# Form 5500

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Department of Labor
Employee Benefits Security Administration

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation

# Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan

This form is required to be filed for employee benefit plans under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and sections 6057(b) and 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code).

▶ **Complete all entries in accordance with the instructions to the Form 5500.**

OMB Nos. 1210-0110
1210-0089

**2021**

**This Form is Open to Public Inspection**

## Part I Annual Report Identification Information

For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2021 and ending 12/31/2021

**A** This return/report is for:
- [ ] a multiemployer plan
- [ ] a multiple-employer plan (Filers checking this box must attach a list of participating employer information in accordance with the form instructions.)
- [X] a single-employer plan
- [ ] a DFE (specify) ____

**B** This return/report is:
- [ ] the first return/report
- [ ] the final return/report
- [ ] an amended return/report
- [ ] a short plan year return/report (less than 12 months)

**C** If the plan is a collectively-bargained plan, check here. . . . . ▶ [ ]

**D** Check box if filing under:
- [ ] Form 5558
- [ ] automatic extension
- [X] the DFVC program
- [ ] special extension (enter description)

**E** If this is a retroactively adopted plan permitted by SECURE Act section 201, check here. . . . . ▶ [ ]

## Part II Basic Plan Information—enter all requested information

**1a** Name of plan
ASCEND LEARNING, INC. 403(B) PLAN

**1b** Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ 001

**1c** Effective date of plan 01/01/2010

**2a** Plan sponsor's name (employer, if for a single-employer plan)
Mailing address (include room, apt., suite no. and street, or P.O. Box)
City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code (if foreign, see instructions)
ASCEND LEARNING, INC.

205 ROCKAWAY PKWY
BROOKLYN, NY 11212-3444

**2b** Employer Identification Number (EIN) 33-1200239

**2c** Plan Sponsor's telephone number 347-464-7600

**2d** Business code (see instructions) 611000

**Caution: A penalty for the late or incomplete filing of this return/report will be assessed unless reasonable cause is established.**

Under penalties of perjury and other penalties set forth in the instructions, I declare that I have examined this return/report, including accompanying schedules, statements and attachments, as well as the electronic version of this return/report, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **SIGN HERE** | Filed with authorized/valid electronic signature. | 02/27/2024 | MARYANN LI |
| | **Signature of plan administrator** | Date | Enter name of individual signing as plan administrator |
| **SIGN HERE** | | | |
| | **Signature of employer/plan sponsor** | Date | Enter name of individual signing as employer or plan sponsor |
| **SIGN HERE** | | | |
| | **Signature of DFE** | Date | Enter name of individual signing as DFE |

**3a** Plan administrator's name and address [X] Same as Plan Sponsor

**3b** Administrator's EIN

**3c** Administrator's telephone number

**4** If the name and/or EIN of the plan sponsor or the plan name has changed since the last return/report filed for this plan, enter the plan sponsor's name, EIN, the plan name and the plan number from the last return/report:
**a** Sponsor's name
**c** Plan Name

**4b** EIN

**4d** PN

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **5** Total number of participants at the beginning of the plan year | **5** | 795 |
| **6** Number of participants as of the end of the plan year unless otherwise stated (welfare plans complete only lines **6a(1), 6a(2), 6b, 6c,** and **6d**). | | |
| **a(1)** Total number of active participants at the beginning of the plan year | **6a(1)** | 727 |
| **a(2)** Total number of active participants at the end of the plan year | **6a(2)** | 783 |
| **b** Retired or separated participants receiving benefits | **6b** | 0 |
| **c** Other retired or separated participants entitled to future benefits | **6c** | 118 |
| **d** Subtotal. Add lines **6a(2)**, **6b**, and **6c** | **6d** | 901 |
| **e** Deceased participants whose beneficiaries are receiving or are entitled to receive benefits. | **6e** | 0 |
| **f** Total. Add lines **6d** and **6e** | **6f** | 901 |
| **g** Number of participants with account balances as of the end of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) | **6g** | 494 |
| **h** Number of participants who terminated employment during the plan year with accrued benefits that were less than 100% vested | **6h** | 30 |
| **7** Enter the total number of employers obligated to contribute to the plan (only multiemployer plans complete this item) | **7** | |

**8a** If the plan provides pension benefits, enter the applicable pension feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:

2F 2G 2L 2M 2T 3H

**b** If the plan provides welfare benefits, enter the applicable welfare feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:

**9a** Plan funding arrangement (check all that apply)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **(1)** | [ ] | Insurance |
| **(2)** | [ ] | Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts |
| **(3)** | [X] | Trust |
| **(4)** | [ ] | General assets of the sponsor |

**9b** Plan benefit arrangement (check all that apply)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **(1)** | [ ] | Insurance |
| **(2)** | [ ] | Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts |
| **(3)** | [X] | Trust |
| **(4)** | [ ] | General assets of the sponsor |

**10** Check all applicable boxes in 10a and 10b to indicate which schedules are attached, and, where indicated, enter the number attached. (See instructions)

**a Pension Schedules**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **(1)** | [X] | **R** (Retirement Plan Information) |
| **(2)** | [ ] | **MB** (Multiemployer Defined Benefit Plan and Certain Money Purchase Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary |
| **(3)** | [ ] | **SB** (Single-Employer Defined Benefit Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary |

**b General Schedules**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **(1)** | [X] | | **H** (Financial Information) |
| **(2)** | [ ] | | **I** (Financial Information – Small Plan) |
| **(3)** | [ ] | 0 | **A** (Insurance Information) |
| **(4)** | [X] | | **C** (Service Provider Information) |
| **(5)** | [ ] | | **D** (DFE/Participating Plan Information) |
| **(6)** | [ ] | | **G** (Financial Transaction Schedules) |

## Part III Form M-1 Compliance Information (to be completed by welfare benefit plans)

**11a** If the plan provides welfare benefits, was the plan subject to the Form M-1 filing requirements during the plan year? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

If "Yes" is checked, complete lines 11b and 11c.

**11b** Is the plan currently in compliance with the Form M-1 filing requirements? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

**11c** Enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the 2021 Form M-1 annual report. If the plan was not required to file the 2021 Form M-1 annual report, enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the most recent Form M-1 that was required to be filed under the Form M-1 filing requirements. (Failure to enter a valid Receipt Confirmation Code will subject the Form 5500 filing to rejection as incomplete.)

