



**STATE OF INDIANA**  
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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February 17, 2021

Charter School Board  
Aspire Charter Academy, Inc.  
4900 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Gary, IN 46406

We have reviewed the Supplemental Audit Report for Aspire Charter Academy, Inc., prepared by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, Independent Public Accountants, for the period July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. In our opinion, the Supplemental Audit Report was prepared in accordance with the guidelines established by the State Board of Accounts.

We call your attention to the finding in the report. Page 3 contains one audit result and comment. Management's response is on pages 5 through 6.

The Supplemental Audit Report and associated audited Financial Statements are filed in our office as a matter of public record.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul D. Joyce".

Paul D. Joyce, CPA  
State Examiner

**SUPPLEMENTAL AUDIT REPORT  
OF  
ASPIRE CHARTER ACADEMY, INC.**

**LAKE COUNTY INDIANA**

**JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020**



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**WEALTH ADVISORY  
OUTSOURCING  
AUDIT, TAX, AND  
CONSULTING**

**ASPIRE CHARTER ACADEMY, INC.  
LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA  
TABLE OF CONTENTS  
JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020**

<b>SCHOOL OFFICIALS</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>AUDIT RESULTS AND COMMENTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>EXIT CONFERENCE</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>OFFICIAL RESPONSE</b>	<b>5</b>

**ASPIRE CHARTER ACADEMY, INC.  
LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA  
SCHOOL OFFICIALS  
JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020**

<u>Office</u>	<u>Official</u>	<u>Term</u>
Board President	Denise Dillard	07/01/19 – 06/30/20
Board Treasurer	Rachael Wright	07/01/19 – 06/30/20
School Leader	Ranae Robinson	07/01/19 – 06/30/20



CliftonLarsonAllen LLP  
CLAconnect.com

## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Board of Directors  
Aspire Charter Academy, Inc.  
Gary, Indiana

We have audited the financial statements of Aspire Charter Academy, Inc. (the Academy) as of and for the year ended June 30, 2020, and have issued our report thereon dated January 22, 2021. As part of our audit, we tested the Academy's compliance with provisions of the *Accounting and Uniform Compliance Guidelines Manual for Indiana Charter Schools* issued by the Indiana State Board of Accounts and related provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements. Reported in the Audit Results and Comments are matters where we believe the Academy was not in compliance with those provisions.

*CliftonLarsonAllen LLP*

**CliftonLarsonAllen LLP**

Indianapolis, Indiana  
January 22, 2021

**ASPIRE CHARTER ACADEMY, INC.  
LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA  
AUDIT RESULTS AND COMMENTS  
JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020**

**VENDOR DIBSURSEMENTS TESTING**

Sales tax can be avoided or reimbursed for purchases eligible under the state tax exemption guidelines. There were twelve (12) instances of the forty (40) selections where the Academy inappropriately paid sales tax.

Charter schools are eligible for an exemption from the state sales tax on purchases. To obtain the exemption for a Sales Tax Exemption Certificate, application shall be made to the Sales Tax Division of the Department of Revenue. This certificate must be presented at the time a purchase is made to avoid paying sales tax. If sales tax is paid erroneously, a refund application may be obtained from the Sales Tax Division (Accounting and Uniform Compliance Guidelines Manual for Indiana Charter Schools, Part 10).

**ASPIRE CHARTER ACADEMY, INC.  
LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA  
EXIT CONFERENCE  
JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020**

The contents of this report were discussed on January 22, 2021, with school officials Denise Dillard, Rachael Wright, and Ranae Robinson, along with Janet Thatcher and Andrew Gayle from National Heritage Academies. The Official Response has been made part of this report and may be found beginning on page 5.



## **Response to Audit Results and Comments**

**Finding:** *Vendor Disbursement Testing – Sales tax can be avoided or reimbursed for purchases eligible under the sales tax exemption guidelines.*

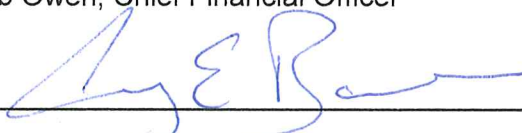
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**Response:** The Academy respectfully disagrees with this comment. Although Charter schools are eligible from state sales tax on purchases, due to the agreement the Academy has with its management company, the Academy is not making the purchases directly. Any purchases made are made by the management company on the Academy's behalf. The Indiana Department of Revenue has ruled that because the management company is making purchases on behalf of the school, the management company must pay sales tax regardless of who is the end user of the purchase.



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Bob Owen, Chief Financial Officer



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Corey Balkon, Director of Accounting and Financial Reporting

