



# 2018 NEW SCHOOL APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION REPORT FOR: ASHÉ PREPARATORY ACADEMY

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## Report Submitted By

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# INTRODUCTION

The Washington State Charter School Commission (Commission) was created in 2013, after the approval of Initiative 1240 and subsequent passage of Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 6194, to serve as a statewide charter school authorizer. The eleven-member Commission is tasked with running a process to approve new charter schools, and effectively monitoring the schools it authorizes through ongoing oversight.

## Mission

To authorize high quality public charter schools and provide effective oversight and transparent accountability to improve educational outcomes for at-risk students.

## Values

Student-Centered  
Cultural and Community Responsiveness  
Excellence and Continuous Learning  
Accountability/Responsibility  
Transparency  
Innovation

## Vision

Foster innovation and ensure excellence so that every student has access to and thrives in a high-quality public school.

The Commission is committed to being culturally responsive. To that end, the Commission has adopted cultural competence definitions to support this commitment.

## Cultural Inclusion

Inclusion is widely thought of as a practice of ensuring that people in organizations feel they belong, are engaged and are connected through their work to the goals and objectives of the organization. Miller and Katz (2002) present a common definition: "Inclusion is a sense of belonging: feeling respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can do your best work." Inclusion is a shift in organization culture. The process of inclusion engages each individual and makes each feel valued and essential to the success of the organization.

Individuals function at full capacity, feel more valued and are included in the organization's mission. This culture shift creates higher-performing organizations where motivation and morale soar.<sup>1</sup>

## Cultural Responsive Education Systems

Culturally responsive educational systems are grounded in the beliefs that all culturally and linguistically diverse students can excel in academic endeavors when their culture, language, heritage, and experiences are valued and used to facilitate their learning and development, and they are provided access to high quality teachers, programs, and resources.<sup>2</sup>

## Cultural Competency

Cultural competence provides a set of skills that professionals need in order to improve practice to serve all students and communicate effectively with their families. These skills enable the educator to build on the cultural and language qualities that young people bring to the classroom rather than viewing those qualities as deficits.

Cultural competence allows educators to ask questions about their practice in order to successfully teach students who come from different cultural backgrounds. Developing skills in cultural competence is like learning a language, a sport or an instrument.

The learner must learn, relearn, continuously practice, and develop in an environment of constant change. Cultures and individuals are dynamic – they constantly adapt and evolve.

Cultural competence is:

- Knowing the community where the school is located
- Understanding all people have a unique world view
- Using curriculum and implementing an educational program that is respectful of and relevant to the cultures represented in its student body
- Being alert to the ways that culture affects who we are
- Places the focus of responsibility on the professional and the institution

<sup>1</sup> Puget Sound Educational Service District. (2014). Racial Equity Policy. (p. 7) Seattle, WA: Blanford, S.

<sup>2</sup> Leadscape, National Institute for Urban School Improvement. (2010) Culturally Responsive Coaching for Inclusive Schools. (p. 4) Tempe, AZ: Mulligan, E. M., Kozleski, E. M.

- The examination of systems, structures, policies and practices for their impact on all students and families viewing those systems as deficits.<sup>3</sup>

### Focus on Quality

The New School Application solicitation and the resulting evaluation process are rigorous and demanding. The process is designed to ensure that charter school operators possess the capacity to implement sound strategies, practices, and methodologies. Successful applicants will clearly demonstrate high levels of expertise and capacity in the areas of education, charter school finance, administration, and management, as well as high expectations for excellence in professional standards and student achievement.

### Autonomy and Accountability

Charter schools have broad autonomy, but not without strong accountability. Charter schools will be accountable to the Commission for meeting academic, financial, and organizational performance standards. The three areas of performance covered by the evaluation policy correspond directly with the three components of a strong charter school application and the three key areas of responsibility outlined in charter contracts.

#### Accountability

Evaluation of charter school performance is guided by three fundamental questions:

- Is the educational program a success?
- Is the school financially viable?
- Is the organization effective and well-run?

The answers to each of these three questions are essential to a comprehensive evaluation of charter school performance.

Charter schools are evaluated annually against standards in the following categories:

*Academic Performance* – Charter schools are required to make demonstrable improvements in student performance over the term of the charter. Schools are required to administer all state standardized tests and to adhere to academic standards.