Receipt Confirmation Code_____

| SCHEDULE C (Form 5500) | Service Provider Information | OMB No. 1210-0110 |
|---|---|---|
| Department of the Treasury<br>Internal Revenue Service<br>Department of Labor<br>Employee Benefits Security Administration<br>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation | This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).<br>▶ **File as an attachment to Form 5500.** | **2021**<br>**This Form is Open to Public Inspection.** |

For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2021 and ending 12/31/2021

| **A** Name of plan | **B** Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ |
|---|---|
| ASCEND LEARNING, INC. 403(B) PLAN | 001 |
| **C** Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 | **D** Employer Identification Number (EIN) |
| ASCEND LEARNING, INC. | 33-1200239 |

## Part I Service Provider Information (see instructions)

You must complete this Part, in accordance with the instructions, to report the information required for **each person** who received, directly or indirectly, $5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of monetary value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or the person's position with the plan during the plan year. If a person received **only** eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures, you are required to answer line 1 but are not required to include that person when completing the remainder of this Part.

### 1 Information on Persons Receiving Only Eligible Indirect Compensation

**a** Check "Yes" or "No" to indicate whether you are excluding a person from the remainder of this Part because they received only eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures (see instructions for definitions and conditions). . . . . ☐ Yes ☒ No

**b** If you answered line 1a "Yes," enter the name and EIN or address of each person providing the required disclosures for the service providers who received only eligible indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed (see instructions).

**(b)** Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

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**2. Information on Other Service Providers Receiving Direct or Indirect Compensation.** Except for those persons for whom you answered "Yes" to line 1a above, complete as many entries as needed to list each person receiving, directly or indirectly, $5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or their position with the plan during the plan year. (See instructions).

**(a)** Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

JANNEY MONTGOMERY SCOTT LLC

23-0731260

| (b) Service Code(s) | (c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest | (d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-. | (e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor) | (f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures? | (g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-. | (h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 49 55 | NONE | 0 | Yes [X] No [ ] | Yes [ ] No [X] | 64267 | Yes [ ] No [X] |

**(a)** Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

PRINCIPAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

42-0127290

| (b) Service Code(s) | (c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest | (d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-. | (e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor) | (f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures? | (g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-. | (h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 37 50 64 | NONE | 10581 | Yes [X] No [ ] | Yes [X] No [ ] | 0 | Yes [ ] No [X] |

**(a)** Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

| (b) Service Code(s) | (c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest | (d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-. | (e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor) | (f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures? | (g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-. | (h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Yes [ ] No [ ] | Yes [ ] No [ ] | | Yes [ ] No [ ] |

**Part I Service Provider Information (continued)**

**3.** If you reported on line 2 receipt of indirect compensation, other than eligible indirect compensation, by a service provider, and the service provider is a fiduciary or provides contract administrator, consulting, custodial, investment advisory, investment management, broker, or recordkeeping services, answer the following questions for (a) each source from whom the service provider received $1,000 or more in indirect compensation and (b) each source for whom the service provider gave you a formula used to determine the indirect compensation instead of an amount or estimated amount of the indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed to report the required information for each source.

| **(a)** Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2 | **(b)** Service Codes (see instructions) | **(c)** Enter amount of indirect compensation |
|---|---|---|
| JANNEY MONTGOMERY SCOTT LLC | 49 55 | 64267 |

| **(d)** Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation | **(e)** Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation. |
|---|---|
| PRINCIPAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY<br><br>42-0127290 | COMMISSIONS |

| **(a)** Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2 | **(b)** Service Codes (see instructions) | **(c)** Enter amount of indirect compensation |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

| **(d)** Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation | **(e)** Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation. |
|---|---|
| | |

| **(a)** Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2 | **(b)** Service Codes (see instructions) | **(c)** Enter amount of indirect compensation |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

| **(d)** Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation | **(e)** Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation. |
|---|---|
| | |

## Part II Service Providers Who Fail or Refuse to Provide Information

**4** Provide, to the extent possible, the following information for each service provider who failed or refused to provide the information necessary to complete this Schedule.

| **(a)** Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions) | **(b)** Nature of Service Code(s) | **(c)** Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

| **(a)** Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions) | **(b)** Nature of Service Code(s) | **(c)** Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

| **(a)** Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions) | **(b)** Nature of Service Code(s) | **(c)** Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

| **(a)** Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions) | **(b)** Nature of Service Code(s) | **(c)** Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

| **(a)** Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions) | **(b)** Nature of Service Code(s) | **(c)** Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

| **(a)** Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions) | **(b)** Nature of Service Code(s) | **(c)** Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

| **Part III** | **Termination Information on Accountants and Enrolled Actuaries (see instructions)**<br>(complete as many entries as needed) |
|---|---|

**a** Name:

**b** EIN:

**c** Position:

**d** Address:

**e** Telephone:

Explanation:

**a** Name:

**b** EIN:

**c** Position:

**d** Address:

**e** Telephone:

Explanation:

**a** Name:

**b** EIN:

**c** Position:

**d** Address:

**e** Telephone:

Explanation:

**a** Name:

**b** EIN:

**c** Position:

**d** Address:

**e** Telephone:

Explanation:

**a** Name:

**b** EIN:

**c** Position:

**d** Address:

**e** Telephone:

Explanation:

# SCHEDULE H (Form 5500)

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Department of Labor
Employee Benefits Security Administration

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation

## Financial Information

This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code).

▶ **File as an attachment to Form 5500.**

OMB No. 1210-0110

**2021**

**This Form is Open to Public Inspection**

For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2021 and ending 12/31/2021

**A** Name of plan
ASCEND LEARNING, INC. 403(B) PLAN

**B** Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ 001

**C** Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500
ASCEND LEARNING, INC.

**D** Employer Identification Number (EIN)
33-1200239

## Part I Asset and Liability Statement

**1** Current value of plan assets and liabilities at the beginning and end of the plan year. Combine the value of plan assets held in more than one trust. Report the value of the plan's interest in a commingled fund containing the assets of more than one plan on a line-by-line basis unless the value is reportable on lines 1c(9) through 1c(14). Do not enter the value of that portion of an insurance contract which guarantees, during this plan year, to pay a specific dollar benefit at a future date. **Round off amounts to the nearest dollar.** MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 1b(1), 1b(2), 1c(8), 1g, 1h, and 1i. CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 1d and 1e. See instructions.

