

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Douglas County Charter School To Transfer to State Authorizer**

Denver, CO (December 18, 2019) – The transfer application submitted by [Ascent Classical Academy Douglas County](#) was approved by the [Colorado Charter School Institute](#) (CSI) Board of Directors at its December 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ascent Classical Academy Douglas County has been authorized by the Douglas County School District since it opened in 2018. The school offers students a classical, content-rich approach to education in the liberal arts and sciences. The school also provides instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue in an orderly and disciplined environment.

The classical school currently serves over 540 students in grades K-11. The school will add 12<sup>th</sup> grade in the 2020-2021 school year to complete its planned build out.

In the fall of 2019, Ascent Classical Academy Douglas County submitted its transfer application to CSI. The school sought to transfer to the [statewide charter authorizer](#) prior to school opening to ensure it had one authorizer as it expanded its network of schools. However, the district did not release the school to apply to CSI.

In nearly every school district within the state, a charter school cannot apply to transfer to the Colorado Charter School Institute without first obtaining the district board of education's approval.

Once approval has been obtained, statute lays out the details for evaluating charter applications by charter authorizers. Transfer applications are evaluated based on a school or network's existing body of evidence related to academic, financial, and operational performance. Additionally, transfer applications address any intended impacts to academic, operational, or financial processes as a result of a transfer in charter school authorizers.

In its first year of operation, Ascent Classical Academy Douglas County demonstrated positive student outcomes, earning the state's highest academic performance rating. The school provided a balanced budget based on realistic growth assumptions and plans to contract with an experienced financial management provider. Additionally, letters of support and growing student enrollment continue to demonstrate the community support for the school within Douglas County.

The CSI Board approved the staff's recommendation for a five-year term. Following contract negotiations, the school's oversight will officially transfer from Douglas County School District to the Charter School Institute on July 1, 2020.

As part of the transfer, and in recognition that CSI schools do not have access to local tax revenue, the district board of education voted to backfill mill levy override dollars for Ascent Classical Academy Douglas County until 2023, when the school and district's contract was set to end. This will ensure that, for the next few years, students attending Ascent Classical Academy will access the same level of mill levy override funding as peers attending schools authorized by the district.

The school's First Application Round for the 2020-2021 school year closed on December 6<sup>th</sup> with the lottery and offers being released on December 9, 2019. Applications received after the December 6<sup>th</sup> deadline will be added to the waitlist on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information on Ascent Classical Academy Douglas County, visit <https://dougco.ascentclassical.org/>.

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***About the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI)***

*CSI is a statewide charter public school authorizer in Colorado, currently authorizing 40 schools from Durango to Steamboat Springs, Grand Junction to Colorado Springs and serving over 18,000 PK-12 students. As a charter authorizer, CSI focuses on the outputs—that is, the quantitative evaluation of academic, organizational, and financial school performance—providing schools the flexibility to focus on and make decisions about inputs like instructional strategies, educational programming, internal assessment system, facility selection, and staffing. The focus on outcomes rather than processes allows CSI to be neutral on educational model and maintain a diverse portfolio of school models, which include Classical, Early College, Alternative, and Montessori models. Learn more at [www.csi.state.co.us](http://www.csi.state.co.us) or read our [Media Kit](#), and follow CSI on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*