

Valdez City Schools Request for Proposal (RFP) Managed IT Services



IMPORTANT: Read all conditions and instructions carefully.

Proposal electronically submitted to:

Valdez City Schools
Amber Cawley
Director of Business Services
acawley@valdezcityschools.org
PO 398
1112 W Klutina St
Valdez, AK 99686

Due On:

May 5, 2025 by 4:30 PM (AKST)

1. About Valdez City Schools

Valdez City Schools is committed to providing high-quality learning environments that support student engagement, communication, and community involvement. As a PK-12 District, VCS serves approximately 600 students and employs 150 staff members across three school buildings.

2. Introduction

Valdez City Schools is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide select managed IT services for its technology infrastructure. This includes network maintenance, security, and planning to ensure uninterrupted connectivity and proactive issue resolution. The District is also restructuring its organization of services, requiring additional advanced systems administration services. This RFP intends to solicit responses and formal proposals from qualified Managed IT Services Providers (MSPs) and select a single organization to provide select IT services to Valdez City Schools commencing July 1, 2025. The winning bidder will work closely with the Valdez City Schools Technology Department during the life of the awarded contract.

The information presenting in the RFP is not to be construed as a commitment of any kind on the part of the District. There is no expressed or implied obligation for the district to reimburse responding Vendors for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals.

Valdez City Schools reserves the right to accept or reject any proposals, to negotiate terms, and to award a contract deemed to be in the best interest of the District.

3. Commencement of Terms and Services

The initial term of the MSP Agreement will be three (3) years commencing on July 1, 2025. If the District is satisfied with the level and quality of service provided, the expectation will be to renew the contract annually.

4. Technical Environment Overview

The information below outlines the general demographics of Valdez City Schools and our current technical environment.

4.1 Campus Locations:

Valdez City Schools has IT infrastructure that runs through multiple city-owned school buildings including, but not limited to:

1. Hermon Hutchens Elementary School
2. Gilson Middle School
3. Valdez High School
4. VCS District Office (facility soon to be closed and relocated to HHES)
5. VCS Warehouse 'Bus Barn' (soon to be connected with internet services)

4.2 Number of Users:

VCS has users with accounts in two overall classifications:

Staff: 150 employees

Students: 600 students

4.3 VCS Technology Department Staff:

VCS will retain one Desktop Support Technician employee and one Director of Technology administrator.

4.4 Current Technical Environment:

- Core Hardware (approximate)
 - (2) physical Dell PowerEdge R440I Domain Controllers, (2) virtual machines
 - (6) Dell PowerEdge R740 physical servers for VMware ESXi Hosts
 - (2) Backup Dell NX3230 Server for backup
 - (2) Dell Equallogic PS4210x storage arrays
 - (17) Virtual Servers (facilitating print server, VOIP, test content management, legacy software)
 - (1) Meraki MX450 firewall
 - (73) Meraki access points
 - (16) Meraki MS250-48FP switches
 - (4) Meraki MS350-48FP switches
 - (5) Meraki MS355-48X switches
 - (1) Meraki MS425-32 Agg switch
 - (1) Meraki MS425-16 Agg switch
 - Smart UPS on all switches
 - Kyocera copiers (6 color, 6 b/w) - managed by Kelley Create
- Software Systems (not all inclusive)
 - Technical
 - vMWare vsphere
 - Microsoft Active Directory
 - End Point Protection
 - Windows 10/11
 - Windows Server 2016+
 - MacOS, iOS
 - Administrative
 - Google Workspace for Education
 - Clever (SSO, Rostering)
 - Microsoft Office
 - Adobe Creative Cloud
 - Browsers: Google Chrome, Apple Safari, Mozilla Firefox
 - Black Mountain Software (Accounting)
 - LINQ Titan (Nutrition)
 - Powerschool (Student SIS)
 - Major sub-products: Special Programs, Curriculum and Instruction, School Messenger, Enrollment, ECollect
 - Frontline (Employee Central, Aesop Absence, Recruiting)
 - Finalsight (website)

- Brightly
- Destiny (library catalog)
- One to One Plus (ITSM, ITAM)
- Jamf MDM (moving to Mosyle)
- Securly Content Filtering (Browsing)
- Gaggle Content Filtering (Google Workspace)
- BoardDocs
- Connectivity
 - Current internet is sourced by Copper Valley Telecom. Speeds are currently 1 GB up/down.
 - Remote Access / VPN access
- Workstations and other devices, this number is approximate.
 - 500 Macbooks (9-12th grade, most employees)
 - 750 iPads (K-8th grade student 1:1 devices, teachers, small fleet at VHS)
 - 25 Windows PCs (select employees, one CTE computer fleet of 15 for students)
 - 80 Apple TVs
 - VOIP phone system with approximately 70+ handsets, maintained through local provider Copper Valley Telecom.

