



PUTNAM COUNTY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #535

Recommendation for the Board of Education

Meeting: June 23rd, 2026

Item: Approval of Construction Manager

Recommendation: With review and direction by the Board of Education from a special meeting on June 3rd, 2026, I recommend the Board of Education approve for the Superintendent to engage in agreements with CORE Construction Services of Illinois, Inc. (CORE) to serve as Construction Manager At-Risk for the PCES and PCJH additions and renovations.

A Request for Proposals for construction management services was issued on May 1st, 2026, with a due date of May 15th, 2026. The District received submissions from five (5) firms. Two (2) firms were shortlisted for interviews with the Board of Education on June 3rd, 2026. Based on these interviews, CORE was identified as the preferred firm.

Questions were raised regarding CORE's support of local contractors and information sharing with the community. The following response was provided by CORE:

CORE understands the impact that local trade partner (subcontractor) participation can have on both the success of a project and the community. Our approach to fostering local trade partner involvement for Putnam County CUSD #535 is multifaceted, ensuring that we not only engage local talent but also support the local economy.

Local Trade Partner Relationships: *We have cultivated strong, long-term relationships with local trade partners, which are critical to the success of our projects. These relationships are built on trust, integrity, and mutual respect, allowing us to leverage local expertise and resources effectively. By maintaining open lines of communication and treating our trade partners as integral members of the construction team, we ensure that they feel valued and motivated to deliver their best work.*

Active Outreach: *To encourage early involvement from local trade partners, we host trade partner fairs during the pre-construction phase of our projects. These fairs serve as a platform for local subcontractors to meet the project team, understand project requirements, and engage in early planning. By doing so, we generate excitement and encourage participation, which strengthens our projects and contributes to the growth of the local economy.*

Advertising Opportunity: *We actively publish information about upcoming projects in local newspapers and industry publications. This strategy ensures that the local trade partner community is well-informed and has the opportunity to participate in the bidding process. By reaching a broad audience, we maximize local involvement and draw attention to the opportunities available within our projects.*

Accessible Bid Opportunities: *Our bid packages are thoughtfully structured to allow contractors of any size to participate. By breaking down larger scopes of work into smaller, manageable packages, we create opportunities for smaller local contractors to compete and contribute to the project. This approach*

not only increases competition but also ensures that a diverse range of local businesses can benefit from the project.

Growing Local Capacity Through Partnership: *We facilitate partnerships between smaller local contractors and larger, more established firms. This collaboration allows smaller contractors to gain valuable experience and resources, while larger contractors benefit from local insights and expertise. By fostering these partnerships, we create a supportive environment where all parties can thrive and deliver exceptional results.*

Through these strategic initiatives, CORE is committed to maximizing local subcontractor participation, ensuring that our projects not only meet high standards of quality and efficiency but also contribute positively to the communities we serve.