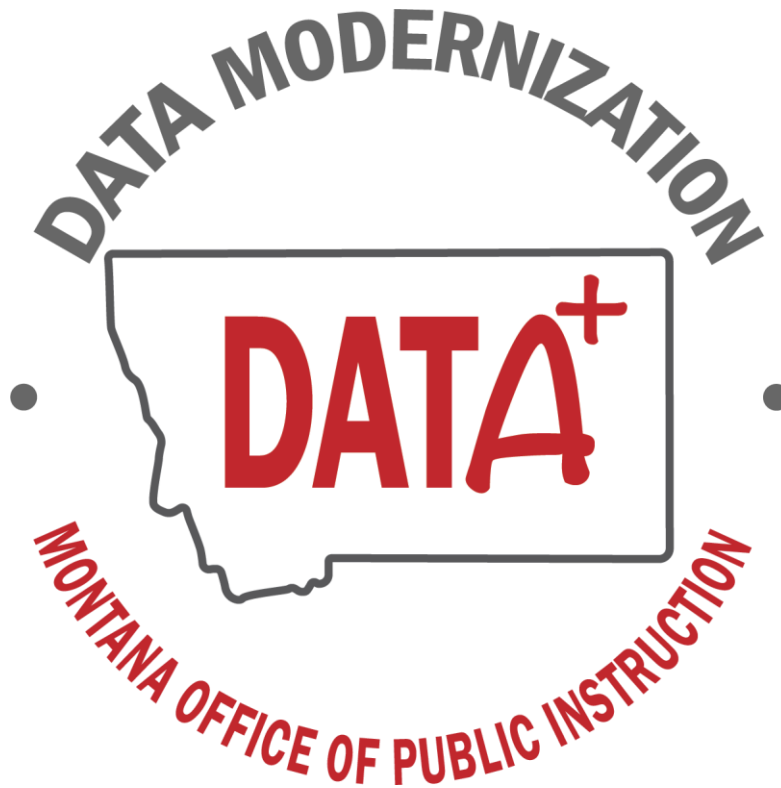




Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent



Educational Data Integration

December 13, 2024 (due December 23, 2024)

Office of Public Instruction

**HB [367](#) OPI Data Modernization Status
and Overview Report**



Superintendent Elsie Arntzen
December 13, 2024

To:
Legislative Finance Committee
Education Interim Committee
General Government Budget Committee
Education Budget Committee

Subject: Progress Update on Office of Public Instruction Educational Data Integration: Costs, Timeline, and Goals

I am pleased to provide the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) Data Modernization Legislative Report for December 2024, which includes information on our progress since October 21, 2024. This is the ninth legislative report for this project as required by [HB 367](#) and will be the final report under my tenure as Superintendent. This project has been in progress now for nearly 18 months, and we anticipate that final sign-off will happen within the next 10-12 months.

The Montana Information and Data Analytics System, or MIDAS project will innovate Montana's educational landscape through the implementation of highly visual data dashboards. These dashboards will reflect current student data in ways that are easy to read and comprehend and will provide actionable information for school and district staff. This follows our many efforts to transform and modernize education in the state.

During the last reporting period, we completed loading the dashboards for all schools. As of December 16, dashboard fitting is nearly complete and our staff is working with PowerSchool on consulting. We also completed additional VPN connections between districts throughout the state that are self-hosted or "on-prem" PowerSchool SIS users. The remaining districts are scheduling time to set up their VPNs, and we anticipate that these will be completed by early January 2025.

OPI and the vendor are committed to providing the best product for schools, teachers, and families. This will better inform decision-making, leading to better outcomes for schools and students. One of our ongoing goals is to ensure that the product delivered to schools meets their needs and provides accurate and timely data and visualizations. We have continued to make progress over this reporting period, including in the following workstream items:

- Load data into Student Analytics from IC State Edition (All Districts): 100% complete.
- Security Setup and configuration for Analytics and Insights: 75% complete.
- Dashboard fitting for standard content: 100% complete.
- Dashboard quality assurance check: 90% complete.

The OPI team is focused on transparency and communication with all external stakeholders. We participate in weekly office hours for district superintendents. Additionally, our team continues to give updates to technology staff, the Board of Public Education, and the legislature. OPI has continued monthly meetings with the School Implementation [Steering Committee](#), and is thankful for their invaluable contribution throughout this project. I encourage you to reach out to our team if you have any questions.

