

DRAFT

Service Desk Consolidation: Feasibility of Establishing a Statewide, Collaborative Help Desk and Workflow Platforms

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Executive Summary



Feasibility of Establishing a Michigan Collaborative Service Desk

MiServiceDesk Feasibility Study Executive Summary

Consolidation of Service Opportunity

Evaluating the Feasibility of establishing a collaborative, statewide Service Desk and workflow platforms for Michigan's 56 Intermediate School Districts (ISDs), 537 school districts, and 293 public school academies (Districts) at the statewide or regional level.

Feasibility Summary

The MiServiceDesk project aims to assess the feasibility of scaling a centralized service desk model to support Michigan's 56 Intermediate School Districts (ISDs). This strategic initiative would enhance service delivery, improve operational efficiency, and reduce costs by centralizing Level 1 end-user support. By unifying service desk operations, MiServiceDesk seeks to streamline IT support processes and enhance the quality of service across the state's ISDs.

Oakland Schools is demonstrating a sustainable model for shared Help Desk services and use of a shared workflow platform on a regional basis.

By centralizing IT services, using common platforms, and spreading technicians across the state MiServiceDesk would deliver consistent, reliable support and provide adaptable solutions to meet the evolving needs of Michigan's educational institutions.

Economies of scale will allow regional collaborations to offer shared services by starting with common Help Desk and workflow platforms as a foundation for eventually sharing support personnel on an inter-county basis.

Statewide scale and efficiency gains result in 42% to 62% ROI.

Recommendation

The offer of shared purchasing for common Help Desk and workflow platforms to ISDs and Districts. Oakland Schools serves as a model for other regions, resulting in:

- *Increased Targeted Response*
- *Equitable Access*
- *Leveraged Shared Services and Purchasing*
- *Improved Staff Utilization, and*
- *Increased Value*

MiServiceDesk could leverage existing statewide support structures within MiCloud, MiSecure, and MiSEN for server management, secure transport, and cybersecurity services to enhance disaster recovery and digital transformation efforts for districts.



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Introduction

The MiServiceDesk study aims to assess the feasibility of scaling a centralized service desk model to support Michigan's 56 Intermediate School Districts (ISDs). This strategic initiative is designed to enhance service delivery, improve operational efficiency, and reduce costs by centralizing Level 1 end-user support. By unifying service desk operations, MiServiceDesk seeks to streamline IT support processes and enhance the quality of service across the state's ISDs.

Through centralization, MiServiceDesk is designed to deliver consistent and reliable support, strengthen cybersecurity, and provide adaptable solutions to meet the evolving needs of Michigan's educational institutions.

The feasibility study will evaluate the current landscape, focusing on technical, financial, and operational factors. Key areas of analysis include the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), Return on Investment (ROI), service levels, and potential challenges to consolidation. Additionally, the study will explore alternative configurations, such as regional or hybrid service desk models, to ensure the solution is scalable and sustainable and consistent, high-quality support for all ISDs, regardless of size or resources.

A. Context

The frustration of interacting with Help Desk support is a common experience for any technology user. Recalling Help Desk interactions can almost create a physical response – the blood boils and sweat beads form. We can all tell stories of negative experiences, as well as those rare exemplary, standout experiences. The varied responses contribute to the feelings of unease when we reach out to make that call or send that email to the Help Desk, creating apprehension before we dial. What will I have to deal with this time? By the time we reach out for help, we are agitated, in need of a solution, ready to lash out...and often we do just that.

Do we ever pause to consider what might be happening on the other end of that call?

Every ISD across Michigan addresses its Help Desk and workflow management in vastly different ways. Some have dedicated staff waiting by the phone for a call or email. Others have every technician and engineer on rotation to address Help Desk needs. Some use spreadsheets to assign, track and document services. Many have sophisticated platforms like Jira or Solar



Winds to manage their work, allowing for valuable data collection which lends itself to creating better response times and more effective troubleshooting, not to mention documentation.

