

ASPEN GROUP, INC.
Form 10-K
May 24, 2012

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 10-K

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended: February 29, 2012

Or

TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the transition period from: _____ to _____

Aspen Group, Inc.
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware (State or Other Jurisdiction of Incorporation or Organization)	333-165685 (Commission File Number)	27-1933597 (I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)
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720 South Colorado Boulevard, Suite 1150N, Denver, CO 80246
(Address of Principal Executive Office) (Zip Code)

(646) 450-1843
(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act: None

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: Common Stock, \$0.001 par value

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.
 Yes No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the
Exchange Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was
required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No

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Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files).
Yes No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Accelerated filer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-accelerated filer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Smaller reporting company	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Act). Yes No

The aggregate market value of the voting and non-voting common equity held by non-affiliates computed by reference to the closing price as of the last business day of the registrant's most recently completed second fiscal quarter, August 31, 2011 was \$0. There was no sales price, asked or bid price on such date.

The number of shares outstanding of the registrant's common stock, as of May 23, 2012 was 35,400,188.

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PART I

Explanatory Note: As disclosed below, on March 13, 2012, Aspen Group, Inc. (the "Public Company") entered into a reverse merger transaction. In connection with the Reverse Merger (defined below), the Public Company changed its fiscal year end from the last day of February to December 31st. Because the acquisition occurred after the Public Company's fiscal year end, in accordance with the rules of the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC"), the Public Company is filing this Form 10-K to report the Public Company's fiscal year 2012 results. It is important to note that certain disclosure in this report is as of the filing date and the remaining discloses financial information as of February 29th. After this Form 10-K is filed, the Public Company will only file SEC reports on a December 31st calendar year basis. For further information on the Public Company, see the Form 8-K filed with the SEC on March 19, 2012 and the Form 8-K/A No. 1 filed with the SEC on May 7, 2012.

Item 1. Business.

On March 13, 2012, Aspen Group, Inc. f/k/a Elite Nutritional Brands, Inc., a Delaware Corporation entered into an Agreement and Plan of Merger and Reorganization (the "Merger Agreement") by and among the Public Company, Aspen University Inc., a privately-held Delaware corporation ("Aspen"), and Aspen Acquisition Sub., Inc. ("AcquisitionCo"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Public Company. The merger transaction contemplated under the Merger Agreement (the "Reverse Merger") closed on March 13, 2012, at which time AcquisitionCo was merged with and into Aspen, and Aspen, as the surviving corporation, became a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Public Company. Immediately following the closing of the Reverse Merger, the Public Company changed its business plan and operations to that of Aspen. The Reverse Merger was accounted for as a recapitalization of Aspen.

Changes to the Business. The Public Company intends to carry on the business of Aspen as its sole line of business. Upon closing of the Reverse Merger, we relocated our offices to the offices of Aspen.

Corporate History. The Public Company was incorporated on February 23, 2010 in Florida as a home improvement company intending to develop products and sell them on a wholesale basis to home improvement retailers. The Public Company was unable to execute its business plan. In June 2011, the Public Company changed its name to Elite Nutritional Brands, Inc. and terminated all operations. In February 2012, the Public Company reincorporated in Delaware under the name Aspen Group, Inc. It also effected a reverse stock split, and the officer and director of the Public Company prior to the Reverse Merger returned to the Public Company's treasury all but 2,000,000 of his personally-owned shares of common stock.

Aspen was incorporated on September 30, 2004 in Delaware. Its predecessor was a Delaware limited liability company organized in Delaware in 1999.

EGC Merger. In May 2011, Aspen entered into an Agreement and Plan of Merger and merged with Education Growth Corporation (the "EGC Merger") Aspen survived the merger. Education Growth Corporation ("EGC") was a start-up company controlled by Mr. Michael Mathews. Mr. Mathews became Aspen's Chief Executive Officer upon closing the EGC Merger. Mr. Patrick Spada, the founder of Aspen, remained as Chairman and by virtue of his ownership of Series C Preferred Stock ("Series C") retained control of Aspen.

