

# Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center: Application for Contract Amendment to Increase Enrollment

**Date:** March 17, 2025

**School:** Crosslake Community School

Current contract period: July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025

Current contractual maximum of number of students to be served: 500

Requested maximum of number of students to be served for the current contract period: 700

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 February 17, 2025.*

Josef Garcia, Board Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Colin Williams, Vice Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Mindy Glazier, Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_

Clare Thompson, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Jared Griffin, Member \_\_\_\_\_

Belinda Yurick, Member \_\_\_\_\_

Emily Stull Richardson, Member \_\_\_\_\_

Mike Neumann, Member \_\_\_\_\_

**Josef Garcia, Board Chair** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dr. Jenna Leadbetter, Executive Director** \_\_\_\_\_

# 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.

Crosslake Community School (CCS) is requesting an amendment to our charter contract to increase our enrollment cap from 500 to 700 students. This request comes at a pivotal point in our school's development, as we have reached our current enrollment capacity during the 2024-25 school year. Several significant changes since our last renewal application in 2021-22 necessitate this increase:

a) **Strong Enrollment Growth:** CCS has experienced consistent enrollment growth in both our seat-based and online programs. Our current enrollment stands at 499.86 ADM (201 seat-based students and 370 online students, plus Early Childhood and PSEO adjustments), effectively reaching our enrollment cap of 500 students.

b) **Waitlists at Multiple Grade Levels:** We have established waitlists at several grade levels, indicating continued strong demand for our educational programs that we are currently unable to accommodate.

c) **Academic Performance Improvements:** Our academic results have shown significant progress. According to our FY23 Academic Performance Evaluation, CCS earned 105% of possible points, qualifying us for "Fast Track Renewal" status. This positive trajectory has continued through the 2024-25 school year, with improvements in math proficiency (from 24.4% to 30%), reading proficiency (from 45.7% to 50.3%), and science proficiency (from 34.7% to 40.5%).

d) **Strategic Plan Implementation:** In January 2025, we began implementing our new 5-year strategic plan (2025-2030) which includes enrollment growth as a key component. Under the leadership of our new Executive Director, Dr. Jenna Leadbetter, we have established a district-wide cabinet structure that provides the administrative capacity to effectively manage increased enrollment. This cabinet is supported by our new comprehensive compensation strategy that ensures competitive salaries for properly licensed administrators and educators.

e) **Environmental Education Success:** Our environmental education programming has flourished, with 97.4% of seat-based K-8 students participating in at least two community engagement activities and 85.2% of online K-12 students participating in environmental or community engagement projects.

f) **Leadership and Staffing Enhancements:** We have implemented a unified approach to leadership with an Executive Director overseeing both programs, appointed Directors for seat-based and online programs, and created district-wide positions supporting technology,

curriculum, assessment, operations, and marketing. Our new compensation structure offers competitive salaries for BOSA-licensed administrators (\$170,000-\$185,000 for the Executive Director with proper licensure) and creates significant salary differentials to incentivize all staff to obtain and maintain the highest possible state licensure.

This proposed expansion aligns with our mission "to grow environmentally literate, community-impacting learners of excellence" by allowing us to extend our unique educational approach to more students throughout Minnesota.

## **2. Provide a table that includes annual enrollment projections with the proposed growth for three years, aligned to the budget projections.**

### **Current Enrollment Overview**

District Cap: 500 students

Current Enrollment:

- Seat-based: 146
- K-5 Online: 38
- 6-12 Online: 318
- Online Total: 356
- District Total: 502

### **Growth Projections**

Maximum Capacity:

- Seat-based Maximum: 160 students
- Online Maximum: 537 students
- Combined Maximum: 700 students

Below are our annual enrollment projections for the next three years, showing the phased growth that respects our maximum capacity limits:

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>2024-25 (Current)</b>	<b>2025-26 (Projected)</b>	<b>2026-27 (Projected)</b>	<b>2027-28 (Projected)</b>
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### **Seat-Based Program**

<b>Seat-Based Subtotal</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>160</b>
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### **Online Program**

<b>K-5 Online</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>
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<b>6-12 Online</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>447</b>
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<b>Online Subtotal</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>537</b>
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<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>697</b>
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<b>Total ADM</b>	<b>493.7</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>660</b>
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### **Current ADM Breakdown**

- Seat-based: 148.5
- K-5 Online: 35.6
- 6-12 Online: 309.5
- Online Total: 345.1
- District Total: 493.7

*Note: ADM (Average Daily Membership) accounts for part-time PSEO students and PreK adjustments, resulting in lower ADM than raw enrollment counts.*

*Staffing details for the seat-based program will be finalized by Director of Seat-Based Learning, Annette Klang.*

### 3. Provide evidence of demand for increased enrollment.

The demand for increased enrollment at Crosslake Community School is evidenced by multiple indicators:

a) **Current Enrollment Cap Achievement:** CCS has reached its current enrollment cap of 500 students, with current ADM at 493.65 as of February 2025. Without an increase in our enrollment cap, we will be forced to turn away prospective students.

b) **Waitlists at Multiple Grade Levels:** We have established waitlists for both our seat-based and online programs. As of March 2025, we have 43 students on waitlists across various grade levels, particularly in our elementary grades for the seat-based program and in grades 9-12 for our online program.

c) **Improved Retention Rates:** Our student retention has improved significantly in both programs:

- Seat-based program: 78.3% of students continued enrollment from Spring 2024 to October 2025
- Online program: 77.5% of students continued enrollment from Spring 2024 to October 2025 These improved retention rates demonstrate growing satisfaction with our educational programs.

d) **Parent/Guardian Satisfaction Surveys:** Our Spring 2025 parent/guardian satisfaction surveys show strong community support:

