



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Special Education Services

Contract Term: July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2029
(3-Year Term, Option to Renew up to two [2] additional years)

HOPE Community Academy

720 Payne Avenue Saint Paul, MN 55130

www.hopeacademymn.org

RFP Release Date:	March 22 nd , 2026
Proposal Deadline:	June 10 th , 2026, by 4:00pm CST
Award Notification:	June 25 rd , 2026 (Board Approval)
Service Start Date:	July 1 st , 2026

Proposal Submission

Via email with Subject Line “SY 2027 SpEd Services” with all cc’d):

Kevin Xiong, Executive Director - kevinxiong@hope-school.org

Mai Ka Yang, Operations Development Consultant - maikayang@hope-school.org

Via Mail (Drop Off in Sealed Envelope or Priority):

HOPE Community Academy

ATTN: Kevin Xiong, Executive Director - SpEd Services Proposal

720 Payne Avenue

Saint Paul, MN 55130



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PART I: LETTER - INVITATION FOR PROPOSAL

May 22, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

HOPE Community Academy (HOPE) is a PreK-12 public charter school located at 720 Payne Avenue in Saint Paul, MN 55130. We are currently seeking proposals from qualified and experienced organizations to deliver comprehensive Special Education Contracted Services for HOPE beginning July 1, 2026.

HOPE currently serves approximately 780 students, with a projected enrollment of up to 890 students for SY 2026-2027 and approximately 136 staff. Our special education program currently serves students in Federal Setting I and Setting II with proactive planning for Federal Setting III. The selected partner will work alongside HOPE administration to ensure full compliance, and to build internal capacity for sustainable special education leadership over time.

We are seeking a three (3) year initial contract term, with the option to renew for up to two (2) additional years. Vendors must propose to serve the full scope of services listed below. Services include:

1. Minnesota-licensed Director of Special Education leadership and oversight of HOPE's Total Special Education System (TSES),
2. Structured onboarding, mentoring, and multi-year capacity-building for HOPE's future in-house Special Education Coordinator (HOPE does not currently have a SpEd Coordinator on staff),
3. Monthly professional development for HOPE's Special Education team, including licensed teachers and Educational Assistants,
4. School psychology and comprehensive evaluation services,
5. Direct and related services, including but not limited to Speech-Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, BCBA, and ASD/EBD/SLD/DCD specialist services,
6. Due process consultation and MDE compliance support, including TSES, SEDRA, MARSS, MEGS/SERVS, and fiscal monitoring.
7. Third-party billing setup, staff training, and ongoing reimbursement support, and
8. Setting III readiness planning and consultation, including staffing, classroom design, related-services scheduling, and fiscal impact analysis.

HOPE is committed to full compliance with IDEA, Minnesota Rule 3525, and all applicable state and federal special education requirements. Vendors must demonstrate experience supporting Minnesota public charter schools and familiarity with MDE reporting, due process, and special education fiscal monitoring expectations.

Written questions and requests for clarification must be received no later than 4:00pm CST on Wednesday, May 27th, 2026 via email to maikayang@hope-school.org. Proposals must be submitted no later than 4:00pm CST on Wednesday, June 10th, 2026. Proposals may be submitted by email (kevinxiong@hope-school.org and maikayang@hope-school.org with subject line "FY 2027-2029 SpEd Services Proposal") or sealed to the address above with ATTN: Kevin Xiong, Executive Director - SpEd Services Proposal.

We appreciate your interest in partnering with HOPE Community Academy to serve our students, families, and staff.

Sincerely,

Kevin Xiong
Executive Director, HOPE Community Academy



PART 2: PROPOSAL REQUEST - ABOUT HOPE

Learning ABOUT HOPE Community Academy

HOPE Community Academy (HOPE) is a PreK-12 public charter school authorized by the University of Saint Thomas (UST) and approved by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). HOPE is committed to providing a rigorous, student-centered education to the diverse families of Saint Paul’s East Side community and within the metro cities.