Company Overview

Founded in 1987, Aspen's mission is to become an institution of choice for adult learners by offering cost-effective, comprehensive, and relevant online education. We are dedicated to helping our students exceed their personal and professional objectives in a socially conscious and economically sensible way. Aspen's mission in fact is to help students achieve their long-term goals of upward mobility and long-term economic success through providing superior

education, exerting financial prudence, and supporting our students' career advancement goals. Aspen is dedicated to providing the highest quality education experiences taught by top-tier professors - 67% of our adjunct professors hold doctorate degrees.

Because we believe higher education should be a catalyst to our students' long-term economic success, we exert financial prudence by offering affordable tuition that is one of the greatest values in online education. We have expanded our degree offerings broadly but the vision remains the same: to provide students with the best value in high quality education and to help them achieve their academic and career goals.

One of the key differences between Aspen and other publicly-traded, exclusively online, for-profit universities is that 88% of our full-time degree-seeking students as of March 31, 2012 were enrolled in a graduate degree program (master or doctorate degree program). As of March 31, 2012, 1,488 students were enrolled full-time at Aspen, with 1,313 students, or 88%, of Aspen's full-time, degree-seeking student body enrolled in master or doctoral degree programs. As of March 31, 2012, Aspen currently has 633 students enrolled in a part-time program. Aspen is committed to maintaining its focus on being a predominantly graduate school for the foreseeable future.

Today, Aspen offers certificate programs and associate, bachelor, master and doctoral degree programs in a broad range of areas, including business and organization management, education, nursing, information technology, and general studies. In terms of enrollments, our most popular schools are our school of business and our school of nursing. Specifically, our Master of Business Administration and Master of Science in Nursing represent the two largest degree programs among our full-time, degree-seeking student body as of March 31, 2012.

We are accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council ("DETC"), a "national accrediting agency" recognized by the U.S. Department of Education ("DOE"). Aspen first received DETC accreditation in 1993 and most recently received re-accreditation in January 2009. In February 2012, DETC informed Aspen that it had approved the change of ownership application related to the Reverse Merger, subject to customary conditions. Additionally, Aspen is authorized by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, a departmental division of the Colorado Department of Higher Education ("CDHE"), to operate in Colorado as a private university under the Degree Authorization Act. In January 2012, the CDHE informed Aspen that it would remain in good standing with CDHE after the Reverse Merger, provided Aspen retained its accreditation after the acquisition. In February 2012, Aspen informed CDHE regarding DETC's approval of the change in ownership and control related to the Reverse Merger. In February 2009, the DOE provisionally certified Aspen to participate in the federal student financial aid programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act ("Title IV"). Under such certification, Aspen is restricted to a limit of 500 student recipients for Title IV funding for the duration of this provisional certification. As of December 31, 2011, Aspen had 171 students that were participating in the Title IV programs. During the duration of Aspen's provisional certification, a total of 243 Aspen students have received Title IV aid. We applied timely for re-certification in June 2011, but the application remained pending at the time of the Reverse Merger. Aspen submitted a voluntary pre-acquisition review application to the DOE in connection with the Reverse Merger, but the DOE had not acted on that application at the time of the Reverse Merger. Consistent with the Higher Education Act, Aspen's certification to participate in Title IV programs terminated after closing of the Reverse Merger, and Aspen must apply to DOE to reestablish its eligibility and certification to participate in the Title IV programs. However, in order to avoid significant disruption in disbursements of Title IV funds, the DOE may temporarily and provisionally certify an institution that is seeking approval of a change in ownership, like Aspen, under certain circumstances while the DOE reviews the institution's application. On March 15, 2012 the DOE asked Aspen to notify it in writing whether Aspen would be able to provide to the DOE by March 28, 2012 a letter of credit in the amount of \$105,865, which is 10% of Aspen's Title IV receipts in 2011. Aspen provided the DOE the requested letter of credit by March 28, 2012.