- 93.5% of seat-based parents would recommend CCS to other parents/guardians
- 91% of online parents agreed or strongly agreed that CCS is a safe and orderly place
- 85% of seat-based parents believe their students are well-prepared for the next level of schooling

e) **Student Satisfaction:** Student satisfaction surveys indicate high levels of engagement:

- 90.3% of seat-based students expressed high or moderate satisfaction with CCS's educational program
- 93.2% of online students reported high or moderate satisfaction with CCS's educational program

f) **Inquiries and Applications:** Since January 2025, we have received 87 new student inquiries for potential enrollment in the 2025-26 school year that we cannot currently accommodate due to our enrollment cap constraints.

g) **Geographic Diversity:** Our online program continues to attract students from across Minnesota, with growing interest from rural and underserved communities where educational options are limited.

h) **Parent Testimonials:** Recent parent testimony at board meetings has emphasized the need for continued growth to accommodate siblings of current students and community demand. Several families have explicitly requested enrollment for younger siblings who would need to attend elsewhere if space is not available.

The evidence presented above demonstrates substantial and sustained demand for our educational programs that significantly exceeds our current capacity. An enrollment cap increase to 700 students would allow us to meet this demand while maintaining our high-quality programming and fulfilling our mission to serve more students throughout Minnesota.

#### **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.**

Crosslake Community School has demonstrated strong academic performance in recent years, fulfilling the primary purpose of charter schools to improve pupil learning and student achievement.

##### **Academic Performance Evidence:**

a) **Osprey Wilds Academic Performance Evaluation:** According to our FY23 Academic Performance Evaluation, CCS earned 105% of possible points, qualifying for "Fast Track Renewal" status. Five indicators exceeded target (Mission Related Outcomes, Reading Growth, Reading Proficiency, Science Proficiency, and Other Proficiency or Growth), three indicators met target (Math Growth, Math Proficiency, and Post-Secondary Readiness), and only one indicator (Attendance) did not meet target.

b) **Proficiency Growth:** Our 2024-25 academic data shows significant improvements across core subject areas:

- Math proficiency increased from 24.4% to 30% (5.6 percentage point improvement)
- Reading proficiency increased from 45.7% to 50.3% (4.6 percentage point improvement)
- Science proficiency increased from 34.7% to 40.5% (5.8 percentage point improvement)

c) **MCA Performance Relative to State:** Our students are performing well compared to state averages:

- Reading: Our students' achievement level improvement rate of 35.8% exceeds the state rate of 20.5%

- Math: Our students' achievement level improvement rate of 18.6% exceeds the state rate of 15.3%
- Science: Our seat-based students in grades 5 & 8 achieved a proficiency index score of 74.8%, significantly higher than the state average

d) **Growth Metrics:** Fastbridge data shows substantial student growth:

- 88.3% of seat-based students in grades K-8 made expected or accelerated growth in reading
- 87.5% of seat-based students in grades 2-8 made expected or accelerated growth in math
- 50.4% of online students in grades K-12 made expected or accelerated growth in reading
- 56.2% of online students in grades 2-12 made expected or accelerated growth in math

e) **Special Populations:** We have demonstrated success with special populations:

- Special Education: Our seat-based special education students achieved a reading proficiency index of 32.5% and math proficiency index of 30.5%, both meeting or exceeding state averages
- Free/Reduced Price Lunch: Our seat-based FRP students achieved a reading proficiency index of 55.6% and math proficiency index of 51.7%, both exceeding state averages

f) **Graduation Rate:** Our high school graduation rate increased to 73% in 2024-25, up from 57% in 2021

g) **Credit Attainment:** 82.3% of our returning online students begin 10th grade with 4 or more credits, exceeding our goal of 70%

h) **Kindergarten Readiness:** 83.3% of PreK students met kindergarten readiness standards as measured by our locally-developed assessment

These results demonstrate that CCS is not only fulfilling the primary purpose of charter schools but is doing so with increasingly strong results. Our academic success justifies serving more students for several reasons:

1. **Proven Educational Model:** Our multi-grade approach with looping teachers has demonstrated effectiveness across both programs.
2. **Successful Intervention Systems:** We have established effective Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MnMTSS) for both Seat-Based and Online Programs.
3. **Professional Development Impact:** Our investments in teacher training through High Reliability Schools, LETRS, CARIEALL, NSQ, and Quality Matters are yielding positive academic results. Our new compensation plan connects professional development with

advancement on the salary scale, further incentivizing teacher growth.

4. **Assessment-Driven Instruction:** Our quarterly data review cycles enable timely interventions and instructional adjustments.
5. **Specialized Support Services:** Our special education and intervention programs have demonstrated effectiveness with diverse learners.

The data clearly shows that Crosslake Community School is serving its current students well and is positioned to extend this quality education to more students through an enrollment expansion.

## **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.**

Crosslake Community School has excelled in environmental education (EE), which constitutes a core element of our mission and our contractual obligations with Osprey Wilds.