Currently, HOPE serves approximately 780 students and is projected to serve approximately 890 students in the 2026-2027 school year, with a continuous goal of enrollment growth. HOPE currently serves students in Federal Setting I and Setting II environments. As part of the school’s long-term program planning, HOPE is preparing for the potential future need to serve students in Federal Setting III.

Charter School Detail	Information
Charter School Name	HOPE Community Academy
School District	HOPE Community Academy
Address	720 Payne Avenue Saint Paul, MN 55130
Grades Served	PreK-12
Current Enrollment	~780 Students
Projected Enrollment (2026 - 2027)	~890 Students
Contract Term Options	3 Year with option to renew up to 2 additional years
Maximum Renewal Period	Up to 5 Years

PART 3: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PURPOSE

HOPE’s Purpose

HOPE Community Academy is soliciting proposals from qualified organizations to provide comprehensive special education services. This includes Director of Special education leadership, related services, school psychology, evaluation services, due process consultation, MDE compliance support, and staff training, with specific emphasis on:

1. Onboarding and developing an in-house Special Education Coordinator (HOPE does not currently have a SpEd Coordinator on staff and intends to hire one);
2. Delivering monthly professional development to HOPE’s Special Education team (licensed teachers and Educational Assistants);
3. Demonstrating capacity to support HOPE’s anticipated expansion from Setting I and II to include Federal Setting III, if and when needed.

The successful organization will partner with HOPE’s administration to ensure full compliance, as required for Minnesota charter/public schools.

PART 4: RFP TIMELINE



All dates are subject to change at HOPE’s discretion.

Phase	Date/Deadline
Issuance of RFP	Friday, May 22, 2026
Deadline for Written Questions	Wednesday, May 27, 2026 by 4:00pm CST
HOPE Issues Written Responses to Questions	Monday, June 1, 2026
Proposals Due	Wednesday, June 10, 2026 by 4:00pm CST
Proposal Review	Wednesday, June 10 - June 24, 2026
Board Approval/Contract Awarded	On or after Thursday, June 25, 2026
Contract Effective Date	Wednesday, July 1, 2026

PART 5: Term and Renewal

Initial Term: The contract resulting from this RFP shall be in effect for three (3) years, beginning July 1, 2026 and ending on June 30, 2029.

Renewal Option: Upon mutual written agreement of both parties, the contract may be renewed up to two (2) additional one-year terms (or one two-year term), with a maximum total contract length of five (5) years through June 30, 2031.

Annual Review: Continuation of services will be reviewed annually by April 1 of each contract year to assist both parties in planning and to confirm continued alignment with HOPE’s program needs and budget.

Pricing Adjustments: Proposers must clearly state pricing for all three (3) years of the initial term. Any proposed annual escalator must be explained in the proposal and shall not exceed three percent (3%) per year unless agreed mutually in writing.

Termination: HOPE retains the right to terminate the contract for cause upon ten (10) days advance written notice and without any cause upon ninety (90) days advance of written notice. Specific termination grounds, including loss of the school’s charter or violation of federal/state law, must be detailed in the final contract.

PART 6: HOPE’s Current Special Education Program

To assist proposers in developing a responsive proposal, HOPE provides the following overview of its current special education program.

Section: 6.1 Current Program Structure

Includes:

1. Grades served: PreK through Grade 12
2. Federal Settings current served: Setting I and Setting II



3. In-house Special Education Coordinator: Non currently on staff (HOPE intends to hire one during the term of this contract)
4. In-house Special Education Assistant: Non currently on staff; position is to support the SpEd Coordinator, support scheduling and case filing (HOPE intends to hire one during the term of this contract)
5. In-house SpEd team: Licensed special education teachers and paraprofessionals
6. Current contracted Director of Special Education services: Provided through a third-party consulting firm (contract terminates June 30, 2026)
7. State reporting and data systems in use: MARSS, MDE TSES, SEDRA, SERVS/MEGS, Infinite Campus, SpEd forms

Section: 6.2 Anticipated Program Evolution

HOPE is actively planning for the possible future addition of Federal Setting III programming to better serve students whose IEPs required a more restrictive setting. The selected organization should be prepared to advise on, design for, and support implementation of Setting III services if and when HOPE's student needs require it.

