

ST. CROIX PREPARATORY ACADEMY

DIRECT BID REQUEST

PAYROLL SERVICES ONLY

4260 Stagecoach Trail North | Stillwater, MN 55082

Bid/Quote Due	Nov 16, 2026 at 1 pm
Anticipated Selection	Nov 22, 2026
Anticipated Service Start	Jan 1, 2027
Contract Term	June 30, 2028
School Contact	Jenn Fuchs, Executive Director, jennfuchs@stcroixprep.org

This request is limited to payroll services. No business management, general accounting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, grant management, budgeting, financial reporting, audit preparation, or broader HR services are included unless expressly identified as payroll-related below.

1. Purpose of Request

St. Croix Preparatory Academy (the "School") is requesting direct bids from qualified firms to provide complete outsourced payroll processing and payroll compliance services. The School seeks a provider with demonstrated experience serving Minnesota public schools or charter schools and the ability to process payroll accurately, securely, and on schedule while meeting all applicable federal, state, retirement-system, and reporting requirements.

The intent of this bid is to combine the payroll-related responsibilities previously included within broader school business-service agreements into one clearly defined payroll-only scope.

2. School and Payroll Profile

Organization	St. Croix Preparatory Academy Charter School
Address	4260 Stagecoach Trail North, Stillwater, MN 55082
Payroll Frequency	Twice monthly, generally the 15th and 30th, according to the School-approved payroll calendar
Approximate Employees per Payroll	150
Current Payroll / Finance System	Skyward
Current Time & Labor / Timekeeping System	Skyward

3. Required Scope of Payroll Services

The selected provider will be responsible for the following payroll services. The bid price should include all routine services listed below unless a service is specifically identified as optional or separately priced.

Service Area	Required Service
Payroll Processing	Process payroll in accordance with the School-approved payroll calendar, including regular salaried and hourly compensation, additional assignments, stipends, supplemental pay, retroactive adjustments, and other approved payroll items.
Payroll Register and Pre-Payroll Review	Prepare and provide a complete payroll register to the School before payroll is finalized. Allow sufficient time for School review, questions, corrections, and approval prior to submission.
Federal and State Payroll Taxes	Calculate, withhold, remit, and reconcile all required federal and Minnesota payroll taxes. Prepare and file all required federal and state payroll tax returns and reports, including quarterly Form 941 filings and applicable state withholding returns.
Minnesota Employment and Unemployment Reporting	Prepare and submit required Minnesota employment, wage, and unemployment insurance reports and related payroll filings.

Service Area	Required Service
TRA and PERA Reporting	Calculate and remit required Minnesota public pension contributions and prepare all required Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) and Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) payroll reporting.
Deductions and Withholdings	Process statutory and voluntary deductions and withholdings accurately, including retirement, insurance, flexible spending/health savings deductions, garnishments, levies, tax-sheltered deductions, and other School-authorized deductions.
Benefits and Payroll Changes	Enter and process approved benefit and deduction changes. Support annual benefit-renewal updates and other mass changes to payroll deductions when required.
W-2 Reporting	Prepare, reconcile, issue, and file annual Forms W-2 and required transmittals within applicable deadlines. Provide electronic and/or paper employee copies as requested by the School.
ACA Reporting	Prepare and file required Affordable Care Act (ACA) employer reporting and employee statements, including Forms 1094-C and 1095-C, if applicable to the School.
Payroll Liability Reconciliation	Reconcile payroll-related liabilities, tax deposits, retirement contributions, deductions, and other payroll clearing accounts sufficiently to identify and resolve discrepancies in a timely manner.
UFARS / School Accounting Coordination	Ensure payroll-related coding and payroll files support accurate Minnesota school accounting/UFARS requirements. Coordinate with the School's finance staff or contracted financial-services provider regarding payroll posting and coding issues.
Year-End and Calendar-Year Close	Complete payroll year-end reconciliations and calendar-year reporting, and support transition between calendar and fiscal years as needed.
Employee and School Support	Provide timely payroll support to the School's designated payroll contact, including research and resolution of payroll errors, employee pay questions, tax questions, retirement-reporting issues, and deduction discrepancies.
Records and Documentation	Maintain organized payroll records, filing confirmations, reconciliation documentation, and support necessary for audits, compliance reviews, and School record-retention requirements.

4. Services Not Included in This Bid

The School is not requesting bids for the following services as part of this payroll-only solicitation:

- Business manager or CFO services
- General ledger maintenance beyond payroll-specific entries/reconciliations
- Accounts payable or accounts receivable
- Budget development, monitoring, or board financial reporting
- Grant management, SEDRA/SERVS, or federal grant administration
- Audit preparation other than providing payroll records and supporting documentation
- 1099 preparation or vendor-payment services
- Human resources management, recruitment, employee relations, or benefits administration beyond payroll-related deduction entry and processing
- Facilities, technology, or other school business-office functions

5. School Responsibilities and Workflow

The School anticipates the following division of responsibilities. Vendors may recommend workflow improvements in their response, but should identify any change that would affect price, staffing, systems, or internal controls.

Party	Responsibility
School	Provide approved time, attendance, stipend, and other variable-pay information by the mutually agreed payroll cutoff date.
School	Provide new-hire, termination, compensation, benefit, deduction, tax, and other payroll changes in a complete and timely manner.
School	Review the pre-final payroll register for accuracy and authorize payroll before final processing.
School	Provide vendor with necessary system access, banking authorization, retirement-system authorization, and designated contacts, subject to School security and internal-control requirements.
Vendor	Maintain a payroll calendar with clear cutoff dates and communicate missing or questionable information promptly.
Vendor	Process and finalize payroll only after completion of required review and approval steps.
Vendor	Maintain documented procedures, segregation-of-duties safeguards, and backup staffing to ensure uninterrupted payroll service.
Vendor	Provide confirmation of tax deposits, filings, retirement submissions, and other required payroll compliance transactions.

