zonya helped clarify the changes to instructional and leadership staff with the family, which are intended to have a positive impact on student safety. Raymond Johnson informed the Board that Ascend has taken steps to ensure that transportation routes are appropriately serving students and families.

At November's meeting, Diana Duncan-Ramsden, a parent at Flatbush Ascend Lower School, shared her concerns with the Board about the safety of the nearby intersection at Linden Boulevard and Rogers Avenue, and requested to add a crossing guard at that intersection for student safety. Ms. Duncan-Ramsden shared that the Principal indicated to parents that Ascend Learning denied the prior request for a crossing guard.

Bernard Washington shared that Ascend has since initiated an application for a crossing guard. Flatbush Ascend Lower School is seeking 150 signatures for a petition to support said application, which will be submitted in January, following a mass hiring of crossing guards to help combat the citywide shortage.

At November's meeting, Jessica Doolal, a founding parent at East Brooklyn Ascend Lower School, shared that she feels the school has lacked structure and consistency since last year. Her daughter's classroom has fewer teachers than initially planned, and tutoring services were discontinued. She also has concerns about benchmark performance and IEP assessment policies. Lastly, Ms. Doolal asked about plans for Ascend's recent gift from Mackenzie Scott.

Wintanna Abai spoke with the Board regarding Ms. Doolal's concerns, and shared that changes to the staffing in her daughter's classroom were in the interest of ensuring high-quality instruction. Wintanna also shared that previous tutoring services were reassessed as they weren't found to adequately serve all students. Jessie Ziegler confirmed that the school's staff have been reminded of IEP assessment policies and that school-based staff receive year-round PD regarding student interventions and support services.

Recy spoke to plans for Ascend's recent gift from MacKenzie Scott. Ascend Leadership, Trustees and Directors will meet in January to discuss future plans for said gift, with a focus on sustainable and high-impact initiatives.

At November's meeting, Shanelle Loyd, a parent at Flatbush Ascend Lower School, spoke to the Board about ensuring there are safe transitions for students within the building and during dismissal. Ms. Loyd also asked about the timeline for sharing test scores with families, and the expectation for family engagement at the school level.

Hunter Zwack provided an update regarding scoring timelines. Kevin Gibbs also shared that the Flatbush Ascend Lower School Family Association has been re-launched following November's meeting, to allow us to better engage with FACS Families.

III. Consent agenda

Stanley presented to the Board the minutes of the November 9, 2022 meeting and requested an amendment to reflect that he attended virtually. Pending that amendment, Gamal moved to approve the meeting minutes, Shelly seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. Charter renewal update

Jonny and Holly spoke to the Board regarding pending renewal applications for Brooklyn, Bushwick, Canarsie and Cypress Hills Ascend Charter Schools. The SUNY Board of Trustees will meet on December 15 to make a renewal decision, and network leaders will be present on the call to respond to any questions or concerns. Once approved, this will extend all four charters by one year, synchronizing all nine open Ascend charters to an expiration date of summer 2024, at which point we will submit a renewal application for all nine.

Board members asked how long the subsequent renewal would be active; Jonny confirmed it would remain active for five years, meaning we will apply to renew all nine charters again in 2029.

V. School and network updates

Financial report and covid stimulus funds update

Shelly summarized the financial highlights from October 2022. Revenue is unfavorable to the budget due to decreased enrollment, and expenses are favorable to the budget with savings driven by personnel expenses. We are tracking favorably against all covenant, SUNY and financial stability metrics.

Student enrollment update

Recy introduced Shaneka McDonald-Cordero, Director of Student Recruitment, to the Board. Shaneka updated the Board on student enrollment, sharing that we remain 5% under budgeted enrollment. Shaneka also provided an update on SY23-24 applications. Overall applications are trending lower than this last year, but unique applications and Grade K applications are trending higher. Trustees ask about school-specific application trends, outreach methods, and student retention metrics.

Academic committee update

Janai spoke on behalf of the Academic Committee, who are currently focused on academic data, curricular quality control, support for school leaders and Student Support Services, and talent acquisition for SpEd roles. Janai also shared an update on Ascend's High School design. Brooklyn Ascend High School (BAHS) is currently exploring experiential learning opportunities in light of space limitations, as well as prioritizing curriculum and teacher development.

Talent update

Ria shared data with the Board on mid-year hires in November and December, current school-based vacancies, and lead teacher hires. T

Trustees asked about vacancy increases between November and December and their impact on testing. Recy and Danique spoke to staffing strategies that have minimized that impact, such as shifting staff between schools, requesting additional support from Network staff, creative approaches to scheduling, and support from substitute teacher agencies. Recy also shared that benchmark data will be compiled to help identify impact trends.

Trustees also asked about attrition data and communication protocols regarding mid-year staffing changes. Recy confirmed there is a cascading communications plan in place and that an exit survey was recently implemented to better inform attrition data.

Lastly, Recy provided an update on Ascend's compensation remodeling project, sharing a preliminary compensation philosophy and an overview of next steps. Trustees asked for clarity on salary adjustments that were made in SY21-22, which Recy provided.

VI. Strategic Planning update

Recy gave the Board a high-level overview of Ascend's five-year strategic plan, developed with Bellwether. He spoke to Ascend's three goal areas—students, team, and community—the key priorities that Ascend will undertake to achieve our five-year goals, and the metrics that will measure our progress against those goals. Some of those key priorities include refining our K12 instructional core, completing our high school redesign, developing an end-to-end talent strategy, and building strong stakeholder partnerships to support the communities we serve.

VII. Executive session

At 7:08 pm, Nadine moved to enter executive session to discuss principal candidates and Janai seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 7:32, Janai moved to exit executive session, which Nadine seconded and was unanimously approved.