PART 7: Scope of Work

HOPE seeks a comprehensive proposal addressing each of the service areas described below. Proposers may also propose additional services not listed where they would enhance HOPE's special education program.

Section: 7.1 Director of Special Education Services

The contractor shall provide a Minnesota-licensed Director of Special Education in compliance with Minn. R. 3525.2405. The Director will be responsible for program development, coordination, evaluation, in-service training, and general supervision and administration of HOPE's total special education system. Services include, at minimum:

1. Sign and assure compliance of MDE's TSES Application for Special Education Funds and Statement of Assurances jointly with HOPE's Executive Director;
2. Provide special education administrative consultation and overall management oversight of HOPE's special education program;
3. Lead and/or support all required state and federal reporting (child count, SEDRA, assessments, tuition billing, TSES Application, Statement of Assurances, MEGS/SERVS);
4. Advise HOPE on current use of state and federal special education funds and UFARS coding;
5. Provide consultation regarding mandated policies as they relate to students with disabilities;
6. Review and update HOPE's Total Special Education System (TSES) document and related policies and procedures;
7. Conduct regularly scheduled on-site visits;
8. Participate in IEP, evaluation summary, child student, and other due process meetings upon request;
9. Review child find, pre-referral intervention, and intake procedures;



10. Provide support for special education fiscal reviews, MDE compliance and monitoring visits, and Corrective Action Plans (CAPs);
11. Assist with parent and family meetings to resolve disagreements, formal complaints, and dispute resolution processes;
12. Assist with recruitment, onboarding, coaching, and retention of HOPE's special education staff and contracted service providers.

Section: 7.2 Special Education Coordinator Onboarding and Training (Priority)

HOPE does not currently have an in-house Special Education Coordinator and intends to hire one during the term of this contract. The selected contractor must be prepared to provide structured onboarding, mentoring, and ongoing capacity-building for HOPE's future Special Education Coordinator. Proposers must describe their approach to each of the following:

1. Pre-hire support (as needed), including job description development, candidate screening guidance, and interview process consultation;
2. A documented onboarding curriculum and training plan covering due process, SpEd Forms/IEP website, child find, MARSS coding and service hours calculation, SEDRA, MDE Compliance, third-party billing, and HOPE's TSES;
3. Regular one-on-one mentoring and coaching for the SpEd Coordinator (at least 5 hours each week) for the first 3 months of hire, and ongoing as needed.
4. Shadowing opportunities with the contractor's licensed Director during IEP meetings, evaluations, and compliance activities;
5. A multi-year capacity-building plan with measurable goals so that HOPE's SpEd Coordinator progressively assumes greater responsibility over the term of the contract;
6. A written transition framework outlining which duties remain with the contractor, which transfer to the SpEd Coordinator, and how oversight responsibilities evolve over time.

Section: 7.3 Monthly Training for HOPE's Special Education Team (Priority)

HOPE requires the selected contractor provide monthly professional development sessions to the school's special education team, including licensed Special Education teachers and Educational Assistants (EAs). Proposers must describe their approach to each of the following:

1. A proposed twelve (12) month training calendar with session topics, target audience (teachers, EAs, or both), and learning objectives;
2. Required topical coverage including: IEP development and progress monitoring, evaluation procedures, behavior support and de-escalation, paraprofessional roles and responsibilities, data collection, manifestation determination, due process, FAPE/LRE, confidentiality (FERPA); and Crisis Prevention Incidents (CPI)...etc.;

Section: 7.4 Setting III Preparedness

HOPE currently does not serve students in Setting III. As part of long-term planning, HOPE would like to be prepared to add Setting III services should student needs require it. The selected contractor must demonstrate capacity to support this potential expansion.