ISDs struggle to fill Help Desk positions with that “just right” personality. A person who stays calm when responding to frustrated callers, someone who is kind and supportive - a good problem solver, engaging and quick to determine how best to land on a solution for end-users, and someone who knows when to turn the issue over to the next level of support. Most importantly, a person who knows when a cluster of calls and emails look like they are leading to a systems issue that may impact larger numbers of people, allowing a department to get in front of an impending organization-wide problem.

“The service desk staff are the ‘face’ of the humans that make technology work for schools. They have the power to turn frustration into joy with the right relationship and technical skills.”

– Kurt Rheume, Wayne RESA

Technology departments, wanting desperately to meet the needs of their users, are often overtaxed, overworked and spread too thin. Hoping to keep everyone happy; tech support is often as frustrated as the users they hope to support. Lack of standardized platforms interferes with their ability to develop the expertise they desire. Opportunities to attend training are rare due to slender budgets and shortages in personnel.

Often, responders to end-users in need are existing staff who are dedicated to other technology roles. It is not uncommon to find a high level technician or systems engineer responding to issues like projectors or log in concerns. Meanwhile the work they should be attending to winds up pushed to the back burner. They are often postponing the priorities of their primary role to respond to perceived emergencies. In short - everyone in the Help Desk relationship is overwhelmed and frustrated.

The need for ISDs to develop shared response systems and resolution strategies is reliant upon having common platforms and standardized procedures. ISDs cannot begin to consider shared solutions until we first have the ability to share incoming requests and monitor responses using the same tools. Common platforms for Help Desk and workflow management are a prerequisite to finding a shared solution to Help Desk woes for ISDs.



"...[S]tandardizing the help desk ticket software across all those entities also has let our staff see [issues early] It kind of acts like the canary in the coal mine; they see issues coming that even the providers, larger providers with Google or Microsoft aren't seeing yet."

-Michigan ISD Technology Director

"I saw efficiency time and time again. But we also talked about if the ISD is going to do the service, we're going to use the same system, we're going to do the same processes, use similar timelines...and so that's where I saw a lot of benefit."

-Michigan Assistant Superintendent

B. Barriers to Consider

Michigan Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) face significant challenges in managing and maintaining their IT service desk operations. Many ISDs operate with limited human resources and technical staff, making it challenging to meet the growing demands for IT support. The landscape of classroom instruction, business services, and school support exist in an increasingly digital learning environment – more tools to support learning are only found online.

The current approach to service desk support often results in frustrating inefficiencies, higher costs, and inconsistent service quality across the ISDs. Additionally, many ISDs cannot keep up with the latest advancements in service desk management systems, further exacerbating the problem.

"It's about increasing the breadth of offerings to meet the instructional needs of our teaching staff and our professional staff. So we've quantified it. It's difficult to do because prices are not consistent by any stretch and what we get versus what we might get through a statewide or a national bid affects pricing."

-Michigan ISD Superintendent

The MiServiceDesk feasibility study evaluates the potential challenges and opportunities of centralizing service desk operations for Michigan's ISDs. The goal is to offer a scalable, secure, and cost-effective service desk model that improves operational efficiency and enhances IT support across the state. However, several key challenges must be addressed:

- **Diverse Technological Readiness:** ISDs use service desk systems in vastly different ways. Some districts have established help desk



platforms, while others rely on manual processes. These varied solutions challenge compatibility and integration across all ISDs into a centralized MiServiceDesk platform.