Nadine moved to approve Taniqua Pryor Davis as Principal of Flatbush Ascend Lower School. Janai seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Nadine moved to approve Marvin Walker as Principal of Flatbush Ascend Middle School. Gamal seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

VIII. Adjournment

At 7:34, Stanley moved to adjourn the meeting, which Gamal seconded and was unanimously approved.

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Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 7/21/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
December 14, 2022
6:00 pm**

Location: Central Brooklyn Ascend Lower School; Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Stanley Taylor (in person); Shelly Cleary (via tele- or videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Kate McGrath, Recy Dunn (in person)

At 7:08 pm, Nadine moved to enter executive session to discuss principal candidates, staff developments, and benefits. Janai seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

I. Executive Session

The Board discussed principal candidates. Kate shared staff and benefits-related updates with the Trustees.

II. Adjournment

At 7:32, Janai moved to exit executive session, which Nadine seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name **Emmanuel Fordjour**

Date **7/21/2023**

Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
January 18, 2023
5:00 pm

Location: Brooklyn Ascend Lower School; Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, (in person); Jackie Wilson, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Agaja Reddy, Carlos Zayas, Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, Recy Dunn, Shaneka Cordero, Shannon-Re Ismael (in person); Ria Mehta (via tele- or video-conference)

Public in attendance

Rodney Barrow (in person)

Janai called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm.

I. Public comment

Rodney Barrow, a parent at Brooklyn Ascend Middle School, shared his concerns about Benchmark scoring and inquired about the rationale for timing Benchmarks and weighing their scores in students' final grades.

Danique and Mr. Barrow connected during the meeting to discuss Benchmark scoring and timing.

Cassandra Rochester requested to make public comment, but was not present at the meeting.

II. Response to public comment

At December's meeting, Sonia Manzo, a parent at East Flatbush Ascend Charter School (EFACS), shared concerns regarding student safety in the building. Her son has experienced incidents of

bullying, and Ms. Manzo is unsatisfied with the school's incident reporting and interventions. Ms. Manzo requested that EFACS provide a safety plan to mitigate the situation.

Shannon-Re Ismael, Principal of EFACS, joined January's meeting to share that she spoke with the Manzo family regarding the schools' response to the incidents of concern. Ms. Ismael clarified that Ms. Manzo was offered a classroom change, but declined in light of other factors, and that both families involved in the incidents were able to reach a resolution outside of school. Ms. Ismael is re-establishing appropriate incident response protocol with her staff, including training on problem-solving conversations, bullying interventions and prevention, and will be rolling out several whole-school support interventions in the coming weeks.

III. Consent agenda

Janai presented to the Board the minutes of the December 14, 2022, meeting. Jackie moved to approve the meeting minutes, Nadine seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. School and network updates

Financial report and covid stimulus funds update

Shelly summarized the financial highlights from November 2022. Revenue is behind the budget due to grant timing, and expenses are favorable to the budget with savings driven by personnel expenses. We are tracking favorably against all covenant, SUNY and financial stability metrics.

Student enrollment update

Shaneka provided a status update on current enrollment and on SY23-24 applications. Current enrollment is at 99% of the forecasted enrollment, and we are 25% of the way towards our April goal for SY23-24 applications. The Student Recruitment and Enrollment team is prioritizing target recruitment messages for SY23-24 in collaboration with the Marketing and Communications team. The Board asked about enrollment trends among peer charter school networks.

Academic committee update

Janai spoke on behalf of the Academic Committee, sharing that Brooklyn Ascend High School (BAHS) recently met their goal of having 100% of the senior class apply to at least 1 CUNY and 1 four-year college. BAHS is also implemented Saturday school, targeted tutoring, and changes to Advisory to support student success. Ascend's middle schools are focusing on foundational math skills and

reinvesting in pre-algebra courses to ensure a smooth high school transition for eighth graders, in response to academic data and new guidance from the College Board.

Talent update

Ria joined the meeting to discuss Talent updates, sharing that we have hired 79 staff since October 1, and updating the Trustees on current lead teacher and staff vacancies.

V. Executive session

At 5:36pm, Janai moved to enter executive session to discuss principal candidates. Jackie seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 6:11pm, Janai moved to exit executive session, which Shelley seconded and was unanimously approved.

Janai moved to approve Curtis Durham as Principal of BVMS. Jackie seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

VI. Adjournment

At 6:13pm, Nadine moved to adjourn the meeting, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.

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Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 7/21/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
January 18, 2023
5:00 pm**

Location: Brooklyn Ascend Lower School; Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Janai Jeter (in-person); Jackie Wilson, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Danique Day, Holly Curtis, Emily Acuna, Melissa Cassells, Recy Dunn

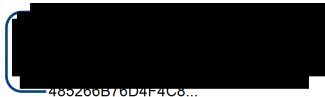
At 5:36pm, Janai moved to enter executive session to discuss principal candidates. Jackie seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

I. Executive Session

The Board discussed a principal candidate.

II. Adjournment

At 6:11pm, Janai moved to exit executive session, which Shelley seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 7/21/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
February 8, 2023
6:00 pm**

Location: Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Jackie Wilson, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Agaja Reddy, Alieghcia Dodd, Carlos Zayas, Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Jonathon Masci, Kate McGrath, Latisha Brown, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, O'Sha Williams, Shaneka Cordero, Ria Mehta (via tele- or video-conference)

Public in attendance

Aiden Johnson, Lasana Tunica-El (via tele- or video-conference)

Stanley called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

I. Public comment

O'Sha Williams, a Teacher at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, shared her concerns about the test prep curriculum and its impact on both students and teachers. Teacher O requested that a different approach be considered for next year, taking student and teacher input into account.

