# The Problem

School boards across Western Canada are facing significant operational challenges due to outdated and unreliable Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems. These systems, which are critical for managing Human Resources and Payroll, which account for over 80% of school district expenditures, are increasingly failing to meet the evolving needs of K–12 education.

These systems suffer from:

* Obsolete technology platforms
* Limited integration capabilities
* Poor reliability and performance
* Insufficient vendor support and investment
* Failed implementations and unmet promises

With incumbents not prioritizing support and development and new entrants failing to deliver on their commitments, school boards are experiencing growing dissatisfaction, operational inefficiencies, and a lack of confidence in current ERP providers. Many districts are actively seeking alternatives but face a market void where no vendor is seen as both credible and capable of delivering a modern, education-focused solution.

There is an urgent need for a cloud-native, integrated ERP system that can handle the complexities of collective agreements and government reporting requirements, support scalable payroll and HR functions, and offer robust reporting and workflow automation. Without such a solution, school boards risk further disruption and inefficiency as legacy systems become increasingly untenable and resources to support aging and outdated infrastructure becomes less available.

Change is never easy, especially in a space where outdated systems have held sway for far too long. But when the well-being of our schools, staff, and students is at stake, the urgency becomes undeniable. We believe in a future where technology empowers, not hinders education. It’s time to rise above the limitations of the past, challenge the norm, and build something better. Our schools deserve nothing less.

# Your Solution

## Zespia: A Modern ERP Solution for Canadian K12

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We are a team of seasoned professionals with deep expertise in both software development and school business operations. We understand the intricacies of collective agreements, staffing workflows, and financial reporting requirements unique to Canadian school boards. Our solution is not just about replacing outdated systems, it’s about reimagining how ERP can empower education.

## The Vision

Zespia is building a robust, cloud-native ERP platform designed specifically for K–12 school boards. Our system will be:

* **Fully Integrated:** Seamless connections between HR, Payroll, and Finance modules.
* **Modern and Scalable**: Built on cutting-edge architecture with flexible APIs and a unified data structure.
* **Automated and Intelligent:** Smart workflows, customizable forms, and powerful reporting tools.
* **Reliable and Secure:** High availability, strong data protection, and responsive support.

## The Approach

What sets Zespia apart is our collaborative development model. We don’t just build software, we build it *with* our clients. From discovery to deployment, we work closely with school boards to ensure our solution aligns with their real-world needs and priorities.

* **Co-Design with Clients:** We engage stakeholders early and often to shape features and workflows.
* **Iterative Development:** Rapid prototyping and feedback loops ensure continuous improvement.
* **Transparent Roadmap:** Clear milestones, open communication, and a long-term commitment to K–12 education.

At Zespia, we believe that the most effective ERP systems are those that mirror the real-world workflows of the organizations they serve. That’s why our development roadmap is structured around the employee lifecycle; from recruitment to retirement, through to payroll and finance, ensuring that every module is purpose-built to support the operational realities of K–12 school boards.

Our phased approach allows us to deliver value early, build momentum through collaboration, and ensure each component is deeply integrated and aligned with school board needs. As new phases are delivered, our partner school boards can transition away from their legacy system in phases, minimizing disruption to their operations.

## Why Zespia?

* Proven expertise in both technology development supporting education operations
* Deep understanding of school board business processes
* Commitment to delivering a future-ready ERP solution
* A trusted partner, not just a vendor

Zespia is not just solving a software problem, we’re solving a trust and capability gap in the Canadian K–12 ERP market. Together with our clients, we’re building Canada’s top ERP solution for education.

## Stop being a customer. Start being a partner.

Through this unique partnership opportunity and unparalleled collaboration, we will deliver a new and much-needed Canadian entrant to the ERP space.

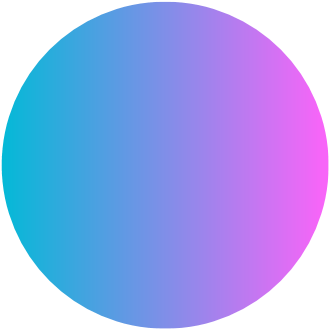
* **Lower Total Cost of Ownership:** By using a modern, license-free tech stack, we deliver a scalable, beautifully designed product that’s significantly more cost-effective.
* **Security at the Core:** “Security by design” isn’t a slogan, it’s foundational. From immutable OS builds and role-based microservices to container firewalls and physically separated encrypted databases, security drives every decision.
* **Enterprise-Grade Support:** Our support team includes engineers and former school business officials, not chatbots. We target a 3-hour response time, with scalable options for 24/7 emergency support.
* **Innovation, Driven by You:** You know ERP best. We listen, learn, and build alongside you, delivering solutions tailored to the real-world needs of Canadian school districts.
* **Open, Unified Ecosystem:** We embrace collaboration. With secure data access, SSO, and robust logging, Zespia integrates seamlessly with other tools, creating a cohesive experience for staff.
* **Shared Values, Shared Mission:** We’re not driven by revenue targets, we’re driven by purpose. With a culture rooted in transparency, humility, and a passion for helping kids, we see you as a partner, not a customer.

