

# CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT

Between

Audubon Center of the North Woods

and

Insert School Name – District #4XXX

WHEREAS, the primary purpose of the School is to provide an educational program for its students in order to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement; and

WHEREAS, the additional purpose(s) of the School's educational program is/are to:

- Increase learning opportunities for all pupils;
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- Measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes;
- Establish new forms of accountability for schools; and
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site; and

WHEREAS, the parties are authorized under Minnesota law to contract for the operation and oversight of a charter school, pursuant to Department of Education approval of Audubon Center of the North Woods' affidavit of intent to charter the School, dated \_\_\_\_\_, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, Audubon Center of the North Woods and School previously entered into a charter school contract which expires on June 30, \_\_\_\_\_; and

WHEREAS, Audubon Center of the North Woods has conducted the performance evaluation of the School (see Exhibit O), considered the reauthorization of the School and approved the issuance of a charter contract to the School.

NOW, THEREFORE, Audubon Center of the North Woods grants this Contract conferring certain rights, privileges, and obligations of a charter school and confirms the status of a charter school to the School. In addition, the parties agree that the granting of this Contract is subject to the following terms and conditions:

## **ARTICLE I**

### **DEFINITIONS**

Section 1.1. Certain Definitions. For purposes of this Contract, and in addition to the terms defined throughout this Contract, each of the following words or expressions, whenever initially capitalized, shall have the meaning set forth in this section:

- (a) "Applicable Law" means all state and federal law applicable to Minnesota charter schools and any regulations implemented pursuant thereto.
- (b) "Charter School Act" means the Minnesota Statutes Chapter 124E, as amended, and any rules adopted pursuant thereto.
- (c) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education.
- (d) "Contract" means this Charter School Contract between ACNW and the School.
- (e) "Department of Education" means the Minnesota Department of Education.
- (f) "ACNW" means Audubon Center of the North Woods.
- (g) "School" means [NAME OF SCHOOL] located at [INSERT ADDRESS] which is established as a charter school under this Contract pursuant to the Charter School Act. The name and location of the School will not be changed without the prior written consent of ACNW.
- (h) "School Board" means the Board of Directors of the School.
- (i) "Student" and "Pupil" are used interchangeably, and each means the Students/Pupils at the school.

Section 1.2. Captions. The captions and headings used in this Contract are for convenience only and shall not be used in construing the provisions of this Contract.

Section 1.3. Gender and Number. The use of any gender in this Contract shall be deemed to be or include the other genders, including neuter, and the use of the singular shall be deemed to include the plural (and vice versa) wherever applicable.

Section 1.4. Exhibits. All Exhibits to this Contract are incorporated into, and made part of, this Contract. This Contract has the following Exhibits:

- A. Minnesota Department of Education Approval
- B. Articles of Incorporation of the School
- C. Bylaws of the School
- D. Description of Educational Program
- E. Description of Additional Programs
- F. Implementation of Statutory Purposes

- G. Academic & Academic-Related Goals
- H. Environmental Education Goals
- I. Admissions Policies & Procedures
- J. Governance, Management, and Administration Plan
- K. Financial Management Plan
- L. Statement of Assurances Signed by All Board Members
- M. Charter School Closure Checklist & Plan
- N. Provisions for Service Provider
- O. Performance Evaluation of School
- P. On-Going Evaluation Criteria, Process, & Procedures
- Q. Range of Possible Interventions
- R. Financial Statement Template & Guide
- S. Performance Improvement Plan

## **ARTICLE II**

### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND ACNW**

Section 2.1. Voluntary Authorization. ACNW qualifies as an authorizer pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 124E.05 Subd. 1. In granting this Contract, ACNW voluntarily exercises powers given to ACNW pursuant to Applicable Law to authorize charter schools. Nothing in this Contract shall be deemed to be any waiver of ACNW's autonomy or powers.

Section 2.2. Independent Status of the School. The School is not and shall not be deemed to be a division or part of ACNW nor an agent of ACNW. The relationship between the School and ACNW is based solely on the applicable provisions of the Charter School Act and the terms of this Contract or other written contracts or written agreements between ACNW and the School. Except as otherwise provided in this Contract, ACNW shall have no authority or control over operational, administrative, or financial responsibility for the School.

Section 2.3. Financial Obligations Are Separate. Any contract, mortgage, loan or other instrument of indebtedness entered into by the School and a third party shall not in any way constitute an obligation, either general, special, or moral, of ACNW. The School will never pledge the full faith and credit of ACNW for the payment of any School contract, mortgage, loan or other instrument of indebtedness.

Any contract, mortgage, loan or other instrument of indebtedness entered into by ACNW and a third party shall not in any way constitute an obligation, either general, special, or moral, of the School. ACNW will never pledge the full faith and credit of the School for the payment of any ACNW contract, mortgage, loan or other instrument of indebtedness.

Section 2.4. No Authority To Obligate or Bind Other Party. The School has no authority whatsoever to enter into any contract or other agreement that would financially obligate ACNW, nor does the School have any authority whatsoever to make any representations to lenders or third parties, that ACNW in any way guarantees, is financially obligated, or is in any way responsible for any contract, mortgage, loan or other instrument of indebtedness entered into by the School.

ACNW has no authority whatsoever to enter into any contract or other agreement that would financially obligate the School, nor does ACNW have any authority whatsoever to make any representations to lenders or third parties, that the School in any way guarantees, is financially obligated, or is in any way responsible for any contract, mortgage, loan or other instrument of indebtedness entered into by ACNW.