5. Scope of Services

5.1 Statement of Essential Need for IT Managed Service Provider

The selected vendor will be responsible for the following support services:

1. Full Network Infrastructure Management:
 - a. Administration of Meraki firewalls, switches, and access points (APs)
 - b. VLAN segmentation optimization and security enhancements
 - c. Site-to-site VPN assessment and assistance
 - d. Bandwidth and content filtering policy management by SSID and/or Organizational Unit
 - e. On-premises and cloud-hosted server management, proactive maintenance, and support
 - f. Optimizing infrastructure through providing recommendations and implementing approved changes to the location, configuration, or installation of equipment
 - g. Collaborating with district partners and contractors to support network changes required by coordinating projects, including but not limited to:
 - i. Internet Service Provider Copper Valley Telecommunications (during upgrades)
 - ii. Winning bidder to Security Camera & Door Access Camera project (during installation of new security system)
 - iii. City of Valdez and related contractors during facility construction projects
 - iv. Copier contract service provider (Kelley Create)
2. Full Network Monitoring & Troubleshooting:
 - a. Ongoing monitoring and performance analysis of network systems
 - b. Proactive identification and resolution of connectivity and security issues
 - c. Emergency response to unplanned outages and cyberattack
3. Advanced Systems Administration Support:
 - a. Tier 2 and 3 identity management and user account support (Active Directory, Google)
 - b. Student content filtering management and support

- c. Print server maintenance and networked printer support (as regarding VCS Infrastructure; all hardware and some software issues are serviced by Kelley Create)
4. Advanced Remote Device Management & Helpdesk Support:
 - a. Tier 3 Endpoint support for 1250 devices (500 computers + 750 iPads)
 - b. Dedicated remote IT technician or team provide advanced troubleshooting, advanced MDM configuration and deployment guidance to support VCS Desktop Technician
5. Communication Expectations between Partner and Site
 - a. Integrated ticketing system support for escalating and tracking issues and assets
 - b. Service Level Agreement for ticket response time according to negotiated priority levels.
 - c. Technical support service contact information for after business hours to resolve emergency system issues.
 - d. Change Control procedures and communication established for changes which could impact access or system uptime, particularly during school and business hours.
 - e. Remote access tools for distance technical support
 - f. Weekly stand-up calls or video-conferencing with VCS Tech. Department
 - g. Monthly on-site IT support visits, to include status reports detailing:
 - i. Status of ongoing and upcoming projects
 - ii. Noteworthy network device downtime
 - iii. Server issues – limited disk space, downtime, etc.

5.2 Areas of Potential Professional Service Need

VCS has identified several tasks for which it anticipates the possible need for professional services. Projects listed below might be outside the scope and budget of this RFP, but would be considered for additional professional services contracts. These include but are not limited to the following:

- On-premises server migration to cloud-hosted alternatives (including print server)
- Significant identity authentication revisions (Move to Azure/Entra, Multi-Factor Authentication for employee accounts, etc)

5.3 Areas OUTSIDE Initial Scope of MSP RFP and Retained by Valdez City Schools

1. Primary Systems Administration (Account creation and archival, basic Tier 1 troubleshooting)
2. Student Information System (SIS) Administration
3. Digital Curriculum Account Management (Access, issue resolution)
4. Primary Desktop Support (Tier 1 and 2)
 - a. Hardware
 - i. Apple repairs (sent to Apple repair facilities)
 - b. Software
 - i. All curriculum software account management and issue resolution
 - ii. Most administrative software account management and issue resolution
5. Capital Project Management
6. Procurement (Hardware, software, licensing, contracts)
7. Strategic Planning
8. Professional Development
9. Communications

- a. Websites
 - b. Social Media
 - c. Parent Communication Platforms (School Messenger, Seesaw)
10. State and Federal Reporting

6. Proposal Requirements

Vendors submitting proposals should include the following information:

- Company background and relevant experience in managed IT services
- Detailed approach to fulfilling the scope of services
- Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for response and resolution times by issue type/priority levels
- Cost proposal, including pricing structure and any additional fees
- References from similar K-12 school District clients

7. RFP Inquiries

Inquiries about this request for proposal should be made no later than May 4, 2025 to:
Valdez City Schools, ATTN: Megan Gunderson, mgunderson@valdezcityschools.org

- Unauthorized contact by the Vendor with other District employees or Board members regarding the RFP may result in disqualification.
- The Vendor may, at the option of the District, be required to make oral presentations for clarification purposes. In conducting these discussions, there shall be no disclosure of any information obtained from any competing Vendor. These presentations may be scheduled and held after receipt and evaluation of the proposals. Refusal by a Vendor to honor the request for an oral presentation may result in disqualification.

8. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria on a scale of 1-10:

- A. **Organizational Expertise in Alaskan K-12 environments (20%):** The bidder's capacity and resources to perform and provide the services described in the RFP.
- a. Please Provide:
 - i. Documentation if the Vendors are an established:
 1. Microsoft Certified Partner
 2. Cisco Certified Partner
 3. Apple Certified Consultant
 4. Mosyle Partner
 - ii. Three references for which your company has provided IT services during the past three years, with preference to Alaskan K-12 Districts.
 - iii. Any past projects or support you may have provided for Valdez City Schools.
 - b. Responses will be evaluated against the following questions based on the bidder's experience with K-12 Districts:

- i. Has the Proposer provided a list with requested information for their three comparable clients and how does that list of clients compare to other proposers?
- ii. How favorable are the references compared to the other proposers with regard to quality, firm responsiveness, audit staff competency, and timeliness of responses to client needs?
- iii. How extensive is the Proposer's experience in providing services such as those requested in this RFP, to organizations of similar size? The following factors will be considered:
 1. Depth of experience (number of years' experience with clients)
 2. Types and locations of clients (e.g. municipality, school District – specifically in Alaska)
 3. Comparable size of IT clients (e.g. number of clients)
- iv. How extensive is the Proposer's experience with a Technical Environment similar to that identified in this RFP, and the Service Requirements identified in this RFP? Do they have experience with the major platforms in our environment, such as Meraki, Mosyle, and Apple?
- v. Does the proposer have any previous experience performing under contracts with Valdez City School District? If so, has the proposer's performance been satisfactory?

B. Plan, Methodology, Approach and Strategy (30%):

- a. Please Provide:
 - i. A plan for the transition from the District's current system support staff to theirs, including estimated timelines and any potential one-time implementation costs.
 - ii. The bidder's approach for the operation of the services outlined in the RFP and the portfolio of services offered throughout the life of the award.
- b. Responses will be evaluated against the following questions based on the bidder's technical proposal:
 - i. How extensive is the Proposer's knowledge of a Technical Environment similar to that identified in this RFP?
 - ii. How extensive is the Proposer's knowledge of the elements of the Service Requirements identified in this RFP?
 - iii. How extensive are the Proposer's unique strengths that are relevant to the services requested?
 - iv. How well does the proposal clearly state the understanding of the work to be performed?
 - v. Is the firm of adequate size and has the proposal provided evidence of adequate planning of what is required to provide services? This is intended to determine the firm's ability to timely respond to the District's need for services.

C. Personnel Experience and Qualifications (20%):

- a. Please Provide:
 - i. Technical biographies, including lists of certifications for team members that will be directly involved with VCS.
 - ii. Description of the firm's approach to ensure the quality and continuity of staff over the term of the contract, given the potential for turnover or absences. In case changes of lead personnel occur, the Proposer should describe how that would be addressed.
 - iii. Description of any relevant partnerships with K-12 organizations or technology corporations that support the vendor's expert reputation.

- b. Responses will be evaluated against the following questions based on the vendor's experience and qualifications providing service similar to those requested in this RFP, as well as their experience in supporting Alaskan K-12 Districts:
 - i. Do resumes demonstrate backgrounds that would be desirable for the job they will perform? How does their level of relevant background compare with other proposers?
 - ii. How extensive is the staff's level of experience with the Software, Hardware, and Remote Access systems identified in this RFP?
 - iii. How extensive is the experience of the senior partner and managers and how does their level of relevant involvement and background compare with other proposers?
 - iv. Does the vendor have a sound practice of cross-training and succession policies for high level staff positions? Would absences of key personnel diminish the quality of services or cause work timelines to be missed?
 - v. How satisfactorily has the vendor described the management of work if personnel assigned for this project are concurrently performing work assigned by other clients?