### **Environmental Education Performance:**

a) **Mission-Related Outcomes (Indicator 1):** CCS has consistently exceeded targets in this area:

- 98% of seat-based students in grades K-8 participated in a minimum of two out of three major community engagement activities in 2024-25, far exceeding our goal of 90%
- 85.2% of online students in grades K-12 participated in environmental or community engagement projects in 2024-25, a significant increase from the 53.7% baseline established in FY22

b) **Environmental Literacy Integration:** We have successfully implemented our Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP) across both programs:

- All teachers have established EE classroom goals aligned with academic standards
- Required EE course for online students in grades 6-8 has 100% participation
- Middle school EE elective class in the seat-based program has expanded enrollment
- Jeffers Journals are used by all students to document environmental learning

c) **Experiential Environmental Learning:** Our hands-on environmental programs continue to thrive:

- Solarium Enhancement: Improved aquaponics system through partnership with Happy Dancing Turtle; expanded plant selection and growing capacity
- School Forest Utilization: Increased educational use of our DNR-designated "Hundred Acre Woods" for interdisciplinary learning
- Science Wednesday (Online Program): Weekly exploration and experiments for elementary students with 93% participation rate
- Community Environmental Partnerships: Collaborations with National Loon Center, Happy Dancing Turtle, and Army Corps of Engineers

d) **Staff Development in EE:** All staff have received environmental education training:

- Jeffers Foundation certification for seat-based teachers
- EE integration training for online teachers
- Cross-program EE collaboration through EE committees

e) **Community Impact:** Our students have engaged in numerous environmental community service projects:

- Annual highway cleanup with 98% student participation
- School grounds beautification projects
- Participation in community recycling initiatives
- Middle School green energy projects focused on solar and wind power

f) **Environmental Awareness Measures:** Internal assessments show growth in environmental literacy:

- 87% of students can articulate multiple ways their actions impact the environment
- 92% of students can identify local environmental issues
- 84% of students have participated in environmental action projects

These accomplishments demonstrate that CCS is not only meeting but exceeding its contractual expectations for environmental education. This success justifies serving more students for several reasons:

1. **Scalable EE Model:** Our environmental education framework has proven effective and can be scaled to accommodate additional students
2. **Environmental Engagement:** High participation rates in environmental activities demonstrate the appeal and effectiveness of our approach
3. **Community Environmental Partnerships:** Strong relationships with local environmental organizations provide resources to support continued growth
4. **Integrated Curriculum:** Our success at embedding environmental concepts across the curriculum ensures all students receive quality environmental education regardless of

program size

5. **EE Leadership:** Our dedicated EE coordinators in both programs have the capacity and expertise to expand programming

By increasing our enrollment cap, we can extend our successful environmental education model to more students, furthering our mission to develop environmentally literate citizens and fulfilling a core purpose of our charter with Osprey Wilds.

## **6. Describe the strengths and areas of improvement of the school's educational program. How is the school addressing the areas of improvement?**

### **Strengths of CCS's Educational Program:**

1. **Small Class Sizes and Personalized Learning:** Our cap of 19 students per class in the Seat-Based Program and low student-to-teacher ratio in the Online Program allow for individualized attention and differentiated instruction. This approach has been particularly effective for students who struggle in larger school settings.
2. **Multi-Grade Approach with Looping Model:** Our classroom structure allows teachers to work with students across multiple years, building stronger relationships and deeper understanding of individual learning needs. Data shows this approach has contributed to higher attendance rates and academic growth.
3. **Environmental Education Integration:** Environmental concepts are embedded across our curriculum rather than treated as separate subjects. This integrated approach has resulted in high levels of student engagement and practical application of environmental concepts.
4. **Dedicated Learning Coach Model:** Each online student has a Learning Coach who facilitates connections between the student, family, teachers, and school programs. This model has improved online student engagement and completion rates.
5. **Strong Community Partnerships:** Collaborations with organizations such as the National Loon Center, Happy Dancing Turtle, and the Army Corps of Engineers enhance our curriculum with real-world applications and experiential learning opportunities.
6. **Effective Assessment Systems:** Our implementation of Fastbridge universal screening along with quarterly data review cycles enables timely identification of student needs and targeted interventions.

7. **Professional Development Focus:** Strategic investments in teacher training through High Reliability Schools (HRS), LETRS, CARIEALL, Responsive Classroom, NSQ, and Quality Matters have improved instructional quality and student outcomes. Our compensation plan now connects professional development with advancement on the salary scale, further incentivizing teacher growth.

### **Areas for Improvement and Addressing Strategies:**

1. **Math Proficiency:** While math proficiency has improved from 24.4% to 30%, it remains below our goals. To address this, we have:
  - Implemented new math curriculum in 2024-25
  - Established quarterly data review cycles to identify struggling students earlier
  - Created intervention systems specifically targeting math skills
  - Provided additional professional development for teachers in math instruction
  - Deployed additional Title I interventionists focused on mathematics
2. **Attendance Challenges:** Consistent attendance remains an area of concern, particularly in our online program. To address this:
  - Created dedicated attendance team to monitor patterns and follow up with families
  - Implemented more engaging synchronous learning opportunities in the online program
  - Established clearer expectations and accountability measures for online attendance
  - Designing tiered reward framework to promote consistent attendance and enhance classroom participation
  - Expanded parent/guardian communication about attendance importance
3. **Special Education Performance in Online Setting:** Students with IEPs in our online program sometimes struggle more than their peers. To address this:
  - Hired additional special education staff for the online program (now 7 licensed SpEd teachers)
  - Implemented enhanced progress monitoring for online students with IEPs
  - Created specialized professional development for online special education staff
  - Designed more accessible digital learning materials
  - Increased synchronous support sessions for students with special needs
4. **Technology Infrastructure:** As our programs have grown, our technology systems have sometimes struggled to keep pace. To address this:
  - Hired dedicated District Technology Manager
  - Enhanced WiFi connectivity in the seat-based location
  - Implemented technology refresh cycle for all devices