- **Funding and Resource Allocation:** Securing sufficient funding for three essential components of centralization – initial setup, ongoing operations, and centralized service desk infrastructure upgrades – is a significant challenge. Identifying sustainable financial models and funding sources will be crucial for MiServiceDesk's long-term success.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** An essential prerequisite is to gain buy-in from ISD administrators, IT staff, and other stakeholders. Concerns about continuing to meet the needs of their LEAs without interruption drives hesitancy in changing systems. The trust ISDs have established with locals underpins the need to maintain control over their service desk operations. ISDs feel the need to retain autonomy in management, and ensure security when centralizing sensitive information and must be addressed. The feasibility study will alleviate these concerns and demonstrate the benefits of a unified service desk.
- **Technical Expertise and Training:** Implementing MiServiceDesk will require skilled IT professionals to manage and maintain the centralized system. Additionally, local IT staff will need training on the new service desk processes. Comprehensive, responsive training and professional development plans are necessary to build the required expertise required to share services.
- **Data Security and Privacy:** Centralizing service desk operations raises important concerns about the security and privacy of sensitive data, particularly related to student and administrative records. The study must evaluate these risks and establish robust security measures to protect sensitive information and ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.
- **Scalability and Adaptability:** The MiServiceDesk model must be scalable to accommodate future growth and technological changes. The system should be flexible enough to adapt to the evolving needs of ISDs and the rapidly changing IT landscape.
- **Operational Continuity:** Ensuring a smooth transition to the centralized service desk with minimal disruption is critical. The feasibility study must explore the support necessary to develop a detailed implementation plan. A successful implementation plan will include contingency measures to



maintain service continuity and prevent disruptions during the transition phase – a vital factor to ISDs.

- **Existing Operations/Technology “Debt”:** Many ISDs operate with existing service desk systems and infrastructure, representing a significant operational and technological “debt” holding the status quo. Reliance on these desperate platforms leads to certain inefficiencies and challenges in system integration across ISDs and Districts. In many cases, the operational costs of existing systems are considerably lower than moving to a new one, especially when implementing a new one comes with a learning curve.

Transitioning to the centralized MiServiceDesk platform should address transitioning from these existing systems, ensuring compatibility, and managing the costs and efforts associated with modernization. Overcoming the inertia of entrenched legacy systems is critical to achieving the operational efficiencies MiServiceDesk promises.

C. MiServiceDesk Logic Model

Overall Goal:

To provide a centralized, scalable, and sustainable service desk model operated by Michigan’s Intermediate School Districts that enhances operational efficiency, improves IT service delivery, and ensures consistent, equitable access to support services across Michigan’s educational landscape.

A [Detailed Logic Model](#) can be found in the Appendix.

D. Evidence Supporting Collaboration

Several successful statewide initiatives provide examples of collaborative purchasing power and the benefits garnered by schools, this study has identified two examples below that closely match the circumstances for scaling cloud storage beyond the regional level. These examples provide models to consider for the feasibility of cloud hosting. Three projects have driven down pricing through shared purchasing power:

1. SPOT: 1:1 Device Purchasing \$132,000,000 (11 years)
2. MiSEN: \$11.5 million annually, \$26.5 million (Erate)
3. MiSecure: \$6.9 million (year 1)

1. MiSecure

[MiSecure](#) is a program that aims to improve cybersecurity for K-12 schools in Michigan. From the 2023-24 School Aid Fund, section 97g allocated \$9,000,000 in one time funding to provide for a statewide K12 Security




Operations Center (SOC) and Managed Detection and Response (MDR) services to ISDs, local districts and PSAs in the State of Michigan. By leveraging shared procurement, MiSecure has **saved more than \$6.9 million in the first year** allowing educational organizations to redirect funds, enhance teaching and learning, and allow schools to maintain focus on their educational mission. [\(MiSecure DRAFT Legislative Report.\)](#)

Organizationally, MiSecure works in conjunction with other similar organizations focused on technology services that are most effectively done at the state level. Michigan DataHub, MiCHDev, MiCloud, MiSEN, and MiServiceDesk are all coordinated by MAISA under the MichIT umbrella, and this coordination extends MiSecure cybersecurity services to support student statewide data efforts, cloud computing, and cybersecurity assessments. Likewise, MiSecure benefits by utilizing existing resources such as help desk, infrastructure, and data-sharing platforms.