| Assets | | (a) Beginning of Year | (b) End of Year |
|---|---|---|---|
| **a** Total noninterest-bearing cash | 1a | | |
| **b** Receivables (less allowance for doubtful accounts): | | | |
| **(1)** Employer contributions | 1b(1) | 10687 | 0 |
| **(2)** Participant contributions | 1b(2) | 19603 | 0 |
| **(3)** Other | 1b(3) | 412516 | 475610 |
| **c** General investments: | | | |
| **(1)** Interest-bearing cash (include money market accounts & certificates of deposit) | 1c(1) | | |
| **(2)** U.S. Government securities | 1c(2) | | |
| **(3)** Corporate debt instruments (other than employer securities): | | | |
| **(A)** Preferred | 1c(3)(A) | | |
| **(B)** All other | 1c(3)(B) | | |
| **(4)** Corporate stocks (other than employer securities): | | | |
| **(A)** Preferred | 1c(4)(A) | | |
| **(B)** Common | 1c(4)(B) | | |
| **(5)** Partnership/joint venture interests | 1c(5) | | |
| **(6)** Real estate (other than employer real property) | 1c(6) | | |
| **(7)** Loans (other than to participants) | 1c(7) | | |
| **(8)** Participant loans | 1c(8) | 174256 | 292092 |
| **(9)** Value of interest in common/collective trusts | 1c(9) | | |
| **(10)** Value of interest in pooled separate accounts | 1c(10) | | |
| **(11)** Value of interest in master trust investment accounts | 1c(11) | | |
| **(12)** Value of interest in 103-12 investment entities | 1c(12) | | |
| **(13)** Value of interest in registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds) | 1c(13) | 11826970 | 15291533 |
| **(14)** Value of funds held in insurance company general account (unallocated contracts) | 1c(14) | | |
| **(15)** Other | 1c(15) | | |

| | | | **(a)** Beginning of Year | **(b)** End of Year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1d** | Employer-related investments: | | | |
| | **(1)** Employer securities | 1d(1) | | |
| | **(2)** Employer real property | 1d(2) | | |
| **e** | Buildings and other property used in plan operation | 1e | | |
| **f** | Total assets (add all amounts in lines 1a through 1e) | 1f | 12444032 | 16059235 |
| | **Liabilities** | | | |
| **g** | Benefit claims payable | 1g | | |
| **h** | Operating payables | 1h | | |
| **i** | Acquisition indebtedness | 1i | | |
| **j** | Other liabilities | 1j | 207679 | 253559 |
| **k** | Total liabilities (add all amounts in lines 1g through1j) | 1k | 207679 | 253559 |
| | **Net Assets** | | | |
| **l** | Net assets (subtract line 1k from line 1f) | 1l | 12236353 | 15805676 |

## Part II Income and Expense Statement

**2** Plan income, expenses, and changes in net assets for the year. Include all income and expenses of the plan, including any trust(s) or separately maintained fund(s) and any payments/receipts to/from insurance carriers. Round off amounts to the nearest dollar. MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 2a, 2b(1)(E), 2e, 2f, and 2g.

| | **Income** | | **(a)** Amount | **(b)** Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a** | **Contributions:** | | | |
| | **(1)** Received or receivable in cash from: **(A)** Employers | 2a(1)(A) | 865602 | |
| | **(B)** Participants | 2a(1)(B) | 2077148 | |
| | **(C)** Others (including rollovers) | 2a(1)(C) | 271055 | |
| | **(2)** Noncash contributions | 2a(2) | | |
| | **(3)** Total contributions. Add lines **2a(1)(A), (B), (C),** and line **2a(2)** | 2a(3) | | 3213805 |
| **b** | **Earnings on investments:** | | | |
| | **(1)** Interest: | | | |
| | **(A)** Interest-bearing cash (including money market accounts and certificates of deposit) | 2b(1)(A) | | |
| | **(B)** U.S. Government securities | 2b(1)(B) | | |
| | **(C)** Corporate debt instruments | 2b(1)(C) | | |
| | **(D)** Loans (other than to participants) | 2b(1)(D) | | |
| | **(E)** Participant loans | 2b(1)(E) | 11144 | |
| | **(F)** Other | 2b(1)(F) | | |
| | **(G)** Total interest. Add lines **2b(1)(A)** through **(F)** | 2b(1)(G) | | 11144 |
| | **(2)** Dividends: **(A)** Preferred stock | 2b(2)(A) | | |
| | **(B)** Common stock | 2b(2)(B) | | |
| | **(C)** Registered investment company shares (e.g. mutual funds) | 2b(2)(C) | 307624 | |
| | **(D)** Total dividends. Add lines **2b(2)(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)** | 2b(2)(D) | | 307624 |
| | **(3)** Rents | 2b(3) | | |
| | **(4)** Net gain (loss) on sale of assets: **(A)** Aggregate proceeds | 2b(4)(A) | | |
| | **(B)** Aggregate carrying amount (see instructions) | 2b(4)(B) | | |
| | **(C)** Subtract line **2b(4)(B)** from line **2b(4)(A)** and enter result | 2b(4)(C) | | 0 |
| | **(5)** Unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of assets: **(A)** Real estate | 2b(5)(A) | | |
| | **(B)** Other | 2b(5)(B) | | |
| | **(C)** Total unrealized appreciation of assets. Add lines **2b(5)(A)** and **(B)** | 2b(5)(C) | | 0 |

| | | (a) Amount | (b) Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| (6) Net investment gain (loss) from common/collective trusts | 2b(6) | | |
| (7) Net investment gain (loss) from pooled separate accounts | 2b(7) | | |
| (8) Net investment gain (loss) from master trust investment accounts | 2b(8) | | |
| (9) Net investment gain (loss) from 103-12 investment entities | 2b(9) | | |
| (10) Net investment gain (loss) from registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds) | 2b(10) | | 1645143 |
| c Other income | 2c | | |
| d Total income. Add all **income** amounts in column (b) and enter total | 2d | | 5177716 |
| **Expenses** | | | |
| e Benefit payment and payments to provide benefits: | | | |
| (1) Directly to participants or beneficiaries, including direct rollovers | 2e(1) | 1551931 | |
| (2) To insurance carriers for the provision of benefits | 2e(2) | | |
| (3) Other | 2e(3) | | |
| (4) Total benefit payments. Add lines **2e(1)** through **(3)** | 2e(4) | | 1551931 |
| f Corrective distributions (see instructions) | 2f | | 45880 |
| g Certain deemed distributions of participant loans (see instructions) | 2g | | |
| h Interest expense | 2h | | |
| i Administrative expenses: **(1)** Professional fees | 2i(1) | 10582 | |
| (2) Contract administrator fees | 2i(2) | | |
| (3) Investment advisory and management fees | 2i(3) | | |
| (4) Other | 2i(4) | | |
| (5) Total administrative expenses. Add lines **2i(1)** through **(4)** | 2i(5) | | 10582 |
| j Total expenses. Add all **expense** amounts in column (b) and enter total | 2j | | 1608393 |
| **Net Income and Reconciliation** | | | |
| k Net income (loss). Subtract line **2j** from line **2d** | 2k | | 3569323 |
| l Transfers of assets: | | | |
| (1) To this plan | 2l(1) | | |
| (2) From this plan | 2l(2) | | |

## Part III Accountant's Opinion

**3** Complete lines 3a through 3c if the opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is attached to this Form 5500. Complete line 3d if an opinion is not attached.