D. Proposed Pricing, Rates, Fees and Expenses (20%):

- a. Please Provide:
 - i. Base Bid fixed monthly cost to perform the services indicated in the scope of work proposed for each of the three years of the initial term.
 - ii. Costs must include all charges anticipated in performance of this contract, with any applicable increases each year.

- b. Responses will be evaluated against the following questions:
 - i. How competitive and reasonable are the proposed costs in comparison to the scope and quality of services offered?
 - ii. Does the cost proposal provide clarity on what is included in the base monthly rate, and are there any hidden or variable costs?
 - iii. How does the proposed pricing compare to other proposers in terms of value for money, considering the qualifications and service package?
 - iv. Are pricing structures scalable or flexible enough to accommodate potential future changes in district size or need?
 - v. Has the vendor clearly identified and justified any proposed annual cost increases or one-time implementation fees?

E. Response Time (10%):

- a. Please Provide:
 - i. Description of specific response time frames for providing services to VCS, with attention to priority levels and issue types.

- b. Responses will be evaluated against the following questions:
 - i. How clearly does the proposer define expected response and resolution times for various levels of technical issues?
 - ii. How does the proposer's Service Level Agreement (SLA) compare to industry standards and to other proposers?
 - iii. Does the proposer demonstrate a reliable and scalable process for timely handling of service tickets and critical incidents?
 - iv. Are escalation procedures clearly outlined and appropriate for K-12 educational environments?
 - v. How confident can the District be in the proposer's ability to meet time-sensitive needs, especially during peak periods or emergencies?

9. Selection Process

All responses will be evaluated as received and included in the following process:

- Review and scoring of the responses, as well as clarification of information as deemed necessary by the evaluation team.
- Identification of 2–3 final candidates to conduct in-depth review of capabilities, which may include on/off-site interviews and presentations.
- Conducting of site visits and/or reference calls as deemed appropriate by the evaluation team.

No alternate proposals that significantly deviate or modify the concept and ultimate objectives of this RFP will be considered. Non-compliance with RFP specifications will disqualify proposals from further consideration.

The Vendor must promptly notify the District of any ambiguity, inconsistency, or error discovered in the RFP. In the event of a conflict between the proposal and the RFP, the District shall resolve any inconsistency in favor of the RFP. Additionally, the District shall in good faith decide all inconsistencies and/or disputes pertaining to the RFP and the proposal. The Vendor agrees to abide by the decisions of the District.

9. Key Dates

Below is a general timeline outlining the process steps with estimated dates for each step of the process. By participating in the RFP process, MSPs agree that they can adhere to the following general timeline and the meeting times they reserve through this process.

Task	Completion Date
RFP Posted	April 4, 2025
Intent to Respond due from MSPs	April 18, 2025
Bids Due from MSPs	May 5, 2025
MSP Selection, Intent to Award	May 7, 2025
School Board Approval of Award	May 12, 2025
MSP 'Go Live'	July 1, 2025

10. General Terms and Conditions

10.1 Assignment / Transfer:

Assignment or transfer of this Agreement or Contract without written consent of Valdez City Schools may be construed by the District as a breach of contract sufficient to cancel any Agreement or Contract at the discretion of the District

10.2 IRS Form W-9 and Vendor Information:

Vendor must have on file with the District a current IRS Form W-9 and complete a vendor registration form before Valdez City Schools will issue a purchase order to the Contractor.

10.3 Applicable Laws and Courts:

The vendor shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations. The Vendor shall procure any permits and licenses required for its business or the services to be provided by it hereunder.

10.4 Termination:

When it is in the District's best interest, Valdez City Schools may unilaterally cancel this Agreement or Contract at any time whether or not Vendor is in default of any of its obligations hereunder. With any such cancellation, Vendor agrees to waive any claim for damages, including loss of anticipated profit on account hereof. However, the District agrees that Contractor shall be paid for items and/or services already accepted by VCS, but in no event, shall VCS be liable for any loss of profits on the order or portion thereof so terminated. All Offerors recognize that the District is a government entity and that payment obligation is subject to yearly appropriations by District's

governing body and that if funds are not appropriated, this Agreement or Contract will terminate without penalty to either party.