Aiden Johnson, a student at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, shared his concerns about adjustments to the school day to accommodate the test prep curriculum. Mr. Johnson spoke to the Board about class length and its impact on student achievement and joy.

II. Response to public comment

At January's meeting, Rodney Barrow, a parent at Brooklyn Ascend Middle School, shared his concerns about Benchmark scoring and inquired about the rationale for timing Benchmarks and

weighing their scores in students' final grades. Danique and Mr. Barrow connected during the meeting to discuss Benchmark scoring and timing.

III. Consent agenda

Stanley presented to the Board the minutes of the January 18, 2023, meeting. Jackie moved to approve the meeting minutes, Shelly seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. Management Agreement

Kate reviewed proposed changes to the SY23-24 management agreement between Ascend Charter Schools and Ascend Learning for the Trustees. The Trustees asked about approval protocol and timelines, and requested to postpone the vote to approve to the March meeting.

V. School and network updates

Financial report and covid stimulus funds update

Shelly summarized the financial highlights from December 2022. Revenue is behind the budget due to lower GenEd and SpEd revenue. Expenses are favorable to the budget with savings driven by personnel expenses. We are tracking favorably against all covenant, SUNY and financial stability metrics.

Student enrollment update

Shaneka provided a status update on current enrollment and on SY23-24 applications. We are 98% enrolled against the budget and applications for SY23-24 are over 40% to April targets. The Student Recruitment and Enrollment team has launched local CBO engagements, public library tabling, open houses and school tours, and have since seen increased application momentum.

Academic committee update

Danique spoke on behalf of the Academic Committee, sharing that schools are focused on literacy and instilling the joy of reading in Ascend students. Danique shared reading level data with the Trustees. In light of data variance, the Schools team is leveraging a partnership with The New Teacher Project (TNTP) to ensure equitable instruction across grades and schools.

Talent update

Ria joined the meeting to discuss Talent updates. Since the January meeting, the Talent team has launched the early hiring process for SY23-24, with over 300 applications in 3 days. The Board asked

about Special Education hiring priorities, and Ria shared that her team has increased their recruitment efforts towards these roles through career fairs, increased LinkedIn engagement, and more.


VI. Executive session

At 6:35 pm, Shelly moved to enter executive session for a quarterly legal update. Jackie seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 6:49 pm, Shelly moved to exit executive session, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.

VII. Adjournment

At 6:50 pm, Jackie moved to adjourn the meeting, which Shelly seconded and was unanimously approved.


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6/6/2023

Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
February 8, 2023
6:00 pm**

Location: Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Jackie Wilson, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Holly Curtis, Kate McGrath, Maryann Li (via tele- or video-conference)

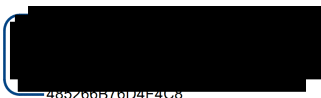
At 6:35pm, Shelly moved to enter executive session to discuss principal candidates. Jackie seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

I. Executive Session

Kate shared a quarterly legal update with the Trustees.

II. Adjournment

At 6:49 pm, Shelly moved to exit executive session, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.



6/6/2023

Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
March 8, 2023
6:00 pm**

Location: East Brooklyn Ascend Lower School, 260 Shepherd Avenue; Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Shelly Cleary, Nadine Sylvester (in person); Janai Jeter, Jackie Wilson, Stanley Taylor (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Carlos Zayas, Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Jonathon Masci, Kate McGrath, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, O'Sha Williams, Recy Dunn, Shaneka Cordero, Jahkia Sanders (in person); Agaja Reddy, Darielle Petrucci, Korena Johnson, Raymond Johnson, Ria Mehta (via tele- or video-conference)

Public in attendance

Lasana Tunica-El, Tasha Popp, Selina Ip (in person); Ericer Brooks (via tele- or video-conference)

Nadine called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

I. Public comment

O'Sha Williams, a Teacher at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, shared her concerns about student and family visibility in the Illuminate grading portal.

II. Response to public comment

At February's meeting, O'Sha Williams, a Teacher at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, shared her concerns about the test prep curriculum and its impact on both students and teachers. Teacher O requested that a different approach be considered for next year, taking student and teacher input into account. Canarsie Ascend Middle School Principal Jahkia Sanders joined the meeting to share that she & Teacher O discussed her test prep concerns and aligned on their commitment to

successful student outcomes. Principal Sanders also shared that she and Teacher O discussed potential growth opportunities in test prep.

At February's meeting Aiden Johnson, a student at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, shared his concerns about adjustments to the school day to accommodate the test prep curriculum. Mr. Johnson spoke to the Board about class length and its impact on student achievement and joy. Principal Sanders informed the Board that she and Mr. Johnson met to discuss his concerns and that she is working closely with his teachers to incorporate more joy into his test prep periods.

III. Consent agenda

Nadine presented to the Board the minutes of the February 8, 2023, meeting. Shelly moved to approve the meeting minutes, Emmanuel seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. Management Agreement

Kate reminded the Board of the proposed changes to the SY23-24 management agreement between Ascend Charter Schools and Ascend Learning.

Nadine presented to the Board the SY23-24 AL-ACS Management Agreement. Stanley moved to approve the Agreement as written in the pre-reads, Jackie seconded, and the vote was carried unanimously.

V. School and network updates

Financial report and covid stimulus funds update

Shelly summarized the financial highlights from January 2023. Revenue and Expenses are unfavorable to the budget, with losses driven by lower GenEd and SpEd Revenue and non-personnel expenses. The Board asked about COVID stimulus funds.

Student enrollment update

Shaneka provided a status update on current enrollment and on SY23-24 applications. We are 97.2% enrolled against the budget and applications for SY23-24 are over 40% to April targets. The Board asked about grade-specific enrollment goals and application variance between schools, which Shaneka and Maryann were able to provide further detail on.

