

Ascent Final Recommendation to Superintendent



Evaluation Rubric

The revised Evaluation Rubric (Rubric) is the final section of the Charter School Application and Rubric (2020). This Charter School Application and Rubric is the result of a collaborative effort that involved the Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers, (CACSA) the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Schools of Choice Unit, the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) and the Colorado League of Charter Schools (CLCS). It is intended as a resource for Colorado charter school authorizers who desire to have a charter school application and rubric that is aligned to statute and reflects best practice. The Evaluation Rubric is a tool for both the Authorizer and reviewers, and the charter school applicant and planning team. The Authorizer and reviewers may use the Rubric to determine the quality of applications and to make approval decisions. The charter applicant may use the Rubric to guide the writing of their application and self-evaluate their application prior to submission to the Authorizer. Each main Application Section of the Rubric is mandated by state statute.

Overall Evaluation Factors

The Overall Section Rating provides a holistic evaluation of the application that considers each indicator as well as the Applicant's ability to clearly and comprehensively present the proposed school. The following factors are considered in the evaluation of the application.

- Comprehensiveness – The new school proposal has all essential pieces of the school's plan.
- Support - All statements are backed up with data, citations, or expert testimony.
- Mission Alignment – All pieces of the plan are working towards the same purpose.
- Cohesion – All pieces of the plan are integrated together.

Reviewer Note: Reviewers who are not evaluating the application in its entirety but instead are evaluating certain sections, should consider the aforementioned factors in their review.

Application Deal Breakers

The Rubric identifies sections of the application that are considered essential to opening a quality school, and typically appear as an Authorizer's more heavily weighted requirements. (These sections are identified with a ^ symbol.) It is anticipated a developer should only apply to an authorizer if all of these essential sections are developed to a level that inspires confidence in the reviewer team.

Rating Descriptions

Rating	Characteristics
Fully Developed	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues, such that the reviewer has essentially no unanswered questions about the section. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to implement the criteria; and inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively. Examples or evidence are provided for all appropriate sections.
Mostly Developed	The response addresses or meets an appropriate level of expectation for these criteria, leaving only a few clarifying questions for the reviewer. Examples or evidence are provided for all appropriate sections if available. If examples or evidence are unavailable, a timeline to include or submit this information is stated in the application.
Partially Developed	The response meets the criteria in some respects but has substantial gaps in several areas, leaving a number of questions remaining for the reviewer. Examples and evidence may be found in a few appropriate sections.

Not Developed	The response is wholly undeveloped or significantly incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out. No examples or evidence are provided.
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Executive Summary

A. Executive Summary: The majority of elements required in this section are evaluated throughout the remainder of the rubric; only elements not captured in other sections of the application are included.	
<i>The application describes the student population based on publicly available demographic data including racial/cultural, socioeconomic, special needs, ELLs, and achievement data for the proposed school's area and comparable schools. The educational program reflects an understanding of the identified student population.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear plan for enrollment timeline including by grade level • The Rationale for using the Classical approach was well-developed, as was the descriptions of the courses that will be offered (ELA, Math, Fine Arts, etc) • Follows their current model of school success <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not much "how" on enrollment • mention of working to promote through advertising, but not how they plan to attract diverse students • educational program does not reflect an understanding of any identified student population • Projected enrollment is declining during each year of High School. I would think that enrollment projections would stay steady, or grow • I don't see anything in here about achievement data for the proposed school's area and comparable schools • For the populations that are identified (Free/Reduced, G/T, IEP, EL, Minority) I see some information about how EL students are successful with the approach, but I didn't see anything about the other populations identified • The final contract should be more specific as to the opening enrollment, future year's enrollment and the more specific language related to the school facility. Minimum enrollment levels may also be considered to ensure the economic viability of the school. <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At what point do you anticipate reaching your "Full Capacity?" - Why do you anticipate losing High School students as they get older? - How will this Classical and Liberal Arts focus meet the needs of Free/Reduced, Minority, and Exceptional Learners? <p>What would your recommendation be based on this section:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Approve as is</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve with conditions. Please outline your conditions here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include how the charter will positively impact students who are Free/Reduced, Minority, and/or Exceptional Learners • Marketing plan regarding enrollment needs more specificity on how they will reach out to a variety of learners • The final contract should be more specific as to the opening enrollment, future year's enrollment and the more specific language related to the school facility. Minimum enrollment levels may also be 	

considered to ensure the economic viability of the school.