My office continues to be an active participant in the Education and Workforce Data Governance Board and its working groups. We appreciate the contributions of our partner agencies in guiding this Board to improve data sharing and research opportunities.

In this report, you will find the OPI's ongoing goals for this project, more detailed information on our progress, and the identification of our next steps to continue to move forward.

Please feel free to visit our [website](#) to see the most recent progress throughout the implementation of this project. We welcome your ongoing commitment to our shared goals.



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Introduction Educational Data Integration

In this reporting period, PowerSchool and OPI have continued to work through Milestone 4a: Deployment of Connected Intelligence and Milestone 5a: Base deployment of Analytics and Insights modules. Data from the State Edition of Infinite Campus is being replicated into Connected Intelligence (data lake), and the data for all districts is being continually loaded into the dashboard system. Currently, the dashboards are being fitted to ensure that labels are correct and to customize dashboard views for users. OPI and PowerSchool are finalizing a state security solution to allow districts to use single sign-on (SSO) to access their dashboards once they go live. We are starting to crosswalk roles and security to identify current users in GEMS, the access they have, and the appropriate roles available in Analytics and Insights. After we complete this crosswalk, part of the setup for schools will be to determine user security and access for district staff. GEMS replication is in progress for the public-facing dashboards (Community Engagement). State assessment data is being tested to load into the dashboards, and we have identified that we will also incorporate MAST data in the dashboards. The Great Falls district completed its VPN connection, and Billings has almost completed their setup. Additionally, the steering committee with schools across the state continues to meet to provide feedback and guidance on the project.

Data Modernization Vendor Partner Role

PowerSchool and the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) continue to meet weekly with progress reports on this project and the project managers meet bi-weekly. The vendor has assisted with the state SSO security solution of Analytics and Insights and worked collaboratively with all parties on the Virtual Private Network setup process. OPI met for the first dashboard consulting meeting on December 10, 2024. Further dashboard consulting meetings will occur through December and into January. The vendor's expertise and involvement demonstrate their dedication to making the project a success and they are crucial in helping Montana's education system transition to modernized data management, in line with House Bills [367](#) & [949](#).

Partnership Foundations

PowerSchool has forged a strategic partnership with Snowflake to establish a robust data lake through their Connected Intelligence product. The connector is set up to allow Connected Intelligence to replicate the data from the State Edition of Infinite Campus into the data lake, which in turn will feed Analytics and Insights and its modules. PowerSchool is working diligently to create a resilient and agile infrastructure that enables efficient data utilization, sharing, and analysis to ensure the success of Montana's data modernization project.

Contractual Framework

OPI and its vendors established a Contract and Statement of Work to clarify responsibilities, expectations, and deliverables. This framework is broken into seven milestones, with milestones 4 and 5 having two sub-milestones. The milestone and delivery schedule are provided in this report.

Unified Direction

OPI and PowerSchool worked together to set clear goals for program management. The team meets weekly with project status updates and the Project Managers from both organizations meet regularly to touch base. The aim is to improve services, streamline IT and data interactions, make better use of data for everyone involved, cut costs, boost security, and improve overall governance.



Preparation and Solutioning

Work has been ongoing for the implementation of Analytics and Insights and its deployment to schools. We to replicate relevant data tables to make sure that we are utilizing Analytics and Insights at its full capacity based on the data currently being collected. This includes GEMS longitudinal data and student assessment data. The analysis for GEMS and assessments is being completed. We are also going to be working to incorporate MAST data into dashboards once we identify the best way to connect that data source. PowerSchool has completed the mapping of all the data for the dashboarding and is now completing dashboard fitting. OPI will be QA-ing the data before the solution is deployed for schools to utilize. Additionally, the work has started to map data from districts that use PowerSchool as their Student Information System (SIS) to then be able to build the connector to pull the data into Connected Intelligence. Kalispell and Great Falls have successfully deployed their VPN connection, which will serve as a mapping tool for other districts. The remaining PowerSchool districts that will require a Virtual Private Network (VPN) are: Belt, Billings, and Polson. OPI and PowerSchool have been working with Billings and their VPN connection has almost been completed. OPI is scheduling time with Belt and Polson to work on setting up their VPNs in the coming reporting period. OPI and PowerSchool are in the beginning phases of getting Community Engagement, the public dashboards, deployed.