Academic committee update

Janai spoke on behalf of the Academic Committee to share updates about the SY23-24 opening of Flatbush Ascend Middle School, Ascend's literacy partnership with the The New Teacher Project, and leader development partnership with the Noble Story Group. Janai also announced that 100% of Brooklyn Ascend High School's senior class is on track to graduate on time. The Board asked about BAHS' approach to boundless choice in post-graduation planning, which we will provide future reporting on.

Talent update

Melissa spoke to the Board about hiring updates for SY22-23 and SY23-24, including outcomes from recently launched early hiring days.

VI. Public Comment

As Board Chair, Nadine requested privilege to hear public comment from Tasha Popp, a parent at Brownsville Ascend Lower School. Tasha asked the Board about the rationale behind benchmark scoring.

VII. Executive session

At 6:40 pm, Stanley moved to enter executive. Jackie seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 6:43 pm, Shelly moved to exit executive session, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.

VIII. Adjournment

At 6:43 pm, Shelly moved to adjourn the meeting, which Emmanuel seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 4/19/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
March 8, 2023
6:00 pm**

Location: East Brooklyn Ascend Lower School, 260 Shepherd Avenue; Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Shelly Cleary, Nadine Sylvester (in person); Janai Jeter, Jackie Wilson, Stanley Taylor (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Carlos Zayas, Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Kate McGrath, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, Recy Dunn (in person)

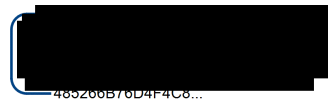
At 6:40 pm, Stanley moved to enter executive. Jackie seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

I. Executive Session

The Board agreed there were no topics to discuss in executive session.

II. Adjournment

At 6:43 pm, Stanley moved to exit executive session, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 4/19/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
April 12, 2023
6:00 pm**

Location: Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Jackie Wilson, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Anastasia Michals, Dana Evans Muller, Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Jonathan Masci, Kate McGrath, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, O'Sha Williams, Recy Dunn, Zonya Hicks (via tele- or video-conference)

Public in Attendance

Diana Duncan Ramsden, Jamila Tannis, Quiana Randall, Ruth Tekle, Shanielle Lloyd, Shanise Jenkins, Tasha Bernard (via tele- or video-conference)

Nadine called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

I. Public comment

Shanise Jenkins, a parent at BVMS and BAHS, asked the Board about staff retention efforts, school safety, and family engagement efforts at both schools.

II. Response to public comment

At the March meeting, O'Sha Williams, a Teacher at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, shared her concerns about student and family visibility in the Illuminate grading portal. Zonya Hicks, Managing Director of Canarsie Ascend Middle School, shared that she has since had an opportunity to meet

with Teacher O and to respond to her concerns. Zonya also shared that parents and students have additional grading visibility through weekly progress reports and conversations with teachers.

At the March meeting, Tasha Popp, a parent at Brownsville Ascend Lower School, asked the Board about the rationale behind benchmark scoring. Anastasia Michals, Managing Director of Brownsville Ascend Lower School, joined the meeting to share that the school's leadership met with Ms. Popp to clarify benchmark scoring and that changes to grading this year are intended to reflect student work more accurately.

III. Consent agenda

Nadine presented to the Board the minutes of the March 8, 2023, meeting. Stanley moved to approve the meeting minutes, Jackie seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. EBACS & EFACS charter revisions

Kate provided an overview of the details and purpose of the revisions to EBACS and EFACS' respective charters.

Nadine presented to the Board the draft Resolution to revise EBACS and EFACS' charters. Stanley moved to approve the Agreement as written in the pre-reads, Jackie seconded, and the vote was carried unanimously.

Nadine presented a request to delay school and network updates to the May meeting. Stanley moved to delay school and network updates, Jackie seconded, and the vote was carried unanimously.

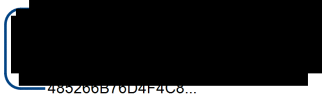
V. Executive session

At 6:16 pm, Nadine moved to enter executive session. Stanley seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 9:01 pm, Shelly moved to exit executive session, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.

VI. Adjournment

At 9:01 pm, Stanley moved to adjourn the meeting, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.

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Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 6/6/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
April 12, 2023
6:00 pm**

Location: Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Jackie Wilson, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Shelly Cleary, Stanley Taylor (via tele- or video-conference)

Directors in attendance

Julia Bator, Isabel Geathers

Ascend staff in attendance

Carlos Zayas, Emily Acuna, Danique Day, Holly Curtis, Kate McGrath, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, Recy Dunn (via tele- or video-conference)

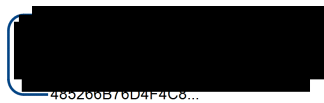
At 6:16 pm, Nadine moved to enter executive session. Stanley seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

I. Executive Session

The Trustees, Julia and Isabel discussed legal issues with the Executive Team.

II. Adjournment

At 9:01 pm, Shelly moved to exit executive session, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 6/6/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
May 17, 2023
6:30 pm**

Location: Flatbush Ascend Lower School, 123 Linden Boulevard; Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Jackie Wilson, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Stanley Taylor (in person); Gamal Walker (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Chenell Shepherd, Curtis Durham, Danique Day, Emily Acuna, Jonathan Masci, Kate McGrath, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, Shaneka Cordero, Shaquise Elie, Recy Dunn (in person); Agaja Reddy, Dana Evans-Muller, Nina Blalock, Raymond Johnson

Public in Attendance

Carine Dieujuste, Diana Duncan-Ramsden, Jummai Jegede, Tamara Gonzalez, Laurin Dieujuste, Nicole Hope, Victor Jegede (in person); Allana Pitterson, Denise Aris, Jamila Tannis, Jean Geraud Pierre, Nicole Hope, Ruth Tekle, Taifa Johnson, Tamara Gonzalez

Nadine called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

I. Public comment

Ruth Tekle, a parent at Cypress Hills Ascend Lower School, spoke to the Board about her son's experience at Ascend, sharing her concerns about school culture, communication within the school and with families, turnover, grading policies and veracity, internal assessments, and the school calendar.