2. MiSEN

The [Michigan Statewide Educational Network \(MiSEN\)](#) has brought 300 Gigabit internet connectivity to Michigan Intermediate School Districts (ISD) at a very low cost by purchasing consortia-based services to offer an inexpensive, reliable fiber-optic secure network to Michigan schools. MiSEN primarily services school entities through the ISDs to the State Education Network (SEN) fiber network for transport and internet access.

MiSEN's support structures are managed in partnership with Intermediate Schools Districts to connect all schools. MiSEN was established out of the TRIG Grant Funding provided to consortiums in service to schools. Due to the wise investments of these dollars and the strategy to leverage Federal E-rate funding, MiSEN has been able to sustain operations for over a decade. MiSEN is uniquely qualified to succeed due to the partnerships and connections established with Regional Representatives managing the board, advisory, and staff.



**Empowering Digital Access
for Endless Opportunities**

2023-24 Statistics

Entities connected to the SEN transport	52
Entities utilizing Internet Access (Primary or Resilient)	47
Students Served	~1 M
Service Up Time	99.99%
DDoS Mitigation Events Mitigated	1,031 events
Preventative measures/tickets	14,435
Transport Capacity	200 G
Internet Access Capacity	300 G
Peak Internet Access	223.4 Gbps
Total E-rate Savings through 2023	\$25,635,049.25
# Public Schools unconnected to the SEN	70
# underserved Public Schools	79

● **MiSEN Return On Investment:**

Projected savings from statewide use of the MiSEN in three areas:

- Capturing Federal Funding for E-rate
 - \$1,9M in E-rate consultants and local staff time annually
 - \$25M in E-rate funding disbursement for past filings for eligible services.
- Providing low-cost equitable connectivity across the State
 - \$6M in Internet costs annually from Pre-MiSEN to current
- Additional Services
 - \$3.5M in Transport Network service annually
 - \$119,976.00 in DDoS Mitigation service annually

3. TRIG Device Purchasing

The Device Purchasing initiative under the [Technology Readiness Infrastructure Grant \(TRIG\)](#) program (2012-2016) was designed to incentivize School District purchases of learning devices and make instructional technology more affordable for Michigan K-12 districts through collective statewide SPOT bidding. This effort has allowed districts to procure over 593,000 devices, including Chromebooks, laptops, and desktops, at significantly reduced prices. *The aggregation of demand has enabled cost savings of over \$132 million across participating districts.*

A critical component of the SPOT Bid was the per-device incentives. Districts would receive a subsidy on individual device purchases through the program, ranging from \$25 to \$100-per-device. This subsidy guaranteed the lower Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) for Districts, removing much of the risk as schools moved from 3 students-per-school- provided-device to closer to 1-to-1. Districts went to their communities to raise additional capital funds to purchase subsidized computers, and this increased collective demand resulted in highly discounted pricing before applying the pre-incentive.

This discounted pricing on aggregated purchasing sustained the program after the initial incentive funds elapsed. The Regional Educational Media Centers ([REMC Saves](#)) assumed administration of the program and charged a 1% administrative fee to vendors to cover the operating expenses. This self-sustaining model has proven successful and continues to support the growth of digital learning environments across the state.

Demonstration: Oakland Schools Service Desk

Oakland Schools is a leading provider of shared services Information Technology (IT) solutions for 28 school districts, serving approximately 220,000 students. Services include:

- **Field Services:** Comprehensive on-site technical support, including desktop support, training, mobile device management, and presentation equipment.
- **Student Information Systems:** Robust tools for managing student data, attendance, and academic records.
- **Business Application Services:** Solutions for financial management, human resources, and other administrative functions.
- **Professional Learning:** Opportunities for educators to develop technology skills and integrate digital tools into their classrooms.
- **Network Services:** Secure and reliable network infrastructure, including high-speed internet and cybersecurity solutions.
- **Help and Service Desk:** A dedicated team of experts available to assist with technology-related issues via phone, email, and online chat.