Section 2.5. Limited Use of "ACNW" Name. The School may not use the name of ACNW or any assumed name, trademark, division or affiliation of ACNW in any of the School's promotional advertising, contracts, or other materials without ACNW prior written consent, except that the School may include the following statement in such materials, "[Name of School] is authorized by Audubon Center of the North Woods." Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 124E.07 Subd. 8(b) the School shall identify ACNW as its authorizer and provide contact information.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **ROLE OF ACNW**

Section 3.1. Oversight Responsibilities of ACNW. ACNW has the responsibility to oversee the School's academic, financial, operational, environmental education and student performance, including the School's compliance with this Contract and Applicable Law. ACNW shall monitor and evaluate School performance using various criteria, processes, and procedures set forth in general in Article VI and Exhibit P.

Section 3.2. Authorizer Fee. The School shall pay ACNW a fee for ACNW's execution of its oversight responsibilities. The fee shall be the maximum fee provided by the Charter School Act, except that if Minnesota law is amended to increase this fee, the School will pay the increased fee.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **PERMITTED ACTIVITIES OF THE SCHOOL & ASSUMPTION OF LIABILITY**

Section 4.1. Limitation on Actions. The School shall act exclusively as a charter school and shall not undertake any action inconsistent with its status as a charter school authorized to receive state and federal school aid funds and shall not undertake any action to jeopardize its 501(c)(3) status including observation of applicable conflict of interest requirements.

Section 4.2. Other Permitted Activities. The School shall have all powers, duties and responsibilities provided by law to a charter school. The School shall not engage in any otherwise lawful activities that are in derogation of the School's status as a public charter school or that would jeopardize the eligibility of the School for state and federal school aid funds. The School may exercise its powers, enter into agreements with other public schools, governmental units, businesses, community and nonprofit organizations, reasonably necessary to accomplish its obligations as a charter school under this Contract so long as such agreements are in compliance with applicable law. If the School elects to contract with

a charter management organization or comprehensive education service provider, the contract shall comply with the provisions of Exhibit N.

Section 4.3. Assumption of Liability. The School and the School Board may sue and be sued. The School and the School Board accept liability for all actions arising out of or are in any manner connected with the School's operations.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **LEGAL STATUS OF THE SCHOOL**

Section 5.1. Nonprofit Status. The School shall be organized and operated as a nonprofit corporation under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 317A, as amended. Notwithstanding any provision of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 317A, as amended, the School shall not take any action inconsistent with the Charter School Act or in derogation of the School's status as a public school.

Section 5.2. Articles of Incorporation. The school represents that The Articles of Incorporation of the School, set forth in Exhibit B, are accurate as of the date of this contract and have not been otherwise altered or amended.

Section 5.3. Bylaws. The school represents that the Bylaws of the School, as of the date of this contract, set forth in Exhibit C are accurate and have not been otherwise altered or amended. Bylaws shall be amended in accordance with procedures specified in the School's Bylaws. In order to ensure consistency with the Contract and Applicable Law, updated Bylaws (as amended) must be forwarded to ACNW within 20 days for review and approval as appropriate.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **OPERATING REQUIREMENTS**

Section 6.1. Governance Structure. The School shall be organized and administered under the direction of the School Board elected in accordance with the School's Bylaws and Applicable Law. The School Board shall decide and be responsible for policy matters related to the operation of the School, not otherwise specified by this Contract, including but not limited to budgeting, curriculum, personnel, and operating procedures, and shall comply with the governance, management and administration plan in Exhibit J.

Section 6.2. School Board Meetings. Meetings of the School's Board and its committees shall comply with the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13D.

Section 6.3. Exhibits. The School agrees to implement and adhere to all the representations and information contained in the exhibits, including without limitation, the Academic and Academic-Related goals identified in Exhibit G and Environmental Education goals identified in Exhibit H.

Section 6.4. Compliance with all Applicable Laws. The School shall comply with all Applicable Laws.

Section 6.5. Programs Offered by School.

(a) Educational Programs: In-School Time. The School provides the in-school time program summarized in Exhibit D. Except as may be otherwise limited by the Department of Education approval of the ACNW affidavit of intent to charter the school or expanded by Department of Education approval of any supplemental affidavit to expand the grades or programs offered by the School, the School may accept enrollment of students for the following in-school time programs:

- Early Learning
  - Preschool Instructional
  - Prekindergarten
- Grades [x] – [y] with a maximum total enrollment of XXX students.

(b) Additional Programs: Out-of-School-Time. Out-of-School-Time Programs include any programs operated before or after school hours, or on weekends, or during school calendar breaks, but does not include school clubs or athletics. The School provides, operates, is affiliated with, or sponsors the out-of-school-time programs identified and described in Exhibit E. The School does not provide, operate, affiliate, or sponsor out-of-school-time programs not otherwise identified and described in Exhibit E.

(c) School Clubs or Athletics. The School may operate school clubs and athletics at its discretion. The School will provide equal access to all programs, provide appropriate adult supervision for these activities and follow all applicable laws.

Section 6.6. Academic Curriculum Program. The School will implement and adopt curriculum consistent with the educational program information set forth in Exhibit D.

Section 6.7. Methods of Student Assessment. The School shall evaluate students' performance based on the assessment strategies identified in this Contract and in its annual report. The School will report on its academic performance in its Annual Report.

- (a) Academic Measures. ACNW will monitor student academic performance and the academic culture at the school.
1. Regular Assessments. ACNW will monitor academic achievement by reviewing student performance data.
  2. Government Required Assessments. School students will take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment tests and any other testing required by Applicable Law.
  3. Nationally Normed Referenced Assessments & School-Level Assessments. School students may take a nationally normed referenced assessment on at least an annual basis. In addition, School students will also take assessments

that are consistent with the education program articulated in Exhibit D, the statutory purposes articulated in Exhibit F and the school goals articulated in Exhibit G.