**a** The attached opinion of an independent qualified public accountant for this plan is (see instructions):

**(1)** [X] Unmodified **(2)** [ ] Qualified **(3)** [ ] Disclaimer **(4)** [ ] Adverse

**b** Check the appropriate box(es) to indicate whether the IQPA performed an ERISA section 103(a)(3)(C) audit. Check both boxes (1) and (2) if the audit was performed pursuant to both 29 CFR 2520.103-8 and 29 CFR 2520.103-12(d). Check box (3) if pursuant to neither.

**(1)** [X] DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 **(2)** [ ] DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d) **(3)** [ ] neither DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 nor DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d).

**c** Enter the name and EIN of the accountant (or accounting firm) below:

**(1)** Name: PKF O'CONNOR DAVIES LLP **(2)** EIN: 27-1728945

**d** The opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is **not attached** because:

**(1)** [ ] This form is filed for a CCT, PSA, or MTIA. **(2)** [ ] It will be attached to the next Form 5500 pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.104-50.

## Part IV Compliance Questions

**4** CCTs and PSAs do not complete Part IV. MTIAs, 103-12 IEs, and GIAs do not complete lines 4a, 4e, 4f, 4g, 4h, 4k, 4m, 4n, or 5. 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 4j and 4l. MTIAs also do not complete line 4l.

During the plan year:

| | | Yes | No | Amount |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a** Was there a failure to transmit to the plan any participant contributions within the time period described in 29 CFR 2510.3-102? Continue to answer "Yes" for any prior year failures until fully corrected. (See instructions and DOL's Voluntary Fiduciary Correction Program.) | 4a | X | | 1935019 |

| | | | Yes | No | Amount |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **b** | Were any loans by the plan or fixed income obligations due the plan in default as of the close of the plan year or classified during the year as uncollectible? Disregard participant loans secured by participant's account balance. (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part I if "Yes" is checked.) | **4b** | | X | |
| **c** | Were any leases to which the plan was a party in default or classified during the year as uncollectible? (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part II if "Yes" is checked.) | **4c** | | X | |
| **d** | Were there any nonexempt transactions with any party-in-interest? (Do not include transactions reported on line 4a. Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part III if "Yes" is checked.) | **4d** | | X | |
| **e** | Was this plan covered by a fidelity bond? | **4e** | X | | 500000 |
| **f** | Did the plan have a loss, whether or not reimbursed by the plan's fidelity bond, that was caused by fraud or dishonesty? | **4f** | | X | |
| **g** | Did the plan hold any assets whose current value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser? | **4g** | | X | |
| **h** | Did the plan receive any noncash contributions whose value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser? | **4h** | | X | |
| **i** | Did the plan have assets held for investment? (Attach schedule(s) of assets if "Yes" is checked, and see instructions for format requirements.) | **4i** | X | | |
| **j** | Were any plan transactions or series of transactions in excess of 5% of the current value of plan assets? (Attach schedule of transactions if "Yes" is checked and see instructions for format requirements.) | **4j** | | X | |
| **k** | Were all the plan assets either distributed to participants or beneficiaries, transferred to another plan, or brought under the control of the PBGC? | **4k** | | X | |
| **l** | Has the plan failed to provide any benefit when due under the plan? | **4l** | | X | |
| **m** | If this is an individual account plan, was there a blackout period? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-3.) | **4m** | | X | |
| **n** | If 4m was answered "Yes," check the "Yes" box if you either provided the required notice or one of the exceptions to providing the notice applied under 29 CFR 2520.101-3 | **4n** | | | |

**5a** Has a resolution to terminate the plan been adopted during the plan year or any prior plan year? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes," enter the amount of any plan assets that reverted to the employer this year _____.

**5b** If, during this plan year, any assets or liabilities were transferred from this plan to another plan(s), identify the plan(s) to which assets or liabilities were transferred. (See instructions.)

| **5b(1)** Name of plan(s) | **5b(2)** EIN(s) | **5b(3)** PN(s) |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**5c** Was the plan a defined benefit plan covered under the PBGC insurance program at any time during this plan year? (See ERISA section 4021 and instructions.) ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not determined

If "Yes" is checked, enter the My PAA confirmation number from the PBGC premium filing for this plan year _____.

# SCHEDULE R (Form 5500)

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Department of Labor
Employee Benefits Security Administration

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation

## Retirement Plan Information

This schedule is required to be filed under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code).

▶ **File as an attachment to Form 5500.**

OMB No. 1210-0110

**2021**

**This Form is Open to Public Inspection.**

For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2021 and ending 12/31/2021

**A** Name of plan
ASCEND LEARNING, INC. 403(B) PLAN

**B** Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ 001

**C** Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500
ASCEND LEARNING, INC.

**D** Employer Identification Number (EIN)
33-1200239

## Part I Distributions

**All references to distributions relate only to payments of benefits during the plan year.**

**1** Total value of distributions paid in property other than in cash or the forms of property specified in the instructions ..... **1** 0

**2** Enter the EIN(s) of payor(s) who paid benefits on behalf of the plan to participants or beneficiaries during the year (if more than two, enter EINs of the two payors who paid the greatest dollar amounts of benefits):

EIN(s): 42-0127290

**Profit-sharing plans, ESOPs, and stock bonus plans, skip line 3.**

**3** Number of participants (living or deceased) whose benefits were distributed in a single sum, during the plan year ..... **3** 62

## Part II Funding Information (If the plan is not subject to the minimum funding requirements of section 412 of the Internal Revenue Code or ERISA section 302, skip this Part.)