Financial Outlook: Project Expenditures & Future Projections

3-Year PowerSchool Contract Cost by Milestones: Including Implementation, Hosting, Licensing, Professional Services, Maintenance & Operation

Note: Recurring cost encompasses the ongoing costs associated with software and technology solutions utilized in the Montana OPI data modernization project. These costs include software licensing, release management, infrastructure hosting, and data integration. It also incorporates annual price increases, which may be influenced by factors like inflation and expanded usage.

Contract Term 1 - By Milestone	One Time	Recurring	Total	Delivery Date	Completed
Milestone 1				9/8/2023	
PS Consulting Services	\$73,728.00		\$73,728.00		✓
AWS Consulting Services	\$300,000.00		\$300,000.00		✓
Subtotal			\$373,728.00		
Milestone 2				9/15/2023	
PS Consulting Services	\$2,304.00		\$2,304.00		✓
AWS Consulting Services	\$20,000.00		\$20,000.00		✓
Subtotal			\$22,304.00		
Milestone 3				9/22/2023	
PS Consulting Services	\$3,456.00		\$3,456.00		✓
AWS Consulting Services	\$17,500.00		\$17,500.00		✓
Subtotal			\$20,956.00		



Milestone 4				November 2024
PS Provisioning Services	\$18,000.00		\$18,000.00	
Subtotal			\$18,000.00	
Milestone 5				June 2025
PS Customization Services	\$774,000.00		\$774,000.00	
PS Provisioning Services	\$230,956.00		\$230,956.00	
CI - Annual Subscription		\$1,351,498.81	\$1,351,498.81	
UI - Annual Subscription		\$1,231,331.42	\$1,231,331.42	
Subtotal	\$1,004,956.00	\$2,498,795.25	\$3,503,751.25	
Initial Term Discount		(\$1,000,000.00)	(\$1,000,000.00)	
Total (Contract Term 1)	\$1,489,944.00	\$1,498,795.25	\$2,988,739.25	July 1, 2023
Post-Deployment	One Time	Recurring	Total	
Annual Term 2		\$2,633,114.41	\$2,633,114.41	July 2024
Annual Term 3		\$2,733,172.76	\$2,733,172.76	July 2025
Contract Total (All 3 Terms)	\$1,489,944.00	\$6,865,082.42	\$8,295,843.48	

Educational Data Integration Payment Schedule

The 3-year term fixed cost project entails creating a payment schedule table that incorporates several key columns to manage the Educational Data Integration project expenses effectively. The table includes:

- Subscription & Deployment Service Cost:** This column captures the initial fixed cost for the project, covering subscription fees and deployment services for each year of the project.
- Annual Increase %:** This column represents the annual percentage increase in costs, reflecting any anticipated inflation or adjustments over the three-year period.
- Annual Increase \$:** This column calculates the dollar amount increase for each year based on the percentage specified in the previous column.
- Subtotal:** This column provides the total cost for each year, accounting for both the initial cost and any annual increases.
- Managed Services:** This column includes any additional costs associated with managed services or ongoing support throughout the project's duration.
- Subtotal:** Similar to the previous subtotal, this column sums up the costs for each year, including managed services.
- Invoice Total:** The final column computes the overall project cost by summing up all expenses over the three-year term, providing a comprehensive view of the project's fixed expenses.



3-Year Annual Payment Schedule

Payment Settlement Date	Subscription & Deployment Service Cost	Annual Increase %	Annual Increase \$	Subtotal	Managed Services	Annual Increase %	Annual Increase \$	Subtotal	Invoice Total
Initial 3 Yr Term 7/1/23 – 6/30/26									
7/1/2023	\$2,929,556.31								\$2,929,556.31
7/1/2024	\$2,304,507.44	1.9%	\$43,786.97	\$2,348,364.41	\$284,750.00			\$284,750.00	\$2,633,114.41
7/1/2025	\$2,348,364.41	3.8%	\$89,237.85	\$2,437,602.26	\$284,750.00	3.8%	\$10,820.50	\$295,570.50	\$2,733,172.76
Total Contract Amount									\$8,295,843.48
Optional Contract Term 7/1/26 – 6/30/28									
7/1/2026	\$2,437,602.26	3.8%	\$92,628.89	\$2,530,231.14	\$295,570.50	3.8%	\$11,231.68	\$306,802.18	\$2,837,033.32
7/1/2027	\$2,530,231.14	3.8%	\$96,148.78	\$2,626,379.93	\$306,802.18	3.8%	\$11,658.78	\$318,460.66	\$2,944,840.59

 Paid Invoice

Note: The 2024 payment to PowerSchool was approved for payment based on a thorough review of deliverables and progress made to this point. That information is substantiated through the progress outlined in the Table of Milestone Delivery Schedule, Project Timeline, and the sign-off acceptance of milestones 1-3.