Deny. Please indicate why you believe it should be denied here:

- see concerns

Vision & Mission Statements

B. Vision & Mission Statements:			
<p><i>The vision statement clearly describes the school's proposed impact on the community.</i></p> <p><i>The mission statement clearly describes how the school will accomplish this vision, with a focus on the target student population.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed</p>		
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:			
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed</p>
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vision statement is inspiring, especially free republic• Both the mission and the vision are concise but also full of powerful language. The long-term benefits of the vision are strong as well• Meets current board/CDE goals for student success. <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vision statement does not give the impact on community• Do not see how it will accomplish the vision• There is no mention about the target student population• The overall mission and vision, guidelines and policies may not support the equitable access and inclusiveness in learning that is important in all educational entities. <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do you intend to promote the program to diverse segments of the community? Multiple languages, locations, contacts? <p>What would your recommendation be based on this section:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve as is</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve with conditions. Please outline your conditions here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need specific language on how to target specific populations• Include the target student population in the Mission and/or Vision <p>Deny. Please indicate why you believe it should be denied here:</p>			

Goals, Objectives & Pupil Performance Standards

^C. Goals, Objectives, & Pupil Performance Standards:

<p><i>The applicant articulates annual and interim goals for the school that align to the school's vision and mission, relate to state and authorizer performance indicators, and accelerate student achievement. There is a clear rationale for the development of the stated goals and plan for addressing performance gaps.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <p>Strong SMART annual goals aligned to Colorado Performance Frameworks and CMAS, address yearly achievement, growth and subgroups for growth gaps</p> <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not see evidence of measurable interim performance measures, Does not appear that there are multiple pathways to graduation demonstrations for post- secondary and workforce readiness other than SAT. • No reference throughout narrative (that we could see), about meeting the READ Act Training Requirement. <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will ACA27J monitor performance and growth before CMAS measures are available? What interim measures throughout the year will monitor progress and growth before annual testing? • How will Ascent be in compliance with the Colorado READ Act Assessment guidelines? • What actions will specifically address the gaps with students? • What goals do you have for students prior to being enrolled for 3 continuous years? • Why was your parent satisfaction goal set at 80%? • What is your target for retaining students who come from outside the district? • What specific components of your model do you believe will be most effective in closing gaps? <p>What would your recommendation be based on this section:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Approve as is</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve with conditions. Please outline your conditions here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More specific interim assessment goals. • Specific information on multiple pathways • Clarification on how performance and growth will be monitored for all students regardless of time spent in Ascent. • READ Act Compliant <p>Deny. Please indicate why you believe it should be denied here:</p>	

Evidence of Support

^D. Evidence of Support:	
<p><i>The applicant provides sufficient evidence that an adequate percentage of parents, pupils, and community members support the formation of the charter school, including a sufficient number of parents and pupils intending to enroll in the school should it open.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	

Strengths: Generally have strong numbers for interest

Concerns: Do not specify where students come from (inside/outside district, etc.). Hiring seems late to support student recruitment in the planning year. Kindergarten interest is low.

What questions do you have regarding this section?

Given what you know about interested families, where do you think students are most likely to be drawn from?

What would your recommendation be based on this section:

- Approve as is**
- Approve with conditions. Please outline your conditions here: Enrollment Milestones?**
- Deny. Please indicate why you believe it should be denied here:**

Educational Program

^E. Educational Program:	
<i>Rationale: There is a strong research-based rationale for the selection of educational model, curriculum, and instruction that is evidence-based and effective with the target population. This includes Include a description of how the school developed a curriculum that is culturally responsive and free of bias.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<i>Alignment: The proposed curriculum is already aligned vertically and horizontally as well as to the state model content standards and school's mission and vision across all grade levels, or there is a reasonable plan for aligning the curriculum prior to the school's opening. If applicable, the applicant provides information for high school course offerings, graduation plans, and credits.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<i>Instructional Strategies: The applicant provides a strong rationale for the school's instructional philosophy, including the process and methods used to differentiate the curriculum, the research to support the selected instructional model with the target population, the alignment to educational program, and the extent to which technology will be implemented into the educational program. The school's proposed calendar and bell schedule support the school's mission and meet state and authorizer requirements.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<i>Supplemental Programming: Proposed supplemental programming are thoroughly described and align with the school's educational program.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school will be drawing from an established curriculum that is well documented with support from the network and other ascent schools for implementation. Clear instructional approach. • Large library of instructional materials and associated supports from teachers <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very little information is provided on why the results from other campuses will transfer to this proposed school with very different demographics. • Research provided supporting the program is minimal and does not reflect the targeted student population. 	