**4** Is the plan administrator making an election under Code section 412(d)(2) or ERISA section 302(d)(2)? ..... ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **N/A**

**If the plan is a defined benefit plan, go to line 8.**

**5** If a waiver of the minimum funding standard for a prior year is being amortized in this plan year, see instructions and enter the date of the ruling letter granting the waiver. **Date:** Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

**If you completed line 5, complete lines 3, 9, and 10 of Schedule MB and do not complete the remainder of this schedule.**

**6** **a** Enter the minimum required contribution for this plan year (include any prior year accumulated funding deficiency not waived) ..... **6a**

**b** Enter the amount contributed by the employer to the plan for this plan year ..... **6b**

**c** Subtract the amount in line 6b from the amount in line 6a. Enter the result (enter a minus sign to the left of a negative amount) ..... **6c**

**If you completed line 6c, skip lines 8 and 9.**

**7** Will the minimum funding amount reported on line 6c be met by the funding deadline? ..... ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **N/A**

**8** If a change in actuarial cost method was made for this plan year pursuant to a revenue procedure or other authority providing automatic approval for the change or a class ruling letter, does the plan sponsor or plan administrator agree with the change? ..... ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **N/A**

## Part III Amendments

**9** If this is a defined benefit pension plan, were any amendments adopted during this plan year that increased or decreased the value of benefits? If yes, check the appropriate box. If no, check the "No" box. ..... ☐ **Increase** ☐ **Decrease** ☐ **Both** ☐ **No**

## Part IV ESOPs (see instructions). If this is not a plan described under section 409(a) or 4975(e)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code, skip this Part.

**10** Were unallocated employer securities or proceeds from the sale of unallocated securities used to repay any exempt loan? ..... ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

**11** **a** Does the ESOP hold any preferred stock? ..... ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

**b** If the ESOP has an outstanding exempt loan with the employer as lender, is such loan part of a "back-to-back" loan? (See instructions for definition of "back-to-back" loan.) ..... ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

**12** Does the ESOP hold any stock that is not readily tradable on an established securities market? ..... ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

## Part V Additional Information for Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans

**13** Enter the following information for each employer that contributed more than 5% of total contributions to the plan during the plan year (measured in dollars). See instructions. *Complete as many entries as needed to report all applicable employers.*

**a** Name of contributing employer

**b** EIN **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires *(If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.)* Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

**e** Contribution rate information *(If more than one rate applies, check this box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)*
(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____
(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify):

---

**a** Name of contributing employer

**b** EIN **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires *(If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.)* Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

**e** Contribution rate information *(If more than one rate applies, check this box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)*
(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____
(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

---

**a** Name of contributing employer

**b** EIN **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires *(If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.)* Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

**e** Contribution rate information *(If more than one rate applies, check this box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)*
(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____
(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

---

**a** Name of contributing employer

**b** EIN **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires *(If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.)* Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

**e** Contribution rate information *(If more than one rate applies, check this box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)*
(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____
(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

---

**a** Name of contributing employer

**b** EIN **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires *(If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.)* Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

**e** Contribution rate information *(If more than one rate applies, check this box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)*
(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____
(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

---

**a** Name of contributing employer

**b** EIN **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires *(If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.)* Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

**e** Contribution rate information *(If more than one rate applies, check this box* ☐ *and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)*
(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____
(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

**14** Enter the number of deferred vested and retired participants (inactive participants), as of the beginning of the plan year, whose contributing employer is no longer making contributions to the plan for:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **a** The current plan year. Check the box to indicate the counting method used to determine the number of inactive participants: ☐ last contributing employer ☐ alternative ☐ reasonable approximation (see instructions for required attachment) | **14a** | |
| **b** The plan year immediately preceding the current plan year. ☐ Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment) | **14b** | |
| **c** The second preceding plan year. ☐ Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment) | **14c** | |

**15** Enter the ratio of the number of participants under the plan on whose behalf no employer had an obligation to make an employer contribution during the current plan year to:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **a** The corresponding number for the plan year immediately preceding the current plan year | **15a** | |
| **b** The corresponding number for the second preceding plan year | **15b** | |

**16** Information with respect to any employers who withdrew from the plan during the preceding plan year:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **a** Enter the number of employers who withdrew during the preceding plan year | **16a** | |
| **b** If line 16a is greater than 0, enter the aggregate amount of withdrawal liability assessed or estimated to be assessed against such withdrawn employers | **16b** | |

**17** If assets and liabilities from another plan have been transferred to or merged with this plan during the plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment ☐

## Part VI Additional Information for Single-Employer and Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans

**18** If any liabilities to participants or their beneficiaries under the plan as of the end of the plan year consist (in whole or in part) of liabilities to such participants and beneficiaries under two or more pension plans as of immediately before such plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment ☐

**19** If the total number of participants is 1,000 or more, complete lines (a) through (c)

**a** Enter the percentage of plan assets held as:
Stock: _____% Investment-Grade Debt: _____% High-Yield Debt: _____% Real Estate: _____% Other: _____%

**b** Provide the average duration of the combined investment-grade and high-yield debt:
☐ 0-3 years ☐ 3-6 years ☐ 6-9 years ☐ 9-12 years ☐ 12-15 years ☐ 15-18 years ☐ 18-21 years ☐ 21 years or more

**c** What duration measure was used to calculate line 19(b)?
☐ Effective duration ☐ Macaulay duration ☐ Modified duration ☐ Other (specify):

**20** **PBGC missed contribution reporting requirements.** If this is a multiemployer plan or a single-employer plan that is not covered by PBGC, skip line 20.

**a** Is the amount of unpaid minimum required contributions for all years from Schedule SB (Form 5500) line 40 greater than zero? ☐ Yes ☐ No

**b** If line 20a is "Yes," has PBGC been notified as required by ERISA sections 4043(c)(5) and/or 303(k)(4)? Check the applicable box:

☐ Yes.

☐ No. Reporting was waived under 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) because contributions equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution were made by the 30th day after the due date.

☐ No. The 30-day period referenced in 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) has not yet ended, and the sponsor intends to make a contribution equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution by the 30th day after the due date.

☐ No. Other. Provide explanation _____

# Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan

Financial Statements

December 31, 2021

PKF O'CONNOR DAVIES
ACCOUNTANTS AND ADVISORS
ESTABLISHED IN 1891

# Independent Auditors' Report

**The Plan Administrator**
**Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan**

## *Scope and Nature of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) Audit*

We have performed an audit of the accompanying financial statements of the Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan (the "Plan"), an employee benefit plan subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 ("ERISA"), as permitted by ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) ("ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit"). The financial statements comprise the statement of net assets available for benefits as of December 31, 2021, and the related statement of changes in net assets available for benefits for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management, having determined it is permissible in the circumstances, has elected to have the audit of the Plan's financial statements performed in accordance with ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.103-8 of the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. As permitted by ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C), our audit need not extend to any statements or information related to assets held for investment of the Plan (investment information) by a bank or similar institution or insurance carrier that is regulated, supervised, and subject to periodic examination by a state or federal agency, provided that the statements or information regarding assets so held are prepared and certified to by the bank or similar institution or insurance carrier in accordance with 29 CFR 2520.103-5 of the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA (a qualified institution).