*Financial Performance* – Schools must demonstrate the proper use of public funds, as evidenced by annual balanced budgets, sound audit reports, and conforming to generally accepted accounting practices.

*Organizational Performance* – A nonprofit corporation holds the charter school contract and is responsible for complying with both the terms in the contract and all applicable laws. This charter school board of directors is a public body and is required to adhere to public meeting and public records laws.

Approved charter schools will be granted a five-year charter contract. Schools unable to demonstrate academic progress or unable to comply with legal/ contractual or financial requirements may face sanctions, non-renewal, or charter revocation.

#### Autonomy

In exchange for rigorous accountability, charter school operators experience substantially greater authority to make decisions related to the following:

- Personnel
- School management and operations
- Finances
- Curriculum
- School day and calendar
- Education Service Provider (ESP) agreements

### Evaluation Process

Commission staff manage the application evaluation process and evaluation teams that include national and local experience and expertise on the operation of successful charter schools. The Commission staff leads these teams throughout the evaluation process to produce a merit-based recommendation regarding whether to approve or deny each proposal. This report from the evaluation team is the culmination of three stages of review:

#### Proposal Evaluation

The evaluation team conducted individual and group assessments of the merits of the proposal based on the complete submission. In the case of experienced operators, the Commission and NACSA supplemented the evaluation team's work with due diligence to verify claims made in the proposals.

#### Capacity Interview

After reviewing the application and discussing the findings of their individual reviews, the evaluation team conducted an in-person assessment of the applicant team's capacity.

<sup>3</sup> Center for Improvement of Student Learning, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

<http://www.k12.wa.us/CISL/EliminatingtheGaps/CulturalCompetence/default.aspx>

### Evaluation Team Ratings

The evaluation team members each produced independent, ratings and comments regarding whether to recommend the proposal for approval or denial.

Commission staff collated the team ratings into an overall recommendation report to approve or deny each application based on its merits as outlined in the rubric. The authority and responsibility to decide whether to approve or deny each application rests with the members of the Commission.

### Recommendation Report Contents

This recommendation report includes the following:

#### Proposal Overview

Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the application.

#### Recommendation

An overall rating regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval.

#### Evaluation

Analysis of the proposal based on four primary areas of plan development and the capacity of the applicant team to execute the plan as presented:

##### *Educational Program Design and Capacity*

- Program overview
- Curriculum and instructional design
- Student performance standards
- High School graduation requirements (if applicable)
- School calendar and schedule
- School culture
- Supplemental programming
- Special populations and at-risk students
- Student recruitment and enrollment
- Discipline policy and plan
- Family and community involvement
- Educational program capacity.

##### *Operations Plan and Capacity*

- Legal status and governing documents
- Organization structure and relationships
- Governing board
- Advisory bodies
- Grievance/complaint process
- District partnerships
- Education service providers (ESP) and other partnerships
- Staffing plans, hiring, management, and evaluation

- Professional development
- Performance framework
- Facilities
- Start-up and ongoing operations
- Operations

##### *Financial Plan and Capacity*

- Financial plan
  - Budgets
  - Cash flow projections
  - Related assumptions
  - Financial protocols
  - Fundraising plan
- Financial management capacity

##### *Existing Operators (if applicable)*

- Track record of academic success
- Organizational soundness
- Plans for network growth

### Rating Characteristics

Evaluation teams assess each application against the published evaluation rubric. In general, the following definitions guide evaluator ratings:

#### Exceeds

The response surpasses all key performance expectations/goals found under meets expectations. It exhibits high overall performance in all categories and routinely goes beyond what is expected and is fully aligned with the strategic mission of the Commission.

#### Meets

The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.

#### Partially Meets

The response meets the criteria in many respects, but lacks detail or specificity and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.

#### Does Not Meet

The response meets the criteria in some respects but has substantial gaps in a number of areas or 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.

# PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

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## Applicant Name

Dr. Debra Sullivan

## Proposed School Name

Ashé Preparatory Academy

## Mission

Ashé Preparatory Academy's mission is to cultivate the genius of a diverse population of students and prepare them to excel in high school, college, and career and to serve as leaders in, and for, their communities.