- While application indicates that the curriculum is culturally responsive it does not provide evidence of support.
- Name direct instruction as the main strategy without research to support; differentiation response is less about differentiating so all students can access grade level content and more like lowering the bar for some students
- Literacy Essentials: Journey from Spelling to Reading reading program is not an approved program by CDE for READ Act.
- “third grade, students begin the formal study of grammar and composition using the Well-Ordered Language series and the Institute for Excellence in Writing” is also not approved for READ Act.
- Even though research has been attached, these programs have not been approved by CDE
- Science of Teaching Reading is not listed as an instructional model/method.

What questions do you have regarding this section?

- Please provide clarity of these following Colorado Social Studies State Laws. HB19-1192, HB20-1336, HB21-1200, SB21-067
- What is the role of the Science of Teaching Reading?
- What Intervention and/or Supplemental programs are used for CO READ Act?
- What evidence do you have that indicates that your curriculum is culturally responsive?

What would your recommendation be based on this section:

- Approve as is
- Approve with conditions. Please outline your conditions here:**
- READ Act Compliant, Social Studies Law Clarity
 - Provide evidence of cultural responsiveness in curriculum
 - Has not articulated why their model will be able to replicate success in a very different context
- Deny. Please indicate why you believe it should be denied here:**

Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance

^F. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance:	
<p><i>The applicant proposes a thorough plan for evaluating student performance across the curriculum, that considers both student needs and the effectiveness of the educational program, has appropriate systems for maintaining and monitoring student information and using information to make changes to the educational program as appropriate, and includes procedures for taking corrective action in the event that performance falls below goals and standards.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed</p>
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed</p>	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing systems supported by network staff; clear on the role of the SAC, including as it relates to UIP; clear understanding and commitment to all state required assessment. • Clear plan for data transparency and collaborative involvement 	
<p>Concerns:</p> <p>Using a Data Management System that does not align with our current district required systems to house student plans (READ, CLD, GT, Response to Intervention, and Intervention Services forms) ie Educlimber; using a SIS system other than Infinite Campus as this feeds into multiple other platforms, For early detection of students struggling- use of assessments for diagnosing issues is lacking</p>	
<p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your plan to integrate into our current SIS system and data management platform? • 27J is a part of the ELAT grant with CDE for READ Act. I didn't see information about Progress Monitoring through DIBELS 	

Next

- 27J has different DIBELS Next/Acadience benchmark windows, will we be able to align? How would ACA27J use diagnostic testing to inform early detection and align interventions?

What would your recommendation be based on this section:

Approve as is

- Approve with conditions. Please outline your conditions here:**

- Develop plan to integrate with Infinite Campus
- READ Act Compliant

Deny. Please indicate why you believe it should be denied here:

Budget and Finance

^G. Budget & Finance:

Establishing Business Operations: <i>The applicant describes reasonable, functional and accountable business operations.</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Budget Narrative: <i>The budget is based on realistic revenue and expenditures, and budget details are based on valid assumptions, and enable the school's mission to be realized. There is a sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Five-Year Budget: <i>The budget demonstrates complete, realistic, and viable start-up and 5-year balanced operating budgets that align with the educational, organizational, and school growth plans as described in each section of the application.</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Special Populations: <i>The budget clearly commits resources toward serving special populations such as students identified as educationally disadvantaged, students with IEPs, 504 Plans, English Language Learners, gifted and talented and homeless students.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What does the school need to budget for special populations during the first year of operation?</i>• <i>What is the school's understanding of how the authorizer allocates special education funds?</i>• <i>Does the school need to prepare financially to enroll a student or students with significant special needs?</i>• <i>Is the school considering a special education reserve for unexpected educational expenses?</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed		
Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear systems and structures for oversight, accounting etc.• Budget process and Financial Policies described with clear roles and responsibilities, quoting CRS as sources as required.. Revenue expectations are realistic and largely only include guaranteed income (both public and private.)• TABOR is budgeted• Budget allocations mimic other operating Ascent Schools		
Concerns:		

- Enrollment projections seem unrealistic for all forecasted years.
- Since overall budget projections are based on enrollment, the budget may not meet expectations even in year 1.

What questions do you have regarding this section?

- How have you set teacher salaries? Why do you believe these salaries will allow you to be competitive in this employment market?
- What is the plan for the budget if it does not meet enrollment amounts?
- What adjustments to the budget will allow for operation with lower than expected enrollment?