- Renamed Technology Coordinator positions to Technology Integrationists with focus on instructional support
  - Developed comprehensive technology plan aligned with strategic goals
5. **Cross-Program Cohesion:** Historically, our seat-based and online programs operated somewhat independently. To address this:
- Implemented unified leadership structure under Executive Director
  - Created district-wide positions supporting both programs
  - Developed shared professional development opportunities
  - Established cross-program collaborative initiatives
  - Implemented unified district newsletter and communication channels
6. **Curriculum Alignment:** Some curriculum areas needed better vertical alignment between grade levels. To address this:
- Established curriculum review cycle
  - Created District Assessment and Curriculum Coordinator position
  - Implemented common assessment framework across programs
  - Aligned curriculum with MnMTSS framework
  - Enhanced curriculum documentation and sharing between teachers
7. **Staff Recruitment and Retention:** The 15.2% turnover rate identified in the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools Compensation Report presents an ongoing challenge. To address this:
- Planning to implement a new comprehensive compensation strategy with significant salary differentials for Tier 3-4 teachers (\$47,000-\$58,000 starting and \$70,000-\$83,000 maximum)
  - Designing financial incentives for staff to obtain proper licensure (10-15% difference between Tier 2/Tier 3 salaries)
  - Developing enhanced benefits package for properly licensed staff (90-95% employer premium coverage for health insurance)
  - Creating teacher mentorship program and leadership pathways
  - Proposing tuition reimbursement for licensure advancement

These improvement efforts demonstrate our commitment to continuous growth and our capacity to identify and address challenges. Our systematic approach to improvement supports our readiness to serve additional students while maintaining educational quality.

## **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;**

Crosslake Community School will maintain our current successful educational model while scaling to accommodate additional students. Key elements include:

**Core Educational Program:**

- Continuation of our multi-grade classroom structure with 19-student cap per class in seat-based program
- Maintenance of our looping model allowing teachers to work with students across multiple years
- Expansion of environmental education integration across the curriculum
- Continuation of our dedicated Learning Coach model for online students
- Implementation of MnMTSS framework across both programs
- Enhanced data-driven instructional practices through quarterly review cycles

**Special Education Services Expansion:**

- Increase special education teaching staff proportionally with enrollment growth:
  - Add 1.0 FTE special education teacher for seat-based program (Year 1)
  - Add 2.0 FTE special education teachers for online program (1.0 FTE in Year 1, 1.0 FTE in Year 2)
  - Add 3.0 FTE paraprofessionals (1.0 FTE per year)
- Enhance specialized services through expanded contracts with service providers:
  - Increase speech/language therapy services by 0.4 FTE
  - Increase occupational therapy services by 0.2 FTE
  - Add 0.2 FTE school psychologist services
- Implement enhanced progress monitoring specifically for students with IEPs
- Create specialized professional development for special education staff

**English Learner Services:**

- While our EL population is currently small (1 seat-based student, 2 online students), we will:
  - Expand contracted EL teacher services from 0.1 FTE to 0.3 FTE in anticipation of growth
  - Enhance identification processes through improved MNLS screening
  - Implement more robust LIEP services as population grows
  - Provide professional development in EL strategies for all teaching staff
  - Develop translated materials for families as needed

**Academic Intervention Services:**

- Add 1.0 FTE Title I interventionist (Year 1)
- Add 1.0 FTE Reading Specialist to support READ Act implementation (Year 2)
- Implement more robust MTSS progress monitoring using Fastbridge
- Expand after-school and summer support programs

**b. How the school will expand other services currently provided to serve additional students;**

**Student Support Services:**

- Increase school counselor staffing from 1.0 to 1.5 FTE (Year 1)
- Expand social worker services from 1.0 to 1.5 FTE (Year 2)
- Enhance telehealth mental health services through ReGroup
- Implement Purpose Prep SEL curriculum more broadly
- Add 0.5 FTE health services coordinator (Year 2)

**Food Service Program:**

- Add 1.0 FTE food service staff member (Year 1)
- Increase meal preparation capacity through kitchen equipment upgrades
- Enhance nutritional offerings based on student input
- Expand participation in federal meal programs

**Transportation Services:**

- Expand contract with C-I Transportation to add one additional daily route
- Complete acquisition of CCS-owned and operated vehicles (1 in Year 1, 1 in Year 2)
- Develop transportation options for after-school programs
- Create more efficient routing systems as enrollment increases

**Extracurricular and Enrichment Programs:**

- Expand Kids Care (after-school program) capacity by 25%
- Implement student activities roadmap including:
  - Competitive Club ESports
  - Competitive Club Fishing Team
  - Competitive Club Archery Team
  - Competitive Club Chess Team
  - Competitive Club Robotics Team
  - Competitive Cross Country Skiing Team
- Develop community partnerships for additional activities:
  - Martial arts programs
  - Dance/ballet instruction
  - Additional STEM-focused offerings

**Environmental Education Programs:**

- Enhance Solarium programming with expanded student participation
- Increase field experiences for all grade levels
- Develop additional environmental service-learning opportunities
- Expand community environmental partnerships

**c. Needed investments in curriculum, technology, equipment or other materials to accommodate additional students;**

**Curriculum Investments:**

- \$40,000 for expanded curriculum resources aligned with enrollment growth
- \$15,000 for additional environmental education materials
- \$25,000 for special education curriculum resources
- \$10,000 for EL curriculum materials
- \$30,000 for intervention curriculum resources including READ Act materials

**Technology Investments:**

- \$120,000 for student devices (120 additional Chromebooks/tablets)
- \$30,000 for staff devices (15 additional laptops)
- \$45,000 for WiFi infrastructure upgrades
- \$25,000 for classroom technology (interactive boards, document cameras)
- \$20,000 for server/network infrastructure enhancements
- \$15,000 for additional software licenses
- \$10,000 for assistive technology for special education

**Equipment Investments:**

- \$35,000 for additional classroom furniture
- \$20,000 for enhanced Solarium equipment
- \$40,000 for CCS-owned vehicle with logo wrapping (Year 1)
- \$40,000 for second CCS-owned vehicle with logo wrapping (Year 2)
- \$25,000 for electronic scrolling sign
- \$15,000 for additional special education assessment materials
- \$10,000 for science laboratory equipment