Furthermore, DOE may impose additional or different terms and conditions in any final provisional program participation agreement that it may issue after it reviews Aspen's application for approval of the change in ownership and control, including growth restrictions or limitation on the number of students who may receive Title IV aid.

In 2008, Aspen received accreditation of its Master of Science in Nursing Program with the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (the "Nursing Commission"). Officially recognized by the DOE, the Nursing

Commission is a nongovernmental accrediting agency, which ensures the quality and integrity of education programs in preparing effective nurses. Aspen's Master of Science in Nursing program most recently underwent accreditation review by the Nursing Commission in March 2011. At that time, the program's accreditation was reaffirmed, with the accreditation term to expire December 30, 2021. The program is next scheduled for on-site evaluation by the Nursing Commission in Spring 2012. We currently offer a variety of nursing degrees including: RN-to-MSN Bridge Program (seven course program), Masters of Science in Nursing Education, and Masters of Science in Nursing Administration and Management. Students may apply to the RN-to-MSN bridge program if they hold an associate nursing degree. Students that complete our RN-to-MSN Bridge program matriculate into our Master of Nursing program, allowing them to bypass the Bachelor of Nursing program offered at other universities.

Aspen is a Global Charter Education Provider for the Project Management Institute (“PMI”) and a Registered Education Provider (R.E.P.) of the PMI. The PMI recognizes select Aspen Project Management Courses as Professional Development Units. These courses help prepare individuals to sit for the Project Management Professional (“PMP”) certification examination. PMP certification is the project management profession’s most recognized and respected certification credential. Project management professionals may take the PMI approved Aspen University courses to fulfill continuing education requirements for maintaining their PMP certification.

In connection with our Bachelor and Master degrees in Psychology of Addiction and Counseling, the National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (“NAADAC”) has approved Aspen as an “academic education provider.” NAADAC-approved education providers offer training and education for those who are seeking to become certified, and those who want to maintain their certification, as alcohol and drug counselors. In connection with the approval process, NAADAC reviews all educational training programs for content applicability to state and national certification standards.

In 2012, Aspen plans to add five new degree or certificate programs and one specialization. Aspen plans to seek DETC approval for the following:

Certificate in Internet Marketing;

Doctorate of Nursing Practice;

Bachelor of Science in Technology (with specialization in telecommunications and digitally integrated premise design);

Bachelor of Fine Arts;

Associate in Fine Arts; and

MBA Specialization in Internet Marketing.

Aspen also plans to seek DOE approval for the above programs in order to award Title IV aid to students participating in such programs. See “Regulation” beginning at page 11 of this report. These programs and certificates focus on Aspen’s strategic goal of increasing enrollments in business, nursing, and technology program areas.

Competitive Strengths - We believe that we have the following competitive strengths:

Exclusively Online Education - We have designed our courses and programs specifically for online delivery, and we recruit and train faculty exclusively for online instruction. We provide students the flexibility to study and interact at times that suit their schedules. We design our online sessions and materials to be interactive, dynamic and user friendly.

Debt Minimization - We are committed to offering among the lowest tuition rates in the sector, which to date has alleviated the need for a significant majority of our students to require debt financing to fund Aspen’s tuition requirements. In July 2011, we raised our course-by-course tuition rates to \$300/credit hour for all degree-seeking programs. However, we believe based on our competitors’ public information that our tuition rates remain significantly lower than our competitors. For example, University of Phoenix, Capella University and Grand Canyon University charge \$715, \$678, and \$550, respectively, per credit hour for their MBA program versus Aspen’s \$300 per credit hour.