# Our Leadership Team

To deliver an ERP, a significant portion of the revenues received for our current software offerings will be reinvested in the development and administrative staff required to deliver this project.

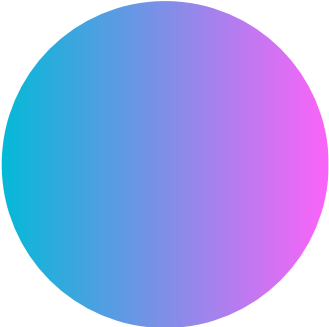
Regardless of team growth, the following individuals will be closely involved and will remain accountable for the project’s ongoing success until a full functioning ERP is delivered.

**Brad Leitch |**



Brad brings 25 years of experience as a veteran software developer, working alongside world-renowned organizations such as Xbox, Minecraft, Roblox, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and Interpol. With 18 years dedicated to education technology (and being married to a teacher), he brings a deep understanding of the education market and a genuine passion for protecting our public institutions. Brad is also responsible for implementing the direction of our advisory board.

**Kaleb Motz |**

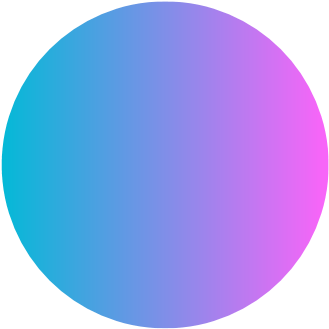


Over the last decade, Kaleb has led the development of hundreds of school district implementations through the efforts of highly productive teams. Currently leading aspects such as the creative team, support, and the recruitment of new school district partners into new communities, Kaleb will be responsible for protecting the invested interests of each participating school district.

**Ryan Stierman |** A person with a beard

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

As an experienced school business official, Ryan brings a wealth of experience in K–12 education finance, technology implementation and operational leadership to the team. Ryan plays a critical role in aligning our ERP solution and implementation philosophy with the real-world needs of school boards. His deep understanding of K-12 requirements ensures that our platform is not only technically advanced but also operationally sound and grounded in the realities of public education.



**Nick Danvers |**

# Phase 1: Recruitment

The recruitment process in Canadian K–12 school boards is burdened by outdated systems, fragmented workflows, and a lack of innovation. For years, the market has been dominated by a single provider, resulting in limited competition and high per-use costs for job postings and applicant searches.

Key challenges include:

* **High Costs**: School boards incur significant fees for each job posting and applicant search, straining already tight budgets.
* **Disconnected Workflows**: Staffing requisitions are managed outside the ATS, requiring manual processes that introduce delays and data entry errors.
* **Lack of Collaboration**: Recruitment teams are unable to collaborate effectively within the system. Interview planning, candidate evaluations, and communication are handled through external tools, leading to inefficiencies and lost context.
* **Manual Data Transfer**: Once a candidate is hired, their information must be manually entered into separate onboarding and HR systems, increasing administrative burden and risk of error.
* **Poor User Experience**: Job seekers face a dated interface with limited search capabilities, making it harder to find and apply for relevant positions.

These limitations not only slow down hiring but also impact the quality of recruitment and the overall candidate experience. In a sector where staffing is critical to student success and where recruitment challenges are prevalent, the cost of inefficiency is too high.

## Zespia’s Solution: A Modern and Integrated Recruitment System

Zespia is developing a next-generation recruitment system designed specifically for the needs of Canadian school boards. Built with modern architecture and a deep understanding of education workflows, our system will streamline recruitment from staffing requests to job posting to hiring, with future functionality to include seamless integration to onboarding and beyond.

Beautiful, elegant, and using the latest technology, Zespia will allow applicants to quickly and easily find jobs using a map or a traditional search. As applicants come in, school districts will be able to process them using a highly innovative Kanban workflow.

