



SKOKIE 73.5

Elizabeth Meyer School • John Middleton Elementary School • Oliver McCracken Middle School



Request for Proposal

Cloud-Based VoIP Phone System

2025

RFP Issuance Date: March 17th, 2025

Deadline for Questions: April 1st, 2025

Responses to Q&A Posted: April 2nd, 2025

Proposal Submission Deadline: April 10th, 2025

Proposal Review and Shortlisting: April 11th - April 14th, 2025

Finalist Demo Scheduling: April 15th - April 17th, 2025

Vendor Finalist Demos: April 18th - April 22nd, 2025

Vendor Selection Date: May 13th, 2025

Implementation Start Date: June 2025

Project Completion Date: July 30th, 2025

Proposals must be submitted in electronic format (PDF) to

it-rfp@sd735.org

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Part I. General Information

1.1 Introduction

Skokie School District 73.5 is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to replace its current on-premises Cisco Call Manager with a modern, cloud-based VoIP phone system. The district aims to enhance communication by providing a scalable, secure, and user-friendly platform for voice, video, messaging, and emergency communications. The goal is to improve reliability, streamline integration with existing tools, and support future growth. This move is part of the district's broader initiative to transition to a cloud-first infrastructure, reducing maintenance efforts and increasing operational efficiency.

Current Setup:

- **On-Premises CUCM:** Supports VoIP communications across three district buildings.
- **Buildings:**
 - **District Office/Oliver McCracken Middle School (MC)** - 8000 E Prairie Skokie, IL 60076
 - **John Middleton Elementary School (MD)** - 8300 St. Louis Skokie, IL 60076
 - **Elizabeth Meyer School (MY)** - 8100 Tripp Skokie, IL 60076
- **Endpoints:** ~180 physical Cisco IP phones for ~200 staff members.
- **Network Connectivity:** AT&T IP Flex, with a planned migration to a new fiber circuit (timing TBD).
- **Analog Devices:** One elevator line and four fax lines that need to transition to digital services.
- **PA System:** Integration with the CareHawk PA system at each building.

1.2 Scope of Work

The district seeks a cloud-hosted VoIP solution to replace its current Cisco Unified Communications Manager (CUCM) system. The new system should:

- Provide reliable voice and video communication.
- Seamlessly integrate with existing Cisco IP phones and Google Workspace.
- Integrate with one of the district's video conference solutions (Zoom or Google).
- Transition analog fax lines and an elevator emergency line to digital services.
- Ensure compatibility with the CareHawk PA system.
- Utilize a new fiber circuit to replace the existing AT&T IP Flex connection.

1.3 Key Features and Capabilities Sought

Core Platform Features

- Voice, video, and messaging services for seamless district-wide communication.
- Porting of existing DID numbers with scalability for shared spaces (e.g., classrooms and common areas).
- Interoperability with existing Cisco phone models (6901, 7821, 8811, 8832) or provision of a hardware migration plan.

User Accessibility

- Multi-platform support for MacOS, iOS, ChromeOS, Windows, and Android.
- Seamless Google Workspace integration for calendar/contact syncing and embedded video conference invites.
- Customizable notifications, including SMS alerts, voicemail, visual voicemail, and email.

Built-in Video Conferencing

- Video conference capabilities, including breakout rooms, screen sharing, and host/participant controls.

Compliance & Security

- Adherence to E911 regulations (RAY BAUM'S Act and Kari's Law compliance).
- FERPA and privacy compliance, ensuring secure encryption for data in transit and at rest.
- Integration with the district's Rapid Identity IdP for SSO using SAML 2.0 or OAuth 2.0.

Administration & System Performance

- Centralized web-based administrative console for easy management.
- Minimum 99.9% uptime guarantee with an SLA detailing service uptime, response times, and penalties for non-compliance.
- Failover and disaster recovery mechanisms with annual testing.

Integration & Compatibility

- Integration with Meraki networking equipment and CareHawk PA systems for announcements.
- Support for analog devices (elevator, fire alarm, fax lines) to ensure compliance with emergency communication standards.

Training & Support

- Comprehensive training for users and administrators, including IT-specific modules for integrations (e.g., PA systems, emergency lines).
- Ongoing technical support with proactive monitoring and documentation.

Licensing & Cost Transparency

- Scalable licensing models for users and common areas.
- Detailed cost breakdown, including setup, recurring fees, and expansion-related charges.

- Flexible licensing options for full-time, part-time, and temporary users.

1.4 RFP Participation Requirements

Right of Selection/Rejection of Proposals

Skokie School District 73.5 reserves the right to select or reject any proposal for any reason. The district may negotiate terms with vendors, select the most favorable financial terms, and waive any informalities or deviations from the RFP.

Incorporation of RFP in the Final Agreement

This RFP and the successful vendor's response will be incorporated into the final contract with the vendor.