4. Assessment and Test Results. The School will provide ACNW results of government required assessments at such time as the School receives its preliminary assessment results and at such time as the School receives its final assessment results, and the School will provide ACNW the results of any other assessment data as requested by ACNW, but no more than quarterly. ACNW may compare the school's testing data to testing data of other comparable schools as determined by ACNW as one measure of performance. If the School wishes to change assessments that affect goals articulated in Exhibit G, those changes must be agreed upon by ACNW, and this Contract will be amended to reflect the change.
5. Audubon Center of the North Woods Annual Required Meetings. The School agrees to participate in ACNW Annual Required Meetings. ACNW will inform the School of the dates of such required meetings each year by no later than August 1. Costs to the School, if any, will be limited to transportation, meals and lodging. ACNW will monitor the School's participation in these required meetings.
6. Professional Development. The school will ensure that each teacher at the School has opportunities to engage in professional development activities that focus in part on developing quality assessments and measures of student outcomes. The School will advise ACNW of its professional development activities in its Annual Report.

(b) Site Visits. ACNW may engage in scheduled and unscheduled site visits in the course of the academic year. Site visits will be an opportunity to review academic goals and achievement data to date, review school performance on environmental education goals, evaluate the implementation of the academic and environmental education programs, and evaluate operations and other matters. ACNW may engage in scheduled and unscheduled site visits at such frequency as determined necessary or prudent by ACNW.

(c) Remediation

- 1) School Initiated. If the School fails to make adequate progress towards achieving its academic or environmental education outcomes/goals, financial targets, or comply with Applicable Law or other requirements, the School may at any time prepare and implement an improvement plan to overcome such deficiencies. The School may at any time submit the plan to ACNW for review and comment prior to adoption and implementation.
- 2) ACNW Initiated. If ACNW has a concern about the School, or if the School fails to make adequate progress towards achieving its academic or environmental education goals or to meet financial requirements, or to

comply with Applicable Law, or other requirements of this contract, ACNW shall determine the appropriate intervention. The intervention will be one of the following at the discretion of ACNW:

- (a) Notice to School Leader and/or Board Chair. ACNW may notify the school leader and/or board chair of area(s) of concern for correction. ACNW may specify a target date for correction.
- (b) Formal Notice to School Board. ACNW may formally notify the School Board of the area(s) of concern for correction and may ask the School Board to adopt a specific performance improvement plan. If ACNW requires the School to retain a third-party investigation, the School Board shall retain an investigator within ten (10) business days of such requirement; in addition, the third-party investigator must be acceptable to ACNW and the School Board shall authorize such investigator to provide status reports to and communicate with ACNW. ACNW shall specify a target date for correction which ACNW may, if circumstances warrant, amend.
- (c) Notice to School Board of Charter Revocation/Termination. ACNW may at its discretion initiate charter revocation and termination proceedings pursuant to Article X of this contract.

See Exhibit Q for “Range of Possible Interventions.”

Section 6.8. School Calendar and School Day Schedule. The School shall provide instruction for at least the number of days and hours required by Minnesota Statutes section 120A.41 and shall notify ACNW by each July 1 of the number of instructional days and hours for that school year.

Section 6.9. Finance, Reporting, and Compliance.

- (a) To ACNW. The school will furnish ACNW with monthly reports, through means determined by ACNW. The report must contain budgeted and actual revenue and expenses by year-to-date percentages, disbursements and deposits, and student enrollment report with enrollment expressed in terms of funding mechanisms (e.g. Pupil Units). At least quarterly (for quarters ending 9/30, 12/31, 3/31, and 6/30), through means determined by ACNW, the School will provide ACNW with a balance sheet, income statement that includes revenues and expenses by UFARS programs (see Exhibit R), up-to-date cash flow projections, and fiscal year-end fund balance projections. Should the School continually exceed its budgeted expenses with no corresponding increase in revenue, not report properly or timely to the Department of Education or ACNW, evidence any fiscal or legal non-compliance, the School will engage resources to resume budgeted performance and operate in compliance with all Applicable Law and generally accepted standards of fiscal management.

The School permits the School's contracted financial auditor and accounting service provider (if any) to discuss any and all financial matters regarding the School with ACNW or any representative of ACNW. ACNW will inform the School when it contacts the School's financial auditor or accounting service provider. ACNW will initiate contact with the School's financial auditor or accounting service provider only to fulfill its oversight responsibilities as determined by ACNW. ACNW will not discuss or attempt to discuss any data that is subject to the privacy and confidentiality provisions of federal and state statutes, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to FERPA and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA), Minnesota Statutes sections 13.01 et seq.

The School Board is responsible for establishing, approving, and amending an annual budget in accordance with Applicable Law.

By June 30 of each year, the School Board shall submit to ACNW a copy of its final approved budget for the following school year. The budget must include a detailed budget of the revenues and expenditures presented at the program and object code level consistent with Exhibit R. In addition, the School Board is responsible for approving all revisions and amendments to the annual budget. Within ten (10) business days after School Board approval, revisions or amendments to the School's budget shall be submitted to ACNW.

- (b) To Department of Education. The School will comply with all reporting requirements established by the Department of Education.
- (c) The School shall comply with the Financial Management Plan as contained in Exhibit K.

Section 6.10. Accounting Standards. The School shall at all times comply with generally accepted public sector accounting principles, generally accepted standards of fiscal management, and accounting system requirements that comply with Department of Education requirements.

Section 6.11. Annual Financial Statement Audit. The School shall engage an annual external audit of all financial and accounting records. The audit will be prepared and reviewed by an independent certified public accountant. The School will submit the finalized annual financial statement audit and auditor's management letters, including any required supplemental information to ACNW no later than December 31 for the preceding fiscal year. The School will comply with the same financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements of school districts, including Minnesota Statutes sections 123B.75 to 123B.83, except to the extent deviations are necessary because of the program of the School. Financial, program, or compliance audits may be conducted by the Department of Education, or the State Auditor, and/or the Legislative Auditor.

Section 6.12. UFARS and MARSS. The School will utilize the UFARS financial accounting principles and methods. The school will comply with MARSS requirements with respect to student accounting.