Core Features of the Vendor Products

PowerSchool Products

1. **Analytics and Insights** will assist Schools and OPI with data analytic tools:
 - Facilitate schools in making data-informed decisions to enhance student outcomes.
 - Provides technical and data analytic tools.
 - Early warning system using artificial intelligence/predictive analytics to identify at-risk students.

2. **Community Engagement** will enhance OPI’s ability to publicly display:
 - Demographic information
 - Enrollment / Attendance
 - Statewide assessment data
 - Graduation and dropout
 - School expenditures data

3. **Connected Intelligence** will facilitate and enhance data sharing with:
 - Data lake technology
 - Data collection and integration tools
 - Data governance tools for data sharing

These applications for data modernization bring forth a range of compelling advantages, including centralized data lake construction for consolidated data storage, improved analytics and data visualization capabilities, and fortified data security measures.



Table of Milestone Delivery Schedule

Milestone #	Deliverable	Delivery Date	Completed
1	Draft Assessment Document	September 8th, 2023	✓
2	Montana Review & Feedback of Assessment Output	September 15th, 2023	✓
3	Delivery of Assessment & Future Solution Document	September 22nd, 2023	✓
4	Organizational Change Management	November -December 2023	✓
4a	Infinite Campus Connector to Data Lake	February 20th 2024	✓
4	Connected Intelligence Application Initial Deployment (with State Infinite Campus data)	March 29, 2024	✓
4a	PowerSchool Connector to Data Lake	March-December, 2024	
4b	PS SIS Integration Analysis	April 24, 2024	✓
5	Analytics and Insights Application Deployed	November-December 2024	
5	Analytics and Insights OPI Customer Education	May 2024-September 2024	✓
5	Analytics and Insights Customer Education	May 2024-February 2025	
5	Analytics and Insights Training Deployment	September 2024-February 2025	
4a	PS SIS Custom Connector Build	August 2024-February 2025	
4a	PS SIS Integration for Hosted Districts: Replicating data into Connected Intelligence	August 2024-February 2025	
4a	Set up VPNs for On-Premise PS SIS Districts	August 2024-February 2025	
6	Post Deployment Assessment	June 2025	
7	Solution Acceptance & Final Project Sign-Off	July 2025	

Project Timeline

Date	Activity	Status
April 07, 2023	Request for Proposal Release	Completed
June 20, 2023	Vendor Tentative Award	Completed
June 30, 2023	Contract & Statement of Work Executed	Completed
July 20, 2023	Project Kick-off Meeting (PowerSchool & OPI)	Completed
July 24-27, 2023	Organizational Change Management Executive Interviews	Completed
August 9-10, 2023	Cloud Assessment Workshops	Completed
August 14-31, 2023	Application Assessment Workshops	Completed
August 24, 2023	Organizational Change Management Assessment Report	Completed
September 1, 2023	Maturity Assessment Report	Completed
September 22, 2023	Commercial off the Shelf Solution, Architecture & Deployment Strategy	Completed