Errors in Proposals

Skokie School District 73.5 may waive deviations or errors in a proposal but reserves the right to reject proposals if discrepancies are found. Any errors or omissions in a proposal will not diminish the vendor's obligations.

Cost of Development of RFP Proposals

All expenses incurred by vendors in the development of proposals will be borne by the vendor, and no reimbursement will be provided.

Non-Collusion

Vendors must certify that they have not engaged in price-fixing or other anti-competitive practices.

Proposal Disposition

All materials submitted will remain the property of Skokie School District 73.5.

1.5 Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Technical Fit:** Alignment with technical, functional, and security requirements.
- **Cost:** Total cost of ownership, including setup, licensing, and support fees.
- **Experience & References:** Vendor experience with K-12 schools or similar environments.
- **Implementation Approach:** Timeline, risk mitigation, and project management methodology.
- **Support & Training:** Quality and availability of ongoing support and training.
- **Scalability & Future-readiness:** Adaptability to future technology changes.

1.6 Timeline

- **RFP Issuance Date:** March 17th, 2025

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Part II. Instructions for Submitting Proposals

2.1 Proposal Format

Vendors must structure their proposals using the following format:

1. **Cover Letter:** Introduction and statement of interest.
2. **Company Overview:** History, experience with K-12 or similar institutions, and relevant certifications.
3. **Project Approach:** Description of how the vendor will meet the district's requirements.
4. **Technical Solution:** Detailed technical specifications, features, and system architecture.
5. **Implementation Plan:** Timeline, milestones, and resource requirements.
6. **Training and Support Plan:** Training schedule, support response times, and escalation procedures.
7. **Cost Proposal:** Detailed breakdown of setup, subscription, licensing, maintenance, and support fees.
8. **References:** At least three (3) references from K-12 or public sector clients.
9. **Optional Enhancements:** Description of additional services or features offered, such as AI-based call analytics or enhanced security modules.

Vendor Finalists will be contacted to provide a demo.



Part III. Vendor Finalists Demo Guidelines

3.1 Finalist Selection

After reviewing the proposals, Skokie School District 73.5 will select a shortlist of finalists based on the evaluation criteria outlined in Section II. Shortlisted vendors will be invited to participate in a live demo as part of the final selection process.

3.2 Demo Format

The vendor demo should include the following components:

- **System Overview:** A high-level overview of the proposed solution, including its key features and benefits.
- **System Architecture & Integration:** Detailed explanation of the architecture and how the solution integrates with existing systems (e.g., Cisco phones, Google Workspace, Meraki networking, CareHawk PA system, analog devices).
- **User Interface and Experience:** A walkthrough of the user interface for both end users and administrators, highlighting ease of use, customization options, and key functionalities.
- **Training and Support:** Demonstration of the training resources available for district staff and administrators, including hands-on tutorials or any digital content.
- **Customization Options:** Showcase any customization options, such as unique features that would address the district's specific needs (e.g., scalability, integration with other systems, specialized support for multilingual or neurodiverse populations).
- **Security Features:** Demonstration of security and compliance features, including FERPA compliance, encryption protocols, and emergency communication services (e.g., E911 integration).
- **Reporting & Analytics:** Walkthrough of the reporting capabilities, including call logs, user management, and system analytics.

3.3 Technical Setup

- Vendors should ensure that the system is set up and configured for the demonstration to showcase the most relevant features of the proposed solution.
- All devices required for the demo (e.g., Cisco IP phones, video conferencing, mobile clients) should be pre-configured and available for demonstration purposes.

3.4 Duration and Format

- Each vendor will have 60 minutes for their demo:
 - 45 minutes for presentation and walkthrough.
 - 15 minutes for Q&A with the selection committee.
- Demos will be conducted virtually (via Zoom or similar video conferencing platform) unless otherwise specified.

3.5 Evaluation Criteria for Demo

The demos will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- **Relevance to Needs:** How well the solution addresses the district's specific needs and requirements.
- **Ease of Use:** User-friendliness and intuitiveness of the interface.
- **Integration Feasibility:** How easily the solution integrates with existing systems, such as Cisco devices, Google Workspace, and CareHawk PA.
- **Scalability:** The solution's ability to scale to future growth and changing needs.
- **Security and Compliance:** Adequacy of security features, including compliance with FERPA and other regulations.
- **Support and Training:** Quality and depth of training materials and post-implementation support.

3.6 Scheduling of Demos

- All demos will be scheduled following the proposal submission deadline. Vendors will be contacted by the district to arrange a convenient time.
- Vendors should be prepared to accommodate demo scheduling within a reasonable window (within 7-10 business days after the proposal deadline).



Part IV: Q&A Access

4.1 Question Submission

All interested vendors may submit questions regarding the RFP by the deadline outlined in section 1.6. These should be directed to it-rfp@sd735.org.

4.2 Responses to Questions

All answers to submitted questions will be shared with all potential vendors by the date outlined in section 1.6. A Q&A document will be posted publicly on the RFP portal and/or emailed to all participants to ensure equal access.