What would your recommendation be based on this section:

Approve as is

Approve with conditions. Provide teacher salary schedule and associated rationale. Provide understanding of enrollment projections and support to show how will modify budget forecasts if projections are not met for at least FY24.

Deny.

Governance

^H. Governance:	
<p>Founding Board/Steering Committee Members: <i>The board consists of a wide range of experienced members with the capacity to oversee a successful school, and a commitment to do so. There is a clear description the transition to a formal board, the nature and extent of parent/community involvement in the board, and draft board member agreements and conflict of interest statements.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>Board Procedures: <i>The applicant includes bylaws and articles of incorporation, and the details of board membership, meeting frequency, and member expectations are thoroughly addressed and align with the proposed school.</i></p> <p><i>Proposed procedures align with statutory compliance requirements.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>Board Internal Accountability: <i>The applicant describes how the board will review, assess, and hold itself accountable for strong governance practices, such as evaluating the school leader, compliance with applicable regulations, and defining its role.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing, experienced board clear articulation of board role; bylaws well defined; range of expertise on current board. • Experience of board members: financial management, public policy lawyer, land development to increase value, marketing, account manager <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of board members: does not appear to be anyone with significant education background • Ascent will not have a local board and will be operating and making decisions and policies based on what is best for all of the schools rather than what is best for the 27J community. • Conflict of interest with vice president and employee at Ascent • As indicated in application and conversation all schools will have representation on the board however unsure which 	

- representatives are connected to which schools
- While the language indicates that the board is diverse, there are no educators on the board and to appears to weigh heavily in financial and political backgrounds
- The governing model at the Board level does not provide adequate level of local (27J residents) participation or parental participation.

What questions do you have regarding this section?

- All of our charters have local boards that manage their school. While one member is likely to be from 27J, how can one person represent the interests of an entire community that is different than other communities? Are there currently representatives from all of your schools?

What would your recommendation be based on this section:

Approve with conditions.

- Local board contracting with Ascent
- A revised governance model should allow for local participation (27J residents and participation by parents of students attending the schools.
- Resolve or explain potential conflict of interest

Employees

I. Employees:	
<p>Employment: <i>The applicant clearly describes the relationship between charter and employees and includes a draft or plan for employment policies and procedures (such as job descriptions, organizational charts, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>The applicant describes the school's teacher evaluation system and its alignment with the intent of SB191</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>Professional Development: <i>The applicant explains the core components of teacher and staff development and how these components will support effective implementation of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The school's mission, vision, values;</i> • <i>The proposed educational program including the educational program terms;</i> • <i>Educational equity, inclusion, and student agency;</i> • <i>Instructional practices proven to be effective with the proposed student population, including all diverse learners and at-risk student populations; and</i> <p><i>Performance data collection, analysis, and use to improve student learning and evaluate the school's culture and climate.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Devel oped <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear structure for employment in alignment with other schools • Plan for need driven professional development throughout the year in addition to model alignment focused summer PD • Clear time for teacher collaboration in the upper grades, though not in elementary <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not have a "final" org chart-only sample • Seem to confuse ongoing coaching with teacher evaluation • Indicated that they plan to waive CDE licensure requirement, but little else about their plan. • Provides concepts. Does not provide full training details. Where will they get teachers? Indicated will waive CDE licensure requirement. What are the specifics of the training? 	

What questions would you like your Executive Representative to ask the applicant?

- What does teacher collaboration look like in lower grades?
- What might you change in the org chart and when do you expect to finalize it?

What would your recommendation be based on this section:

Approve with Conditions

- Needs more details on teacher qualifications, training, and evaluation, not just concepts.

Insurance Coverage

J. Insurance Coverage:

Proposed insurance coverage aligns with statutory and district-mandated requirements and aligns with what the school is proposing within the application.

- Fully Developed
- Mostly Developed
- Partially Developed
- Not Developed

Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:

- Fully Developed Mostly Developed Partially Developed Not Developed

Strengths:

- Insurance meets most basic expectations

Concerns:

What questions do you have regarding this section?

What would your recommendation be based on this section:

Approve as is:

Parent and Community Involvement

K. Parent & Community Involvement:

The applicant provides evidence of parent and community involvement in the development of the school as well as the ongoing support of the school once opened.

The applicant addresses outreach efforts conducted to date and planned for the future that reach all student populations, including at-risk students.

The applicant provides opportunities to solicit feedback from stakeholders.