Section 6.13. Contributions and Fund Raising. The School may solicit and receive contributions and donations as permitted by law. The school shall have an approved policy regarding the acceptance and administration of such gifts. No solicitation shall indicate that a contribution to the School is for the benefit of ACNW. ACNW may review the feasibility of any fundraising/non-government grants or gifts not already received or subject to written pledge in its budget for operating expenses.

Section 6.14. Annual Reports. The School will submit its state required annual report for the immediately preceding school year ending June 30 to ACNW, post the annual report on the school's official website, and distribute the annual report by publication, mail, or electronic means to school employees and parents and legal guardians of students enrolled in the School no later than the deadline determined by ACNW. ACNW will inform the School of the deadline of the annual report each year no later than August 1; this deadline will be no earlier than October 1. The annual report shall be approved by the School Board prior to the submission to ACNW and will include such information as ACNW may require, including at a minimum, information required by Applicable Law and a report on the School's performance as it relates directly to the goals articulated in this contract in Exhibit G and Exhibit H.

Section 6.15. Authorization of Employment. An employee hired by the School shall be an employee of the School for all purposes and not an employee of ACNW for any purpose. With respect to School employees, the School shall have the power and responsibility to: (i) select and engage employees; (ii) pay their wages; (iii) dismiss employees; and (iv) control the employees' conduct, including the method by which the employee carries out his or her work. The School shall comply with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 179A as applicable. The School must employ or contract with teachers who hold valid licenses or any allowable waivers to perform the teaching service for which they are employed at the School.

The School Board shall be responsible for carrying workers' compensation insurance and unemployment insurance for its employees. The School shall employ and contract teachers who hold valid licenses or certifications, as required by Applicable Law. Teachers employed by the School shall be treated by the School as public school teachers for the purposes of Minnesota Statutes Chapters 354 and 354A.

Section 6.16. Collective Bargaining Agreements. Collective bargaining agreements, if any, with employees of the School shall be the responsibility of the School.

Section 6.17. Transportation. The School may provide transportation for students enrolled in the School and shall provide transportation for all students who are enrolled in the School and who reside in the district in which the School is located; otherwise, transportation will be provided by the district in which the School is located. In providing transportation either through the district or itself, the School shall do so in compliance with and provide any notices required by Applicable Law.

Section 6.18. Notification of Claim. The School agrees to provide notice to ACNW within five (5) business days of the School's receipt of any significant claim, including any allegation of illegality or impropriety by the School or its employees, and any adverse notice received from the Department of Education.

Section 6.19. Expenses. The School agrees to pay for all expenses related to its operation as a charter school, including expenses incurred for operational programs and all expenses related to the performance of its obligations under this Contract and Applicable Law.

Section 6.20. Board Data. The School agrees to notify ACNW, via an updated board roster, of any resignations or additions to its School Board within ten (10) business days of such change. All additions to the School Board will execute a statement of assurance, in the form of Exhibit L, within ten (10) business days of such addition, which shall be provided to ACNW within twenty (20) business days of such addition. The School agrees to obtain background checks, at the School's or the individual's expense, whichever is allowed by Applicable Law, on all potential board members before such members are added to the School Board; the School shall certify to ACNW within ten (10) business days of receipt of such background check that the background check has been completed and whether or not the background check contained adverse information. In addition, the School agrees to furnish ACNW with finalized minutes of the Board's meetings at such time as the minutes are approved by the School Board. The School further agrees to notify ACNW of the School Board regular meeting schedule when requested by ACNW. The School agrees to inform ACNW of any special and emergency meetings at the same time as notice is provided to board members and the public. The School further agrees to provide ACNW by October 1 of each year conflicts of interest statements for all board members and ex-officio board members in the form ACNW requires.

Section 6.21. Additional Reporting Obligations.

- a) Teacher Licensure. The School will advise ACNW, in its Annual Report and through submission of a STAR report if requested, each school year of the following for each teaching staff member: full name, Minnesota license number, grade taught, subject(s) taught.
- b) Other Reporting. The School will furnish other critical documents, data or information at ACNW's request. ACNW agrees that requests for other reporting will be reasonable and necessary.

Section 6.22. Cooperation and Third Parties. The School agrees to cooperate with and assist ACNW or its designee in providing the access, information, and data ACNW requires at ACNW's sole discretion in executing this Contract. The School understands and agrees that ACNW may contract with a third party to perform any of ACNW's oversight functions.

Section 6.23. Conflict of Interest and Assurances. The School agrees to comply with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes sections 124E.07 Subd. 3 and 124E.14 as well as the requirements of Exhibit L.

## ARTICLE VII

### GENERAL PROHIBITIONS

Section 7.1. Tuition Prohibited. The School shall not charge tuition. The School may impose fees and require payment of expenses for activities of the School where such fees and payments are not prohibited by Applicable Law, including Minnesota Statutes sections 123B.34 to 123B. 39.

Section 7.2. Establishment of Religion Prohibited. The School shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations.

Section 7.3. Home School Support Prohibited. The School shall not be used as a method of educating or generating revenue for students who are being home schooled.

Section 7.4. Open Admissions. The School is a public school open to all Minnesota students, notwithstanding admission limitations allowed by Minnesota Statutes section 124E.11. The School shall not limit admissions to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability or any other criteria inconsistent with Applicable Law. A student shall be considered enrolled in the School until the student formally withdraws or is expelled. The School will comply with its admission policies as provided in Exhibit I, which shall be consistent with all applicable laws.

Section 7.5. Lottery Admissions. The School shall enroll an eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the number of applicants exceeds the capacity of the programs, class, grade level, or building. In such cases, selection shall be by lottery except that the School shall provide enrollment preference to siblings of the School's enrolled students and to foster children of any of the School's enrolled student's parents. The School may provide enrollment preference for the children of the School's staff and to children currently enrolled in the School's free preschool or prekindergarten program who are eligible to enroll in kindergarten in the next school year.

