

# **Audubon Center of the North Woods**

## **Grade Level, Site or Early Learning Program Expansion Application Guide**

### **Introduction**

The Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW) encourages charter schools in its portfolio that have demonstrated success in providing all students with a high quality education, advancing students' environmental literacy, ensuring efficient use of public resources, and meeting compliance requirements, to expand their impact on students in Minnesota by implementing grade level, site, or early learning program expansions, should such an expansion meet community need and demand and align to the strategic plan of the school.

### **Timeline**

MN Statute 124E.06, Subd. 5 states that an authorizer must file a supplemental affidavit to the Minnesota Department of Education by October 1 in order for a school to be eligible to expand the following school year. ACNW has established the following deadlines based on the timeline outlined in statute:

- May 1 – Notice of Intent due to ACNW
- August 1 – Full Application due to ACNW

If any deadline date falls on a weekend or non-business day, the deadline moves to the following business day. Failure to meet the deadlines may result in disqualification of the application.

### **Evaluation Process**

Expansions must be reviewed at four levels in order to be implemented:

- ACNW Charter School Division (CSD)
- ACNW Charter School Committee (CSC)
- ACNW Board of Directors
- Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)

ACNW reserves the right to reject any and all applications for grade level, site, or early learning program expansions should ACNW determine that the school's performance does not warrant such expansion or that the expansion plans do not demonstrate a high probability of success.

### **Notice of Intent**

A school must submit a Notice of Intent to Submit Application for Grade Level, Site and/or Early Learning Program Expansion (NOI) to ACNW in order for a complete application to be considered. The NOI must indicate the school's proposed expansion (i.e., grade level, site, early learning, or some combination) and include evidence in the form of meeting minutes that the school's board of directors has engaged in substantive discussion and consideration of the proposed expansion. Furthermore, the school must provide evidence of formal action by the board to submit the NOI. The NOI must be submitted via e-mail to [admin@auduboncharterschools.org](mailto:admin@auduboncharterschools.org). Applicants must use the NOI template found on the [ACNW website](#) (and as part of this document). The deadline for submission of the NOI is defined above in the timeline.

### **NOI Feedback and Invitation to Submit a Full Application**

ACNW Charter School Division staff, in consultation with the ACNW Charter School Committee, will review the NOI and determine whether to invite the school to submit the full application. This determination will be based on the school's recent contractual performance as evidenced in formal performance evaluation documents completed by ACNW and by any other information available to

ACNW. An invitation (or lack thereof) to submit a full application will be communicated to the school no later than June 1. This will include specific requirements for the full application. (See ACNW Expansion NOI Review Rubric for ACNW's criteria to determine whether to invite a school to submit a full application.)

### **Application Evaluation**

Applicants must complete required sections of the expansion application. Applicants are expected to review these application requirements closely. Review the [ACNW website](#) to ensure you have the most up to date version of the application.

The school must demonstrate to the satisfaction of ACNW the following, which is outlined in MN Statute 124E.06, Subd. 5:

- (1) the need for the expansion with supporting long-range enrollment projections;*
- (2) a longitudinal record of demonstrated student academic performance and growth on statewide assessments under chapter 120B or on other academic assessments that measure longitudinal student performance and growth approved by the charter school's board of directors and agreed upon with the authorizer;*
- (3) a history of sound school finances and a finance plan to implement the expansion in a manner to promote the school's financial sustainability; and*
- (4) board capacity and an administrative and management plan to implement its expansion.*

For Early Learning Programs, the school must also demonstrate to the satisfaction of ACNW the following, which is outlined in MN Statute 124E.06, Subd. 3(a):

*A charter school may offer a free or fee-based preschool or prekindergarten that meets high-quality early learning instructional program standards that are aligned with Minnesota's early learning standards for children.*

To that end, the school must provide a complete description of the proposed expansion as outlined in the application along with any additional information required to demonstrate the above.

The CSD will review the full application to determine whether requirements have been met, which will be evidenced by Overall Section Ratings of Meets in all areas of the application review rubric. (See ACNW Expansion Application Review Rubric for ACNW's evaluation criteria.) The CSD will produce a Summary Report, which compiles the findings from the evaluation. The report will contain a recommendation regarding approval of the Expansion Application. The CSC will review the Evaluation Report and make a recommendation to the full ACNW Board, which will make the final decision on the application. Should the ACNW Board grant approval, it will direct the CSD to use information provided in the application along with additional necessary information to submit a Supplemental Affidavit on behalf of the school to MDE for final approval.