10.5 Complete Agreement:

The parties agree that the conditions of purchase stated herein and the Offeror's proposals set forth their entire Agreement or Contract and there are no promises or understandings other than those stated herein, and that any prior negotiations between Valdez City Schools and Contractor or terms and conditions set forth in the Contractor's quotation, order, or sales acknowledgment shall not constitute a part of the Agreement or Contract between the District and Contractor concerning this purchase. The terms "Agreement" and "Contract" as used in this clause shall include any future written amendments, modifications, or supplements made in accordance herewith.

10.6 Liability and Indemnity:

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Vendor shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless Valdez City Schools, its officers, and employees from and against any and all loss, expense, damage, claim, demand, judgment, fine, charge, lien, liability, action, cause of action, or proceedings of any kind whatsoever (whether arising on account of damage to or loss of property, or personal injury, emotional distress or death) arising directly or indirectly in connection with the performance or activities of the Contractor hereunder, whether the same arises before or after completion of the Vendor's operations or expiration of this Agreement or Contract, except for damage, loss or injury resulting from the District's gross negligence or willful misconduct solely.

10.7 Ethics in Public Contracting

By submitting their proposals, offerors certify that their proposals are made without collusion or fraud and that they have not offered or received any kickbacks or inducements from any other offeror, supplier, manufacturer or subcontractor in connection with their proposal, and that they have not conferred on any public employee having official responsibility for this procurement transaction any payment, loan, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services or anything of more than nominal value, present or promised, unless consideration of substantially equal or greater value was exchanged.

10.8 Alaska Business License

The Vendor must submit to the District a copy of its current State of Alaska Business License and any other applicable licenses within thirty (30) days of official notice of award of this contract.

10.9 Certificate of Insurance

The Contractor must submit to the District a certificate of liability insurance from an insurance company authorized to do business in the State of Alaska that covers the Contractor and all persons working for the Contractor under this contract. Contractor's certificate of liability insurance coverage must be received by the District within thirty (30) days of official notice of award.

10.10 Acceptance of Proposals:

As soon as practicable after determining award, the Valdez City School Board is the approving body. The rights and obligations of the contract will become effective and binding upon the contracting parties only after formal execution of a purchase order signed by the Purchasing Agent or a contract form signed by the Vendor and Superintendent or designee. No other act whether oral, written or implied shall constitute acceptance of a proposal.

10.11 Confidentiality

The final contract will include a provision prohibiting the winning bidder from disclosing District information, records, materials, documents, records to anyone without the express written approval by VCS. The winning bidder will agree to comply with all federal and state confidentiality and privacy laws that govern VCS. In addition, the vendor will agree that no copies of data, backups, diagrams, or lists of network address or devices will leave the District without written approval.

10.12 Drug Policy

Valdez City School District is a drug-free, tobacco-free zone; no one shall use anywhere or at any time on school property. The winning bidder will comply with this policy.

10.13 Sex Offenders

Pursuant to Board Policy 3515.5, any outside contractor with whom the district contracts, and whose employees or agents may have contact with students, is prohibited from sending any employee or agent who is a sex offender/child kidnapper to any district property when students are present. The contractor shall certify in writing the contractor's knowledge and understanding of this policy. The district will contact law enforcement when a sex offender/child kidnapper violates this policy and will immediately revoke any privileges granted to the individual under this policy.

11. Submission Deadline and Contact Information

Proposals must be electronically delivered by 4:30 pm on May 5, 2025 to:

Amber Cawley
Director of Business Services, Valdez City Schools
acawley@valdezcityschools.org
1112 W Klutina Dr, Valdez AK 99686

Thank You!

Valdez City Schools looks forward to reviewing your response and would like to thank you in advance for your participation. The Managed Service Provider selection project is very important to our continued success and represents a major focus of effort for Valdez City Schools. We appreciate and value your input, expertise, and feedback.

VENDOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSE FOR PROPOSAL

Valdez City Schools reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive technical defects, and to select the Proposal deemed most advantageous to the District.

The undersigned certifies that he/she has the authority to bind this company in an agreement to supply the service in accordance with all terms and conditions specified herein.

Please type or print the information below. Respondent is required to complete, sign, and return this intent to submit form in order to be considered for potential selection.

Date _____

VENDOR INFORMATION:

Company Name: _____

Business Address: _____

Business City, State, & Zip Code: _____

Business Hours: _____

Business Telephone Number: _____

Business Fax Number or email : _____

Signature of Authorized Representative

Name (Printed)_____ Title_____

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FORM DUE: April 18, 2025

SUBMIT TO:
Amber Cawley
Director of Business Services, Valdez City Schools
acawley@valdezcityschools.org