## ARTICLE VIII

### COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS

Section 8.1. State Laws. The School shall comply with applicable state laws. Nothing in this Contract shall be deemed to apply any other state law to the School. Except as otherwise provided by the Charter School Act or this Contract, the School shall be exempt from all Minnesota Statutes and rules applicable to a school, school board, and school district unless the statute or rule is made specifically applicable to a charter school.

(a) Students with Disabilities.

1. Compliance. The School shall comply with Minnesota Statutes sections 125A.02, 125A.03 to 125A.24, and 125A.65, concerning the provision of education services to students with a disability at the School.

2. Special Education Director. The School shall employ or contract with a special education director who shall be responsible for program development, coordination and evaluation; planning for professional development and general programmatic and fiscal supervision and administration. The School permits the School's contracted special education director to discuss any and all matters related to special education at the School with ACNW or any representative of ACNW. ACNW will inform the School when it contacts the School's special education director. ACNW will initiate contact with the School's special education director only to fulfill its oversight responsibilities as determined by ACNW. ACNW will not discuss or attempt to discuss any data that is subject to the privacy and confidentiality provisions of federal and state statutes, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to FERPA and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA), Minnesota Statutes sections 13.01 et seq.
3. Systems & Services. The School shall implement, at a minimum:
  - a. A child-find system to identify students with disabilities and students who are suspected of having disabilities; such system will include a procedure for receiving referrals from parents, teachers, outside agencies, and physicians.
  - b. A system for conducting comprehensive initial and reevaluations to determine eligibility for special education and related services.
4. Financial Parameters. The School is entitled to access state special education funds for salaries, supplies/equipment, contracted services, and student transportation costs. The School is permitted to bill certain excess special education costs not paid by state special education fund to the student's resident district. The combination of state special education funds and the ability to bill to the district certain excess special education costs enable the School to adequately provide special education services to such children. The School may also access federal special education funds.

At such time as the School has determined the number of its students who have disabilities as defined in Minnesota Statutes sections 125A.02, 125A.03 to 125A.24, and 125A.65, the School shall provide special education instruction and services to such children.

- (b) Health and Safety. The School shall meet the same federal, state, and local health and safety requirements applicable to a school district.

- (c) Immunization. The School shall comply with the Minnesota Statutes section 121A.15, requiring proof of student immunization, or exemption consistent with Applicable Law, against measles, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, mumps, and hemophilia influenza type B prior to enrollment.
- (d) Human Rights Act. The School shall comply with the Minnesota Human Rights Act, Chapter 363A, which prohibits unfair discriminatory practices in employment, public accommodations, public services, or education; and comply with Minnesota Statutes section 121A.04, which governs provisions of equal opportunities for members of both sexes to participate in athletic programs.
- (e) Student Discipline and Dismissal. The School shall comply with the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act (MPFDA), Minnesota Statutes sections 121A.40 to 121A.575. The school board shall provide to ACNW its approved discipline policy and procedure consistent with MPFDA within 120 days of the effective date of this Contract. The School shall comply with the continuing truant notifications under Minnesota Statute section 260A.03.
- (f) Fee Law. The School shall comply with the Minnesota Public Schools Fee Law, Minnesota Statutes sections 123B.34 to 123B.39, which governs authorized and prohibited student fees.

Section 8.2. Federal Laws. The School shall comply with applicable federal laws. Nothing in this Contract shall be deemed to apply any other federal law to the School.

Section 8.3. Intellectual Property. The School has ascertained that its name and logo do not violate or infringe upon the intellectual property rights of any third party and has taken appropriate measures to secure the intellectual property rights with respect to its name and logo. The School gives ACNW the authority to use the School's name and logo on the ACNW website, newsletters, or other materials including public reports solely for the purposes of identifying that the School is authorized by ACNW.

Section 8.4. Student Records. The School shall comply with Applicable Law regarding the management and transfer of student records consistent with Minnesota Statutes sections 120A.22 Subd. 7, 138.163, and 138.17.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **AMENDMENT**

Section 9.1. Amendments. ACNW and the School acknowledge that the operation and administration of a charter school and the improvement of educational outcomes over time may require appropriate amendment of this Contract. In order to ensure a proper balance between the need for independent development of the School and the statutory

responsibilities of ACNW as an authorizing body, all amendments to this contract must be in writing, and signed by the parties.

Section 9.2. Change in Existing Law. If, after the effective date of this Contract, there is a change in Applicable Law which alters or amends the responsibilities, obligations, rights, or remedies of either the School or ACNW, this Contract shall be altered or amended to reflect the change in existing law as of the effective date of such change. To the extent possible, the responsibilities, obligations, rights, or remedies of the School and ACNW shall conform to and be carried out in accordance with the change in Applicable Law.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **CONTRACT REVOCATION/TERMINATION AND NONRENEWAL**

Section 10.1. Grounds for Revocation/Termination or Nonrenewal. This Contract may be revoked/terminated and need not be renewed by ACNW upon a determination by ACNW that one or more of the following has occurred:

- 1) Failure of the School to meet the requirements for student performance set forth in this Contract; or
- 2) Failure of the School to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or
- 3) Failure of the School to comply with all Applicable Laws

Section 10.2. Other Grounds for Revocation/Termination or Nonrenewal. In addition to the grounds for revocation/termination and nonrenewal set forth in Section 10.1, ACNW may revoke/terminate or not renew this Contract, upon ACNW's determination that one or more of the following has occurred:

- a) Failure of the School to meet the requirements for environmental education performance set forth in this Contract;
- b) The School is unable to pay its bills as required by Minnesota Statutes section 471.425 Subd. 2, is insolvent, or is bankrupt;
- c) The School has insufficient enrollment or demonstrated financial resources to successfully operate a charter school, or the School has lost more than fifty percent (50%) of its student enrollment from the previous school year;
- d) The School substantially defaults in the terms, conditions, promises, or representations contained in or incorporated into this Contract as determined by ACNW in its sole discretion;
- e) ACNW discovers negligent, fraudulent, or criminal conduct by any of the School's applicant(s), directors, officers, employees, or agents in relation to the school's performance under this Contract; or

- f) The School's applicant(s), directors, officers, or employees have provided false or misleading information or documentation to The Department of Education or ACNW in connection with ACNW's issuance of this Contract, or the School's reporting requirements under this Contract or Applicable Law; or programs outlined in any supplemental affidavit.
- g) Other good cause shown.