Section: 7.5 School Psychology Services



The contractor shall provide licensed school psychology services to support HOPE's evaluation and re-evaluation processes. Services shall include:

1. Planning and completing comprehensive evaluations to determine eligibility for special education services;
2. Designing and supporting implementation of academic and behavior interventions;
3. Consulting with HOPE's school staff on individual students;
4. Serving on HOPE's child student and problem-solving as requested;
5. Attending evaluation and IEP meetings as determined by the need of the school.

Section: 7.6 Direct and Related Services

HOPE currently has direct and related services completed by our current contractor and through independent contractors. Our hope is to consolidate these services through our contractor; therefore, a contractor that has these available services will be highly desirable. The contractor shall make available, directly or through subcontractors, qualified and appropriate licensed providers in the following areas. Proposers must indicate which services they provide directly and which would be subcontracted, including names and subcontracting partners:

1. Speech-Language Pathology
2. Occupational Therapy
3. Physical Therapy
4. Audiology
5. Developmental Adapted Physical Education (DAPE)
6. Blind and Visually Impaired services
7. Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) services
8. Teacher of the Physically Impaired
9. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) special services
10. Emotional/Behavioral Disorder (EBD) specialist services
11. Specific Learning Disability (SLD) specialist services
12. Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD) specialist services
13. Transition and work-Based Learning Services
14. Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) services
15. Mental health practitioner services
16. Due Process consultation
17. Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) evaluation and services
18. Temporary Special Education Teacher (long- or short-term coverage)

Section: 7.7 Due Process, Compliance, and MDE Support

The contractor shall:

1. Support and provide training on the use of SpEd Forms or comparable IEP management system in use at HOPE;
2. Review of due process forms and procedures, including child find, evaluation, IEP, and re-evaluation documentation;
3. Assistance with MDE compliance and monitoring visits, including preparation, on-site response, and Corrective Action Plan development and execution;



4. Assistance with formal complaints, mediation, and dispute resolution processes;
5. Annual review of HOPE's TSES and related policies.

Section: 7.8 Third Party Billing Support

Minnesota law requires public schools to seek reimbursement from public and private health plans for health-related services provided to students who receive special education services through an IEP. The contractor shall:

1. Assist HOPE in establishing, maintaining, and auditing its third-party billing system;
2. Train school staff on third-party billing laws, procedures, and documentation requirements;
3. Support submission of invoices for reimbursement through the Minnesota Department of Human Services system;
4. Provide guidance on coordinating third-party billing with HOPE's business office or as suggested.

Section: 7.9 Additional Considerations

The contractor shall consider the following:

1. All personnel providing services under the contract must hold and maintain appropriate licensure in accordance with Minnesota standards.
2. Maintain general liability insurance and name HOPE Community Academy as an additional insured for the duration of the contract;
3. All student records, files, and data created or maintained by the contractor on behalf of HOPE are the property of HOPE and shall be returned to HOPE upon termination or expiration of the contract;
4. Comply with FERPA and Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) in handling all student data.

PART 8: Proposal Requirements

Proposals must address each of the following sections.

Section: 8.1 Organizational Capacity

1. Provide a description of the organization, including legal structure, history, mission, and full range of services offered;
2. Total number of staff and Minnesota charter school clients currently served;
3. Evidence of financial stability and capacity to deliver services across a three (3) to five (5) year term.

Section: 8.2 Additional Considerations

1. Provide a description of the organization's experience serving Minnesota public charter schools, particularly PreK-12 schools and schools serving diverse student populations;
2. Specific examples of outcomes achieved with similar client;
3. Three (3) professional references from current or recent Minnesota charter school clients.



Section: 8.3 Background and Qualifications of Personnel

1. Names, credentials, and resumes of the proposed Director of Special Education and any other key personnel who would be assigned to HOPE;
2. Background and qualifications of all personnel who would deliver services under this contract, including any subcontractors;
3. Confirmation that the proposed Director holds a current Minnesota Director of Special Education license.