Allana Pitterson, a parent at Flatbush Ascend Lower School, asked the Board about data-related professional development for leaders; family engagement expectations for leaders; curriculum visibility for families; additional student supports; extracurricular activities; and benchmark content.

Carine Dieujuste, a parent at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, shared her concerns about her daughter's academic outcomes, student supports, and grading visibility for families.

Tamara Gonzalez, a parent at Flatbush Ascend Lower School, shared her concerns about family engagement and teacher hiring, development, and turnover, and echoed other parents' comments.

Nicole Hope, a parent at East Flatbush Ascend Lower School, shared her concerns about school culture, leader and teacher turnover, family engagement, and echoed other parents' comments.

II. Response to public comment

At April's meeting, Shanise Jenkins, a parent at Brownsville Ascend Middle School and Brooklyn Ascend High School, asked the Board about staff retention efforts, school safety, and family engagement efforts at both schools.

Curtis Durham, Principal at Brownsville Ascend Middle School, spoke to the Trustees about actions taken to resolve Ms. Jenkins' concerns. Mr. Durham met with Ms. Jenkins to discuss her concerns. Mr. Durham is working closely with the Principal of Brooklyn Ascend High School to ensure an improved and collaborative culture throughout the building, and with the building's security team and NYPD to improve safety in the building. In addition, the school is moving towards an in-person parent-teacher conference model in line with Ascend's values.

Trustees asked Mr. Durham for more detail about action steps to address retention and safety. Mr. Durham shared his approach towards staff placement and professional development in line with staff's personal and professional goals. He also shared that he has increased staff presence at arrival and dismissal to facilitate stronger relationships between leadership, staff and family.

III. Consent agenda

Nadine presented to the Board the agenda of the May 17, 2023 meeting. Stanley moved to adopt the meeting agenda, Janai seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Nadine presented to the Board the sublease at 1833 Nostrand Avenue as written in the pre-read package. Stanley moved to approve the sublease, Jackie seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Nadine presented to the Board the minutes of the April 12, 2023, meeting. Stanley moved to approve the meeting minutes, Janai seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

I. School and network updates

Financial report and covid stimulus funds update

Carlos summarized the financial highlights from March 2023. Revenue is unfavorable to the budget, with losses driven by lower GenEd and SpEd Revenue and non-personnel expenses. Expenses are favorable to the budget, with savings driven by personnel expenses. We have communication to network staff and school leaders to slow spending. We are tracking favorably against all covenant, SUNY and financial stability metrics with the exception of our internal revenue and net income variance metric.

The Board asked questions about the parameters, management, and impact of the communicated spending freeze.

Student enrollment update

Shaneka reviewed recent enrollment and application data with the Board. We are 4% under enrolled for the current school year. Applications are tracking lower than last year, but acceptances and registrations are tracking higher. The Student Enrollment team is rolling out a data-based strategy to increase offers and is investing in a high level of individualized support to convert acceptances to registrations.

The Board asked about Intent to Return Survey data and Family Survey data, which the Executive Team committed to sharing back once available.

Academic committee update

Danique spoke on behalf of the Academic Committee and previewed changes to the calendar for School Year 2023-24, which has been developed based on feedback from staff and families with the intent to increase instructional calendars, align the schedule across all grades, and maintain our commitment to preventing burnout.

The Board asked about our approach to Election Day and accommodations for staff to vote.

Talent update

Melissa presented an update on the Talent team with the Board. Ria Mehta has transitioned out of her role as Managing Director of Talent. Melissa introduced Chenell Sheppard, Director of Talent, who will be taking on additional responsibilities to support the team's capacity. The team is currently focused on improving their sourcing pool; fully staffing teachers and leaders in advance of summer training; and retention efforts. Melissa also provided an overview of progress towards hiring against projected teacher and AP vacancies for school year 2023-24.

Melissa then spoke to the Board about hiring strategies, which include redefining our sourcing strategy and re-investing in AP hiring and teacher retention. The Board asked about retention initiatives, partnerships with teachers colleges, and communication with the Trustees about open positions.

II. Executive session

At 7:40 pm, Nadine moved to enter executive session.

At 8:40pm, Janai moved to exit executive session, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.

III. Adjournment

At 8:41 pm, Stanley moved to exit executive session, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature of Emmanuel Fordjour. A small blue icon is visible to the left of the box.

Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 7/8/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
May 17, 2023
6:30 pm**

Location: Flatbush Ascend Lower School, 123 Linden Boulevard; Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Jackie Wilson, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Stanley Taylor (in person); Gamal Walker (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Carlos Zayas, Emily Acuna, Danique Day, Holly Curtis, Kate McGrath, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, Recy Dunn (via tele- or video-conference)

At 7:40 pm, Nadine moved to enter executive session.

I. Executive Session

The Board and the Executive Team spoke about family concerns, personnel, and Board nominations.

II. Adjournment

At 8:40pm, Janai moved to exit executive session, which Jackie seconded and was unanimously approved.