**Other Materials:**

- \$10,000 for library/media center expansion
- \$15,000 for physical education equipment
- \$8,000 for art supplies and materials
- \$7,000 for music program resources
- \$12,000 for environmental education field equipment
- \$5,000 for additional testing materials

**d. Staffing changes;**

**i. New positions that will be added to accommodate growth;**

Based on our detailed staffing analysis, we will implement the following specific staffing additions to support our enrollment expansion:

**Seat-Based Program (Current: 143, Proposed Increase: 20 students to 163 total):**

- Staffing details to be finalized by Director of Seat-Based Learning, Annette Klang

**Online Program (Current: 357, Proposed Increase: 180 students to 537 total):**

*Elementary Level (Current: 38, Proposed Increase: 19 students):*

- 1.0 FTE Elementary Teacher

*Middle Level (Current: 44, Proposed Increase: 22 students):*

- 0.5 FTE Middle Level English Teacher
- 0.5 FTE Reading Interventionist
- 0.5 FTE Middle Level Math Teacher
- 0.5 FTE Middle Level Science Teacher
- 0.5 FTE Environmental Education Teacher
- 0.5 FTE Middle Level History Teacher
- 0.5 FTE Middle Level Health Teacher
- 0.5 FTE Elementary/MS Homeroom Teacher
- 1.0 FTE Learning Coach

*High School (Current: 275, Proposed Increase: 139 students):*

- 1.0 FTE High School English Teacher
- 1.0 FTE High School Math Teacher
- 1.0 FTE High School Science Teacher
- 1.0 FTE High School History Teacher
- 0.5 FTE Increase for Electives Teacher
- Potential Art Teacher (or restructure of current positions)
- 3.5 FTE Learning Coaches

*Special Education (Current: 67 students, Projected Increase: 32 students):*

- Increase special education teaching staff proportionally with enrollment growth, based on our current special education populations (20.4% for seat-based and 32.7% for online):
  - Add 1.0 FTE special education teacher for seat-based program (Year 1)
  - Add 2.0 FTE special education teachers for online program (1.0 FTE in Year 1, 1.0 FTE in Year 2)
  - Add 3.0 FTE paraprofessionals (1.0 FTE per year)

### *Administrative/Support:*

- 0.5 FTE 504 Coordinator
- 0.5 FTE MTSS Lead Teacher
- 0.5 FTE Reading Interventionist
- 0.5 FTE Math Interventionist
- 0.5 FTE Social Worker
- 0.5 FTE School Counselor

### **District-Wide Positions (already filled or in process):**

- 1.0 FTE Director of Online Learning (already filled by Rose Bierce)
- 1.0 FTE District Technology Manager (already filled by Will Lyke)
- 1.0 FTE (combined) District Engagement and Marketing Coordinators (already filled by Mitch Swaggert and Heidi O'Brien)
- 1.0 FTE District Assessment and Curriculum Coordinator
- 1.0 FTE Executive Operations and Enrollment Compliance Coordinator

This staffing plan represents a strategic approach to growth, ensuring that we maintain appropriate student-to-teacher ratios while providing specialized support services. The phased implementation of these positions will align with our projected enrollment increases.

### **ii. Any other changes to be made to accommodate growth;**

In addition to new positions, we will implement the following changes to accommodate growth:

#### **Administrative Structure:**

- Enhance cabinet meeting structure to ensure cross-program coordination
- Implement formal delegation framework for leadership responsibilities
- Create lead teacher positions within grade-level bands
- Establish instructional coaching model for teacher mentorship
- Refine committee structure to be more efficient with staff time

#### **Professional Development:**

- Develop CCS Teacher Excellence Program:
  - Design and implement a CCS-specific professional development framework that preserves the core benefits of the former Q-Comp program
  - Create an internally managed teacher observation and coaching system
  - Establish performance-based advancement opportunities
  - Develop peer mentorship structures to support teacher growth
  - Align professional development initiatives with school expansion goals and strategic priorities
  - Build sustainable funding model independent of state Q-Comp allocation
- Implement teacher mentorship programs in both online and seat-based settings

- Create cross-program professional learning communities
- Enhance new staff onboarding processes
- Develop leadership pathways within district-wide compensation plan

**Operational Systems:**

- Implement upgraded student information system
- Enhance enrollment management processes
- Improve attendance tracking and intervention systems
- Expand financial management infrastructure
- Refine communication protocols between programs

**Facilities Adjustments:**

- Optimize classroom spaces for multi-grade instruction
- Create additional small-group intervention spaces
- Enhance technology infrastructure to support additional users
- Expand office space for new administrative staff
- Create dedicated professional development space

**Compensation Strategy Implementation:**

- Implement our comprehensive compensation strategy with PELSB licensure incentives:
  - Year 1 (2025-26): Create significant gap between Tier 2/Tier 3 salaries (10-15% difference) and implement higher starting salaries for new Tier 3-4 hires (\$47,000-\$58,000)
  - Year 2 (2026-27): Further widen the gap between license tiers as enrollment approaches 600-650 and implement retention bonuses for Tier 3-4 teachers
  - Year 3 (2027-28): Reach market competitiveness for Tier 3-4 positions (\$70,000-\$83,000 maximum) as enrollment approaches 700

**iii. Provide an organizational chart;**

Please see the Organizational Chart attachment, which illustrates the proposed structure to support our enrollment expansion. The chart demonstrates:

1. Clear reporting lines between online and seat-based programs
2. District-wide positions supporting both programs
3. Executive Director oversight of the entire organization
4. Cabinet structure for collaborative leadership
5. Board governance and oversight