A. Oakland Schools Statewide Service Desk

In particular, Oakland Schools Technology Services is exemplary in the help desk support it provides its districts and several statewide projects:

- [EduPaths](#) is a free online professional development platform designed for Michigan educators. It offers various courses to help educators enhance their skills and knowledge. EduPaths allows for personalized learning



paths, enabling educators to grow professionally in various education-related topics at their own pace.

- **MiCIP (Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process)** is a platform that supports school districts in planning, implementing, and evaluating continuous improvement strategies. It focuses on aligning district goals, data, and resources to promote student success. By streamlining the improvement process, MiCIP integrates various plans into a cohesive approach, making it easier for districts to manage and track their progress toward educational goals.
- **MiDataHub** is a statewide data management platform that facilitates the exchange of student information between different educational systems. It allows schools and districts to access real-time data, improving their ability to make informed decisions. Additionally, MiDataHub ensures compliance with state and federal reporting requirements through data standardization, helping districts maintain accurate and timely records.
- **MiECC (Michigan Early Childhood Collaborative)** aims to improve early childhood education by fostering collaboration among providers and educators. The system is focused on supporting young learners and ensuring their readiness for school. MiECC integrates early learning data to enhance the effectiveness of programs, ultimately improving outcomes for children in their formative years.
- **MiEWIMS (Michigan Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring System)** helps schools identify students at risk of academic failure by monitoring key indicators such as attendance, behavior, and course performance. The system provides early warning signals that prompt, timely interventions, allowing schools to support at-risk students before they fall behind. MiEWIMS supports data-driven decision-making, helping to improve student success rates and reduce dropout rates.
- **MiRead** is a literacy-focused platform designed to help educators and students improve their reading proficiency. It provides tools for educators to monitor student reading progress and identify areas needing intervention. MiRead aligns with Michigan's Read by Grade Three law, helping to ensure students meet critical literacy milestones early in their educational journey.
- **MiStrategyBank** is a repository of evidence-based strategies and practices that schools can use to improve student outcomes. It allows districts to document and share successful strategies with other schools,



fostering a collaborative approach to educational improvement. By offering access to various proven practices, MiStrategyBank supports continuous improvement efforts across the state.

B. Wayne RESA - Oakland Schools Collaboration

Wayne RESA and Oakland Schools were compelled to develop a consortium to respond to the need to provide Service Desk support for a shared student information system, MISTAR-Q. Both organizations shared the platform but found themselves responding with parallel troubleshooting, independent documentation of issues, and varied solutions. In many cases, they were solving the same problem in multiple ways. End-users in the respective organizations were experiencing different support models. The need to establish a shared response and collect data in a unified space became evident.

Both organizations used the same platform for help desk and ticket management. This made collaborating around a shared response system both logical and facile. End-users began to experience alignment in workflows, prioritization, and status responses. All users shared everyday response experiences. The valuable collaboration allowed for alignment in software coding, thus resolving system issues for stakeholders. This action facilitated Service Level Agreements (SLAs) that created a common understanding among support teams and the customer base – delivering better service.

These conservation efforts led to more effective reporting models, eliminating email requests and moving users to a reporting portal that economized the time needed to address each ticket. Response times and communication breakdowns decreased while customer satisfaction increased through these collaborative efforts. Efficiencies were also created for collecting standardized response data and service documentation. Altogether, the collaboration proved successful for all education entities.

To be clear, moving to a shared service desk was not a small lift.

“... [F]rankly, things like the data migration and refactoring of how we manage Service Desk are no small tasks. It takes a lot of collaboration. It's given us some baseline for tracking, whether it be support requests or, frankly, even enhancement requests, and the users a little agency over what outstanding issues they might have.” – Kurt Rheume, Wayne RESA



Through qualitative analysis, the MAISA team heard how important trust and proximity are to combining organizations into a collaborative effort. Researcher Virginia Satir stated, "People prefer the certainty of misery to the misery of uncertainty." It took leadership, confidence, and social capital for both organizations to negotiate a successful, shared experience for end-users. That gamble paid off.