The applicant identifies reasonable plans for external partnerships to support the school.

- Fully Developed
- Mostly Developed
- Partially Developed
- Not Developed

Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:

- Fully Developed Mostly Developed Partially Developed Not Developed

Strengths:

- Support from multiple mayors
- Identified several partner organizations in the community
- Clear framework for parent engagement

Concerns:

- Without a local board speaking on behalf of the stakeholders and working with local partnerships, it will be a challenge for the community to have a voice.
- Without a local board, it will be challenging to solicit feedback from parents and to build a diverse student body mirroring the district's population

What questions do you have regarding this section?

- Parental involvement looks different for many families, how will you provide different opportunities for various ways for parents to feel involved and engaged (volunteer)?
- Many of our families are working (sometimes more than one job), how will you ensure they still feel welcome if they don't have time to volunteer?
- Currently in 27J we have many families of diverse cultures, 86% of our EL families are Spanish speaking and we have 64 languages. How will you ensure you are able to outreach to some of these diverse families and make them feel welcome?
- How will culturally inclusive practices be used to characterize what good character and virtues are?

What would your recommendation be based on this section:

Approve with conditions:

- Detailed information about outreach to diverse families
- Detailed information on opportunities for parent involvement
- Local board representing the stakeholders of our community

Enrollment Policy

L. Enrollment Policy:	
<p><i>The applicant details a plan for recruitment of all students, including special populations.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed enrollment policy and priorities for enrollment are non-discriminatory and align with district policy and procedures and statute as applicable.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to certain subgroups given FRL weight, etc. • Clear lottery preferences that make sense generally <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not affirm district resident as first preference • Grounds for denial of admission seem exclusionary and non-equitable • Enrollment offers must be accepted very quickly, which could inevitably impact certain groups • One of the requirements of the RFP was to mirror enrollment across the district. There is no language to describe how Ascent can accomplish this and the initial priorities for enrollment could serve to negatively impact that goal. • The order in which students are selected outside the lottery could be discriminatory. Priorities 1 and 2 could potentially fill 40% of all seats. Priorities 2 and 3 do not have any limits set. <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please provide more specifics on the FRL weight in your lottery. • What preferences will be given to district residents relative to other groups? • How will you ensure the grounds for denial of admission are equitably applied? <p>What would your recommendation be based on this section:</p> <p>Approve with conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an outreach process that will reach your goal of mirroring district demographics • Reduce percentages for Priorities 1 and 2 and set limits for Priorities 3 and 4 in an effort to ensure diversity 	

Transportation and Food Services

M. Transportation & Food Services:	
<p><i>If the school plans to offer transportation, the applicant provides an explanation of a transportation plan that meets the needs of the school.</i></p> <p><i>If the school does not plan to offer transportation, the applicant describes any alternative means for meeting students' transportation needs.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p><i>If the school plans to offer food services, the applicant provides an explanation of a food service plan to meet the needs of the school.</i></p> <p><i>If the school does not plan to offer food services, the applicant provides an explanation of how students qualifying for free or reduced price meals would be accommodated.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Economic Data Surveys would need to be filled out to keep track of Free/Reduced/Paid status of students would need to be completed and processed at the school level. <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant does not plan to offer a nutrition program and may not provide meals for students who cannot afford them. The District does not provide home to school/school to home services transportation services. The District is willing to consider providing any services that the school is required(IEP) or wishes to offer (field trips, athletics, etc.) on a negotiated and contracted services basis. The applicant does not intend to participate in a school lunch program and indicates that should a student forget their lunch they may be provided with a meal. This process may deter potential students who are in need of such services to avoid applying for admission and in effect create a significant barrier to serving "every" student of the District. This practice would seem to be in direct conflict with 27J's established mission. The schools will need to process the applications and keep track of the documentation, as it is subject to review by internal and CDE auditors to assure that the applications were processed correctly. Documentation must be kept for five years plus the current year. Results of determination must also be entered into Infinite Campus for district counting purposes. <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If transportation is limited, what impact do you think that will have on enrollment? Given you are not planning to participate in the national school lunch program, how will you ensure all students have access to food at school? <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve with conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contract should require that the school have a program that will provide nutritional services to economically disadvantaged students that does not identify their economic status <p>Deny.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to mitigate this concern may be cause for denial. 	