**e. How the school will address additional space needs.**

Crosslake Community School will address additional space needs through a combination of strategic approaches:

## **Seat-Based Program Space Solutions:**

1. **Classroom Reconfiguration:** We will optimize our current building through:
  - Reconfiguring two larger classrooms to accommodate the 19-student cap
  - Converting one office space into a small specialized intervention room
  - Repurposing current storage areas into additional student support spaces
  - Creating multi-purpose spaces that can serve different functions throughout the day
2. **Schedule Optimization:**
  - Implementing staggered specials schedules to maximize use of shared spaces
  - Creating rotating use schedules for common areas
  - Extending the school day slightly to allow for more efficient use of specialized spaces
  - Developing alternative schedules for intervention services
3. **Partnership with LAKE Foundation:**
  - The LAKE Foundation, which owns our building, has committed to exploring a modest expansion of approximately 1,200 square feet to create:
    - Two additional small-group intervention spaces
    - One additional resource room
    - Expanded storage areas to free up existing instructional spaces
  - The Foundation has completed a preliminary feasibility study and is prepared to move forward if our enrollment expansion is approved
4. **Community Partnerships for Additional Space:**
  - Formalizing agreements with Crosslake Community Center for physical education and large group activities
  - Expanding use of local field trip destinations including National Loon Center
  - Utilizing Crosslake Community Library for research projects and enrichment
  - Developing partnership with Crosslake Lutheran Church for additional classroom space if needed

## **Online Program Space Solutions:**

1. **Administrative Space:**
  - Lease additional office space near our current location to house expanded online administrative staff
  - Create dedicated meeting spaces for online program staff collaboration
  - Establish regional testing centers by leasing temporary space for assessment

## 8. Outline how the board will oversee the growth, including monitoring the quality of programs provided to students and the academic outcomes achieved.

The Crosslake Community School Board of Directors will implement a comprehensive oversight framework to ensure that our enrollment expansion maintains and enhances educational quality. This framework includes:

### Strategic Oversight Mechanisms:

1. **Vision Card Implementation:** The board will receive quarterly Vision Card updates tracking progress on key performance metrics:
  - Academic performance indicators (proficiency, growth, graduation rates)
  - Environmental education participation and outcomes
  - Enrollment and retention data by program and subgroup
  - Staffing metrics including retention and qualifications
  - Financial performance relative to enrollment targets
2. **Action Card Accountability:** The board has implemented an Action Card system for all committees to ensure accountability:
  - Each committee documents specific action steps related to growth management
  - Progress updates are required at monthly board meetings
  - Red/yellow/green status indicators highlight areas needing attention
  - Board maintains oversight while empowering committees to address operational details
3. **Enhanced Committee Structure:** The board has refined its committee structure to provide more focused oversight:
  - Finance Committee: Monthly review of enrollment-based financial projections
  - Academic Committee: Quarterly analysis of academic performance data
  - Personnel Committee: Regular review of staffing plans and professional development
  - Facilities Committee: Oversight of space utilization and technology infrastructure
  - Governance Committee: Policy updates to support enrollment growth
4. **Board Work Sessions:** The board has established quarterly work sessions dedicated to strategic oversight:
  - Two-hour focused sessions between regular board meetings
  - Detailed review of specific growth-related topics
  - Opportunity for deeper discussion than regular board meetings allow
  - Forums for long-term strategic planning

## **Academic Quality Monitoring:**

1. **Regular Academic Performance Reports:** The board will receive enhanced academic reporting:
  - Monthly data dashboard showing real-time academic performance indicators
  - Quarterly comprehensive academic reports with comparison to enrollment projections
  - Analysis of performance by student subgroups across both programs
  - Review of intervention effectiveness for struggling students
  - Implementation progress on MnMTSS framework
2. **Academic Growth Targets:** The board has established specific academic targets tied to enrollment growth:
  - Math: 5 percentage point annual improvement in proficiency
  - Reading: 5 percentage point annual improvement in proficiency
  - Science: 5 percentage point annual improvement in proficiency
  - Achievement gap reduction of 3 percentage points annually
  - Graduation rate improvement of 2 percentage points annually
3. **External Evaluation:** The board will commission annual external evaluations:
  - Independent review of academic performance relative to enrollment growth
  - Recommendations for program adjustments based on findings
  - Benchmark comparisons with similar charter schools experiencing growth
  - Compliance verification with Osprey Wilds' academic expectations
4. **Environmental Education Oversight:** The board will monitor environmental education quality through:
  - Quarterly EE committee reports tied to enrollment metrics
  - Annual environmental literacy assessments
  - Tracking participation rates in environmental activities
  - Evaluation of community environmental partnerships

## **Operational Quality Monitoring:**

1. **Executive Director Accountability:** The board has implemented quarterly reviews with the Executive Director:
  - Written updates on enrollment management
  - Staffing adjustments relative to enrollment growth
  - Professional development implementation
  - Program quality indicators across both programs
  - Leadership team effectiveness

2. **Staff Feedback Mechanisms:** The board will gather direct staff input on growth management:
  - Confidential semi-annual staff surveys focused on growth impacts
  - Teacher representative reports at board meetings
  - Open forum sessions during strategic work sessions
  - Clear pathways for staff to communicate concerns directly to the board
3. **Parent/Guardian and Student Voice:** The board will ensure stakeholder input through:
  - Enhanced annual satisfaction surveys with specific growth-related questions
  - Parent/guardian focus groups each semester
  - Student advisory council meetings with board representatives
  - Community forum events for public feedback
4. **Financial Oversight:**
  - Monthly review of actual vs. projected enrollment
  - Quarterly budget adjustments based on enrollment realities
  - Cash flow monitoring with triggers for board intervention if needed
  - Maintenance of fund balance goals despite growth pressures
5. **Compensation Plan Implementation Oversight:**
  - Regular review of staff retention metrics relative to the competitive compensation plan
  - Monitoring effectiveness of licensure-based compensation differentials
  - Ensuring phased implementation aligns with enrollment growth
  - Maintaining appropriate fund balance while implementing competitive salaries

The board recognizes that growth must never compromise quality. Through these oversight mechanisms, we will ensure that our enrollment expansion enhances rather than dilutes the educational experience for all Crosslake Community School students. The board is committed to taking prompt corrective action if any indicators suggest that growth is negatively impacting program quality or student outcomes.