### **Implementation of Expansion**

Once the Supplemental Affidavit is approved, ACNW will monitor the school's progress as it implements the expansion or early learning program according to the plan outlined in the Expansion Application. To this end, ACNW will require the school to develop and maintain an implementation checklist specific to the approved expansion. ACNW will monitor the school's activities related to expansion to ensure the expansion is successful. In the event milestones related to the expansion are not met according to the timeline established in the implementation plan and checklist, ACNW may, at its own discretion, decide to postpone the opening of the new site or the implementation of the new grade levels. The school may also decide to postpone the opening of the

new site or the implementation of the new grade levels on its own in order to have more time to successfully execute the expansion.

### **Submission of Application**

An email containing an electronic version of the application must be **received** by ACNW by the designated deadline. Applicants must send an electronic copy of the application including all attachments in either Microsoft Word or PDF versions via e-mail to [admin@auduboncharterschools.org](mailto:admin@auduboncharterschools.org).



**Audubon Center of the North Woods  
Notice of Intent to Submit Application for  
Grade Level, Site and/or Early Learning Program Expansion**

**Date:**

**School:**

Check the box(es) that relate to the proposed expansion:

- Grade level
- Site
- Early childhood health and developmental screening
- Preschool instructional program (not prekindergarten) for children ages 3-5 years  
    Anticipated size of preschool instructional program:
- Prekindergarten instructional program for four-year-olds to prepare children for entry into kindergarten the following year  
    Anticipated size of prekindergarten instructional program:

Briefly describe the proposed expansion. Include additional grade levels to be served, proposed location of the additional site, and/or nature of early learning program. Indicate the estimated number of additional students to be served along with other relevant information.

Provide evidence that the school's board of directors has engaged in substantive discussion and consideration of the proposed expansion, including formal board action to move forward with a Notice of Intent to ACNW. Include meeting minutes as attachments or indicate the dates of the meetings in which the board engaged in such discussion and consideration (if minutes have already been submitted to ACNW via Epicenter). In addition, board members present at the meeting at which this NOI was approved must sign below (add additional lines as necessary).

*By our signatures below, we affirm that this Notice of Intent to submit an application for expansion was approved by majority vote of the board in public session on **DATE**.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member Signature

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Board Member Signature

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Board Member Signature

Submit to [admin@auduboncharterschools.org](mailto:admin@auduboncharterschools.org) no later than May 1. If the deadline falls on a weekend or non-business day, the deadline moves to the following business day. A Notice of Intent received after the deadline may result in disqualification.

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**Board Chair Signature**

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**School Leader Signature**



**Audubon Center of the North Woods  
Application for Grade Level, Site and/or Early Learning Program Expansion  
Cover Page**

**Date:**

**School:**

Check the box(es) that relate to the proposed expansion:

- Grade level
- Site
- Early childhood health and developmental screening
- Preschool instructional program (not prekindergarten) for children ages 3-5 years  
    Anticipated size of preschool instructional program:
- Prekindergarten instructional program for four-year-olds to prepare children for entry into kindergarten the following year  
    Anticipated size of prekindergarten instructional program:

Board members present at the meeting at which this application was approved must sign below (add additional lines as necessary).

*By our signatures below, we affirm that this application for expansion was approved by majority vote of the board in public session on **DATE**.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member Signature

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Board Member Signature

Submit to [admin@auduboncharterschools.org](mailto:admin@auduboncharterschools.org) no later than August 1. If the deadline falls on a weekend or non-business day, the deadline moves to the following business day. An application received after the deadline may result in disqualification.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Board Chair Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**School Leader Signature**

## **Audubon Center of the North Woods**

### **Application for Grade Level, Site and/or Early Learning Program Expansion**

Directly address each section below that is required for your expansion request as indicated by ACNW's response to the school's Notice of Intent to Submit Application for Grade Level, Early Learning and/or Site Expansion. Responses should be concise and comprehensive.