October 31, 2023	OCM Stakeholder Engagement Plan	Completed
February 20, 2024	Connection and replication of data from Infinite Campus to Connected Intelligence (CI)	Completed
March 29, 2024	Connected Intelligence initial data load verified and begin mapping for ongoing replication	Completed
April 24, 2024	Complete Custom Connector Analysis for PowerSchool Districts (Both on Premise Districts and PS cloud-housed districts)	Completed
April 30, 2024	Ongoing replication of Infinite Campus State Edition into Connected Intelligence	Completed
May 2024-September 2024	Analytics and Insights Customer [OPI] Education	Completed
May 2024-February 2025	Build Custom connector for PowerSchool Student Information System (SIS) replication into CI	In Progress (70%) *pending completion of other work
January-December 2024	Connection from on-premises PowerSchool Districts to Connected Intelligence (5 VPN connections)	In Progress (50%)
March 2024-December 2024	Analytics and Insights Base Module	In Progress (63%)
September 2024-February 2025	Analytics and Insights Training Implementation	In Progress (10%)
August 2024-November 2024	Replication of all districts data into Unified Insights	Completed
October 2024-December 2024	Complete standard conformance/configuration and ETL QA for dashboards	In Progress (75%)
October 2024-December 2024	Dashboard QA	In Progress (99%)
December 2024-January 2025	Dashboard fitting and consulting for SIS data in Analytics and Insights	In Progress (20%)
April 2024-February 2025	Risk Analysis Module (pending Analytics and Insights initial deployment)	On Hold
April 2024-February 2025	Student Readiness Module (pending Analytics and Insights initial deployment)	On Hold
April 2024-February 2025	Community Engagement Module	In Progress (10%)
April 2024-November 2024	Replication of Additional Data Sources into Connected Intelligence	In Progress (15%)
November 2024-April 2025	Customizations of Dashboards	Not Started
June 2025	Post Deployment Assessment	Not Started
July 2025	Solution Acceptance & Sign-Off	Not Started

**The percentages in the above table are updated for each report. These percentages are accurate as of December 13, 2024.*

Considerable progress has been made in milestones 4 and 5. Milestone 4 primarily addresses the implementation of Connected Intelligence (data lake). In the last year, CI has been provisioned, connectors made, and data replication is occurring. Milestone 5 encompasses the implementation of Analytics and Insights and its modules for deployment. This required the setup of CI. Connectors from CI into Analytics and Insights are currently being implemented. The Montana OPI Analytics and Insights site has been provisioned and data is continually flowing from CI into the dashboards for all districts. The OPI team is meeting with PowerSchool to complete dashboard fitting. OPI will then complete their QA to ensure that all data is accurate and the dashboards are displaying information that is pulled from the correct sources to make actionable, quality visualizations for schools.



Milestone 1-3 Acceptance Criteria

RUBRIC	SCORE	SCORING SCALE	TOTAL
Product exceptionally addresses project requirements / EXCEPTIONAL	4	EXCEPTIONAL	18 – 20
Product significantly addresses project requirements / STRONG	3	STRONG	14 – 17
Product somewhat addresses project requirements / NEUTRAL	2	NEUTRAL	10 – 13
Product minimally addresses project requirements / INADEQUATE	1	INADEQUATE	0 – 9
Product does not address project requirements at all / UNACCEPTABLE	0		

CRITERIA	MILESTONE 1	MILESTONE 2	MILESTONE 3
Does the document show understanding of the problem and its requirements?	3	3	3
Does the document use appropriate data sources?	3	3	3
Does the document identify an accurate and extensive inventory?	3	3	4
Does the document correctly identify problems and outline appropriate solutions?	2	3	3
Will executing/implementing the document be simple or complex? And will the vendor provide adequate support throughout the project?	2	2	2
<i>Simple = Higher Score; Complex = Lower Score</i>			
TOTAL SCORES	13	14	15

With the delivery of the final assessment product on September 23, 2023, milestones 1, 2, and 3 were completed. Each milestone was scored as noted above and the final product was determined to be strong. The final criterion remains at a “2” due to complexity of the project with required customizations.