## **9. Provide a 3-year budget beginning with the year in which the increased enrollment would be realized. Include basic assumptions in the budget.**

Crosslake Community School has developed a fiscally sound 3-year budget that supports our enrollment expansion while maintaining financial stability. The budget reflects our commitment to responsible growth, prioritizing student needs while ensuring long-term sustainability.

### **Budget Summary (FY26-FY28):**

<b>Category</b>	<b>FY26 (2025-26)</b>	<b>FY27 (2026-27)</b>	<b>FY28 (2027-28)</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>			
General Education Aid	\$6,158,675	\$6,758,500	\$7,050,600
Special Education Aid	\$984,250	\$1,079,840	\$1,125,700
Federal Title Funding	\$175,000	\$192,500	\$201,250
Federal Special Education	\$124,500	\$136,500	\$142,500
Food Service Revenue	\$148,750	\$163,250	\$170,500
Other Revenue	\$110,000	\$115,000	\$120,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$7,701,175</b>	<b>\$8,445,590</b>	<b>\$8,810,550</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$5,402,500	\$5,932,000	\$6,189,000
Instructional Materials	\$185,000	\$162,500	\$157,500
Technology	\$265,000	\$175,000	\$160,000
Contracted Services	\$695,400	\$725,600	\$747,500
Facilities/Operations	\$580,300	\$598,700	\$620,500
Transportation	\$185,000	\$196,000	\$205,000
Food Service	\$160,000	\$176,000	\$184,000
Other Expenses	\$82,500	\$90,000	\$95,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$7,555,700</b>	<b>\$8,055,800</b>	<b>\$8,358,500</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$145,475</b>	<b>\$389,790</b>	<b>\$452,050</b>
<b>FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>\$2,348,105</b>	<b>\$2,737,895</b>	<b>\$3,189,945</b>
<b>FUND BALANCE %</b>	<b>31.1%</b>	<b>34.0%</b>	<b>38.2%</b>

**Key Budget Assumptions:**

**1. Enrollment Projections:**

- FY26: 607 ADM (640 total students)
- FY27: 665 ADM (703 total students)

- FY28: 693 ADM (764 total students)

## **2. Revenue Assumptions:**

- Basic formula allowance of \$7,481 per pupil (as confirmed by MDE's February 28, 2025 memo)
- Special education funding at approximately 90% of actual costs
- Title funding based on qualifying student population (currently 58%)
- Conservative estimates for all federal and competitive grant funding
- Food service revenue based on 65% participation rate

## **3. Staffing Assumptions:**

- Student-to-teacher ratio maintained at current levels
- Special education staffing aligned with projected service needs
- Phased addition of administrative and support positions
- Annual salary increases of 3% for all staff
- Benefits calculated at 30% of salaries
- Professional development at 2% of salaries
- Implementation of compensation strategy with PELSB licensure incentives:
  - Year 1: Initial Tier 3-4 teacher salary differentials (10-15% above Tier 2)
  - Year 2: Enhanced differentials with retention bonuses
  - Year 3: Full market competitiveness for properly licensed staff

## **4. Operational Assumptions:**

- Technology investment heavily front-loaded in Year 1
- Curriculum and instructional materials front-loaded in Year 1
- Contracted services increase proportionally with enrollment
- Facilities costs include lease, utilities, maintenance, and minor improvements
- Transportation costs reflect expanded contracted services and vehicle acquisition
- Food service expenses aligned with projected participation

## **5. Financial Management Principles:**

- Maintain fund balance above 30% of annual expenditures (exceeding 24% requirement)
- Budget conservatively for revenues, especially enrollment-based funding
- Front-load investments in technology and curriculum
- Create contingency reserves for unexpected enrollment fluctuations
- Monitor cash flow monthly with quarterly adjustments
- Maintain debt-free status through LAKE Foundation partnership

## **6. Financial Impact of Increased Enrollment**

- The school's February 2025 financial report indicates a projected deficit of \$98,154 for the current fiscal year. However, the addition of students through our proposed expansion will significantly improve our financial position:
  - Just 100 additional students would generate approximately \$748,100 in new revenue (at \$7,481 per pupil)

- This new revenue would transform our current deficit into a substantial surplus of over \$600,000
- The economies of scale achieved through growth allow us to spread fixed costs across more students
- Our strong fund balance (31.7% of expenditures) provides stability during the transition
- The ADM of 493.65 as of February 2025 confirms we've effectively reached our current enrollment cap

The financial impact calculations support our ability to make the necessary investments in staffing, technology, and curriculum while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

This budget demonstrates our financial capacity to implement the proposed enrollment expansion while maintaining fiscal stability. The consistent positive net income and strong fund balance percentages reflect our commitment to responsible growth. The front-loaded investments in technology, curriculum, and staffing ensure that we have the necessary infrastructure in place before additional students arrive.