Name Emmanuel Fordjour

Date 7/8/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
June 15, 2023
6:00 pm**

Location: Dial-in

Meeting Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Stanley Taylor (via tele- or video-conference)

Directors in attendance

Isabel Geathers, Julia Bator (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Alim Uddin, Anastasia Michals, Andrea Pineda Madrigal, Chenell Shepherd, Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Justin Moorman, Kate McGrath, Kate Stewart, Korena Johnson, Leyde St Leger, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, Nina Blalock, Recy Dunn, Raymond Johnson, Rebecca Goldman, Shaquise Elie (via tele- or video-conference)

Public in Attendance

Amilcar David, Cecilia, Diana Ramsden, FACS Newton, FACS Zuriel, FACS Treq, Jamila Tannis, Mario Moses, Ms. Preston, Ms. Laburda, Natasha Moses, Natalie Mitchell, Noreen James, Nicole Hope, Nicole Knight, Roxanne P, Pat, Pamela Banton, Ruth Tekle, Shannon Davenport, Seraphine Lin, Simone (FACS parent), Sherley, Talitah Granderson, T Senier, Vanessa Wallace, (via tele- or video-conference)

Nadine called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

I. Response to public comment

At May's meeting:

Ruth Tekle, a parent at Cypress Hills Ascend Lower School, spoke to the Board about her son's experience at Ascend, sharing her concerns about school culture, communication within the school and with families, turnover, grading policies and veracity, internal assessments, and the school calendar.

Allana Pitterson, a parent at Flatbush Ascend Lower School, asked the Board about data-related professional development for leaders; family engagement expectations for leaders; curriculum visibility for families; additional student supports; extracurricular activities; and benchmark content.

Carine Dieujuste, a parent at Canarsie Ascend Middle School, shared her concerns about her daughter's academic outcomes, student supports, and grading visibility for families.

Tamara Gonzalez, a parent at Flatbush Ascend Lower School, shared her concerns about family engagement and teacher hiring, development, and turnover, and echoed other parents' comments.

Nicole Hope, a parent at East Flatbush Ascend Lower School, shared her concerns about school culture, leader and teacher turnover, family engagement, and echoed other parents' comments.

On June 15, Ascend responded with a presentation sharing feedback we've heard from public comment and family surveys, and improvements we are making in SY23-24 in response.

Recy spoke to improvements to school culture and community. Ascend will develop a family engagement plan to ensure each school is consistently holding academic events, meetings, and touch points with families. Ascend is creating an Assistant Principal of Student Services role at the school level and developing a multilingual learner academic support plan to better serve our ELL students and students with IEPs. Family engagement and interaction will be part of future leader development, and there will be centralized supports put in place in this area.

Anastasia shared curricular investments and improvements for SY23-24, including different curricular offering that will provide teachers and families with concrete resources. Literacy professional development will be increased so that every teacher approaches reading instruction and intervention. The Schools team is working to improve systems for family communication and visibility around student progress. The Schools team will also have more time in schools next year for live-coaching, training and observation. Ascend is also committed to ensuring assessments are standards-aligned and match classroom pacing.

Alim provided an update on grading for SY23-24. In the next school year, students will have more opportunities to demonstrate mastery and academic growth. Ascend will also work to reduce subjectivity in grading students. Students will have opportunities for credit from homework, quizzes, and character & citizenship. The design will be improved to help parents better understand how grades are broken down, and Ascend is committed to improving training and communication about report cards for staff and families.

II. Public comment

Diana Duncan-Ramsden, a parent at FACS, shared her concerns about inconsistent and unstructured school town halls, as well as school leader communication. She also expressed dissatisfaction with communication about her son's first year at FAMS in SY23-24.

Nicole Hope, a parent at EFACS, echoed her concerns from May's meeting, and added her dissatisfaction with the school's parent association. She requested an improved and consistent governance structure for Ascend's family associations.

Nicole Knight, a parent at FACS, shared her concern's about her son, and the school overall's, academic performance. She also expressed dissatisfaction with family communication from the school's leader and echoed Ms. Duncan-Ramsden's sentiment about the school's town halls.

Natasha Moses, a parent at FACS, also shared her concerns about the school's culture, particularly around family communication and engagement from the school leader.

Pamela Banton, a parent at EFACS and a member of its Family Association Board, shared concerns about network-wide turnover, staff diversity, and school culture. She also shared concerns about Ascend's budget and policies around family fundraising.

Talita Granderson, a parent at FACS, also expressed her dissatisfaction with the school's culture, leadership, and family engagement.

Rebecca Goldman, a Clinician at CBACS, shared her concerns about staff turnover and its impact on students, families, and school culture.

Mario Moses, a parent at CHACS, shared his concerns about report cards and grading, assessments, and school culture.

Wilma Hayams Rodriguez, a parent at FACS, echoed others' concerns about school culture and leadership as well as family engagement. She also shared concerns about the school's approach to student services.

III. Consent agenda

Nadine presented to the Board the minutes of the May 17, 2023, meeting. Janai moved to approve the meeting minutes, Emmanuel seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. FY24 ACS budget

Recy presented to the Board the FY24 ACS budget, sharing how we plan to steward our funds during an inflection point in the education sector to attain a sustainable financial and operational model. Key drivers in the FY24 budget include the assumption of flat enrollment, increased per-pupil funding and rental assistance, and strategic use of the Scott gift Ascend received. Ascend has also right-sized the school staffing model to better align with current and projected enrollment and prioritized increasing school-level staff salaries to ensure competitive pay. Ascend is also committed to auditing and improving financial systems, controls and forecasting. Recy then turned the presentation to Gamal to share his work with interim CFO Carlos Zayas on the budget.

I. Executive session

At 7:05 pm, Stanley moved to enter executive session, which Janai seconded and was unanimously approved.

At 8:44 pm, Stanley moved to exit executive session, which Emmanuel seconded and was unanimously approved.