## Board Members

Dr. Debra Sullivan – Chair      Khavin Debbs – Vice-Chair      James Valiere -Secretary  
  
Marjon Heru – Treasurer      Gennette Cordova – Proposed Member

## Proposed School Leader

TBD

## Proposed Location

Renton - Skyway/ West Hill

## Enrollment Projections

| Academic Year | Planned Enrollment | Maximum Enrollment | Grades Served             |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 2019/2020     | 150                | 162                | K, 1, 2, 6                |
| 2020/2021     | 250                | 270                | K, 1, 2, 3, 6,            |
| 2021/2022     | 350                | 378                | K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7       |
| 2022/2023     | 425                | 459                | K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,7, 8  |
| 2023/2024     | 450                | 486                | K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 |

# SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Recommendation

Ashé Preparatory Academy

**APPROVE**

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## Summary Analysis

Ashé Preparatory Academy (Ashé) proposes to serve 450 students in grades K-8 from the Skyway/West Hill (SWH) community. According to the applicant, Ashé (ah-SHAY) is a philosophical concept from the Yoruba of Nigeria, West Africa that affirms the power to make things happen and produce change. Ashé's intent is to produce change by addressing unmet educational needs of SWH students through civic and community-focused projects and studies at every grade level, culturally responsive teaching methods, and a focus on student leadership development.

Ashé is participating in a larger multi-year collective impact project with Skyway West Hill Action Plan (SWAP) which is currently underway in unincorporated King County, in an area located South of Seattle with limited governmental services and resources. Residents in this area face significant economic instability. SWAP was developed by many stakeholders in Skyway, including Skyway Solutions, a community-based organization working to find community-led solutions for many aspects of the plan. SWAP focuses on cultivating community talent to revitalize the region through:

- Healthy, Connected Neighborhoods
- Smart, Sustainable Growth
- Thriving, Educated Youth and Community
- Economic Prosperity and Affordability
- Culture, Art, and Innovation

In collaboration with Skyway Solutions and other SWAP partners, Ashé is focused on “cultivating the talent that exists *within* the school's community, specifically, through the creation of a school that celebrates the genius within each student, where youth are educated and thriving”.

Overall, Ashé demonstrated numerous strengths throughout its application, and has a high likelihood of operating and sustaining a high-quality charter school.



## Summary of Section Ratings

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weaknesses in others.

*Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must maintain a "Meets" rating in all areas.*

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Executive Summary</b>            | <b>Educational Program Design and Capacity</b> |
| <b>MEETS</b>                        | <b>MEETS</b>                                   |
| <b>Operations Plan and Capacity</b> | <b>Financial Plan and Capacity</b>             |
| <b>MEETS</b>                        | <b>MEETS</b>                                   |
| <b>Existing Operators</b>           |  |
| <b>NOT APPLICABLE</b>               |  |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ashé Preparatory Academy

**MEETS**

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## Executive Summary: Summary

Ashé has defined the student population to be served, identified their multiple challenges, and considered a strategic approach for serving these students. Family outreach, community connection, and stakeholder input is consistently interwoven into the development of the application.

Ashé has provided a clear educational focus with the following three education program terms:

1. Projects and studies at every grade level
2. Cultural and community-responsiveness
3. Student leadership development

The targeted student population includes students of color, from low-income families that are at risk for achieving academic proficiency. The projected school demographics are 80% students of color with 60% African America and 70% low income, 25% English Language Learners (ELL), and 14% Special Education.

Ashé's demonstrated educational need for the proposed school is based on low percentages of third and eighth grade students meeting the 2016-2017 reading/math standards per the Smarter Balanced Assessments in two out of the three neighborhood elementary schools, and the middle school, which targeted students attend.

Starting with 150 students in grades K, 1, 2, 6 and adding two grades annually until they reach a full K-8 school with a maximum of 486 students is a reasonable growth plan.

| Executive Summary: Analysis and Evaluator Comments  |       |
|---|-------|
| RUBRIC OUTCOME  | MEETS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The applicant is proposing to serve the Skyway/West Hill community that is home to students of color, English language learners, and low-income students – which are the specific demographics that the chosen educational model has been designed to serve.</li><li>▪ Ashé has assessed demand through parent feedback via meeting with parents beginning in 2016.</li><li>▪ The school plans for all of its teachers and staff to have a Personalized Learning Plan just as their students, demonstrate strong modeling for students and has the potential to contribute to high job satisfaction for teachers and staff.</li><li>▪ There are clear and focused goals, measurable operations and financial objectives for the school.</li></ul> |       |

# EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM DESIGN AND CAPACITY

Ashé Preparatory Academy

MEETS

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## Educational Program Design and Capacity: Summary

Ashé has ably proposed a framework that builds on student skills and assets, is cognizant of students' developmental stages, backgrounds, individual learning goals, and is aligned with an understanding of how race and ethnicity affects learning styles. Educational program components include the following three measurable Educational Program Terms:

- School based mentor groups
- Personalized Learning pathways for every student
- Project Based Learning

Additionally, the proposed essential instructional design elements of the school model include:

- High Scope-inspired Learning Environment and Structure (focused on active learning, adult/child interaction, Teach/ Plan/Do/Review cycle within core classes to gradually increase student agency and ownership of learning, conflict resolution model, etc.)
- Direct Instruction<sup>i</sup> (*Teach*):
- Personalized Learning (*Do*):
- Culturally-Responsive Teaching Methods
- Ujima Team
- Community Connections Through Projects and Thematic Studies
- Kuumba Genius Exhibitions
- Student Leadership Development

Of positive note are the principles that guide the school culture. These principles were consistently referred to in all aspects of the school's operation during the Capacity Interview and are the school's guide to high expectations for staff, students and the community. These principles include:

- Unity – Umoja
- Self-Determination – Kujichagulia
- Collective Responsibility –Ujima
- Cooperative Economics – Ujamaa
- Purpose – Nia
- Creativity – Kuumba
- Conviction/Belief – Imani

Ashé has coherently aligned its curricular educational terms and the culturally responsive instructional design elements with their school mission, vision, and values.

Overall, Ashe has demonstrated a sophisticated understanding and knowledge of the research to support their culturally responsive education program and design elements and their impact on the targeted student

population, and community outreach and support. Notably, the applicant team has demonstrated that their education program, essential design elements and principles have a strong likelihood to positively impact academic and social-emotional outcomes for *any* student (pp 13-16 and Table pg. 17-21).

Ashé provided a comprehensive and complete overview of the planned curriculum, (Attachment 3).

Of positive note, Ashé proposes to implement the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice and Illinois Social/Emotional Standards as their diversity, justice and SEL curriculums, and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Student Outcomes rubric to address progress in community studies (diversity, equity and inclusion), social-emotional learning and the many core “skills and knowledge students must master to succeed in work and life” (29). These standards and assessment exceed state content standards and have a strong potential to provide well-conceived benchmarks to strive for and track progress. Ashé also proposes that every student will have an Ujima team supporting her or his academic, leadership, and social-emotional goals. Among other uses, Ujima Teams will utilize a finalized version of this rubric when meeting quarterly.

In addition to the Northwest Evaluation Association’s (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment three times per year to diagnose and track growth in reading and math, Ashe Prep intends to use an additional third-party assessment in English Language Arts (ELA) and math to track student progress. The founding team and school leader has had and will continue to benefit from significant external support from the Washington Charter School Association; New School Venture Fund; and a new leadership incubator.

Overall, the many strengths of this section outweigh the one primary weakness of this section, which is the poorly defined English Language Learner (ELL) program. It is unclear what the core components of the proposed “transitional bilingual”, or “Alternative” instructional program will be and how it will be carried out. In the Capacity Interview, the applicant acknowledged the need to further define the ELL program. While this is a critical omission because the school estimates at least 25% of its students will be ELLs and, given the area in which the school plans to be located, that percentage could be much higher with multiple languages. Based on the many strengths of this section and personalized learning for each student, the evaluation team has confidence that the school will address this need during the planning year.