## Key Features

* **Unified Job Board**: Aggregate job postings across school districts, giving applicants a centralized, elegant interface to search by map or keyword.
* **Kanban Workflow for Recruiters**: Hiring teams can manage applicants using a visual, drag-and-drop interface that reflects each stage of the recruitment process.
* **Dynamic Interview Tools**: Automatically generate interview questions based on applicant stage and position. Schedule interviews directly within the platform.
* **Video Introductions**: Applicants can submit short video intros to personalize their applications and help recruiters assess fit.
* **Communications**: Automate communications with applicants as they progress through the recruitment process.
* **Single Sign-On (SSO)**: Applicants can log in using Google, Meta, or X accounts, while school boards can manage access through Microsoft Entra ID or Google Directory.
* **Collaborative Environment**: Recruiters can leave notes, tag team members, and share feedback, all within the platform.

## Future Features

* **Hiring:** Electronically issue offer letters and employee contracts for applicant review and approval.
* **Artificial Intelligence:** Use our AI agent toanalyze resumes and screen applicants, develop interview questions and search the Zespia candidate pool to reach out to qualified candidates

# Future Phases

## Phase 2: Onboarding & Human Resources

Once hired, employees will transition seamlessly into the HR module, which will manage:

* Digital onboarding and document collection
* Employee profiles with demographic and assignment tracking
* Contract and position management
* Professional development tracking
* Integration with leave entitlements and benefits

## Phase 3: Absence & Replacement Management

Absence and dispatch management is one of the most complex and critical functions in education. Our system will:

* Track all leave types and entitlements
* Automate replacement dispatch based on qualifications, availability, and collective agreement rules
* Provide real-time visibility into coverage and costs

## Phase 4: Payroll

With HR and absence data in place, we will implement a powerful payroll engine capable of:

* Handling complex pay rules and collective agreements
* Processing multiple employee groups and pay cycles
* Managing retroactive pay, adjustments, and entitlements
* Generating ROEs, T4s, and other statutory documents
* Seamlessly integrating with HR and Finance

## Phase 5: Finance

The final phase will deliver a modern financial management system that includes:

* General ledger, accounts payable/receivable, and budgeting
* Automated workflows for expense claims, purchase cards, purchasing, invoices and journal entries
* Real-time reporting and analytics
* Integration with provincial reporting requirements
* Full audit trails and role-based access controls

## Our Commitment

Throughout every phase, Zespia will work collaboratively with school boards to co-design, test, and refine each module. Our agile development process ensures that feedback is incorporated continuously, and our shared goal remains clear: to deliver Canada’s most trusted, modern ERP solution for education.

# Your Opportunity

The current state of applicant tracking and recruitment in Canadian school boards is not only outdated, it’s expensive, inefficient, and disconnected from the broader needs of modern education systems. This presents a unique and timely opportunity to reimagine how recruitment should work in the public education sector.

Zespia is seizing this opportunity to deliver a modern, cost-effective Applicant Tracking System that does more than just replace the status quo, it lays the foundation for a fully integrated ERP ecosystem tailored to the realities of K–12 education.

At an all-inclusive cost lower than what is charged by current recruitment software, school boards that join the Zespia movement will gain access to a powerful, intuitive recruitment platform that streamlines hiring, enhances collaboration, and improves the candidate experience. But more importantly, they will become active partners in shaping the future of education ERP in Canada.

## A Platform That Grows With You

Zespia’s recruitment module is just the beginning. Our development roadmap follows the employee lifecycle; recruitment, onboarding, HR, absence management, payroll, and finance, ensuring that each module builds on the last with seamless integration and a consistent user experience.

As new modules are released, participating districts will have the choice to expand their usage of Zespia, without disruption, gaining access to:

* Modern, unified interfaces across departments
* Real-time data sharing between HR, Payroll, and Finance as modules are developed
* Automated workflows that reduce administrative burden
* Customizable reporting and analytics tools

## A Collaborative Development Model

Unlike traditional vendors, Zespia is committed to co-developing our platform with the school boards we serve. Early adopters will have a direct voice in shaping features, workflows, and priorities, ensuring the system reflects real-world needs, not just theoretical designs.

We will host regular community development meetings where your team meets directly with our developers to see demos of new features pre-release, critique work in development, discuss upcoming features, and refine and reprioritize the roadmap based on your current needs.

When it comes to diverging priorities or conflicting feature requests, we understand that this is a regular part of any development project. In our experience, successfully navigating these situations has been based on a few key concepts.

* **Building configurable software.** We prioritize the design of highly extensible system architecture.
* **Fostering a collaborative environment.** One of the most rewarding aspects of our approach is seeing school district teams work together.

