



College for Certain Newsletter | March 2016

Dear Aspire Friends,

This spring at Aspire our team and scholars are seeing steady progress towards achievement as well as opportunities for continued growth throughout the organization. As we continue to work and refine, we pause to recognize a significant transition as we say goodbye to one of our own. Founding team member, Elise Darwish, is leaving Aspire after 17+ years. Elise built a strong foundation for the organization and has realized incredible success. We are so grateful and proud of the work she has done and wish her all the best in her next venture. For more on Elise's incredible contribution to Aspire, see the article below.

Another one of our own, Delphine Sherman, was honored as a finalist for the Bay Area CFO of the Year Awards, this year presented by Larkin Street Youth Services. Delphine has been a true asset to our work, keeping all of our schools, regions and the home office on track financially, allowing us to continue to grow. Some of the growth that Delphine's incredible work has made possible is showing up in Shelby County, Tennessee where we are opening a new school in the fall. The new school will open serving kindergarten and 1st grades, and grow a grade each year until it is a full K-5 campus. We are thrilled to expand our impact in Tennessee and serve even more students.

Finally, I want to thank everyone for their hard work this semester and for creatively working with our students to achieve *College for Certain*. It is through our staff and parents' creativity that we are best able to serve our students with such programs as family math nights to teach parents how to help their students with new common core math homework. Thank you for all that you do for our students and schools as we work towards giving all children access to a great education.

Thank you,
Carolyn Hack
CEO, Aspire Public Schools

Goodbye to Elise Darwish

After 17+ years, we say goodbye to our Chief Academic Officer, Elise Darwish. Elise has been on our leadership team since Aspire Public Schools was founded and most recently oversaw our growth in the blended learning space along with the implementation of curriculum and instruction aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Elise has many, many years of experience in charter schools, serving as the instructional coordinator of the first charter school in California, the San Carlos Charter Learning Center.



In Elise's time at Aspire, she has been instrumental in helping Aspire grow from a single school to the 38 schools in two states that we have today. From helping to create Aspire's vision and mission to designing, implementing and overseeing the Aspire educational model, Elise has been at the core of our work from the beginning. We are so grateful to her for her contribution to make *College for Certain* a reality for so many children.

Thank you Elise for all of your hard work over the years! We all have enjoyed working with and learning from you and wish you all the best in your next adventure.

Congratulations to CFO Delphine Sherman!

The Bay Area CFO of the Year Awards announced that our very own Delphine Sherman is a finalist in the nonprofit category for 2016 CFO of the Year.

All award finalists will be recognized, and winners announced, at the awards dinner and ceremony on Thursday, May 12, 2016 to be held at The Fairmont, San Francisco. The Bay Area CFO of the Year Awards is a partnership between the San Francisco Business Times and Larkin Street Youth Services.



We are so grateful to Delphine for the fantastic work she does for us on a daily basis and are excited to see her recognized by the larger community. Congratulations, Delphine!

[Read more >](#)

New School Opening in Memphis

We are thrilled to share that Aspire will be opening a new school in Memphis this fall through the local Shelby County School District (SCS)!

The new school will open serving kindergarten and 1st grades (a total of 120 students), and grow a grade each year until it is a full K-5 campus. The school will be named Aspire East International Academy, and it will have a focus on international studies with the goal of becoming an official International Baccalaureate (IB) school in the coming years. We believe this will give us an opportunity to



celebrate the diverse community we will serve.

The founding principal will be Monique Cincore, who has been with Aspire first as a principal resident and now as interim principal for Aspire Hanley 1 while Megan McGrail has been on maternity leave. The first day of school is planned for August 8, 2016 and the school is currently enrolling students for fall.

The entire Aspire staff is incredibly excited that we are able to even more effectively meet the needs of our parents and families in Memphis. Thanks in advance to the many of you that will play an integral role in a successful opening!

News Spotlight: Modesto Bee Showcases Aspire Summit's Family Math Night

Recently the Central Valley's Modesto Bee featured our very own Aspire Summit Charter Academy and how they are helping parents to understand Common Core math. It's just another way in which Aspire staff and teachers are finding new opportunities to engage parents and help their students achieve *College for Certain*.



[Read more>](#)

Where will **YOU** thrive?

APPLY NOW to make a difference in the future.

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

Way in school Math Activities

ASPIRE CREATES A CULTURE WHERE STAFF, TEACHERS & STUDENTS CAN THRIVE --Aspire Alumni

When the Wind Blows

Hexagon
- It is shaped like a stop sign.
- It has 6 sides.
- It has 6 corners.

ASPIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

From the Press Room

[Oakland District at Heart of Drive to Transform Urban Schools](#)

The New York Times

[Students Take On Classic Whodunit](#)

Recordnet.com

[Stockton's Achievement Gap Wider Than Many](#)

Recordnet.com



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Founded in 1998, Aspire Public Schools is one of the nation's largest highest-performing, college-preparatory public school systems. Aspire delivers a rigorous K-12 *College for Certain* education to 15,000 students in 38 open-enrollment public schools in California and Memphis, Tenn. Currently in our 17th academic year, Aspire is one of the nation's first charter school systems.

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