- Complete Part A through D for schools that **do not plan** to add an early learning program
- Complete Part A through E for schools that plan to add an instructional preschool program to provide early childhood education and preparation for transition to kindergarten for children 3-5 and/or an instructional prekindergarten program for four-year-olds to prepare children for entry into kindergarten the following year.
- Complete Part A through F for schools that plan to add an instructional early learning program **and** an early childhood health and developmental screening program.

#### **Part A. Expansion Description, Need, and Demand**

1. Describe the proposed expansion.
  - a. Specify the additional grade levels, sites or early learning program requested.
  - b. Specify the additional number of students that would be served.
  - c. If planning to add an early learning program; whether the program(s) will be free to all participants or fee-based.
    - i. If fee-based, include the fee structure that will be used.
    - ii. Indicate if the school will provide enrollment preference to kindergarten for students participating in the school's early learning program per Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.11(c).
  - d. Describe the new program(s) to be offered as part of the requested expansion.
  - e. Discuss how this expansion will help your school meet its mission.
  - f. Describe how the proposed expansion will improve all pupil learning and all student achievement and improve service overall to students and families.
  - g. Describe how the proposed expansion will impact the school's instructional approach.
  - h. Describe how the proposed expansion will include environmental education programming consistent with ACNW expectations.
  - i. Include how the proposed expansion will impact the school's current contractual goals. As appropriate, provide new proposed goals.
  - j. Describe any other staffing changes that will occur including job descriptions and qualifications for any new hires or positions.
  - k. Describe the facility requirements for this expansion, including learning spaces and other characteristics that are designed to meet the unique needs of the school and students to be served by the school. For a grade level expansion, describe how the school's current facilities will meet those needs. For a site expansion, include a comprehensive discussion of potential locations and scenarios to meet those needs. In most instances, this will require multiple scenarios.
2. Provide evidence that the proposed expansion is supported by need and projected enrollment.

- a. Provide a table that includes annual enrollment projections with and without the proposed expansion. This should be for as many years as needed to achieve full implementation of the expansion.
- b. Provide evidence to document need and demand for this expansion, including the following:
  - i. Waiting list numbers.
  - ii. Evidence of interest from current or prospective families and community level support for this expansion as attachments. This could include but is not limited to letters/emails of support from parents and community organizations, survey information that includes a sample survey and survey results, and/or sign-in sheets from community information sessions.
  - iii. Enrollment information of nearby schools that serve students represented by the proposed expansion.
  - iv. Discussion of how this expansion fulfills an unmet need in the community.
- c. Describe marketing and recruitment strategies to be implemented to ensure equitable access for all students and enrollment targets will be met.

### **Part B. Current Academic Performance**

1. Provide evidence of a longitudinal record of demonstrated student academic performance and growth on statewide assessments under chapter 120B or on other academic assessments that measure longitudinal student performance and growth approved by the charter school's board of directors and agreed upon with the authorizer.
2. Provide evidence that academic performance and growth has been demonstrated across student groups.

### **Part C. Financial Management Plan**

1. Provide analysis that the school is fiscally sound and has the financial capacity to implement the proposed expansion.
  - a. Provide information demonstrating the school has sound financial health.
  - b. Provide at least a four-year budget (starting with the next fiscal year) with and without the proposed expansion. If full implementation of the expansion will go beyond four years, extend the budget model as needed. This budget should be a line-item report, subtotaled by program.
  - c. Provide a comprehensive budget narrative that addresses the differences in the two budgets and provides assumptions used in developing the budgets.

### **Part D. Governance and Management Plan**

1. Provide evidence that the charter school has the management capacity to carry out its expansion.
  - a. Provide evidence that the school's board of directors has approved the application for the proposed expansion by completing the Application Cover Page.
  - b. Describe the capacity of the board and management to implement the proposed expansion including any anticipated changes to the organizational structure.



- c. Provide an implementation plan that includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities, as well as timelines, milestones, and key activities related to the proposed expansion.
- d. Discuss potential challenges related to the proposed expansion and possible solutions to address those challenges.