Section 10.3. Procedures for Revoking/Terminating or Not Renewing Contract.  
ACNW's process for revoking/terminating or not renewing the Contract is as follows:

- a) Notice of Intent to Revoke/Terminate or Not Renew. ACNW, upon reasonable belief that grounds for revocation/termination or nonrenewal of the Contract exist, shall notify the School Board of such grounds by issuing the School Board a notice of intent to revoke/terminate or not renew. The notice of intent to revoke/terminate or not renew shall be in writing, shall set forth in reasonable detail the alleged grounds for revocation/termination or nonrenewal, and shall state that the School Board may request in writing an informal hearing before ACNW within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the notice.
- b) School Board's Response. Within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the notice of intent to revoke/terminate or not renew, the School Board shall respond in writing to the alleged grounds for revocation/termination or nonrenewal. The School Board's response shall either admit or deny the allegations of non-compliance. If the School's response includes admissions of non-compliance with the Contract or Applicable Law, the School Board's response must also contain a description of the School Board's plan and timeline for correcting the non-compliance with the Contract or Applicable Law. If the School's response includes a denial of non-compliance with the Contract or Applicable Law, the School's response shall include sufficient documentation or other evidence to support a denial of non-compliance with the Contract or Applicable Law. A response not in compliance with this Section shall be deemed to be non-responsive. As part of its response, the School Board may request that an informal hearing be scheduled with ACNW. The School Board's failure to provide to ACNW a written request for an informal hearing within the fifteen (15) business day period shall be treated as acquiescence to ACNW's proposed action.
- c) Informal Hearing. Upon receiving a timely written request for an informal hearing, ACNW shall give ten (10) business days notice to the School Board of the hearing date and time, and ACNW shall conduct such hearing.
- d) Plan of Correction. ACNW shall review the School Board's response and may, in its sole discretion, determine whether a reasonable plan for correcting the deficiencies may be formulated. If ACNW determines that a reasonable plan for correcting the deficiencies set forth in the notice of intent to revoke/terminate or not renew can be formulated, ACNW shall develop a plan for correcting the non-compliance ("Plan of Correction"). In developing a Plan of Correction, ACNW is permitted to adopt, modify, or reject some or all of the School Board's response for correcting the

deficiencies outlined in the notice of intent to revoke/terminate or not renew. ACNW is not obligated to offer a Plan of Correction to the School.

- e) Withdrawal of Notice of Revocation/Termination or Nonrenewal. ACNW may withdraw its notice of intent to revoke/terminate or not renew if ACNW determines any of the following: (i) the School Board's denial of non-compliance is persuasive; (ii) the non-compliance set forth in the notice of intent to revoke/terminate or not renew has been corrected by the School Board; or (iii) the School Board has successfully completed the Plan of Correction.
- f) Effective Date of Revocation/Termination or Nonrenewal. If ACNW decides to revoke/terminate or not renew the Contract, the revocation/termination or nonrenewal shall be effective on the date of ACNW's act of revocation/termination or nonrenewal, or at a later date as determined by ACNW, such date specified by ACNW in its determination of revocation/termination or nonrenewal. ACNW must take final action regarding revocation/termination or nonrenewal no later than twenty (20) business days: (i) before the specified date for revocation/termination or nonrenewal of the Contract, or (ii) the Contract's termination date.

Section 10.4. Dissolution. If this Contract is revoked/terminated, or if this Contract is not renewed pursuant to this Article, the School will dissolve following the process provided by Applicable Law relating to dissolutions and Exhibit M.

Section 10.5. Distribution of Property Upon Termination of Contract. In the event of dissolution of the School, all property which it might lease, borrow or contract for use, shall be promptly returned to those organizations or individuals from which the School has leased or borrowed the materials.

Section 10.6. Property Owned by School. All property which has been purchased by the School will remain its own. In the event of subsequent dissolution of the School, such property as may be required or permitted by Applicable Law will first be donated to any other Minnesota Charter School. Any remaining property will then be sold or distributed in accordance with Applicable Law.

Section 10.7. Property Owned by School Employees. All property personally and/or individually owned by the trained and licensed teachers or staff employed by the School, shall be exempt from distribution of property and shall remain the property of the individual teachers and staff. Such property includes, but is not limited to, albums, personal mementos, and other materials or apparatuses which have been personally financed by teachers or staff. Such property does not include lesson plans and related materials developed and produced by School employees to implement the School's academic plan and curriculum; the School will ensure that its employment agreement with its employees document that such property is School property.

## ARTICLE XI

### ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

#### Section 11.1. Contract Renewal or Transfer to Different Authorizer.

##### (a) Contract Renewal.

1. Considerations Determining Renewal. The School acknowledges that improving all pupil learning and all student achievement is the most important factor ACNW will consider in determining Contract renewal, which determination shall be based substantially on the School's attainment of its academic and academic-related goals identified in Exhibit G. ACNW will also consider the degree to which the School has improved all pupil learning and all student achievement other than the attainment of goals specified in Exhibit G.