| Educational Program Design and Capacity: Analysis and Evaluator Comments |  |
|--|--|
| RUBRIC OUTCOME   | MEETS  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One of the strengths of the basic learning environment is that it includes personalized learning aligned with time for interventions, accelerated learning, and a multi-tiered system of services to differentiate instruction (25).</li> <li>▪ Notable practice: "Every Ashé Prep student will have a [Ujima] team supporting her or his academic, leadership, and social-emotional goals." These teams include a student's teacher, a family member, a community member (if available), and a student peer.</li> <li>▪ The proposed "Council of Elders" represents and gives voice to the local community. This council will report to the board and collaborate with the principal.</li> <li>▪ The applicant has provided evidence of culturally responsive instructional strategies and the school's intent to implement a continuous improvement cycle (teach, plan, do and review) in its instructional design.</li> <li>▪ Ashé has proposed the following rigorous grade promotion goals: 80% of students at grade level will meet proficiency on the reading and math SBA (grades 3-8); 80% of students below grade level will grow at least 1 proficiency level as measured by reading and math SBA; 85% of students will be proficient on Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS) (grades 3-5); and 90% of students will be proficient on WCAS (grades 6-8).</li> <li>▪ The proposed school calendar meets Washington State's minimum instructional requirements as stated in RCW 281.150.220 and reflects 11 <i>more</i> instructional days than the required 180 days.</li> <li>▪ Ashé has demonstrated reasonable school marketing strategies (i.e. materials translated) and how the school will be promoted. The applicant has ably noted staff, outreach efforts, described community events, enrollment timelines, and lottery and enrollment procedures.</li> <li>▪ The school has identified a convincing student discipline plan that builds on belonging, collective responsibility, unity, and includes a restorative practice model with a process that starts from a positive stance of belonging. This includes High Scope's 6-STEP Conflict Resolution Model and equitable practices, which promote belonging and a sense of community. Additionally, disciplinary data will be disaggregated by student subgroup (race, ethnicity, language, gender, age, special needs, and economic status) to ensure that no group is disproportionately or inappropriately disciplined.</li> </ul> |

# OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

Ashé Preparatory Academy

MEETS

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## Operations Plan and Capacity: Summary

The proposed school founder and members of the design team and board bring significant experience in traditional schools, non-profit and for profit, governance, diverse communities, outreach, and finance. The Ashé Board has taken early steps to develop an effective governance model evidenced in part by BoardOn Track training. The Board's Committee structure allows for focus on specific areas, (i.e. financial, governance, communication, and diversity topics) offering expediency and economy in the Board's work.

The proposed school complaint process includes a list of 'Complainant's Rights' that suggests a process which conveys a willingness to take concerns seriously and to reach resolution.

Of positive note, is the already strong partnership (since 2016) and collaboration with Skyway Solutions and other SWAP partners. This appears to be a genuine partnership in service of the community and based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). There is no contract, or service fees regarding the Ashé Prep/Skyway partnership. This partnership is aligned to Ashé's mission, vision, values, education program, instructional design elements, Council of Elders, and aligns and supports Ashé's focus on "cultivating the talent that exists within the community" (7).

Ashé not only has a well-developed education program for its students, it has comprehensively demonstrated its commitment to the health, welfare and professional growth of its teachers and staff. This is in part, evidenced with merit-based pay, compensating teachers "according to their level of competence and display of professional skills, rather than by years of experience. Employees who meet their annual performance goals... will receive an annual 3% salary increase". Additionally, there are health and other benefits for half-time employees, a comprehensive hiring process, regular evaluations, coaching and 45 days of professional development per year with topic coverage such as restorative justice, equity, diversity and inclusiveness.

Ashé has not yet identified a facility, though is working with Washington Charter School Development and a real estate agent to identify viable commercial properties in and around Skyway/West Hill.

As of June 2018, Ashé's founder Dr. Sullivan will transition into the Board Chair position.

