



Case Study: Prospect Hill Academy Charter School

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*- Michael O'Donnell
CFO*



Charter School Learns the Benefits of HR Outsourcing

Prospect Hill Academy Charter School serves more than 1,100 students in grades K-12 in Cambridge and Somerville, Massachusetts. The school is committed to promoting the highest standards of academic, personal, and social achievement for all students, while embracing their unique racial, cultural, linguistic, educational, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

A Study in Efficient Operations

The prevailing culture at Prospect Hill Academy is one of ongoing improvement. In this spirit, school administrators and faculty members are constantly seeking new and better ways to improve operations, engage students, and expand their knowledge.

In 2008, the charter school decided to outsource its HR, benefits, and payroll functions, so school administrators could focus 100% on education. According to Michael (Mike) O'Donnell, Chief Financial Officer, "Running a school is all about managing your human capital. In order to advance our mission, we need to attract top teachers and staff who are committed to the school, our students, and the community. And, to attract the right people, we need to have a strong HR program and great employee benefits."

Prospect Hill Academy looked to partner with an HR outsourcing firm that offered end-to-end human resources, benefits, and payroll services and had direct charter school industry experience. "Charter schools have particular HR administration challenges," says Mike, "so working with a provider that understood us was vitally important."

HR Knowledge Goes to the Head of the Class

Prospect Hill Academy chose HR Knowledge, Inc., an outsourced provider of integrated, affordable HR services, including payroll, employee benefits, and HR management, to small- to medium-sized businesses that lack the internal resources to manage the multitude of complex HR issues.

With over 40 charter schools as clients, HR Knowledge has the deep expertise needed to address the specific payroll, HR, Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System (MTRS), and benefit challenges that charter schools encounter. They offered Prospect Hill Academy many unique advantages, including:

- Expert understanding and decision-making support surrounding the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) for Massachusetts public employees
- Specialized retirement calculations, reporting, and file



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transfers, like the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement Board (MTRB)

- Specialized reporting and audit support
- Effective management of new hires, employee changes, and terminations
- Call center support to assist school leadership with both routine and sensitive HR issues

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HR Knowledge does all of this with their signature concierge-level client service. “They have a terrific response time,” adds Mike. “They sometimes respond within minutes, and always within one day. Our management team has full confidence in their abilities. That makes all the difference.”