ACNW will consider other factors in its renewal determination, which factors are considered secondary to improving pupil learning and student achievement. Specifically, ACNW will consider the School's environmental education performance specified in Exhibit H, achievement of any additional identified purposes specified in Exhibit F, and financial and operational performance obligations and compliance with Applicable Law as set forth in this Contract.

The School will be eligible for renewal only if the School has improved all pupil performance and all student achievement, and met environmental education performance expectations notwithstanding superior performance in financial, operations, governance, and legal compliance factors.

2. Considerations Warranting Nonrenewal. The School agrees that nonrenewal is warranted based on the existence of grounds identified in section 10.1 or 10.2 or Applicable Law, notwithstanding the existence of improved pupil learning and student achievement. For example, nonrenewal will result from the School's failure to improve pupil learning and student achievement (notwithstanding superior performance in financial, operations, governance, or legal compliance factors) and may result from the School's improvement of pupil learning and student achievement combined with a failure to achieve environmental education goals specified in Exhibit H or significant financial, operational, governance, or legal compliance deficiency, or multiple deficiencies in any of the financial, operational, governance, or legal compliance areas, or deficiencies in multiple areas.
3. Corrective Action Renewal. If the School has improved all pupil learning and all student achievement, but School performance also indicates the existence of a significant financial, operational, governance, or legal compliance deficiency, or multiple deficiencies in any of the financial,

operational, governance, or legal compliance areas, or deficiencies in multiple areas, or failure to meet environmental educational goals specified in Exhibit H, ACNW may, but is not obligated to, renew this Contract. If ACNW renews the Contract in these circumstances, the renewal is for corrective action with a term not to exceed three years, and the School acknowledges and agrees that the School must continue to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement and must eliminate and resolve the deficiencies causing the Corrective Action Renewal and that no additional deficiencies are created or identified during that renewal term in order to be eligible for a subsequent renewal.

4. Application. By November 15 of the School Year in which this Contract terminates, the School will either inform ACNW that it no longer desires to be authorized by ACNW after the conclusion of the contract period, or submit an application to ACNW, in the manner ACNW requests, which shall generally contain three parts: (1) School Performance. An analysis and evaluation of the School's fulfillment of its mission, statutory purposes and performance under this Contract, which shall include a comprehensive evaluation of each academic and environmental education contract goal for each year of the contract, as well as an evaluation of financial performance and operations performance, including compliance with reporting obligations; (2) Strategic Direction. A description of the school's strategic direction including a proposal for goals for the following contract period; and (3) Other Information. Any other information the School desires ACNW to consider. The School agrees to provide ACNW documentation supporting the School's evaluation if requested by ACNW.

ACNW will notify the School at least sixty (60) business days prior to the termination of this Contract of its proposed renewal action. If ACNW offers a renewal contract, the terms of the Contract will be at the sole discretion of ACNW.

- (b) Transfer to a Different Authorizer. The School agrees to comply with Minnesota Statutes section 124E.10 Subd. 5. If ACNW consents to the School's request to transfer to a different authorizer, the School agrees to reimburse ACNW for any authorizer fees waived or not paid.

Section 11.2. Insurance. The School Board shall secure and maintain in its own name as the "first named insured" at all times the following insurance coverages:

- (a) workers' compensation insurance;
- (b) insurance covering all of the School's real and personal property, whether owned or leased;
- (c) insurance required by Minnesota Statutes section 466.04, including a minimum of commercial general liability insurance in comprehensive form, bodily injury

and property damage combined of one and a half million dollars (\$1,500,000) per occurrence and personal injury of one and a half million dollars (\$1,500,000) per occurrence, and three million dollars (\$3,000,000) per occurrence for the release or threatened release of a hazardous substance; and

- (d) if not included under its general liability coverage, additional coverages as follows: minimum automobile liability insurance coverage, bodily injury and property damage, of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence if the School owns or operates motor vehicles; officer and employee errors and omissions/professional liability of one and a half million dollars (\$1,500,000) per occurrence; and employee dishonesty insurance of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000).

The insurance must be obtained from a financially responsible licensed mutual, stock, or other responsible company licensed to do business in the State of Minnesota. The School may join with other charter schools to obtain insurance if the School Board finds that such an association provides economic advantages to the School, provided that each School maintains its identity as first named insured. The School shall have a provision included in all policies requiring notice to ACNW, at least thirty (30) days in advance, upon termination or non-renewal of the policy. In addition, the School shall provide ACNW or its designee copies of all insurance policies required by this Contract, if requested by ACNW. ACNW may periodically review the types and amounts of insurance coverages that the School secures.

The above-stated coverage limits shall be issued and maintained as indemnity limits and shall not be reduced by any applicable insurer defense obligations. The Department of Education may suggest or Applicable Law may determine alternative amounts and terms of any deductible or insurance provisions, which shall supersede the foregoing requirements. The School shall provide the Department of Education with any insurance information, as requested.

The School may expend funds for payment of the cost of participation in an accident or medical insurance program to insure protection for students while attending school or participating in a school program or activity.

Section 11.3. School Lease. The School shall provide to ACNW a copy of its lease, and any subsequent amendment(s), for the premises in which the School shall operate within fourteen (14) calendar days of execution. The school will provide to ACNW any notice of lease termination within five (5) calendar days of receipt. The School may lease space from any independent or special school board eligible to be a charter school authorizer, other public organization, private nonprofit institution organization or private property owner, as it deems necessary. The School may lease space from a sectarian organization as allowed by Applicable Law.

Section 11.4. Occupancy and Safety Certificates. The School Board shall: (i) ensure that the School's physical facilities comply with all fire, health, and safety standards applicable to schools; and (ii) possess the necessary occupancy and safety certificates for the School's physical facilities. The School Board shall not conduct classes until the School has complied with this section. Copies of such certificates shall be provided to ACNW, if requested by ACNW.

