



MEMO

To: Education Interim Budget Committee
From: Jennie Stapp, State Librarian, Evan Hammer, Digital Library Administrator
Subject: Montana State Reference Network Glidepath
Date: March 6, 2026

The Education Interim Budget Committee requested an updated financial glidepath for the Montana State Reference Network (MTRSN). This update revises subscriber projections for FY27–FY30 based on actual subscription data beginning in FY25. The charts also reflect the Montana Department of Transportation’s ongoing contribution toward platform hosting fees. If MDT continues this support, MTRSN is projected to reach a break-even point in FY29. By FY30, the network should be able to cover platform hosting costs, assuming subscriber growth aligns with current projections. Until that break-even point, the remaining revenue gap after MDT’s contribution will be primarily covered by MGIA funds.

MTRSN Revised Glidepath (March 2026)

Stations

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Stations	65	70	80	120	140	160	160

Expenses

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2027	2029	2030
Coordinator FTE	\$116,662	\$121,523	\$125,169	\$128,924	\$132,792	\$136,776	\$136,776
Tech FTE	-	-	-	\$79,440	\$81,823	\$84,278	\$84,278
Platform Hosting Fees	\$106,250	\$109,500	\$116,000	\$142,000	\$159,650	\$173,040	\$173,040
Admin Costs	\$54,320	\$56,000	\$11,250	\$22,500	\$37,500	\$60,000	\$75,000
Other Operating Costs	\$16,000	\$53,000	\$30,000*	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$275,000	\$280,000
Total Expenses	\$293,232	\$340,023	\$282,419	\$622,864	\$661,765	\$729,094	\$749,094



Subscriptions

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Subscription Target	-	70	75**	150	250	400	500
Subscription Cost	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Revenue	-	\$105,000	\$112,500	\$225,000	\$375,000	\$600,000	\$750,000

Revenue Gap

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Revenue Gap Before MDT's Contribution	(293,232)	(235,023)	(169,919)	(397,864)	(286,765)	(129,094)	\$906
Platform Hosting Fees Covered by MDT	\$106,250	\$109,500	\$116,000	\$142,000	\$159,650	\$173,040	-
Remaining Revenue Gap	(186,982)	(125,523)	(53,919)	(255,864)	(127,115)	\$43,946	\$906

*MSL will spend \$240,000 in FY26 year-end MGIA funds for additional nodes in anticipation of several new stations coming online near fiscal year end.

**As of March 6, 2026, MTSRN has 74 subscribers.