Management has obtained a certification from a qualified institution as of and for the year ended December 31, 2021, stating that the certified investment information, as described in Note 3 to the financial statements, is complete and accurate.

## *Opinion*

In our opinion, based on our audit and on the procedures performed as described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section:

- The amounts and disclosures in the financial statements referred to above, other than those agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.
- The information in the financial statements referred to above related to assets held by and certified to by a qualified institution agrees to, or is derived from, in all material respects, the information prepared and certified by an institution that management determined meets the requirements of ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C).



PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP is a member firm of the PKF International Limited network of legally independent firms and does not accept any responsibility or liability for the actions or inactions on the part of any other individual member firm or firms.

***Basis for Opinion***

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Plan and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit opinion.

***Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. Management's election of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit does not affect management's responsibility for the financial statements.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date the financial statements are available to be issued.

Management is also responsible for maintaining a current Plan instrument, including all Plan amendments; administering the Plan; and determining that the Plan's transactions that are presented and disclosed in the financial statements are in conformity with the Plan's provisions, including maintaining sufficient records with respect to each of the participants, to determine the benefits due or which may become due to such participants.

***Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***

Except as described in the Scope and Nature of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) Audit section of our report, our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Plan's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

Our audit did not extend to the certified investment information, except for obtaining and reading the certification, comparing the certified investment information with the related information presented and disclosed in the financial statements, and reading the disclosures relating to the certified investment information to assess whether they are in accordance with the presentation and disclosure requirements of accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Accordingly, the objective of an ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit is not to express an opinion about whether the financial statements as a whole are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

***Supplemental Schedules Required by ERISA***

The supplemental schedules of: (1) Schedule H, Part IV, Line 4a – Schedule of Delinquent Contributions for the year ended December 31, 2021 and (2) Schedule H, Part IV, Line 4i – Schedule of Assets (Held at End of Year) as of December 31, 2021 are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements but are supplementary information required by the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information included in the supplemental schedules, other than that agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, have been subjected to auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. For information included in the supplemental schedules that agreed to or is derived from the certified investment information, we compared such information to the related certified investment information.

In forming our opinion on the supplemental schedules, we evaluated whether the supplemental schedules, other than the information agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, including their form and content, are presented in conformity with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.

In our opinion:

- The form and content of the supplemental schedules, other than the information in the supplemental schedules that agreed to or is derived from the certified investment information, is presented, in all material respects, in conformity with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.
- The information in the supplemental schedules related to assets held by and certified to by a qualified institution agrees to or is derived from, in all material respects, the information prepared and certified by an institution that management determined meets the requirements of ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C).

PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP

January 24, 2024

PKF O'CONNOR DAVIES
ACCOUNTANTS AND ADVISORS
ESTABLISHED IN 1891

# Independent Auditors' Report

**The Plan Administrator**
**Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan**

We were engaged to audit the accompanying statement of net assets available for benefits of the Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan (the "Plan") as of December 31, 2020, and the related notes to the financial statement.

## *Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statement*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of this financial statement in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of a financial statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

## *Auditors' Responsibility*

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the 2020 financial statements based on conducting the audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Because of the matter described in the Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion paragraph, however, we were not able to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to provide a basis for an audit opinion.

## *Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion*

As permitted by 29 CFR 2520.103-8 of the Department of Labor's ("DOL") Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 ("ERISA"), the plan administrator instructed us not to perform, and we did not perform, any auditing procedures with respect to the information summarized in Note 3, which was certified by Principal Trust Company, the trustee of the Plan, except for comparing such information with the related information included in the financial statement. We have been informed by the plan administrator that the trustee holds the Plan's investment assets and executes investment transactions. The plan administrator has obtained a certification from the trustee as of December 31, 2020, that the information provided to the plan administrator by the trustee is complete and accurate.

## *Disclaimer of Opinion*

Because of the significance of the matter described in the Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion paragraph, we have not been able to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to provide a basis for an audit opinion on the 2020 financial statement. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the 2020 financial statement.



PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP is a member firm of the PKF International Limited network of legally independent firms and does not accept any responsibility or liability for the actions or inactions on the part of any other individual member firm or firms.

***Report on Form and Content in Compliance With DOL Rules and Regulations for 2020 Financial Statement***

The form and content of the information included in the 2020 financial statement, other than that derived from the information certified by the trustee, have been audited by us in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and, in our opinion, are presented in compliance with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974.

PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP

January 24, 2024

**Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan**

Statements of Net Assets Available for Benefits

| | December 31, | |
|---|---|---|
| | 2021 | 2020 |
| **ASSETS** | | |
| Investments, at Fair Value | | |
| Mutual funds | $ 15,291,533 | $ 11,826,970 |
| Total Investments | 15,291,533 | 11,826,970 |
| Receivables | | |
| Employee contributions | - | 19,603 |
| Employer contributions | - | 10,687 |
| Other receivable | 475,610 | 412,516 |
| Notes receivable from participants | 292,092 | 174,256 |
| Total Receivables | 767,702 | 617,062 |
| Total Assets | 16,059,235 | 12,444,032 |
| **LIABILITIES** | | |
| Excess contributions | 253,559 | 207,679 |
| Net Assets Available for Benefits | $ 15,805,676 | $ 12,236,353 |

See notes to financial statements

**Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan**

Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Benefits
Year Ended December 31, 2021

| | |
|---|---|
| **ADDITIONS** | |
| Contributions | |
| Participants | $ 2,077,148 |
| Employer | 865,602 |
| Rollover | 271,055 |
| Total Contributions | 3,213,805 |
| Investment Income | |
| Net appreciation in fair value of investments | 1,645,143 |
| Interest and dividends | 307,624 |
| Total Investment Income | 1,952,767 |
| Interest on notes receivable from participants | 11,144 |
| Total Additions | 5,177,716 |
| **DEDUCTIONS** | |
| Benefits paid to participants | 1,551,931 |
| Corrective distributions | 45,880 |
| Administrative expenses | 10,582 |
| Total Deductions | 1,608,393 |
| Net Increase | 3,569,323 |
| **NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS** | |
| Beginning of year | 12,236,353 |
| End of year | $ 15,805,676 |

See notes to financial statements

## 1. Description of Plan

The following description of the Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan (the "Plan") provides only general information. Participants should refer to the plan agreement for a more complete description of the Plan's provisions.