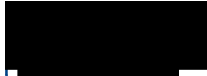
Nadine presented to the Board a vote to approve Hannah Chapman as Principal of East Flatbush Ascend Charter School. Janai moved to approve the appointment, Emmanuel seconded, Stanley abstained, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Stanley presented to the Board the FY24 ACS budget. Janai moved to approve the budget, Emmanuel seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

The SY23-24 ACS Board of Trustees roster will include Emmanuel and Gamal as co-chairs, Gamal as interim treasurer, Janai as secretary, and Jackie as a trustee. Nadine and Stanley's terms will come to an end on June 30, 2023. Stanley moved to approve the SY23-24 slate of Trustees, which Nadine seconded and was unanimously approved.

II. Adjournment

At 8:47 pm, Nadine moved to adjourn the meeting, which Stanley seconded and was unanimously approved.



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Name Janai Jeter

Date 7/20/2023

**Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the School Board of Trustees
June 15, 2023
6:00 pm**

Location: Dial-in

Executive Session Minutes

Trustees in attendance

Emmanuel Fordjour, Gamal Walker, Janai Jeter, Nadine Sylvester, Stanley Taylor (via tele- or video-conference)

Directors in attendance

Julia Bator (via tele- or video-conference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Andrea Pineda Madrigal, Chenell Shepherd, Emily Acuna, Holly Curtis, Kate McGrath, Kate Stewart, Maryann Li, Melissa Cassells, Recy Dunn (via tele- or video-conference)

At 7:05 pm, Stanley moved to enter executive session, which Janai seconded and was unanimously approved.

I. Executive Session

The Board and the Executive Team spoke about the FY24 ACS budget, forward planning, principal candidates, family engagement, and student services.

II. Adjournment

At 8:44 pm, Stanley moved to exit executive session, which Emmanuel seconded and was unanimously approved.


Name Janai Jeter

Date 7/20/2023

Ascend Public Charter Schools

School Year Calendar 2022-23

July 1	New Ops Staff Start (Onboarding)
July 4 - 5	No school — Independence Day (observed)
July 6 - 8	New Operations Institute
July 11 - 15	All Operations Institute
July 18 - 29	Leader Institute
August 1	New Staff Admin & Tech Day
August 3 - 5	New Teacher Institute
August 8 - 11	All Staff Institute
August 12 - 18	On-site school PD and classroom prep
August 19	No school — Wellness Day
August 22	1st Day of School: K, 1, 5, 8, 9, 12 (12:30 pm dismissal for students)
August 25	1st Day of School: 2-4, 6-7, 10-11 (12:30 pm dismissal for students)
August 22 - 31	12:30 pm dismissal for scholars
September 1 - 2	12:30 pm dismissal for scholars
September 5	No school — Labor Day
October 10	No school — Indigenous People's Day
October 28	No school — Wellness Day
November 8	No school — Election Day
November 11	No school — Veterans Day
November 21-25	No school — Thanksgiving Holiday
December 19-30	No school — Mid-winter Break
January 2	No school — Mid-winter Break
January 3	No students — PD day
January 16	No school — Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 20 - 24	No school — Winter Break
March 20 - 24	No school — Spring Break
April 7 - 10	No school — Wellness Day
April 21	No students — PD day
May 29	No school — Memorial Day

June 12	12th Grade Graduation
June 14	Last Day of School for K-4 students (12:30 pm dismissal for students)
June 15	No K-4 students — K-4 PD day
June 16	Last Day of School for K-4 teachers
June 19	No school — Juneteenth
June 21	Last Day of School for 5-12 students (12:30 pm dismissal for students)
June 22	8th grade graduation
June 23	Last day for 5-12 teachers

SEMI-ANNUAL TEST OF INITIATING DEVICES

113

ices Tested: Harold Calderon 12-10-21

INITIATING DEVICES TEST

Date	Tested By	Device Tested	Location	Remarks
11/28/22	Jose Zarate	Smoke	6th Fl Elev. PE #1 lobby	
			6th Fl Elev. PE #2 lobby	
			5th Fl Elev. PE #1 lobby	
			5th Fl Elev. PE #2 lobby	
			4th Fl Elev. PE #1 lobby	
			4th Fl Elev. PE #2 lobby	
			3rd Fl Elev. lobby PE #1	
			3rd Fl Elev lobby PE #2	
			2nd Fl Elev lobby PE #1	
			2nd Fl Elev lobby PE #2	
			1st floor Elev lobby PE #1	
			1st floor Elev lobby PE #2	
		Pull Station	Roof stair A	
			Roof stair B	
			6th floor stair A	
			6th floor stair B	
			5th floor stair A	
			5th floor stair B	
			4th floor stair A	
			4th floor stair B	
			3rd floor stair A	
			3rd floor stair B	
			2nd floor stair A	
			2nd floor stair B	
			1st floor stair A	
			1st floor stair B	
			Cellar stair case A	
			Cellar stair case B	
			1st floor East New York Exit	
6/20/23	ISAAC WELSH	Dust Det	4th floor By Elev lobby	
5	5	5	3rd floor By Elev lobby	
			Cellar Mech Room	

SEMI-ANNUAL TEST OF INITIATING DEVICES

Date	Tested By	Device Tested	Location	Remarks
6/20/23	JSAK Wismar	Smoke Pull Station	Roof Top of Sln 14	
			Roof Top of Sln 13	
			6th Fl Sln A	
			6th Fl Sln C	
			5th Fl Sln 1A	
			5th Fl Sln C	
			4th Fl Sln 1A	
			4th Fl Sln C	
			3rd Fl Sln A	
			3rd Fl Sln C	
			3rd Fl Sln 2	
			3rd Fl Sln 2	
			2nd Fl Sln 1A	
			2nd Fl Sln C	
			1st Fl Lobby	
			cell Sln B	
			cell Sln E	
			cell Ry Fire Pump Rm	
			Roof Top of Sln 14	
		Smoke	Roof Top of Sln 13	
			6th Fl Elevator closet	
			6th Fl IT Room	
			6th Fl Corridor	
			6th Fl Corridor	
			5th Fl Elevator closet	
			5th Fl IT Room	
			5th Fl Elevator lobby	
			5th Fl Elevator lobby	
			4th Fl Elevator closet	
			4th Fl IT Room	
			4th Fl Elevator lobby	
			3rd Fl IT Room	
			3rd Fl Elevator closet	

