

State of New Jersey  
Department of Education  
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**Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton**

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New Jersey K to 12 Education

Collaborative Monitoring Report  
February 2026

**District:** Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton  
**County:** Passaic  
**Dates Monitored:** December 2, 3, 4 and 5, 2025  
**Case Number:** CM-02-26

**Funding Sources:**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Funding Award</b>
Title I, Part A	53,793
Title I SIA	0
Title II, Part A	6,585
Title III	0
Title III Immigrant	0
Title IV, Part A	10,000
IDEA Part B, Basic and Preschool	35,147
Perkins V	0
<b>Total Funds</b>	<hr/> 105,525 <hr/>

Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton  
Collaborative Monitoring Report  
February 2026

## **Background**

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The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and other Federal education laws require local education agencies (LEAs - school districts and charter schools) to provide programs and services to schools within their local jurisdiction. The provision of these programs and services is based on the pertinent authorizing statutes specified in each of the Federal education laws.

The laws further require that state education agencies, in this case, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to monitor the implementation and execution of Federal programs by the subrecipients. The monitors thereby determine whether the funds are being properly used by the charter school for their intended purposes and achieving the overall objectives of the funding initiatives.

## **Introduction**

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The NJDOE visited the Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton (CACSC or charter school) virtually, except where noted, to monitor the charter school's use of Federal funds. The NJDOE also examined related program plans, as applicable, to determine whether the charter school's programs are meeting the intended purposes and objectives, as specified in the current year's applications and authorizing statutes.

The goal of the monitoring is to determine whether the funds were spent in accordance with the requirements of each program, Federal and state laws, and applicable regulations. The monitoring of CACSC included staff interviews, as well as the review of documents and records related to the requirements of these programs:

- Title I, Part A (Title I);
- Title II, Part A (Title II-A);
- Title IV, Part A (Title IV-A); and
- IDEA Part B - Basic and Preschool.

The scope of work performed included the review of records and documentation such as:

- accounting records
- annual audits
- board of education (board) meeting minutes
- grant applications program plans and needs assessments
- grant awards
- payroll records
- purchase orders

The scope of work also included interviews with appropriate charter school staff regarding the administration of the aforementioned programs/grants.

Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton  
Collaborative Monitoring Report  
February 2026

## **Expenditures Reviewed**

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The grants and programs reviewed included Title I, Title II-A, Title IV-A, and IDEA Basic and Preschool from July 1, 2025 through December 3, 2025. A sampling of purchase orders and/or salaries and wages was selected from each program and reviewed for examination.

## **General Overview of Used of Federal Funds**

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### **Title I, Part A Projects**

The purpose of Title I is to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps.

CACSC is a grades 6–8 school charter school and operates a targeted assistance program in its Title I funded school. The charter school utilizes its FY 2026 Title I funds primarily to cover the salaries and benefits of teachers and paraprofessionals, as well as to purchase instructional supplies for academic programs.

### **Title II-A Projects**

The purpose of Title II-A is to:

1. increase student achievement consistent with the challenging State academic standards;
2. improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals and other school leaders;
3. increase the number of teachers, principals and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools; and
4. provide low-income and minority students greater access to effective teachers, principals and other school leaders.

In FY 2026, CACSC has outlined plans in its ESEA application to use Title II-A funds to provide high-quality, personalized professional development for staff. The charter school's professional learning program includes in-district training sessions, presentations by expert speakers and consultants, and out-of-district professional development for delivery using a train-the-trainer model. Additional opportunities include book studies, professional learning communities and individualized learning aligned to educator interests and the needs of students and classrooms.

### **Title IV-A Projects**

The purpose of Title IV-A is to improve students' academic achievement by increasing the capacity of LEAs to:

1. provide all students with access to a well-rounded education;

Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton  
Collaborative Monitoring Report  
February 2026

2. improve school conditions for student learning; and
3. improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.

The charter school has used its FY 2026 Title IV-A funds to acquire the LinkIt! assessment platform to analyze growth and benchmarking data for students in grades 6–8, enabling data-driven instruction and more targeted academic supports.

## **IDEA**

The purpose of the IDEA Grant is to provide Federal entitlement funds to assist with the excess cost of providing special education and related services to students with disabilities. FY 2026 IDEA Basic funds are being utilized to support the salaries of staff who provide services to students with disabilities, as well as for the purchase of contracted services and supplies necessary to meet the needs of these students.

## **Detailed Findings and Recommendations**

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The Detailed Findings and Recommendations are disaggregated into the following sections:

1. Multiple Grants Section – findings necessitating correction, or the reversal of charges due to the lack of adequate supporting documentation, for multiple grants.
2. Grant Specific Programmatic and Fiscal Section – findings directly attributable to the Federal awards covered during the monitoring. The programmatic findings precede the fiscal findings unless otherwise denoted by an asterisk (\*).
3. Administrative Section – crosscutting administrative findings may be found in this section.

### **Multiple Grants Section**

There are no findings which warrant mention in this section.

### **Grant Specific Programmatic and Fiscal Section**

#### **Title I**

The review of the charter school’s 2025-2026 Title I programs yielded the programmatic finding below, a recommendation and no fiscal findings.