While future modules are in development, we will work closely with our partners to, where possible, integrate Zespia’s data into their existing systems, using modern APIs or structured data files. This ensures immediate value and a smooth transition as the full platform evolves.

This is more than a software upgrade, it’s a movement. By joining Zespia, school boards are investing in a smarter, more connected future for education operations in Canada.

## Development Roadmap

Our goal is to deliver a market-ready ERP within three years. A complete list of the features we’re currently proposing can be found in the Appendix section of this proposal.

While this timeline may need to be extended to accommodate district specific customizations, we are confident that with the right resources, core functionality will be achievable by year three.

A project like this, even two years ago, would likely have taken two to five times longer to complete. However, advancements in AI as a coding assistant to experienced, capable developers make every developer significantly more productive, enabling them to write quality code faster and more securely. Moreover, it can propose numerous solutions to complex problems that have already been solved and cite the advantages and disadvantages of each, saving engineers days, if not weeks, during the design stages of development.

## Project Management

To achieve our software development goals, we will be using the Agile methodology. Agile is a continuous process that provides the highest-value items in a priority sequence. Using the resources generated from sales of Zespia, we will work at the direction of the community to deliver each requirement in the order it is prioritized. As part of the Agile process, priorities and the scope of requirements are regularly reviewed and adjusted to ensure the right needs are being met at the correct times.

Implementations of new software can always be disruptive to an organization. Our team is experienced in project management, has implemented software for school divisions throughout North America and is familiar with the data for the current major ERP and Recruitment providers. New clients can expect a solid and well-managed process when they implement Zespia.

## Security

“Security by design” simply means that a company, its people and products have been designed to be foundationally secure. It is not tied to designations, certifications, or specific standards but instead employs principles that require security to be at the forefront of all decision-making.

Our team abides by this standard. Here are some examples:

* **Proactive Security by Design:** We anticipate threats and embed defenses before coding begins, evident in our tenancy model and role-based microservice separation, which limits API misuse even in supply chain attacks.
* **Defence in Depth:** Multiple security layers ensure redundancy. From geofencing to AWS WAF (L3–L7 protection), Kubernetes-managed container firewalls, centralized middleware logic, and strict controller validation—each request passes through all layers before reaching core services.
* **Least Privilege Access:** Users, services, and systems get only the access they need. APIs are split by role (student, parent, staff), each with restrictive logic to prevent misuse. E.g. staff APIs return only that staff member’s data.
* **Secure Defaults:** Features are off by default. Strong passwords, encrypted data, and disabled HTTP are standard. We use NixOS with infrastructure-as-code to include only necessary Linux features, compiled without root to avoid rootkit risks.
* **Secure Failure & Graceful Degradation:** Failures never expose data. APIs are tested for edge cases (e.g., buffer overloads, type mismatches), and catch-all middleware ensures graceful failure without revealing infrastructure or stack details.
* **Continuous Risk Assessment:** Threat modeling and security reviews are part of every design meeting. We also use AI to assist in vulnerability detection during development.
* **Auditability & Observability:** All security events are logged and monitored via CloudWatch. Critical incidents are pushed to our Slack dev channel for real-time investigation.

Adopting a “security by design” philosophy is difficult for companies not already aligned with it. It requires rethinking everything from people and processes to code and infrastructure.

Legacy vendors often struggle, as many of these principles were rare even a decade ago.

Cybersecurity threats have only grown more urgent. As a modern company with a clean slate, a secure-by-default architecture, and a team trained by top global institutions, we have a clear advantage: no security debt to repay, we’ve built with this mindset from day one

## Success Metrics

How will success be measured? The opportunity before us has the potential to make a significant impact that can be measured and realized using several key metrics.

* **Zespia will replicate all core ERP features**, delivering a complete, fully integrated solution.
* **Security-first architecture** will make Zespia a trusted fortress for sensitive staff data.
* **Collaborative innovation** will address key shortcomings in existing ERP systems.
* **Cloud-native design** eliminates version control issues, no more disruptive upgrades.
* **Modern, intuitive UI** will drive enthusiastic adoption and positive feedback across all user levels.
* **Superior support**, with responses within 3 hours and scalable 24/7 emergency coverage.
* **Vendor-friendly integrations** will make Zespia a welcome relief for third-party providers.

# Let's get started!

If you’re ready to stop being a customer and start being a partner, let’s forge a new partnership and do something that has never been done before. If you have further questions about pricing or any other aspect of our proposal, don’t hesitate to reach out. Our team looks forward to collaborating with you to build an outstanding solution.