Section 11.5. Legal Liabilities. ACNW does not assume any obligation with respect to any director, employee, agent, parent, guardian, student, or independent contractor of the School. The School acknowledges and agrees it assumes full liability for its activities and that the Commissioner, ACNW, officers and members of the Board of ACNW, and employees of ACNW, are immune from civil and criminal liability with respect to all activities related to the School, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 124E.09, and nothing in this Contract is intended to affect such immunity.

Section 11.6. Indemnification of ACNW & Commissioner. Notwithstanding Section 11.5, the School agrees to indemnify and hold harmless ACNW and its board members, employees, agents or representatives, and to indemnify and hold harmless the Commissioner and Department of Education officers, agents, and employees notwithstanding Minnesota Statutes section 3.736 from all suits, claims, demands, or liabilities, including attorney fees, and related expenses, which arise out of or are in any manner connected with the School's operations or which are incurred as a result of the reliance of ACNW upon information supplied by the School, or School Board and its agents or employees, which arise out of the failure of the School to perform its obligations under this Contract or which arise out of ACNW's exercise of its obligation under Applicable Law and this Contract. The School will also provide to ACNW a certificate from the insurance company naming ACNW as an "additional insured."

## ARTICLE XII

### GENERAL TERMS

Section 12.1. Term of Contract. This Contract shall be effective July 1, \_\_\_\_\_, and shall remain in full force and effect for \_\_\_\_\_ academic years through the end of the \_\_\_\_\_ school year, and shall terminate on June 30, \_\_\_\_\_, unless sooner revoked/terminated according to the terms hereof.

Section 12.2. Notices. Any and all notices permitted or required to be given hereunder shall be deemed duly given: (i) upon actual delivery, if delivery is by hand; or (ii) upon receipt by the transmitting party of confirmation or answer back if delivery is by facsimile or telegram or electronic mail; or (iii) upon placing into United States mail if by postage paid first class mail. Each such notice shall be sent to the respective party at the address indicated below or to any other address or person as the respective party may designate by written notice delivered pursuant hereto:

If to ACNW:

Audubon Center of the North Woods  
Attn: Executive Director  
54165 Audubon Drive, P.O. Box 530  
Sandstone, MN 55072

If to School:

(INSERT SCHOOL NAME)  
Attn: Board Chair  
(INSERT SCHOOL ADDRESS)

Section 12.3. Severability. If any provision in this Contract is held to be invalid or unenforceable, it shall be ineffective only to the extent of the invalidity, without affecting or impairing the validity and enforceability of the remainder of the provision or the remaining provisions of this Contract. Subject to Section 9.2, if any provision of this Contract shall be or become in violation of any local, state or federal law, such provision shall be considered null and void, and all other provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 12.4. Successors. The terms and provisions of this Contract are binding on and shall inure to the benefit of the parties and their respective successors.

Section 12.5. Entire Contract. Except as specifically provided in this Contract, this Contract sets forth the entire agreement between ACNW and the School with respect to the subject matter of this Contract. All prior contracts, representations, statements, negotiations, understandings, and undertakings are superseded by this Contract.

Section 12.6. Assignment. This Contract is not assignable by either the School or ACNW.

Section 12.7. Non-Waiver. Except as provided herein, no term or provision of this Contract shall be deemed waived and no breach or default shall be deemed excused, unless such waiver or consent shall be in writing and signed by the party claimed to have waived or consented. No consent by any party to, or waiver of, a breach or default by the other, whether expressed or implied, shall constitute a consent to, waiver of, or excuse for any different or subsequent breach or default.

Section 12.8. Governing Law. This Contract shall be governed and controlled by the laws of the State of Minnesota as to interpretation, enforcement, validity, construction, and effect, and in all other respects.

Section 12.9. Counterparts. This Contract may be executed in any number of counterparts. Each counterpart so executed shall be deemed an original, but all such counterparts shall together constitute one and the same instrument.

Section 12.10. Construction. This Contract shall be construed fairly as to both parties and not in favor of or against either party, regardless of which party prepared the Contract.

Section 12.11. Force Majeure. If any circumstances occur which are beyond the control of the parties, which delay or render impossible the obligations of one or both of the parties, the parties' obligations to perform such services shall be postponed for an equivalent period of time or shall be canceled, if such performance has been rendered impossible by such circumstances.

Section 12.12. No Third Party Rights. This Contract is made for the sole benefit of the School and ACNW. Except as otherwise expressly provided, nothing in this Contract shall

create or be deemed to create a relationship between the parties hereto, or either of them, and any third person, including a relationship in the nature of a third party beneficiary or fiduciary.

Section 12.13. Non-agency. The School is not an agent of ACNW and ACNW is not an agent of the School.

Section 12.14. Termination of Responsibilities. Except as provided in Section 12.15, upon termination or revocation of the Contract, ACNW or its designee and the School shall have no further obligations or responsibilities under this Contract to the School or any other person or persons in connection with this Contract.

Section 12.15. Survival of Provisions. The terms, provisions, and representations contained in Section 11.1(a)3 Probationary Renewal, 11.2 Insurance, Section 11.5 Legal Liabilities, Section 11.6 Indemnification of ACNW, Section 12.8 Governing Law, Section 12.10 Construction, Section 12.13 Non-Agency, and any other provisions of this Contract that by their sense and context are intended to survive termination of this Contract shall survive.

As the designate of ACNW, I hereby issue this Contract to the School as of the date set forth:

DATE: July 1, \_\_\_\_\_

AUDUBON CENTER OF THE NORTH WOODS

By: \_\_\_\_\_

(INSERT NAME)

Its: Director of Charter School Authorizing

As the authorized representative of the School, I hereby certify that the School is able to comply with the Contract and all Applicable Law, and that the School, through its governing board, has approved and agreed to comply with and be bound by all of the terms and conditions of this Contract.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

(INSERT NAME)

Its: Board Chair