### *General*

The Plan is a defined contribution plan covering substantially all employees of Ascend Learning, Inc. (the "Organization"). Principal Trust Company ("Principal") serves as the trustee of the Plan. The following are adopting employers of the Plan, Brooklyn Ascend Charter School, Brownsville Ascend Charter School and Bushwick Ascend Charter School.

### *Eligibility*

Eligible Employees (as defined by the Plan) are able to participate in the Plan immediately upon their date of hire for purposes of making elective deferral contributions. Eligible employees (as defined by the Plan) are able to receive employer matching contributions upon completion of one year of service and attainment of age 21.

### *Contributions*

Each year, participants may contribute a portion of their annual compensation on a pre-tax or after-tax (Roth) basis, as defined in the Plan. Participants who have attained age 50 before the end of the plan year are eligible to make catch-up contributions. Transfers from qualified plans (rollover contributions) are also permitted. Participants direct the investment of their contributions into various investment options offered by the Plan. There is an annual dollar limit as to the amount that can be deducted from compensation that is determined by the Internal Revenue Code ("IRC").

Effective through July 12, 2018, the Organization contributed a matching contribution to an eligible participant's account equal to 100% of the contribution made by the participant based on years of service in accordance with the following schedule:

| Years of Service | Matching Percentage |
|---|---|
| Less than 1 year | 0% |
| 1 year or more but less than 3 years | 2% |
| 3 years or more but less than 5 years | 3% |
| 5 years or more | 4% |

## 1. Description of Plan *(continued)*

### *Contributions (continued)*

As of July 13, 2018, the Organization contributes a matching contribution to an eligible participant's account equal to 100% of the contribution made by the participant based on years of service in accordance with the following schedule:

| Years of Service | Matching Percentage |
|---|---|
| Less than 1 year | 1% |
| 1 year of more but less than 3 years | 2% |
| 3 years or more but less than 5 years | 3% |
| 5 years or more | 5% |

### *Participant Accounts*

Each participant's account is credited with the participant's contribution and allocations of (a) the Organization's matching contributions, and (b) Plan earnings. Allocations are based on participant earnings or account balances, as defined. The benefit to which a participant is entitled is the benefit that can be provided from the participant's vested account. All investments are participant directed.

### *Vesting*

A participant is 100% vested in their contributions immediately. The Organization's matching contributions are subject to the following vesting schedule:

| Years of Service | Vesting Percentage |
|---|---|
| Less than 1 | 0% |
| 1 | 20% |
| 2 | 60% |
| 3 or more | 100% |

### *Forfeitures*

At December 31, 2021 and 2020, forfeited non-vested accounts totaled $23,907 and $12,849. In 2021, none of the forfeitures were used to offset Employer contributions or pay administrative expenses.

### *Notes Receivable from Participants*

Participants may borrow from their fund accounts up to a maximum of $50,000 or 50% of their vested account balance, whichever is less. The minimum amount of any loan is $1,000. The loans are secured by the balance in the participant's account and bear a reasonable rate of interest at the time funds are borrowed. Principal and interest are paid ratably through payroll deductions. Participants may only have one loan outstanding at a time, which must be repaid within five years. The number of loans approved for any participant in a 12 month period shall be limited to two loans.

## 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### *Payment of Benefits*

Participants are eligible to receive benefit payments when they terminate service or reach age 59 1/2, a participant is entitled to receive a distribution in the amount up to the value of the participant's vested interest in his or her account. The Plan also provides for hardship withdrawals subject to the approval of the plan administrator.

### *Expenses*

Certain expenses related to maintaining the Plan are paid by the Organization and are excluded from these financial statements. Any expenses not paid by the Organization are paid by the Plan. Investment related expenses are included in net appreciation in fair value of investments.

### *Compliance Testing Correction*

The nondiscrimination testing for the Plan was completed in a subsequent year. The Plan initially failed the required testing and is using the one-to-one method for correcting the failed tests. This method requires the Organization to refund amounts to the highly compensated employees and contribute a similar amount to the Plan to be allocated to the non-highly compensated. These amounts are shown on the statements of net assets available for benefits as the other receivable and excess contributions and on the statement of changes in net assets as corrective distributions.

### *Basis of Accounting and Use of Estimates*

The accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (“U.S. GAAP”), which requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, and changes therein, and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

### *Fair Value Measurements*

The Plan follows U.S. GAAP guidance on *Fair Value Measurements* which defines fair value and establishes a fair value hierarchy organized into three levels based upon the input assumptions used in pricing assets. Level 1 inputs have the highest reliability and are related to assets with unadjusted quoted prices in active markets. Level 2 inputs relate to assets with other than quoted prices in active markets which may include quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities or other inputs which can be corroborated by observable market data. Level 3 inputs are unobservable and are used to the extent that observable inputs do not exist. At December 31, 2021 and 2020, all of the Plan's investments were valued using level 1 inputs.

### *Investment Valuation and Income Recognition*

The Plan’s investments are stated at fair value. Mutual funds held by the Plan are valued at fair value based on the daily closing price as reported by the funds. All of the mutual funds are open-ended and are registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. These mutual funds are required to publish their daily NAV and to transact at that price.

## 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies *(continued)*

### *Investment Valuation and Income Recognition (continued)*

Purchases and sales of securities are recorded on a trade-date basis. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Dividends are recorded on the ex-dividend date. Net appreciation in fair value of investments includes the Plan's gains and losses on investments bought and sold as well as held during the year.

### *Notes Receivable from Participants*

Notes receivable from participants are measured at their unpaid principal balance plus any accrued but unpaid interest. If a participant ceases to make loan repayments and the plan administrator deems the participant loan to be in default, the participant loan balance is reduced and a benefit payment is recorded.

### *Payment of Benefits*

Benefits are recorded when paid.

### *Subsequent Events Evaluation by Management*

Management has evaluated subsequent events for disclosure and/or recognition in the financial statements through the date that the financial statements were available to be issued, which date is January 24, 2024.

## 3. Information Certified (Unaudited)

Certain information related to investments and notes receivable from participants disclosed in the accompanying financial statements and ERISA-required Schedule H, Part IV, Line 4i – Schedule of Assets (Held at End of Year) including investments and notes receivable from participants held at December 31, 2021 and 2020, and net appreciation in value of investments, interest and dividends, and interest on notes receivable from participants for the year ended December 31, 2021, was obtained by management and agreed to or derived from information certified as complete and accurate by Principal Trust Company, a qualified institution.