Wayne RESA and Oakland Schools continue to benefit from the collaboration and subsequent growth of their shared Service Desk. This is a proven, effective model that provides increased value that other regions could consider. Ultimately, under suitable circumstances, the consideration could be scaled to a statewide level.

C. Challenges to Scaling Oakland Schools' Current Service Desk

There are three challenges to scaling Oakland Schools' current offering in support of consolidating other regional and state programs:

- **Full Resolution Cost:** The MAISA feasibility study team initially attempted to determine a per-ticket cost for the Oakland Schools service desk; however, in examining the financial information, we could only account for the total cost of ticket resolution, whether the issue was resolved at Level 1 (resolved by help desk staff), Level 2 (resolved by an application specialist) or Level 3+ (resolved by dispatching a technician).

Without separating the physical dispatch of technical staff, the financial costs screw towards the less frequent but more expensive interventions and make it difficult to make cost comparisons and total cost of operation and return on investment estimates.

- **Different Missions:** Oakland Schools is dedicated to serving the School Districts, educators, students, and staff in Oakland County's geographic region, and are funded for that purpose. Because of operational efficiencies, expertise, and scale, Oakland Schools has grown its Service Desk to support other areas and statewide programs, as discussed. Oakland's regional mission should and does take precedence, limiting its ability to scale beyond its original mission.

This limitation will force future statewide programs to seek other service desk options from different service providers with standard operating procedures and ticketing and workflow management software. This would render the economies of scale and operational efficiencies gained through consolidating services through Oakland unavailable.

- **End-of-Life, On-Premise Software:** Oakland Schools and Wayne RESA currently use an on-premise version of popular Jira software, provided by Atlassian, to manage its service desk and workflow process jointly. Atlassian announced that this software is no longer supported as of February 15, 2024 ([announcement](#)), forcing a shift to Cloud hosting. Wayne RESA is facing a similar challenge.

Proposed MiServicesDesk Services

To determine feasibility, we proposed a MiServiceDesk as a coordinated effort between Michigan’s 56 ISDs that results in the selection, implementation, standardization, and sharing of service desk activities across a uniform, integrated help desk and workflow management platform.

A. Intended Benefits

As a result, this coordinated effort would result in the following statewide benefits:

- **Improve Operational Efficiency:** MiServiceDesk will centralize and standardize help desk operations across Michigan’s 56 ISDs, reducing redundancy and streamlining workflows. By utilizing a unified platform, ISDs can eliminate disparate systems, automate routine tasks, and reduce time spent on manual processes. This will result in faster issue resolution, improved response times, and a more effective use of IT resources.
- **Leverage Shared Services:** By consolidating service desk operations, Michigan’s ISDs can leverage shared services to reduce duplication of effort and infrastructure. A coordinated approach allows ISDs to pool resources, benefit from economies of scale, and optimize service delivery. This collaboration will provide minor ISDs access to tools and expertise typically available only to larger districts, enhancing overall service quality.
- **Enhance Data Security and Privacy:** A standardized service desk platform will ensure that all ISDs follow consistent data security protocols, reducing vulnerabilities and enhancing compliance with state and federal regulations. Centralized control will provide greater oversight and the ability to implement advanced security features, including encryption and multi-factor authentication, to protect sensitive student and staff information.

- **Support Technical Expertise and Development:** MiServiceDesk will offer ongoing professional development and training to ensure that technical staff across ISDs are equipped to manage and maintain the new platform. Centralizing technical operations will allow for knowledge sharing and collaboration, provide access to specialized expertise that might be lacking locally, and foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement.
- **Achieve Cost Savings/Long-Term Sustainability:** By implementing MiServiceDesk, Michigan’s ISDs will benefit from reduced hardware, software, and staffing costs through shared infrastructure. This model reduces upfront investment and provides long-term sustainability through efficient resource allocation and maintenance, positioning ISDs to reinvest savings into educational improvements.