## **10. Discuss any potential challenges related to the proposed enrollment increase and possible solutions to address these challenges.**

Crosslake Community School acknowledges that enrollment expansion brings inherent challenges. We have identified key potential challenges and developed proactive solutions to address each:

### **Challenge 1: Maintaining Educational Quality During Growth**

*Potential Impact:* Rapid enrollment growth could potentially dilute program quality if not carefully managed and monitored.

*Solutions:*

- Phased implementation approach with growth targets monitored quarterly
- Front-loaded investments in staffing and resources before enrollment increases
- Continued commitment to small class sizes (19-student cap in seat-based program)
- Enhanced professional development for all staff on core instructional models
- Quarterly academic data reviews with intervention triggers for underperforming areas
- Comprehensive classroom observation cycles to ensure instructional quality
- Implementation of teacher mentorship programs to support new staff

### **Challenge 2: Staffing for Growth**

*Potential Impact:* Finding qualified staff, particularly in specialized areas like special education, could be difficult in a competitive hiring environment.

*Solutions:*

- Implementation of our comprehensive compensation strategy with significant differentials for properly licensed staff
- Early recruitment beginning immediately upon approval of expansion
- Development of "grow your own" teacher pathway in partnership with local universities
- Enhanced new teacher mentorship program to improve retention
- Expanded professional development opportunities as recruitment/retention incentive
- Flexible work arrangements for specialized positions
- Strategic use of contracted services to supplement staff in hard-to-fill positions
- Development of teacher leadership pathways to enhance retention

### **Challenge 3: Technology Infrastructure Capacity**

*Potential Impact:* Increased enrollment, particularly in the online program, will place additional demands on our technology infrastructure.

*Solutions:*

- Comprehensive technology audit completed in February 2025
- Phased implementation of infrastructure upgrades prioritizing critical systems
- Front-loaded investment in server capacity and network infrastructure
- Creation of District Technology Manager position (already filled)
- Development of technology refresh cycle aligned with enrollment growth
- Implementation of enhanced troubleshooting and support systems
- Contingency plans for technology failures including backup systems
- Cloud-based solutions to reduce on-premise infrastructure demands

### **Challenge 4: Facility Constraints for Seat-Based Program**

*Potential Impact:* Physical space limitations could constrain growth in the seat-based program.

*Solutions:*

- Strategic classroom reconfiguration to optimize existing space
- Partnership with LAKE Foundation for modest building expansion
- Schedule optimization to maximize use of shared spaces
- Community partnerships for specialized instructional spaces
- Implementation of flexible learning environments
- Creative use of outdoor learning spaces aligning with environmental mission
- Development of additional small-group intervention spaces
- Long-range facilities planning aligned with strategic plan

## **Challenge 5: Special Education Service Delivery**

*Potential Impact:* Increased enrollment will likely bring additional special education needs, potentially straining service delivery systems.

*Solutions:*

- Front-loaded hiring of special education staff before student enrollment increases
- Enhanced progress monitoring systems for early identification of challenges
- Development of comprehensive intervention framework aligned with MnMTSS
- Expanded contracts with related service providers (OT, PT, Speech, Psychology)
- Implementation of co-teaching models to maximize inclusion opportunities
- Advanced training for all staff in differentiated instruction
- Technology solutions for specialized service delivery
- Strengthened partnership with Paul Bunyan Special Education Cooperative

## **Challenge 6: Staff Retention During Growth**

*Potential Impact:* The 15.2% turnover rate identified in the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools Compensation Report could be exacerbated during growth periods.

*Solutions:*

- Implementation of our comprehensive compensation strategy that incentivizes proper licensure and longevity
- Creating significant salary differentials (10-15%) between Tier 2 and Tier 3-4 teachers
- Offering competitive benefits package (90-95% employer premium coverage for health insurance)
- Developing clearly defined career advancement pathways
- Providing tuition reimbursement for staff pursuing higher licensure levels
- Implementing mentorship programs for new staff
- Enhancing professional development opportunities
- Creating positive school culture initiatives specific to growth periods

## **Challenge 7: Cultural Integration Across Programs**

*Potential Impact:* Growth could exacerbate existing cultural divisions between online and seat-based programs.

*Solutions:*

- Implementation of "4Cs" approach: Communication, Clarity, Connection, and Collaboration
- Unified district newsletter to strengthen shared identity
- Cross-program professional development opportunities
- Joint community events and service projects when feasible

- Shared governance structures including district-wide cabinet
- Common branding and messaging across programs
- Development of shared traditions and celebrations
- Regular opportunities for staff collaboration across programs

### **Challenge 8: Financial Management During Growth**

*Potential Impact:* Growth phases often create financial unpredictability that could strain resources.

*Solutions:*

- Conservative enrollment projections in budget planning
- Maintenance of strong fund balance (over 30%) as buffer
- Monthly enrollment monitoring with quarterly budget adjustments
- Phased implementation of staffing plans tied to actual enrollment
- Front-loaded investments in infrastructure to avoid future emergencies
- Development of contingency funds for unexpected needs
- Creation of triggered hiring process based on confirmed enrollment
- Clear financial monitoring protocols with board oversight

Crosslake Community School is confident that these proactive solutions will effectively address the challenges associated with our proposed enrollment expansion. Our methodical approach, with careful planning, phased implementation, and robust monitoring systems, positions us well to manage growth while maintaining and enhancing educational quality.

By anticipating these challenges and developing specific solutions, we demonstrate our readiness to responsibly increase our enrollment cap to 700 students. Our planning reflects a realistic understanding of the complexities of school growth while maintaining our unwavering commitment to our mission of growing environmentally literate, community-impacting learners of excellence and the students we serve.

We believe this comprehensive expansion plan aligns with Osprey Wilds' expectations for quality charter schools and demonstrates our capacity to implement growth responsibly and effectively.