Current Activities as of December 13, 2024

Workstream	Activity Overview	Outcomes
<p>Connected Intelligence (CI)</p>	<p>The team is working on solidifying the connection between GEMS and Connected Intelligence. Several files were not replicating correctly and are being reformatted to prevent errors.</p> <p>OPI is continuing internal conversations to identify additional data sources for replication into Connected Intelligence.</p> <p>Virtual Private Networks are being built to connect hosted and on-premise PS SIS districts to Connected Intelligence.</p> <p>OPI is scheduling meetings with two remaining districts to begin the process of establishing a VPN: Belt and Polson.</p>	<p>Ongoing replication is occurring for the State Edition of Infinite Campus. Timing of the replication was changed to ensure that schools will see a refresh of data from the previous day.</p> <p>GEMS replication timeline is being developed.</p> <p>Kalispell and Great Falls have established VPN connections</p> <p>Billings VPN is in progress.</p>
<p>Analytics and Insights</p>	<p>The initial authorization setup was tested and confirmed for the single sign-on solution. Ongoing file replication will need to be tested and confirmed.</p> <p>Dashboards have been populated with data from all school districts in the state. Dashboard fitting is in progress.</p> <p>Dashboard consulting has started between OPI and PowerSchool. This will help to inform the training plan for the rollout to districts.</p> <p>Once GEMS replication is completed, will begin the implementation of Analytics and Insights Community Engagement module for public-facing dashboards.</p>	<p>Assessment files are being moved into Analytics and Insights.</p> <p>Solidifying training plan with input from the Steering Committee and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The dashboard environment has been provisioned, including web domain for eventual public access.</p> <p>Dashboard fitting is in progress to ensure all connections and customizations are in place.</p>



<p>Stakeholder Partnerships</p>	<p>OPI is an active participant on the Education and Workforce Data Governance Board. There have been ongoing working group meetings at regular intervals since the March 2024 Board meeting. The OPI most recently participated in the December 9th Board meeting.</p> <p>OPI has continued to hold meetings with the established Data Modernization Steering Committee. This committee has members from schools across the state. The next meeting will be in January 2025.</p> <p>OPI holds weekly Office Hours for district Superintendents on Wednesdays at 10 am; the staff working on the Data Modernization project have been providing updates and are available for questions since May 8th.</p> <p>The OPI hosts a K-12 Data Taskforce meeting on a quarterly basis. During this meeting, which has members from across the state, including legislators, school administrators, teachers, and parents, we routinely provide updates on the MIDAS project. The next K-12 Data Taskforce meeting will be in January 2025.</p> <p>OPI attended the most recent Power Panel, hosted by PowerSchool on December 4th. This group gathers PowerSchool partners throughout the country to provide updates and insights from their own projects.</p>	<p>OPI will continue to participate in the Board's working groups to continue the progress of this group and the data modernization project.</p> <p>The Steering Committee has been meeting monthly and is providing valuable insight into the project, including how we can tailor solutions to help with data collection and reporting.</p> <p>Office hours provide the OPI with a way to connect with more district staff and continue to provide updates throughout the summer.</p> <p>The K-12 Data Taskforce provides another avenue for updates on the project and allows us to get valuable feedback from key stakeholders on issues related to educational data.</p>
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Education and Workforce Data Governing Board

The Education and Workforce Data Governing Board most recently met on December 9, 2024. Our office was in attendance and was an active participant in the meeting. We have also been active in the three subgroups established in March 2024:

- Project Design and Implementation Group: responsible for developing the technological processes for the linking and sharing of data across the agencies; defining the specific types of data that must be shared by the contributing agencies (the data dictionary); identifying current state operations and defining future state operations; and respond to any technical issues regarding data transfers, initial matching, or other initial use cases
- Data Governance Group: responsible for developing policies related to the linking and sharing of data; identifying the Board's purpose and goals in those policies; and developing policies for the data requests or MOU agreements in the scope that has been made available
- Data Research Work Group: responsible for developing the education and workforce research agenda; describing how the contributing agencies will work together to improve understanding of the connection of primary and secondary education, higher education, and workforce data

Education Data Integration through Data Modernization

Goals and Vision for Montana OPI

Goal 1: Improve Services

Goal 2: Improve IT/Data Workforce Interactions

Goal 3: Increase the Value of IT/Data for Operations and Business Impacted Audiences

Goal 4: Reduce IT/Data and Other Operating Costs

Goal 5: Security Risk Management and Continuity of Operations

Goal 6: Increase Governance Maturity

Addressing Statutory Compliance for Educational Data Integration

The information in the following section has been previously detailed in a prior report, and there have been no changes or updates for this section.

Montana OPI's Approach in the Data Modernization Project

- Montana's OPI is committed to legislative compliance via its Data Modernization Project, aligning with House Bill 367 and 949.
- The project aims to seamlessly integrate systems, enhance insights, provide academic support, ensure security, and facilitate secure data sharing across education.

Integration: Connected Intelligence

- The Data Modernization Project prioritizes Comprehensive Data Integration, in line with House Bills 367 and 949, to consolidate educational data from diverse sources.
- This approach improves data consolidation efficiency and accuracy, meeting legislative requirements effectively.