Facilities

^ N. Facilities:

<p>Needs Assessment: <i>The applicant provides a comprehensive facility needs assessment that aligns with the proposed school program</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>Facility Options: <i>The applicant provides a realistic timeline and resource allocation for the identification, selection, construction/repair, and/or lease/contract negotiation for a facility that meets the requirements identified in the needs assessments.</i></p> <p><i>The applicant provides a plan for ensuring student safety and security, including anticipated costs.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:</p>	
<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed </p>	
<p>Strengths:</p> <p>Concerns:</p> <p>The applicant has not identified the organizational capacity to open two schools in a relatively short time frame.</p> <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <p>What would your recommendation be based on this section:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Approve as is <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve with conditions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline benchmarks and measures for opening the schools. Inability to meet those benchmarks and measures will lead to forfeiture of contract </p>	

Waivers

<p>O. Waivers:</p>	
<p><i>The applicant provides a list of state statutes and district policies for which waivers are being requested and provides adequate rationale and replacement plans</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:</p>	
<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed </p>	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand requirements, etc. <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant requested waivers that the district was clear we would not approve. Waiving nutrition program Discipline waiver—if they are going to make expulsion decisions could be exclusionary Certification-need to confirm all teachers will be HQT even if not certified. What questions do you have regarding this section? <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <p>What would your recommendation be based on this section:</p>	

- Approve with conditions. Please outline your conditions here:**
 - Work with district to modify waiver requests based on the RFP expectations

Student Discipline, Expulsion or Suspension

P. Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension:	
<p><i>The applicant provides a discipline policy that aligns with statute and policy and provides appropriate details for addressing student discipline, expulsion, and suspension.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Complies with state law, limiting reasons that may be used to justify expulsion or suspension of students in preschool through grade 2;</i> • <i>Does not discriminate against students on the basis of hair texture, type, or protective hairstyles commonly or historically associated with race.</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p><i>The applicant describes how the school's approach to discipline is culturally responsive, consistent with the school's proposed culture and climate, and provides the opportunity for all students to achieve personal and academic success.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policy with consequences articulated • Clear description of PBIS and supporting research, though not what it will look like at this school specifically <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are concerns that several statements may be used to create environments that are not safe and inclusive for all students: • The application focuses on rewards and consequences but spends little time discussing how the school will help support students who have difficulty meeting the expectations outlined because of a potential skill deficit. It appears that the student will be consequence until they either leave or are expelled without the benefit of behavioral instruction. • Does not sufficiently address disproportionality • Seems very punitive and like a lot of students may end up missing a lot of school • Gender specific uniforms may be exclusive to some students who want a classical learning approach <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What supports will you provide to students who have difficulty meeting the expectations of the classroom? What processes will you use to help them learn better behaviors? • As a charter authorized by 27J and as expulsions are tied to an authorizing district and not the charter school itself, Ascent will follow our expulsion process. • How will you make EVERY student feel welcome for who they are and safe in the learning environment? <p>What would your recommendation be based on this section:</p> <p>Approve with conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline, expulsion, and suspension processes should be consistent with the public school processes and standard levels of care of 27J Schools. As a public school we serve every student, and adjust our services and supports for every student to find success without excluding their participation. 	

Serving Students with Special Needs

^Q. Serving Students with Special Needs:	
<p>The applicant provides a plan for serving students with special needs that includes appropriate discussion of the following High-Quality Special Population Program Planning items.</p> <p>1. Human Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Approximately how many students with disabilities do the founders estimate that the school will enroll?</i> ● <i>If the school will be responsible for providing special education:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>How many special education teachers will the school need to employ?</i> ○ <i>What kind of certification will the special education teachers need?</i> ○ <i>What are the state's teacher and special education teacher qualifications standards?</i> ○ <i>How many special service providers will the school need to employ?</i> ○ <i>What will the ratio of student: service provider be and is it aligned with best practice?</i> ○ <i>Will the school hire dual-certified teachers?</i> ○ <i>Will the school hire part-time or retired special education teachers?</i> ○ <i>Will the school need to hire staff for health-related issues?</i> ○ <i>What are the implications for salaries and benefits if the school hires full-versus part-time employees?</i> ● <i>If an LEA will be responsible for all, or part of, special education in the school:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Will the school be required to contract with an LEA for the purposes of special education?</i> ○ <i>If the school needs to work with an LEA, how will it negotiate with the LEA to ensure its students will receive appropriate services?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>2. Curriculum and Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>How will the school modify the curriculum and instructional delivery to address the unique needs of children with disabilities?</i> ● <i>How can the school train general and special education teachers to modify/adapt the curriculum and instructional approach for children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms while meeting requirements of IEPs?</i> ● <i>How will the school include children with disabilities in required assessments or develop alternate assessments?</i> ● <i>How will curriculum and assessment decisions be considered and monitored by IEP teams and staff?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>3. Professional Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>How will the school provide special education and general education teachers with professional development?</i> ● <i>Will general education and special education teachers need any specialized professional development related to educating and including children with disabilities?</i> ● <i>Does the district or the state operate a professional development program or network that the school can utilize?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>4. Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Who will administer the special education program?</i> ● <i>Who will be responsible for collecting, managing, and reporting data related to children with disabilities?</i> ● <i>Will the founders create their own system to administer special education or will they adopt the policies/procedures dictated by the authorizer, local district, or other administrative unit?</i> ● <i>How will the school handle student records and other school property appropriately in the event of closure of the charter school?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed

<p>5. Facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>If the school will be responsible for special education evaluations and services:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Where will it conduct student evaluations?</i> ○ <i>Where will it conduct IEP meetings?</i> ○ <i>Where can it store confidential student records?</i> ○ <i>Where will it provide pullout services?</i> ○ <i>Where will related services personnel meet with individual students?</i> ○ <i>Will entrances, classrooms, common areas, and bathrooms be accessible to individuals— including adults—with physical disabilities?</i> ○ <i>Will the facility have space for a nurse to store and administer medications or use medical equipment?</i> ○ <i>If the school uses some type of online learning, how will the school administer evaluations and maintain electronic document security in a virtual environment?</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>MTSS/RTI: <i>The plan also provides a comprehensive description of the monitoring for all students to determine universal, targeted, or intensive needs.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p>Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:</p>	
<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed </p>	
<p>Strengths:</p> <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The special education section is insufficient to support students with IEPs. The staffing ratios are too high, there is no mention of health services or for instruction of students with visual and hearing impairments or for those who have a language based disability. ● There was an insufficient description of how to serve students who require modification or qualify for alternative standards and assessments, and no mention of health services. ● “ACA27J is committed to serving all students who are willing to work hard and respond to the school's commitment to character.” can be exclusionary to those students with learning disabilities, behavioral challenges or language needs. ● There is not a clear plan for supporting students who have behavioral, social and/or emotional challenges. ● There is little specific information discussing how to identify and support English learners including specifics on home language surveys, ensuring how to comply with state law, etc.... <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <p>What would your recommendation be based on this section:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve with conditions.</p> <p>Develop a plan to meet the varied needs of students with disabilities on IEPs. Their staffing plan is not sufficient and it doesn't appear that they have a plan for support and services beyond academics.</p>	

Dispute Resolution Process

R. Dispute Resolution Process:

<p><i>The applicant sets forth a method for resolving disagreements which arise from the school's charter contract between a charter school and its chartering district, in compliance with statutory requirements.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligns with state law Meets basic expectations <p>Concerns:</p> <p>What questions do you have regarding this section?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wondering about the development of a more thorough resolution process including progressive strategies to resolve issues prior to mediation <p>What would your recommendation be based on this section:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve with conditions. Please outline your conditions here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would recommend a more enhanced resolution process established between 27J and Ascent in the contracting phase 	

School Management Contracts

^S. School Management Contracts:	
<p><i>The applicant demonstrates the effectiveness of the proposed school management provider academically, operationally and financially, includes a rationale for the selection of this provider, and identifies any existing or potential conflicts of interest between provider and school and board stakeholders.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p><i>The applicant provides a draft management contract as an attachment, which addresses the cost, length of contract, and the process to evaluate, oversee, renew, or terminate the contract without adversely affecting the viability of the school</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
<p><i>The applicant provides a draft EMP Management Plan as an attachment that adequately describes evidence of EMP capacity, division of roles and responsibilities, cost and compensation structure, clear identification of all payments to be paid to the EMP, the employer of record for EMP and school staff, and a board approved plan for how the EMP will be evaluated.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed
Overall Rating & Supporting Narrative:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Developed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially Developed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Developed	
<p>Strengths:</p> <p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While we appreciate the expertise, there is concern regarding the capacity of the ACA to manage the start up of multiple 	

schools as well as manage legal challenges and appeals with school districts and applying to move one of their schools to CSI. The concern stems from the request to extend the deadline of the application on two occasions (once to align with misinformation) and another two day extension for ACA beyond that. In addition, when pressed, staff indicated that they had “so much going on” that it was difficult for them to complete the application.