Section: 8.4 Description of Services

1. A comprehensive narrative addressing each service area in Part 7 of this RFP;
2. Description of how the contractor will customize services to HOPE's specific student population, staff structure, and current contracted-services environment.

Section: 8.5 Special Education Coordinator Training Plan

1. A written response to each element listed in Section 7.2 including a onboarding and training plan, and a multi-year capacity building framework;
2. Description of how progress will be measured.

Section: 8.6 Monthly SpEd Team Training Plan

1. A proposed 12-month training calendar with topics and learning objectives.

Section: 8.7 Setting III Preparedness Statement

1. A written response to Section 7.4;
2. Summary of at least one (1) Minnesota school the contractor has supported in establishing or operating Setting III programming.

Section: 8.8 Transition Plan from Current Contractor

1. Description of how the contractor will manage transition from HOPE's current SpEd services provider, including file transfer, system continuity, and minimizing disruption to students and IEP implementation;
2. Proposed transition timeline from the contract execution through the start of the 2026-2027 school year.

Section: 8.9 Pricing

1. Total annual fee for the base scope of Director of Special Education services including the assumed number of Director hours include in the base fee;
2. Hourly rate(s) for the Director of Special Education above the base hours;
3. Hourly rate(s) for the SpEd Coordinator training and mentoring described in Section 7.2;
4. Pricing (if applicable) for the monthly SpEd team training described in Section 7.3;
5. Hourly rate(s) for school psychology services;
6. Hourly rate(s) for each category of direct and related services in Section 7.6;
7. Hourly rate(s) for third-party billing support;
8. Travel, mileage, technology, and other reimbursable expense policies;



9. Proposed pricing for each of the three (3) years of the initial contract term including any annual escalator;
10. Pricing methodology for any optional renewal years;
11. Invoicing cadence and payment terms;
12. Description of how pricing would be adjusted if HOPE’s enrollment, special education student count, or program structure changes materially during the contract term.

Section: 8.4 Additional Information

Any additional information, services, or value-added offerings the proposer wishes HOPE to consider.

PART 9: Selection Criteria and Evaluation Process

Proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation team led by HOPE’s Operations Development Consultant and including the Executive Director and other staff and/or board members as appropriate. HOPE reserves the right to refer the final selection to the Board of Directors for approval.

Proposals will be evaluated on the following weighted criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Scope of Services and responsiveness to HOPE’s priority areas (SpEd Coordinator development, monthly team training, Setting III preparedness)	30%
Experience and Effectiveness with Minnesota charter schools	20%
Background and Qualifications of assigned personnel	15%
Pricing and value across the three (3) year term	20%
Organizational Capacity, references, and transition plan	15%
Total	100%

HOPE may request additional information or evidence from any proposer to demonstrate the proposer’s ability to deliver the services described in the RFP.

PART 10: Submission Instructions and Questions

Please see questions and proposal submission information below.

Section: 15.1 Questions and Clarifications

All questions and requests for clarification must be submitted in writing via email to the contact below, with the subject line: “HOPE SpEd Services RFP - Request for Clarification.”

Questions must be received no later than 4:00pm CST on May 27, 2026. HOPE will compile and distribute responses to all questions to all parties intending to submit a proposal by June 1, 2026.

HOPE will not provide individual or verbal responses to questions. All clarifications will be issued in writing to all proposers to ensure equal access to information.

Section: 15.2 Proposal Submission



Proposals must be submitted electronically (PDF format) or via mail in a sealed envelope no later than 4:00pm CST on June 10, 2026 to:

Via email with Subject Line “SY 2027 SpEd Services Proposal” with all cc’d):
Kevin Xiong, Executive Director - kevinxiong@hope-school.org
Mai Ka Yang, Operations Development Consultant - maikayang@hope-school.org

Via Mail (Drop Off in Sealed Envelope or Priority):
HOPE Community Academy
ATTN: Kevin Xiong, Executive Director - SpEd Services Proposal
720 Payne Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55130

Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.