Holistic Student Insights: Analytics and Insights

- Analytics and Insights, in compliance with House Bill 367, offers educators a comprehensive view of student data, enabling a deep understanding of individual student performance and needs.
- This alignment with legislative intent empowers educators to meet compliance mandates and support students more effectively.



Individualized Academic Enhancement: Analytics and Insights/Risk Analysis

- Analytics and Insights and Risk Analysis tools, in line with House Bill 949 objectives, empower educators to utilize student data for personalized academic interventions.
- This approach, focused on identifying at-risk students and customizing interventions, directly supports the bill's intent to enhance student outcomes.

Robust Data Security: Connected Intelligence/Analytics and Insights

- Montana OPI prioritizes data security in alignment with House Bills 367 and 949, leveraging Connected Intelligence and Analytics and Insights.
- Robust security measures, including encryption, role-based access controls, audits, and data protection standards, are rigorously enforced to safeguard sensitive student information and fulfill compliance obligations.

Secure Data Sharing: Connected Intelligence

- The Secure Data Sharing component of the Data Modernization Project aligns with the security provisions of House Bills 367 and 949, facilitating controlled and encrypted data sharing for confidentiality and authorized access.
- Montana OPI's Data Modernization Project not only ensures compliance with legislative mandates but also empowers educators with tools to improve student outcomes, all while maintaining high data security and privacy standards.

Enhancing School Customer Experience for Educational Data Integration

Bridging Legacy & Modernization

- Ensuring a smooth link between existing software and new data modernization infrastructure is vital.
- Maintaining uninterrupted compatibility and coordination between older systems and the new framework is essential. This means addressing differences in data formats, communication methods, and operational procedures to ensure seamless connectivity. This collaboration supports ongoing operations and improves functionality, making the transition to modernized data systems seamless.

Elevating Performance

- Leveraging data modernization to streamline processes, optimize data management, and achieve a new level of operational effectiveness, resulting in improved productivity and resource allocation.

Data Integrity

- The data modernization project strengthens data accuracy and reliability, fostering trust in decision-making processes within educational institutions by ensuring data integrity and consistency, enabling confident, data-informed decisions that enhance educational outcomes and organizational effectiveness.

Reduced Downtime

- The data modernization project streamlines operational processes, minimizing system downtime and disruptions, enhancing efficiency, and promoting a resilient educational environment that supports seamless learning experiences and administrative excellence.



Data Modernization Steering Committee

OPI has put together a [Steering Committee](#) of school representatives to help provide oversight, guidance, and strategic direction for the Data Modernization project. The committee has offered valuable insights into both the current data collection practices and makes informed recommendations to ensure alignment with organizational goals. Their advisory role extends to risk assessment, resource allocation, and resolving issues that may arise during the project life cycle. The committee meets regularly to review project progress and provide guidance. The committee includes subject matter experts in educational data systems, data management, and data analysis along with other high-level stakeholders. Members of the committee have been gathered from across the state. For more information and updates on these meetings visit our [website](#). The next meeting will be in January 2025.

Currently, the committee is providing valuable insight to help guide the communications and training plan. The members are playing an active role in evaluating the functionality of the training plan and guiding the long-term outlook of the project. They are also going to be critical in testing the security solution currently in development. The Steering Committee members are being asked to consider use cases for different aspects of the data modernization project to help guide communication and outreach for schools across the state.

Data Modernization Steering Committee Members List:

- Sandra Rivas, District Clerk, Browning Public Schools
- Kevin Patrick, Business Director, Butte School District
- Jill Swanson, Technology Director, Conrad Public Schools
- Julie Asbeck, Business Manager, Fairview School
- Stacy Montgomery, District Clerk/Business Manager, Forsyth Public Schools
- Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager/District Clerk, Helena Schools
- Eric Miletich, IT Coordinator, Kalispell Public School District
- Colleen Drury, Business Manager, Scobey Schools

Charting the Course Forward

Navigating the Next Steps in Educational Data Integration

OPI is using the MIDAS data modernization project to prioritize and ensure an educational system that is more efficient, transparent, and responsive to the needs of its stakeholders. The project has made progress since our last report, and we look forward to the ongoing partnership with our vendor, PowerSchool.