#### **Finding 1:**

The charter school provided evidence of a Title I LEA/school-level parent and family engagement policy; however, the policy is outdated and references an incorrect citation (ESEA §1118) for parent and family engagement.

Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton  
Collaborative Monitoring Report  
February 2026

**Citation(s):**

ESEA §1116(a)(2) Parent and Family Engagement: Local Education Agency (Written Policy) and ESEA §1116(b) Parent and Family Engagement: School Parent and Family Engagement Policy

**Required Action(s):**

The charter school must have a written LEA/school-level parent and family engagement policy developed with parental input, evaluated regularly, and reflective of all applicable ESEA citations. As part of the submission of its corrective action plan (CAP), the charter school must submit a copy of an updated board-approved LEA/school-level parent and family engagement policy. In addition, the charter school must submit evidence of engaging parents in the development and review of this policy (e.g., meeting agenda, sign-in sheets, meeting minutes). The charter school must also ensure a copy of the updated policy is accessible to all parents and families on the LEA's website and is also provided in language(s) that are understandable to parents and families

**Programmatic Recommendation(s):**

The charter school provided evidence that its parent and family engagement documents are translated into languages that the parents and families of students of Multilingual Learners (MLs) can understand. However, the translated documents are not currently available on the LEA's website, where they would be easily accessible, as required under ESEA §1116(f). The NJDOE recommends the charter school post translated versions of all Title I parent and family engagement documents on its website to ensure parents and families of MLs can readily access this information.

**Note:** The term multilingual learner is synonymous with "English learner" or "English language learner." Sources which are cited from the United States Department of Education may still reference the use of the term English learner or EL. The NJDOE recognizes that multilingual learners may enter New Jersey's schools with a level of proficiency in a world language other than English. The NJDOE will use "Multilingual Learner" and "ML," respectively, to shift to asset-based language and honor a student's primary language.

**Title II-A**

The review of the charter school's 2025-2026 Title II-A programs yielded no programmatic or fiscal findings.

**Title IV-A**

The review of the charter school's 2025-2026 Title IV-A programs yielded no programmatic or fiscal findings.

Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton  
Collaborative Monitoring Report  
February 2026

## IDEA

The review of the charter school's 2025-2026 IDEA programs yielded no programmatic or fiscal findings.

### Administrative Section

#### Finding 1:

The charter school submitted board policies for examination which address certain Uniform Grant Guidance provisions. Some of the policies lacked mention of Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG) citations (e.g., the charter school's policy on suspension and debarment) or pertinent requirements. For example, the aforementioned policy—

- does not state that the requirement of vetting vendors for suspension and debarment applies to contracts or purchase orders exceeding \$25,000, unless the charter school elects to use a lower threshold; and
- incorrectly references the outdated Excluded Parties List System for screening potential vendors instead of the System for Award Management available at [Home | SAM.gov](#).

In addition, the conflict of interest policy does not require the written disclosure of any potential conflict of interest to the Federal awarding agency or to NJDOE.

Moreover, the charter school did not provide the following board policies and/or written procedures:

- A board policy requiring the charter school to promptly disclose in writing to the Federal awarding agency or NJDOE whenever it has credible evidence of the commission of a violation of Federal criminal law involving fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, or gratuity violations in connection with the Federal award (including any activities or subaward thereunder).
- Written cost allowability procedures necessary to implement the charter school's cost allowability policy. To be compliant, such procedures cannot simply reiterate the Federal requirements or policies or goals.

Rather, the procedures should be robust and clearly identify roles and responsibilities. They should also provide a series of steps to be followed for determining the allowability of costs in accordance with Federal cost principles and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. Steps that—

- offer a detailed description of activities;

Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton  
Collaborative Monitoring Report  
February 2026

- describe the process used throughout the entire grant life cycle, including the proper submission of applications and amendments in accordance with department instructions; and
- serve as guide and training tool for employees.

**Citation(s):**

Uniform Grant Guidance, 2 C.F.R. §200.112 Conflict of interest, §200.113 Mandatory disclosures, §200.214 Suspension and debarment and §200.302(b)(6)-(7) Financial management

**Required Action(s):**

The charter school must develop, revise, adopt and implement board policies and written procedures which address the requirements of the Uniform Grant Guidance, and include relevant citations and references to current legislation, where appropriate. The charter school may opt to utilize a vendor for the preparation and revision of the requisite board policies and procedures.

**Advisory Notice**

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**Preventing Improper Use of Taxpayer Funds**

Pursuant to ESEA §9203(1), each recipient of a grant or subgrant under ESEA must display, in a public place, the hotline contact information of the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Education (USDEOIG) so that any individual who observes, detects, or suspects improper use of taxpayer funds can easily report such improper use.

Federal guidance relating to the prevention of fraud is accessible from [USDEOIG Brochures](#); scroll past multiple tables to the Brochures, Flyers & Posters (Download Free) section. Use this link, [For K-12: Preventing Fraud and Corruption in Federal Education \(2021\)](#), to access a video training presentation.

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The NJDOE thanks you for your time and cooperation during the monitoring visit and looks forward to a successful resolution of every finding and implementation of all required actions and recommendations contained in this report.

If you have any questions, please contact me via phone at (609) 376-3608 or via email at [lisa.mccormick@doe.nj.gov](mailto:lisa.mccormick@doe.nj.gov).