SEMI-ANNUAL TEST OF INITIATING DEVICES

[illegible]

Certificate of Occupancy

CO Number: 320157744F

This certifies that the premises described herein conforms substantially to the approved plans and specifications and to the requirements of all applicable laws, rules and regulations for the uses and occupancies specified. No change of use or occupancy shall be made unless a new Certificate of Occupancy is issued. *This document or a copy shall be available for inspection at the building at all reasonable times.*

A.	Borough: Brooklyn	Block Number: 03492	Certificate Type: Final
	Address: 1501 PITKIN AVENUE	Lot Number(s): 1	Effective Date: 03/23/2020
	Building Identification Number (BIN): 3080697	Building Type: Altered	
This building is subject to this Building Code: 1968 Code			
<i>For zoning lot metes & bounds, please see BISWeb.</i>			
B.	Construction classification: 1-B	(1968 Code designation)	
	Building Occupancy Group classification: E	(2014/2008 Code)	
	Multiple Dwelling Law Classification: None		
	No. of stories: 6	Height in feet: 88	No. of dwelling units: 0
C.	Fire Protection Equipment: Standpipe system, Fire alarm system, Sprinkler system		
D.	Type and number of open spaces: None associated with this filing.		
E.	This Certificate is issued with the following legal limitations: None		
Borough Comments: None			

Borough Commissioner


Commissioner

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Certificate of Occupancy

CO Number: 320157744F

Permissible Use and Occupancy						
All Building Code occupancy group designations below are 2008 designations.						
Floor From To	Maximum persons permitted	Live load lbs per sq. ft.	Building Code occupancy group	Dwelling or Rooming Units	Zoning use group	Description of use
CEL	20	OG	E		3	GAS METER, WATER SERVICE, STORAGE, MAINTENANCE, TELECOMMUNICATION, ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL, SEWER PUMP, FIRE PUMP, KITCHEN ROOMS AND JANITOR CLOSET
CEL	403	OG	E		3	CLASSROOMS, BATHROOMS, OFFICES AND NURSE OFFICE (INCIDENTAL TO CHARTER SCHOOL)
CEL	234	OG	A-3 E		3	CAFETERIA (INCIDENTAL USE TO CHARTER SCHOOL)
001	350	125	M		6	RETAIL SPACES
001	373	125	E		3	CAFETERIA, BATHROOMS, MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM (INCIDENTAL USE TO CHARTER SCHOOL)
001	397	125	E		3	VESTIBULE, LOWER SCHOOL LOBBY, MIDDLE SCHOOL LOBBY, RECEPTION AREA, LOWER AND MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOMS, GALLERY, TRASH, FIRE ALARM ROOMS, SCHOOL STORAGE
002	002 474	125	E		3	CLASSROOMS, TOILETS, OFFICES (INCIDENTAL USE TO CHARTER SCHOOL)
003	003 260	100	A-3		3	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
003	003 416	100	E		3	CLASSROOMS, TOILETS, OFFICES, WARMING PANTRY (INCIDENTAL USE TO CHARTER SCHOOL)
004	564	100	E		3	CLASSROOMS, TOILETS, OFFICES (INCIDENTAL USE TO CHARTER SCHOOL)
004	004 56	100	A-3		3	ROOFTOP RECREATION AREA
005	005 662	100	E		3	CLASSROOMS, TOILETS, OFFICES (INCIDENTAL USE TO CHARTER SCHOOL)


Borough Commissioner

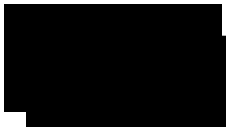

Commissioner

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Certificate of Occupancy

CO Number: 320157744F

Permissible Use and Occupancy						
All Building Code occupancy group designations below are 2008 designations.						
Floor From To	Maximum persons permitted	Live load lbs per sq. ft.	Building Code occupancy group	Dwelling or Rooming Units	Zoning use group	Description of use
006 006	450	100	A-4		3	CAFETERIA/GYMNASIUM
006 006	475	100	E		3	CLASSROOMS, TOILETS, LOCKERS/SHOWERS, KITCHEN
RO F	325	100	E		3	CHILDRENS PLAYGROUND (INCIDENTAL USE TO CHARTER SCHOOL)
RO F	1	100	E		3	EMERGENCY GENERATOR EQUIPMENT
RO F	2	100	E		3	BOILER/MECHANICAL ROOM_ (INCIDENTAL USE TO CHARTER SCHOOL)
RO F	5	100	E		3	ELEVATOR LOBBY, STAIR BULKHEADS (INCIDENTAL USE TO CHARTER SCHOOL)
TOTAL SIX (6) STORY AND CELLAR SCHOOL BUILDING WITH RETAIL SPACE ON FIRST FLOOR. NOTE: THESE PREMISES HAVE BEEN DECLARED AS ONE ZONING AND TAX LOT PURSUANT TO THE NYC ZONING RESOLUTION 12-10 AND RECORDED IN THE CITY REGISTER OFFICE CRFN #2010000187672, #2010000187673						
END OF SECTION						


Borough Commissioner


Commissioner

END OF DOCUMENT

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