| <b>Operations Program Design and Capacity: Analysis and Evaluator Comments</b>  |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>RUBRIC OUTCOME</b>   | <b>MEETS</b> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The applicant has provided all required legal documents, along with a strong description of the board selection process, a demonstrated understanding of the roles, responsibilities and commitment required to be a board member, a plan for board training and development inclusive of a timetable, specific topics to be addressed, participation requirements, and coverage of the development of cultural competence (pg. 76).</li> <li>▪ Board members possess many of the skills, knowledge and expertise, necessary for operating a high-quality charter school, including: classroom teaching, finance, business strategy, ties with the local community, fundraising, educating students of African descent, and youth development. Additionally, one of the board members brings experience working with families and educators of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and dual-language learning (p. 74). The board is “is actively recruiting board members with legal and risk management, human resources, and facilities expertise”, and has identified how new members will be recruited and receive ongoing training (p. 75).</li> <li>▪ Including the Council of Elders in the organization’s structure brings community voice into the operations and the governance of the school and provides a direct and clear path between the board and larger community by attending monthly board meetings in an advisory role (p. 74).</li> <li>▪ Ashé ably and comprehensively demonstrated how it will implement internal and external diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments (including all mandatory state assessments) to inform instruction, student interventions, accelerated learning, and student progress on their Personalized Learning Plans.</li> <li>▪ Of concern is the lack of evidence and/or documented progress (other than a meeting) made toward any current or future collaboration between the school and local district.</li> <li>▪ While overall very comprehensive, the Start-Up Plan (Attachment 25) did not identify “Staff Responsible” for the various tasks.</li> <li>▪ Using board members to coach the principal may overstep the Board’s role, affect the principal’s autonomy, and create undue scrutiny for the School Leader. Additionally, the Director of Finance and Director of Operations are shown as direct reports to the Board rather than to the Principal so that the principal can “focus on teaching and learning and academic accountability” (Attachment 12). These expansions of the Board’s staff management role potentially affect governance.</li> </ul> |              |

# FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

Ashé Preparatory Academy

**MEETS**

## Financial Plan and Capacity: Summary

Overall, members of the Ashe applicant team and board bring financial and fund raising experience. The budget worksheet is conservative, showing net operating income each year.

The budget narrative considers various scenarios in which unexpected expenditures arise, and provides viable contingency plans for those eventualities. The budget also includes a cash flow projection for the planning year and first 3 years of operation. The financial policies are developed with solvency and risk-management in mind, and include healthy financial practices and adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) accounting principles. The school's plans for financial transparency are supported by regular opportunities for finances to be presented in Board or other public meetings.

The travel reimbursement policy is disproportionately detailed, given the likelihood of staff travel in comparison to other financial activities. Other policies could be developed to a similar level of detail for clarity.

While Ashé currently has strong projected philanthropic funds dedicated to the school in the first four years; which will allow the school to weather fluctuations in enrollment during the first few years, and/or meet other necessary budget surprises; the applicant did not provide the required long-term fund raising plan.

| Financial Plan and Capacity: Analysis and Evaluator Comments   |       |
|--|-------|
| RUBRIC OUTCOME   | MEETS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is adequate detail on cash handling.</li> <li>▪ While the school's positive projected cash flow could cover the deficit, of concern is that the school oversight fee was not projected in the budget.</li> <li>▪ The school principal has ownership over school-site budget (pg. 104).</li> <li>▪ The conservative enrollment figures for grade 2 and grade 6 demonstrate fiscal prudence.</li> <li>▪ The Contingency Budget plan is well reasoned as articulated in the budget narrative.</li> <li>▪ Ashé has already garnered significant philanthropic support and/or letters of commitment for funds once the school is approved (i.e. New School Venture Fund). Additionally, the school has access to other significant resources (i.e. Washington Charter School Association start-up funds, Washington Charter School Development), as well, applicant team members have experience in successful grant writing.</li> <li>▪ There does not appear to be a reference as to who approves the payroll for each pay cycle.</li> </ul> |       |



## EXISTING OPERATORS

Ashé Preparatory Academy

NOT APPLICABLE

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### Existing Operators: Summary

Not applicable, Ashé is a new non-profit.

| Existing Operators: Analysis   |                |
|--|----------------|
| RUBRIC OUTCOME   | NOT APPLICABLE |
| Not applicable, Ashé is a new non-profit and does not already operate any other schools. |                |

## EVALUATION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Dr. Cathy Fromme, Team Lead**

**New School Application Director  
Washington State Charter School Commission**

Dr. Fromme began her tenure with the Commission in March of 2014, with the initial development efforts on the Performance Frameworks, oversight and authorization processes and the Commission's first Strategic Plan. She served as the Commission Deputy Director and is currently the New School Application Director. Cathy began her journey as an educator 35 years ago as a first grade teacher in California, and has since held district, regional and state department positions in Washington and California. Prior to staffing the Commission, Cathy developed Washington's statewide Special Education Mediation System and chaired several statewide education committees as an OSPI Program Supervisor. As the Diversity Manager for the Washington Department of Natural Resources, she facilitated positive/inclusive working relationships and diversity in the workplace. Cathy is a long-standing Peer Reviewer for federally funded programs. She has consulted, written and presented extensively in the areas of workforce diversity, trust, social capital/relationship building and transition and the change process. Cathy holds a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology/Education from UCLA, a Master of Science in Therapeutic Recreation/Special Education from San Jose State University, and doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Washington.

