

# **Audubon Center of the North Woods Program Expansion Application Guide: Increasing Number of Students Served**

## **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 serving more students in its current facilities should such expansion meet community need and demand and align to the strategic plan of the school. Article VI. Section 6.5(a) of the charter contract outlines the grade levels and number of students that the charter school is authorized to serve. This application is for requesting a contract amendment to increase the number of students served at the school's current site(s). (An expansion to add grade levels or additional sites requires that the school submit a Grade Level and/or Site Expansion Application which is available on ACNW's website: [http://auduboncharterschools.org/processes/.](http://auduboncharterschools.org/processes/))

## **Timeline**

ACNW will accept applications on a rolling basis; however, in order to implement an increase at the beginning of a school year, the school is encouraged to submit the NOI and subsequent application no later than May 1 of the fiscal year prior to new school year when the increase would take effect.

## **Evaluation Process**

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

- ACNW Charter School Division (CSD)
- Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)

ACNW reserves the right to reject any and all applications for enrollment expansion 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.

## **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.

In evaluating the application, ACNW will consider the following:

- Is the school's learning program fulfilling the primary purpose of charter schools, which is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement?
- Is the school's learning program increasing students' environmental literacy?
- Is the school financially viable and are its finances well managed?
- Is the school organization effective and is the school well governed?

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 a rating of Meets in all five areas of the application review rubric. (See ACNW

Enrollment Expansion Application Review Rubric for ACNW's evaluation criteria.) The CSD will review the application and make a determination on the application. Should the application be approved, the CSD team will use information provided in the application along with additional necessary information to amend the school's charter contract and submit the revised contract to MDE.

### **Submission of Application**

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  
Application for Contract Amendment to Increase Enrollment  
Cover Page**

**Date:**

**School:**

Current contract period: July 1, \_\_\_\_ to June 30, \_\_\_\_\_

Current contractual maximum of number of students to be served: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested maximum of number of students to be served for the current contract period: \_\_\_\_\_

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 \_\_\_\_\_.*

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

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

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

Submit to [admin@auduboncharterschools.org](mailto:admin@auduboncharterschools.org)

## **Audubon Center of the North Woods Application for Contract Amendment to Increase Enrollment**

Directly address each section below. Responses should be concise and comprehensive.

1. Describe the planned enrollment expansion. Provide information on the rationale for this increase in enrollment including what has changed since submission of the school's last renewal application and budget projections.
2. Provide a table that includes annual enrollment projections with the proposed growth for three years, aligned to the budget projections.
3. Provide evidence of demand for increased enrollment.
4. Describe the school's recent academic performance, how this demonstrates that the school is meeting the primary purpose of charter schools, and how this justifies serving more students. Provide data, as appropriate, to support evidence the school is serving its current students well.
5. Describe the school's recent environmental education performance, how this demonstrates that the school is meeting its contractual expectations, and how this justifies serving more students.
6. Describe the strengths and areas of improvement of the school's educational program. How is the school addressing the areas of improvement?
7. Describe the school's plan for growth. Include the following:
  - a. The educational program to be implemented to serve additional students, including any projected increases in services to special student populations including students with disabilities and English learners;
  - b. How the school will expand other services currently provided to serve additional students;
  - c. Needed investments in curriculum, technology, equipment or other materials to accommodate additional students;
  - d. Staffing changes;
    - i. New positions that will be added to accommodate growth;
    - ii. Any other changes to be made to accommodate growth;
    - iii. Provide an organizational chart;
  - e. How the school will address additional space needs.
8. Outline how the board will oversee the growth, including monitoring the quality of programs provided to students and the academic outcomes achieved.
9. Provide a 3-year budget beginning with the year in which the increased enrollment would be realized. Include basic assumptions in the budget.
10. Discuss any potential challenges related to the proposed enrollment increase and possible solutions to address these challenges.

**Audubon Center of the North Woods  
Application for Enrollment Expansion  
Review Rubric**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Performance Area</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Inadequate</b> 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.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Approaches</b> Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Meets</b> Addresses most of the criteria, is reasonably comprehensive, and indicates the applicant’s understanding of the issues, concepts, and/or ability to implement the expansion.</p>
<p><b>Academic Performance</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.</p>			
<p><b>Environmental Education Performance</b> A record of demonstrated progress on environmental education goals as outlined in the charter contract.</p>			
<p><b>Financial Performance</b> A history of sound financial management and financial health.</p>			
<p><b>Operations &amp; Governance Performance</b> A history of sound school operations, governance, and compliance.</p>			
<p><b>Description, Need, and Demand</b> Compelling evidence of need and demand, reasonable enrollment projections, and adequately addresses additional facility, staffing, and program needs.</p>			