## **Part E – Early Learning Programs (Instructional Preschool or Prekindergarten; if applicable)**

1. Provide a plan that addresses the following elements:
  - a. **Comprehensive Child Assessment:** Assess each child's cognitive skills with a comprehensive child assessment instrument when the child enters and again before the child leaves the program to inform program planning and promote kindergarten readiness.
    - i. Describe the assessment process used to measure individual child progress in all the prekindergarten and preschool instructional classes that includes the use of a standardized child assessment instrument, such as *High Scope Child Observation Record (COR)*, *Teaching Strategies Gold* or *Work Sampling System*.
    - ii. The child assessment should be approved by [Minnesota Parent Aware](#). The comprehensive child assessment must align with [Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress – Minnesota's Early Learning Standards](#).
    - iii. To measure child progress, the assessment must be used at program entrance and program exit.
    - iv. At a minimum, the comprehensive assessment should measure children's progress in the domains of language, literacy and mathematical thinking. Other domains may include approaches to learning, general cognitive development, physical and motor development, social and emotional development, creativity and the arts.
    - v. Describe how the child assessment results are used to inform curricula and instruction throughout the school year.
    - vi. Indicate how families are involved in the assessment process throughout the year.
    - vii. To maximize the building of a coherent system between early learning and kindergarten, describe how assessment results are shared between the early learning and kindergarten staff, including kindergarten staff at other schools.
    - viii. Describe how the child assessment process is responsive to the cultural and linguistic needs of children in the school's early learning program.
  - b. **Intentional Instructional Practice:** Provide intentional instructional practice aligned with the state early childhood learning standards and kindergarten standards that is based on early childhood research and professional practice focused on children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical skills and development and prepares children for the transition to kindergarten, including early literacy skills.

- i. Describe how program content and intentional instructional practices are aligned with the *Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards (ECIPs)* available on the [MDE website](#).
  - ii. Include a very brief description of the curriculum used in the early learning program, such as *High Scope Preschool Curriculum* or *Opening the World of Learning (OWL)*.
  - iii. Indicate how the *Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards (ECIPs)* are incorporated into the program.
  - iv. Provide an overview of instructional practice to support children's early literacy skills development.
  - v. Describe a balance of child-initiated learning and teacher-directed pedagogies appropriate for young children's development and interests.
  - vi. Provide a brief overview of early learning approaches (such as use of project-based learning, inquiry-based learning, learning centers, interactive learning, and play-based learning).
- c. **Kindergarten Transition:** Coordinate appropriate kindergarten transition with parents and kindergarten teachers.
  - i. Briefly describe the program plan for transition to kindergarten that includes meaningful coordination and planning with kindergarten teachers, and engages families in a variety of ways to support children's learning and successful transition to kindergarten. The transition plan should be responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of children and their families participating in the early learning program and school.
  - ii. Describe a plan for providing guidance to families not enrolling their child in the charter school kindergarten program. Describe strategies to engage families in meaningful ways to support their children's learning throughout the transition into the kindergarten year beyond one-time events.
  - iii. Describe how the curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices between the early learning program and kindergarten program are aligned.
- d. **Coordinate with Relevant Community-Based Services**
  - i. Provide a brief description of how the program coordinates with community organizations and how those resources are shared with families. (Coordination may include referrals to community programs based on child needs, such as local public health, social services, mental health services, or other early learning or child care programs.)
  - ii. Describe how information about community-based services can be made available to families using a variety of strategies, such as family advocates, school-home liaisons, parenting educators, social media, and informal school events.
  - iii. Describe how coordination with community-based services reflects the needs of the children participating in the early learning program, and is responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of children and their families participating in the early learning program and school.
- e. **Staff Ratios and Licensure:** Ensure staff-child ratios of one-to-ten and maximum group size of 20 children with the staff being supervised by a licensed early childhood teacher.