## 4. Plan Termination

Although it has not expressed any intent to do so, the Organization has the right under the Plan to discontinue its contributions at any time and to terminate the Plan subject to the provisions of ERISA. In the event that the Plan is terminated, participants would become 100% vested in their Company matching contributions.

## 5. Tax Status

The Organization has adopted a plan document restated effective July 1, 2011 which is intended to satisfy the Internal Revenue Service's final 403(b) regulations. The Plan has since been amended, however, the Organization believes that the Plan, as amended, is designed and currently being operated in accordance with applicable sections of the IRC.

U.S. GAAP requires plan management to evaluate tax positions taken by the Plan and recognize a tax liability if the Plan has taken an uncertain position that more likely than not would not be sustained upon examination by the IRS. The Plan is subject to routine examinations by taxing jurisdictions; however, there are currently no examinations for any tax periods in progress.

## 6. Party-in-Interest Transactions

Participants who are active employees may borrow from their accounts and such loans qualify as exempt party-in-interest transactions under ERISA. These loans are recorded as notes receivable from participants in the statements of net assets available for benefits.

Certain administrative functions are performed by employees of the Organization. No such employees receive compensation from the Plan.

## 7. Non-Exempt Party-in-Interest Transactions

During 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015 and 2014, the Employer failed to transmit to the Plan participant's contributions in the amount of $249,715, $477,405, $451,729, $133,255, $184,681, $229,501 and $208,733 within the period prescribed by Department of Labor regulations. The total of these amounts is reported on the supplemental Schedule of Delinquent Participant Contributions in the amount of $1,935,019. Delays in remitting amounts to the Plan were due to an administrative oversight. The Employer is in the process of making the necessary corrections to satisfy both the Department of Labor and IRS guidance for this matter.

## 8. Risks and Uncertainties

The Plan invests in various investment securities. Investment securities are exposed to various risks such as interest rate, market, and credit risks. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the values of investment securities will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect participants' account balances and the amounts reported in the statements of net assets available for benefits.

Global and domestic economic uncertainty has resulted in significant volatility in financial markets. This volatility has affected, and may continue to affect, the value of the Plan's net assets available for benefits, The effects of economic and market conditions subsequent to December 31, 2021 are not reflected in these financial statements.

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# Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan

Supplemental Schedules

December 31, 2021

**Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan**

Schedule Pursuant to Department of Labor Requirements
Year Ended December 31, 2021

Schedule H, Part IV, Line 4a - Schedule of Delinquent Participant Contributions

EIN #: 33-1200239
Plan #: 001

| | Total that Constitute Nonexempt Prohibited Transactions | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Participant Contributions Transferred Late to Plan | Contributions Not Corrected | Contributions Corrected Outside VFCP | Contributions Pending Correction in VFCP | Total Fully Corrected Under VFCP and PTE 2002-51 |
| $ 1,935,019 | $ - | $ - | $ 1,935,019 | $ - |

Check here if late participant loan repayments are included: X

**Ascend Learning, Inc. 403(b) Plan**

Schedule Pursuant to Department of Labor Requirements
December 31, 2021

Schedule H, Part IV, Line 4i - Schedule of Assets (Held at End of Year)

EIN #: 33-1200239
Plan #: 001

| (a) | (b) Identity of Issue, Borrower, Lessor or Similar Party | (c) Description of Investment Including Maturity Date, Rate of Interest, Collateral Par, or Maturity Value | (e) Current Value |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **MUTUAL FUNDS** | **SHARES** | |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2045 Fund R-3 Class | 136,682 | $ 2,073,470 |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2040 Fund R-3 Class | 77,680 | 1,362,500 |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2050 Fund R-3 Class | 147,670 | 2,714,177 |
| * | Principal Equity Income Fund R-3 Class | 10,245 | 419,923 |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2055 Fund R-3 Class | 176,889 | 2,973,509 |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2020 Fund R-3 Class | 23,000 | 328,433 |
| * | Principal LargeCap S&P 500 Index Fund R-3 Class | 35,379 | 861,119 |
| * | Principal Real Estate Securities Fund R-3 Class | 6,096 | 206,528 |
| * | Principal Global Emerging Markets Fund R-3 Class | 8,590 | 247,662 |
| * | Principal Short-Term Income Fund R-3 Class | 19,670 | 239,969 |
| * | Principal MidCap S&P 400 Index Fund R-3 Class | 6,596 | 164,954 |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2065 Fund R-3 Class | 6,589 | 96,602 |
| * | Principal International Fund I R-3 Class | 7,865 | 128,431 |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2025 Fund R-3 Class | 44,924 | 555,258 |
| * | Principal Core Plus Bond Fund Class A | 10,641 | 114,285 |
| * | Principal Core Fixed Income Fund R-3 Class | 46,161 | 458,844 |
| * | Principal SmallCap S&P 600 Index Fund R-3 Class | 7,820 | 249,613 |
| * | Principal Capital Appreciation Fund R-3 Class | 2,334 | 150,487 |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2030 Fund R-3 Class | 21,897 | 352,320 |
| * | Principal MidCap Value Fund I R-3 Class | 2,779 | 48,070 |
| * | Principal SmallCap Value Fund II R-3 Class | 7,336 | 89,421 |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2035 Fund R-3 Class | 19,123 | 266,568 |
| * | Principal International Equity Index Fund R-3 Class | 9,814 | 113,062 |
| * | Principal LifeTime Strategic Income Fund R-3 Class | 1,331 | 16,146 |
| * | Principal LifeTime 2010 Fund R-3 Class | 671 | 8,673 |
| * | Principal Bond Market Index R3 Fund | 1,950 | 18,737 |
| * | Prinincipal Lifetime 2060 Fund I R-3 Class | 49,162 | 898,192 |
| * | Principal MidCap Growth III R3 Fund | 10,886 | 134,545 |
| * | Principal Lifetime 2015 Fund R-3 Class | 4 | 35 |
| | Total Investments | | 15,291,533 |
| * | **NOTES RECEIVABLE FROM PARTICIPANTS** | Interest rates range from 5.25% to 7.50% with maturities through 2026 | 292,092 |
| | Total Assets (Held at End of Year) | | $ 15,583,625 |

* - Denotes a party-in-interest as defined by ERISA

See independent auditors' report