6. Minimum Vendor Qualifications

- Demonstrated experience processing payroll for Minnesota public school districts and/or charter schools.
- Current knowledge of federal and Minnesota payroll tax requirements, Minnesota unemployment reporting, TRA, PERA, ACA reporting, and school payroll practices.
- Adequate staffing and backup coverage to ensure payroll is completed accurately and on time despite staff absences or emergencies.
- Ability to work with the School's payroll/finance, timekeeping, benefit, and banking systems or provide a clearly described integration approach.
- Professional liability/errors and omissions coverage and any other insurance reasonably required by the School.
- Secure handling of employee payroll data and compliance with applicable federal and state privacy and data-security requirements, including the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act where applicable.

7. Service, Security, and Contract Expectations

- Vendor will perform services accurately, professionally, in a timely manner, and in the best interests of the School.
- Vendor will designate a primary payroll contact and a backup contact.
- Vendor will notify the School promptly of payroll errors, missed deadlines, rejected filings, tax notices, retirement-system issues, or other material compliance concerns.
- All School payroll data, reports, files, and work products created for the School will remain the property of the School and must be returned or transferred upon request or termination.
- Vendor must protect confidential payroll and employee data and may not disclose School data except as authorized by the School or required by law.
- Vendor should identify its standard response times, escalation process, disaster-recovery/continuity procedures, and cybersecurity controls related to payroll data.
- The final agreement will be governed by Minnesota law and will include mutually acceptable termination, indemnification, insurance, confidentiality, and data-security provisions.

8. Implementation and Transition

The selected vendor must provide a transition plan sufficient to ensure no interruption to payroll. The proposal should describe:

- Implementation timeline and required lead time before the first payroll;
- Data conversion or setup requirements;
- Responsibility for employee master-file validation;
- Testing and parallel payroll, if recommended;
- TRA/PERA, tax, banking, benefit, and system setup requirements;
- Year-to-date conversion requirements if services begin mid-calendar year;
- Training and communication needed for School staff;
- Contingency plan for the first two payroll cycles.

9. Bid / Proposal Response Requirements

Please provide a concise response containing the following information:

- Firm name, address, primary contact, telephone number, and email address.
- Brief description of the firm and its Minnesota K-12/charter school payroll experience.
- Names and qualifications of the staff who would be assigned to St. Croix Preparatory Academy, including primary and backup payroll personnel.
- List of current Minnesota school clients for which the firm provides payroll services, with at least three references if available.
- Confirmation that the firm can perform every item in Section 3. Clearly identify any exception, limitation, dependency, or separately priced service.
- Description of payroll systems supported and any required third-party software, licenses, interfaces, or implementation costs.

- Description of internal controls, quality review, backup coverage, data-security controls, and business-continuity procedures.
- Implementation/transition plan and earliest available start date.
- Completed pricing form in Section 10.
- Sample service agreement or proposed contractual terms, if available.

10. Pricing Form

Pricing should be stated as a fixed annual amount whenever possible. Identify any variable, per-employee, per-payroll, setup, software, year-end, ACA, retirement-reporting, tax-filing, or other charges separately. The School is seeking transparent all-in pricing for the required scope.

Pricing Item	Amount	Notes / Assumptions
Annual payroll services - base fee		
Implementation / conversion fee		
Payroll software or platform fees		
Time & labor / integration fees		
W-2 preparation and filing		
ACA reporting		
TRA / PERA reporting		
Federal / state tax filing		
Additional payroll cycle / off-cycle payroll		
Hourly consulting rate for work outside scope		
Other required fees (describe)		
TOTAL ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST		

11. Selection Considerations

The School will consider the following factors when selecting a payroll provider. The School is not obligated to select the lowest-cost proposal and will consider overall value, experience, risk, and service quality.

Factor and Points	Considerations
Relevant Experience-15 pts	Minnesota public school/charter payroll expertise; TRA/PERA and school payroll knowledge.
Scope and Service Model-20 pts	Ability to perform the full required scope; staffing, backup coverage, responsiveness, and implementation approach.
Accuracy, Compliance, and Controls-20 points	Quality-control procedures, tax and retirement compliance, reconciliations, internal controls, and error-resolution process.
Technology and Data Security-10pts	System compatibility, secure data handling, continuity, and integration capabilities.
Cost and Overall Value-30 pts	Total annual cost, transparency of fees, and value of included services.
References-5 pts	Demonstrated performance for comparable Minnesota school clients.

12. Bid Conditions

- The School may request clarification, additional information, interviews, demonstrations, or best-and-final pricing before selection.
- The School may reject any or all bids, waive informalities, negotiate scope or terms, or discontinue the process if determined to be in the School's best interests.
- All costs of preparing a response are the responsibility of the bidder.
- Any final award is subject to the School's Board of Directors' approval and execution of a written agreement acceptable to the School.
- Bidders should identify any proposed contract term, annual escalation, renewal condition, minimum commitment, or termination fee.

13. Submission

Submit bid/quote electronically to: Jenn Fuchs, Executive Director, jennfuchs@stcroixprep.org

Deadline: Nov 16, 2026 at 1 pm

Scope Development Note: This payroll-only scope consolidates payroll responsibilities previously included in the School's broader outsourced financial-services and business-management agreements. Non-payroll services have intentionally been excluded.