- i. Briefly describe how the early learning program is provided and how ratios and group size are provided to ensure a high-quality early learning program.
  - ii. For each prekindergarten and preschool instructional class, describe staff licensure area and MN teaching license file folder number and other credentials, as appropriate. If this information is not available at the time of submission, please indicate anticipated staffing licensure areas. MDE may require the school to submit staff licensure areas and MN teaching license folder numbers and other credentials when staff is hired.
- f. **Teacher Content Knowledge:** Have teachers knowledgeable in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, and instruction.
  - i. Describe licensed staff training/professional development specific to early learning curriculum, instructional practices and assessment that has been completed in the past five years. If this information is not available at the time of submission, please indicate anticipated teacher knowledge in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, and instruction. MDE may require the school to submit teacher knowledge in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, and instruction when staff is hired.
- g. **Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening:** Ensure participating children have completed health and developmental screening within 90 days of program enrollment under Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.16 to 121A.19.
  - i. Provide a description of how and where participating children receive health and developmental screening either through a traditional school district or comparable screening from health care provider (such as a Child and Teen Checkups through local public health organizations) if the charter school is not providing the early childhood health and developmental screening program. It is not necessary for the charter school to provide the early childhood health and developmental screening, but must describe how children receive the comprehensive health and developmental screening to identify possible problems that may interfere with children's learning.
  - ii. Provide a plan for those children who do not successfully complete early childhood screening.

## **Part F - Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening**

1. Describe the school's plan and capacity to provide an Early Childhood Screening program in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 121A.16–121A.19 and Minnesota Rules 3530.3000, 3530.3300, and 3530.3400.
2. The plan should include a description of how the school will meet MDE accountability requirements for data submission in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.17. This includes the establishment of the MARSS Preschool Screening (PS) Record and the annual data submission to MDE Early Learning Services for children receiving the Early Childhood Screening program directly from the school or through a contracted service provider with a comparable screening program, such as a local public health organization. The purpose of establishing the MARSS PS Record is to provide screening state aid to the school and to ensure the screening requirement has been met.

**Audubon Center of the North Woods  
Notice of Intent to Submit Application for  
Grade Level and/or Site Expansion  
Review Rubric**

Upon receipt of the Notice of Intent to Submit Application for Grade Level and/or Site Expansion by a school, ACNW Charter School Division staff will review the school’s performance to determine whether to invite the school to submit a full application. Should the school clearly not meet the required threshold in any area below, it will not be invited to submit a full application.

<b>Performance Area</b>	<b>Evidence clearly shows the school does not meet this threshold. The school will not be invited to submit a full application.</b>	<b>Evidence is unclear. The school must provide additional information in the full application.</b>	<b>Evidence clearly shows the school meets this threshold. No additional information is needed in the full application.</b>
<b>Academic:</b> A longitudinal record of demonstrated student academic performance and growth on statewide assessments under chapter 120B or on other academic assessments that measure longitudinal student performance and growth approved by the charter school's board of directors and agreed upon with the authorizer.			
<b>Environmental Education:</b> A record of demonstrated progress on environmental education goals as outlined in the charter contract.			
<b>Financial:</b> A history of sound school finances in terms of financial management and financial health.			
<b>Operations:</b> A history of sound school operations, governance, and compliance.			