### **Krystal Starwich, Evaluator**

**Charter School Program Grant Coordinator  
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction**

Krystal Starwich served as an evaluator in her role as the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's Charter School Program Grant Coordinator. Prior to joining OSPI, she spent three years providing a variety of operations and student support at an independent school in Seattle. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from University of Washington and her Master's Degree in Public Administration from Seattle University. Her non-profit professional experience includes legal advocacy and fund development for a community based organization serving survivors of domestic violence, and program coordination for a political non-profit. She is passionate about youth civic engagement and has been a longtime volunteer and board member for the YMCA's Youth and Government program.

### **Adam Aberman, Evaluator**

Adam is the CEO and Founder of The Learning Collective [www.thelearningcollective.com](http://www.thelearningcollective.com) with 20 years' experience in education. Over the past 15 years, Adam has reviewed over 100 proposals for charter schools in 7 states: California, Illinois, Indiana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York and Washington. Adam has led teams a team of reviewers on over 50 of those charter school applications, submitting the finalized application reviewers to boards of education. Adam has also evaluated over 200 current, K-12 charter schools nationally - in California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Washington, and Washington DC - including lead for charter renewal inspection visits, charged with evaluating the school and writing the report that is submitted to authorizers. Previously, Adam was the Director of Global Digital Strategy for Ashoka's Youth Venture, which helps teams of youth internationally launch socially responsible businesses and organizations. Prior to Ashoka, Adam was the Executive Director and Founder (and currently Board Member Emeritus) of [icouldbe.org](http://icouldbe.org), the non-profit Internet-based career mentoring program that has served over 27,000 teens and e-mentors nationwide. Before establishing [icouldbe.org](http://icouldbe.org), Adam was a Regional Coordinator for the New York City

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Department of Education. Adam began his career in education as a Spanish bilingual public school teacher in Los Angeles. Adam received a B.A. from Vassar College and a Master in Public Policy from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. A frequent speaker at conferences, Adam has also won numerous awards including Cause Marketing Silver Halo Award for Best Use of Social Media (2009) and International Computerworld Magazine Honors Finalist Award (2002).

### **Laura Crandall, Evaluator**

Laura Crandall, of Crandall Strategy & Research, has twelve years of experience in education management. She was Head of School in a preschool through grade eight independent school for six years. There, she led a faculty of thirty-five, managing a \$2.4 million budget, and greeting over 200 students daily. Laura also understands crisis management, having served as Interim Head of School in 2016 for an independent school that suffered the sudden loss of their School Director.

As the Business Manager of an independent school, Laura was responsible for facilities management, policy and procedure development, financial management and controls, and admissions processes. She has a deep understanding of what is essential to providing an educational environment in which students will thrive. Laura holds an MPA with a focus in local government, and her areas of expertise are financial analysis, process improvement, and organizational development.

### **Crystal Wash, Evaluator**

Crystal, a former school administrator, has served in various leadership roles including, Senior Literacy Trainer and Project Consultant where she provided expertise to IL School Districts in Teacher Evaluation. She began her career as an elementary classroom teacher, which led to becoming a demonstration classroom teacher. Crystal opened her classroom for teachers to observe and develop their expertise using the Balanced Literacy Approach. Following her teaching, Crystal was promoted to Literacy Project Consultant in which she led literacy Collaborative Inquiry Groups for K-2 teachers.

Crystal was accepted into New Leaders for New Schools, as a resident principal program and later became an Assistant Principal. Within her administrator roles, Crystal remained committed to developing teachers' expertise in instruction. In 2012, Crystal engaged in groundbreaking work as a Principal Calibrator. Her role focused on providing training and support on Danielson-based teacher evaluation to administrators. Over her career, Crystal has conducted a variety of education workshops that focused on teacher evaluation and content instructional strategies to support the Framework for Teaching.

Crystal received an MBA from Northwestern University, a Masters in Educational Leadership from National Louis, MED in teaching and learning from DePaul University, Reading Endorsement from Chicago State and a BA in Philosophy and English from Indiana University.

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