PowerSchool is working with districts across the state with self-hosted (“on-premise”) PowerSchool Student Information Systems to build VPNs to streamline data collection for those schools. The goal is to reduce the burden of data entry on those schools. Building a better connection for districts utilizing a PowerSchool Student Information System will allow for simplified data reporting throughout the year. This will also make sure that there is no difference in how often data is refreshed in the Analytics and Insights dashboards that schools will have access to based on less frequent flow of data from information systems. As of this report, two of the five needed VPNs have been set up (Kalispell and Great Falls). OPI and PowerSchool are working with the remaining districts (Billings, Belt, and Polson) on establishing VPN connections.

PowerSchool and OPI are collaborating on file replication from the current GEMS system to help build more information into the dashboards as well as help begin the set up for the public-facing Community Engagement module. PowerSchool is also working on mapping the assessment data that has been loaded separately. The data will need to be put in a data warehouse structure so that the dashboards can be deployed. PowerSchool



and OPI will start with pilot districts from the Steering Committee to be able to set up security, access protocols, and early training.

Upcoming Activities and Efforts

- Weekly Project Status Update Meetings with Vendor
- Data Modernization Steering Committee meetings
- Quarterly K-12 Data Taskforce updates
- Quarterly legislative interim committee meetings
 - Other updates as requested by the session committees
- Quarterly Education and Data Workforce Governing Board meetings
- Other scheduled sub-group meetings as part of our commitment to working with our partners in the Education and Data Workforce Governing Board
- PowerSchool will continue analysis for loading student assessment data into Analytics and Insights
- Continue work on building Virtual Private Network (VPN) connections for remaining on-prem districts
- Continue responding to data load tickets
- Complete dashboard fitting and QA
- Finish implementation of the security solution and Configuration of UI for State, District, and School Users
- Custom Connector Build for PowerSchool SIS districts
- Community Engagement Build and Deployment
- Continue GEMS mapping and analysis
- Ongoing dashboard consulting meetings
- Crosswalk user role security in GEMS with available roles in Analytics and Insights

Sustainability of Project

The Office of Public Instruction is committed to providing the best possible tools for schools, teachers, students, and families. As we move forward with the MIDAS project, it is easy to see the value these products will have for education in Montana. However, there are several factors to be considered as we look to the future:

- The contract signed in June 2023 was for a subscription through June 30, 2026, to finish the build of the project.
- The ongoing subscription cost for the product is substantive. As outlined on page 6 of this report, the cost is estimated to be over \$2.6 million for FY2027 and over \$2.9 million for FY2028.
- Beyond FYs 2027/2028, there is an estimated 3.8% annual increase for both the Subscription/Deployment cost and the Managed Services cost. For an additional contract term of 7/1/2028-6/30/2030 (FYs 2029 and 2030), this would result in total invoices of:
 - \$3,056,744.53 for FY2029
 - \$3,172,900.83 for FY2030

Understanding these budget issues, ongoing subscription funding was requested as part of the Governor's proposed biennium budget. Other things to be considered may include: staffing from OPI to support schools in using the available products; any changes that need to be made to the product(s) as the result of changing statutes or rules; and changes in the subscription cost that may arise based on the expansion or change of the scope of the project.

Communication Plan

OPI is committed to providing ongoing communication about this project to all stakeholders. As part of this goal, we maintain the [webpage](#) dedicated to the project with current information. Project overview videos will be posted on the website by the end of the month.

We also provide regular updates in the following venues:



- Weekly Superintendent Office Hours: Wednesdays at 10 am
- Regular Steering Committee meetings
- Bi-monthly Board of Public Education meetings
- Quarterly Legislative Interim Committee meetings
- Quarterly K-12 Data Taskforce meetings

OPI has maintained communication with the PowerSchool Customer Education team to begin planning district training options that align with feedback we are receiving from our school partners. A formal training plan is in development. We are also going to be planning webinars for districts for additional training opportunities. Part of our consideration for training will include ongoing training opportunities for district staff after the initial training rollout. This will allow for refresher-style opportunities as well as training for incoming district staff and district staff who may change roles between years.

Our team is happy to answer any questions you may have about this project. Please reach out to [Julia Caro](#) or [Anna Hoerner](#).

Anticipated Future Reporting Periods:

February 24th, 2025

April 21st, 2025

June 23rd, 2025

August 25th, 2025