- There is concern regarding ACA’s relationship with districts. Two districts have (or will) give up exclusive authorizing authority and a representative from CSI and another from CDE have indicated that they do believe that ACA would prefer to have CSI authorize all. Challenges with districts have included expectations that the school complies with the district’s SIS and other procedural issues that CSI does not have. This is hearsay, however communications from ACA are not always collaborative.
- While the ACA board describes itself as independent, it is difficult to separate ACA and ACACS and there is a potential conflict of interest between the board and the employees.

What questions do you have regarding this section?

- As you look to continue to grow, what is your plan to manage the various new school projects, applications, legal and/or appeals challenges?
- What is the rationale for not considering the relationship between the board vice chair and the director of new school development and outreach for Ascent Classical Academies a conflict of interest?
- Would you be open to considering a completely local board representing the community in which the school will eventually reside?

What would your recommendation be based on this section:

Deny.

- Potential conflict of interest between vice chair and the director of new school development
- If we determine that Ascent must have a local board, then identifying the educational management organization prior to building a local board seems premature

Overall Recommendation

Overall Recommendation

Risk Factors (Reviewers should summarize risk factors, as applicable, from the application for consideration by the authorizer in acting on the application. Generally, risk factors inform the reviewer’s overall recommendation—approval or denial—as well as proposed conditions and milestones to address identified risk factors to the extent possible.)

Recommendation

- Approve as is
- Approve with conditions and milestones
- Deny

Proposed Conditions

Conditions to be fulfilled before execution of the contract and based on identified weaknesses in the proposal.

- Resolve the discrepancy between the philosophies, policies, and practices of Ascent Classical Academy’s application and the standard of care within 27J for our students, their families, and our community. To garner our approval as a district we would want at minimum the following changes to access and services. These are standard expectations that we have for all schools within the 27J community.
 - Ascent Classical Academy would agree to have an elected local school-board that reflects and represents the local school community that ACA would serve.
 - Ascent would agree to offer a free and reduced lunch option for students who are unable to provide one for themselves. 27J Schools is willing to partner with Ascent to provide these services if helpful, or Ascent may choose to partner with another provider, but a plan for free and reduced lunch

- services is a 27J standard of care that we would expect from all of our schools.
- Ascent would agree to and work to provide a plan for services and support for students who qualify for special education and/or need additional help transitioning in their English language development. Ascent would have to agree to have 27J Schools serve as the administrative unit for special education students. As the future administrative unit, the district is willing to collaborate in the development and articulation of programming and resource/staffing needs.
- Ascent would agree to amend its dress code to provide no distinction between what boys and girls must wear. A general uniform concept with specific colors and pants/dresses options is acceptable.

Failing to agree to these terms and support for students and their families excludes these students from enrolling in ACA and from access to a classical academy approach.

Proposed Milestones

Milestones to be fulfilled after execution of the contract and before the opening of the school

- During contract negotiations:
 - The contract would require at a minimum, a specified location and timing of the opening of ACA as well as a plan for capital construction as ACA reaches capacity. Without additional clarity, we cannot approve an opening prior to the 2024-2025 school year.
 - The contract would require ACA to provide additional details, evidence of planning, and articulation related to the established standard of care for every student and their family, as outlined above, prior to contract negotiations.
 - The contract would require an agreement to review data exchange processes to ensure accurate and timely data transfer with specific benchmarks and methods to monitor progress.
 - The contract would require Ascent Classical Academy to ensure compliance with all state and federal laws and requirements, (ie. Colorado Read Act, Title IX, McKinney Vento, etc.)
- 27J Schools is willing to extend application and contract timelines if mutually agreed upon to support ACA in having the time to meet these outlined conditions.

Rationale for Denial

Specific legal, financial, equity issues that cause significant concern regarding the viability of the proposal

Summary of overall conditions and/or reasons for denial:

27J School’s executive leadership team can see a path toward approving the charter application for Ascent Classical Academy. We believe that a classical academy provides an option for students and their families and this option is currently not available for 27J students. There are numerous points of disagreement between the philosophies, policies, and practices of Ascent’s application to what we know to be public school. Our ratings reveal 2 fully developed attributes, 2 mostly developed, 13 partially developed, and 1 not developed attribute as we evaluated this application. The missing attributes most often represented the differences between the programming of a private/tuition based school and that of a public/publicly funded school that willingly embraces the diversity of every and takes on the challenges of meeting the needs of every student. There is an interest to approve this charter, and we hope that Ascent Classical Academy is willing to make the required amendments to its application to ensure the established level of care for our students and families.