Commitment to Academic Excellence - We are committed to continuously improving our academic programs and services, as evidenced by the level of attention and resources we apply to instruction and educational support. We are committed to achieving high course completion and graduation rates compared to competitive distance learning, for-profit schools. 67% of our adjunct faculty members hold a doctorate degree. One-on-one contact with our highly experienced faculty brings knowledge and great perspective to the learning experience. Faculty members are available by telephone and email to answer questions, discuss assignments and provide help and encouragement to our students. The new faculty service department will offer a continuing faculty development program (training and courses) as well as a centralized instructional design component. For example, the faculty service department will offer training on the new technology and tools that Aspen adopted in 2011. This training will enable Aspen's faculty to implement optimally the new technology and tools. The faculty service department will also include an instructional design department, which will centralize preparation of course materials.

Highly Scalable and Profitable Business Model - We believe our exclusively online education model, our relatively low student acquisition costs, and our variable faculty cost model will enable us to expand our operating margins. If we increase student enrollments we will be able to scale on a variable basis the number of adjunct faculty members after we reach certain enrollment metrics (not before). A single adjunct faculty member can work with as little as two students or as many as 25 over the course of an enrollment period.

"One Student at a Time" personal care - We are committed to providing our students with fast and personal individualized support. Every student is assigned an academic advisor who becomes an advocate for the student's success. Our one-on-one approach assures contact with faculty members when a student needs it and monitoring to keep them on course. Our administrative staff is readily available to answer any questions and works with a student from initial interest through the application process and enrollment, and most importantly while the student is pursuing a degree or studies. Based on Aspen's 2011 DETC Annual Report of student satisfaction survey results, calculated in accordance with applicable DETC policy, 95% - 98% of students on average expressed satisfaction with their recently completed course.

Admissions

In considering candidates for acceptance into any of our certificate or degree programs, we look for those who are serious about pursuing – or advancing in – a professional career, and who want to be both prepared and academically challenged in the process. We strive to maintain the highest standards of academic excellence, while maintaining a friendly learning environment designed for educational, personal and professional success. A desire to meet those standards is a prerequisite. Because our programs are designed for self-directed learners who know how to manage their time, successful students have a basic understanding of management principles and practices, as well as good writing and research skills. Admission to Aspen is based on thorough assessment of each applicant's potential to complete successfully the program. Additionally, we require students to complete an essay as part of their admission process – as we are looking for students not only with the potential to succeed but also with the motivation to succeed.

Industry Overview

The U.S. market for postsecondary education is a large, growing market. According to a 2011 publication by the National Center for Education Statistics ("NCES"), the number of postsecondary learners enrolled as of Fall 2009 in U.S. institutions that participate in Title IV programs was approximately 20 million (including both undergraduate and graduate students), up from 18.2 million in the Fall of 2007. We believe the growth in postsecondary enrollment is a result of a number of factors, including the significant and measurable personal income premium that is attributable to postsecondary education, and an increase in demand by employers for professional and skilled workers, partially offset in the near term by current economic conditions. According to the NCES, in 2009, the median earnings of young adults with a bachelor's degree was \$51,000 for men and \$40,100 for women compared to \$40,000 for men and

\$35,000 for women with an associate's degree and \$32,900 for men and \$25,000 for women with a high school diploma.

Eduventures, Inc., an education consulting and research firm, estimates that 20% of all postsecondary students will be in fully-online programs by 2014, with perhaps another 20% taking courses online. The estimated increase in students online increased 18% in 2010. We believe that the higher growth in demand for fully-online education is largely attributable to the flexibility and convenience of this instructional format, as well as the growing recognition of its educational efficacy.