**Audubon Center of the North Woods  
Application for Grade Level and/or Site Expansions  
Review Rubric**

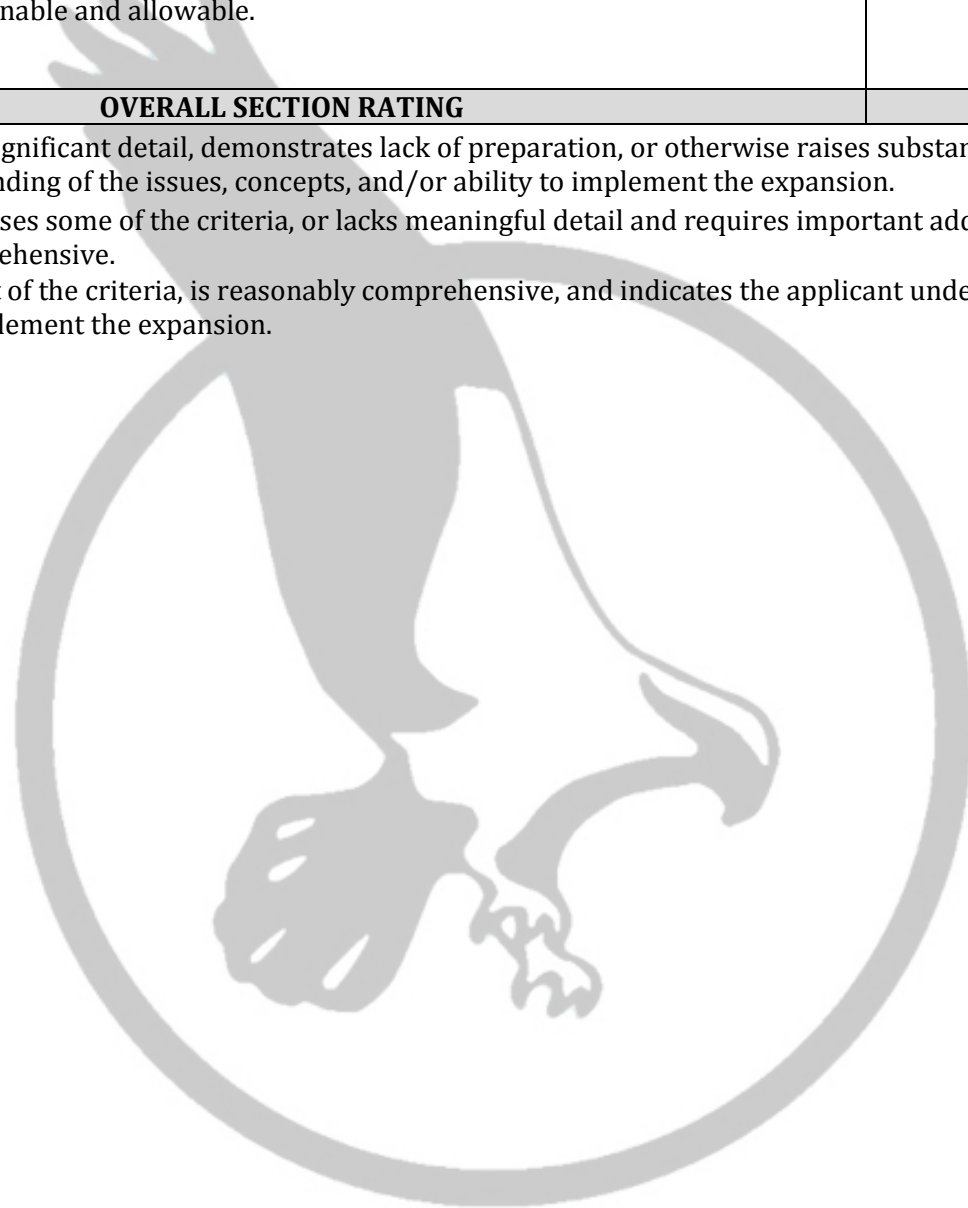
<b>School Name:</b>		
<b>Strengths:</b>		
<b>Weaknesses:</b>		
<b>Questions:</b>		
<b>Overall Recommendation</b>	<b>Denial</b>	<b>Approval</b>
<b>Narrative Justification of Recommendation:</b>		

***I. Expansion Description, Need, and Demand***

Strengths			
Weaknesses			
Questions			
	Inadequate	Approaches	Meets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application includes a complete description of the new program(s) to be offered as part of the requested expansion.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application includes a clear description of how this expansion will help the school meet its mission, the primary purpose of charter schools, and improve overall service to families.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application includes a description of how the proposed expansion will impact the instructional program and staffing.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application includes proposed new academic contractual goals as appropriate.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application includes information on how the proposed expansion will include environmental education programming consistent with ACNW expectations.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application includes a description of facility needs for the expansion and a comprehensive discussion of potential locations and scenarios to meet those needs.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment projections are reasonable.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application provides compelling evidence of the need and demand for the proposed expansion.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The marketing and recruitment plan presented in the application ensures equitable access for all students and is sufficient to meet enrollment projections.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application provides a summary of the school's early learning program(s), including the proposed start date, the fee structure of the program(s) (if fee-based), and indication whether the school will grant enrollment preference to kindergarten for students participating in the school's free early learning program(s) (if applicable).</li> </ul>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application describes how the early learning program(s) will be funded. The funding mechanism(s) are reasonable and allowable.</li> </ul>			
<b>OVERALL SECTION RATING</b>			

- Inadequate:** Lacks significant detail, demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.
- Approaches:** Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- Meets:** Address most of the criteria, is reasonably comprehensive, and indicates the applicant understands the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.