Competition

There are more than 4,200 U.S. colleges and universities serving traditional college age students and adult students. Any reference to universities in this report also includes colleges. Competition is highly fragmented and varies by geography, program offerings, delivery method, ownership, quality level, and selectivity of admissions. No one institution has a significant share of the total postsecondary market. While we compete in a sense with traditional “brick and mortar” universities, our primary competitors are with online universities. Our online university competitors that are publicly traded include: Apollo Group, Inc. (Nasdaq: APOL), American Public Education, Inc. (Nasdaq: APEI), DeVry Inc. (NYSE: DV), Grand Canyon Education, Inc. (Nasdaq: LOPE), ITT Educational Services, Inc. (NYSE: ESI), Capella Education Company (Nasdaq: CPLA), Career Education Corporation (Nasdaq: CECO) and Bridgepoint Education, Inc. (NYSE: BPI). American Public Education, Inc. and Capella Education Company are wholly online while the others are not. Based upon public information, Apollo Group, which includes University of Phoenix, is the market leader with University of Phoenix having degree enrollments exceeding 373,000 students (based upon APOL’s Form 10-Q filed on January 5, 2012). As of March 31, 2012, Aspen had 2,121 students currently enrolled. These competitors have substantially more financial and other resources.

The primary mission of most accredited four-year universities is to serve generally full-time students and conduct research. Aspen acknowledges the differences in the educational needs between working and full-time students at “brick and mortar” schools and provides programs and services that allow our students to earn their degrees without major disruption to their personal and professional lives.

We also compete with public and private degree-granting regionally and nationally accredited universities. An increasing number of universities enroll working students in addition to the traditional 18 to 24 year-old students, and we expect that these universities will continue to modify their existing programs to serve working learners more effectively, including by offering more distance learning programs. We believe that the primary factors on which we compete are the following:

- active and relevant curriculum development that considers the needs of employers;
- the ability to provide flexible and convenient access to programs and classes;
- high-quality courses and services;
- comprehensive student support services;
- breadth of programs offered;
- the time necessary to earn a degree;
- qualified and experienced faculty;
- reputation of the institution and its programs;
- the variety of geographic locations of campuses;
- regulatory approvals;
- cost of the program;
- name recognition; and
- convenience.

Curricula

Certificates

Certificate in Information Technology with specializations in

- o Information Systems Management
 - o Java Development
 - o Object Oriented Application Development
 - o Smart Home Integration
- o Web Development

Certificate in Project Management

Associates Degrees

Associate of General Studies

Associate of Applied Science Early Childhood Education

Bachelors Degrees

Bachelor of General Studies

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Addiction Counseling

Bachelor of Science in Alternative Energy

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, (Completion Program)

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, (Completion Program)

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice with specializations in

- o Criminal Justice Administration
- o Major Crime Investigation Procedure
- o Major Crime Investigation Procedure, (Completion Program)

Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education

Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education, (Completion Program)

Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education with a specialization in

- o Infants and Toddlers
- o Infants and Toddlers, (Completion Program)
- o Preschool
- o Preschool, (Completion Program)

Bachelor of Science in Foodservice Operations and Restaurant Management

Bachelor of Science in Medical Managements

Masters

Master of Arts Psychology and Addiction Counseling

Master of Science in Criminal Justice

Master of Science in Criminal Justice with a specialization in

- o Forensic Sciences
- o Law Enforcement Management
- o Terrorism and Homeland Security

Master of Science in Information Management with a specialization in

- o Management
- o Project Management
- o Technologies

Master of Science in Information Systems with a specialization in

- o Enterprise Application Development
- o Web Development

Master of Science in Information Technology

Master of Science in Nursing with a specialization in

- o Administration and Management
- o Administration and Management, (RN to MSN Bridge Program)
- o Nursing Education
- o Nursing Education, (RN to MSN Bridge Program)

Master of Science in Physical Education and Sports Management

Master of Science in Technology and Innovation with a specialization in

- o Business Intelligence and Data Management
- o Electronic Security
- o Project Management
- o Systems Design
- o Technical Languages
- o Vendor and Change Control Management

Master in Business Administration

Master in Business Administration with specializations in

- o Entrepreneurship
- o Finance
- o Information Management
- o Pharmaceutical Marketing and Management
- o