## II. Academic Performance

<b>Strengths</b>			
<b>Weaknesses</b>			
<b>Questions</b>			
	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACNW has evidence of a longitudinal record of demonstrated student academic performance and growth on statewide assessments under chapter 120B or on other academic assessments that measure longitudinal student performance and growth approved by the charter school's board of directors and agreed upon with the authorizer.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACNW has evidence that all student groups have demonstrated performance and growth on statewide assessments or on other academic assessments.</li> </ul>			
<b>OVERALL SECTION RATING</b>			

- Inadequate:** Lacks significant detail, demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant's understanding of the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.
- Approaches:** Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- Meets:** Address most of the criteria, is reasonably comprehensive, and indicates the applicant understands the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.



### III. Financial Management Plan

<b>Strengths</b>			
<b>Weaknesses</b>			
<b>Questions</b>			
	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACNW has evidence of a history of sound school finances – both in terms of financial management and financial health or a plan from the school to address any areas of concern.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The budget for the expansion is comprehensive, reasonable for the proposed expansion, and viable for overall school sustainability.</li> </ul>			
<b>OVERALL SECTION RATING</b>			

- Inadequate:** Lacks significant detail, demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.
- Approaches:** Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- Meets:** Address most of the criteria, is reasonably comprehensive, and indicates the applicant understands the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.

#### IV. Governance and Management Plan

<b>Strengths</b>			
<b>Weaknesses</b>			
<b>Questions</b>			
	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACNW has evidence of a history of sound school operations, governance, and compliance or a plan from the school to address any areas of concern.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application includes a description of any changes to the school’s organization structure stemming from the proposed expansion.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application includes a description of the board and staff’s capacity to implement the proposed expansion.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application includes an implementation plan that provides clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, milestones, and activities for the proposed expansion.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application includes evidence that the school has considered potential challenges related to the proposed expansion and offers possible solutions to address those challenges.</li> </ul>			
<b>OVERALL SECTION RATING</b>			

- Inadequate:** Lacks significant detail, demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.
- Approaches:** Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- Meets:** Address most of the criteria, is reasonably comprehensive, and indicates the applicant understands the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.

***V. Environmental Education Performance***

<b>Strengths</b>			
<b>Weaknesses</b>			
<b>Questions</b>			
	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACNW has evidence that the school is making substantial progress on environmental education goals as outlined in the charter contract or a plan from the school to address any areas of concern.</li> </ul>			
<b>OVERALL SECTION RATING</b>			

- **Inadequate:** Lacks significant detail, demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.
- **Approaches:** Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- **Meets:** Address most of the criteria, is reasonably comprehensive, and indicates the applicant understands the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.

***XI. Early Learning Program (if applicable)***

***A. Early Learning Program Description, Need, and Demand***

<b>Strengths</b>			
<b>Concerns / Questions</b>			
	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application provides a summary of the school’s early learning program(s), including the fee structure of the program(s) (if fee-based), and indication whether the school will grant enrollment preference to kindergarten for students participating in the school’s free early learning program(s) (if applicable).</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application describes how the early learning program(s) will be funded. The funding mechanism(s) are reasonable and allowable.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application includes information on how the proposed program(s) will include environmental education programming consistent with ACNW expectations.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application provides compelling evidence of the need and demand for the proposed program(s).</li> </ul>			
<b>OVERALL SECTION RATING</b>			

- **Inadequate:** Lacks significant detail; demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the proposed early learning program(s).
- **Approaches:** Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- **Meets:** Addresses most of the criteria, is reasonably comprehensive, and indicates the applicant understands the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the proposed early learning program(s).

***B. Prekindergarten and/or Preschool Instructional Program***

<b>Strengths</b>			
<b>Concerns / Questions</b>			
	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>
The proposed plan adequately addresses the following elements:			
• Comprehensive Child Assessment			
• Intentional Instructional Practice			
• Kindergarten Transition			
• Community-Based Services			
• Staff Ratios and Licensure			
• Teacher Content Knowledge			
• Early Childhood Screening			
<b>OVERALL SECTION RATING</b>			

- **Inadequate:** Lacks significant detail; demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the proposed early learning program(s).
- **Approaches:** Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- **Meets:** Addresses most of the criteria, is reasonably comprehensive, and indicates the applicant understands the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the proposed early learning program(s).