B. Coordinating Activities

This coordinated effort would complete the following tasks:

1. Collective Purchasing of Common Cloud-Based Platforms

MAISA would assist the ISDs in coordinating a statewide purchase of help desk and workflow management Software-as-a-Service (SaaS). Examples we used to determine Total Cost of Operation (TCO) and Return on Investment (ROI):

a. Helpdesk SaaS

We used a reliable and robust help desk SaaS for cost estimating. A cloud-based IT service management software is designed to streamline help desk operations for organizations of all sizes:

- It provides multichannel support, allowing users to efficiently manage service requests from various sources, such as email, phone, and a customer portal.
- Features include ticket management, customizable workflows, asset management, automation, and real-time reporting designed to enhance operational efficiency and improve IT support services.
- The market price for this software is approximately **\$336.63/year per user**, with no discounts applied.
- Comparable software prices are between \$420 and \$594/year per seat, assuming a 50% academic discount.

We estimate the 300-seat SaaS licensing costs over 3 years:

Seats	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total
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50	\$16,832	\$17,336	\$17,857	\$52,024
125		\$43,341	\$44,641	\$87,982
125			\$44,641	\$44,641
300	\$16,832	\$60,678	\$107,139	\$184,648

- Helpdesk software requires fewer seats because issue resolution or ticket transfer involves fewer staff.
- Estimates anticipate a 3% annual cost increase in 2025-26 and 2026-27.

b. Workflow SaaS

We used a different, and cost-effective workflow SaaS provided for cost estimating. A cloud-based IT service management (ITSM) tool is designed to help organizations streamline their help desk and service management operations.

- It offers incident, problem, and change management, enabling teams to handle service requests and collaborate effectively on a single platform.
- Features include customizable workflows, SLA management, automation, and real-time reporting.
- Based on a software development platform, Jira integrates seamlessly with other Atlassian tools, making it ideal for IT support and development teams. It is highly scalable, suitable for small and large enterprises, and offers flexible pricing plans.
- List price starts at **\$120/year** per agent after an education discount.
 - Comparable software prices are \$120 to \$420/seat, assuming a similar 50% academic discount.

We estimate the 1,500-seat SaaS licensing costs over a 3-year period:

Seats	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Extension
500	\$43,500	\$44,805	\$46,149	\$134,454
500		\$44,805	\$46,149	\$90,954
500			\$46,149	\$46,149
1,500	\$43,500	\$89,610	\$138,447	\$271,557

- Helpdesk software requires more seats because more staff are involved in the downstream advanced issue resolution.
- Estimates anticipate a 3% annual cost increase in 2025-26 and 2026-27.

c. Combined SaaS Licensing Cost

The combination of Help Desk and Workflow SaaS allows a larger number of issues to be resolved by a fewer number of service desk staff (Level 1). The workflow software then routes advanced tickets to the correct specialist for resolution (Level 2). Combined licensing costs 3 years are:

Seats	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total
1,800	\$60,332	\$150,288	\$245,587	\$456,206

- Estimates anticipate a 3% annual cost increase in 2025-26 and 2026-27.

2. Standardized Ticketing and Issue Resolution Processes

We recommend forming an advisory board composed of ISD and local district staff to review and standardize operating procedures for the MiServiceDesk initiative. This board would ensure that perspectives from districts of various sizes and technological readiness levels are incorporated into decision-making processes. By gathering representatives from across the state, the advisory board can identify common service desk challenges, assess best practices, and develop uniform operating procedures.

The costs associated with standardizing ticketing and issue resolution processes include:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Contracted consultant (organizing and writing) | \$50,000 |
| 2. Shared time of advisory board members: | \$50,000 |
| 3. Travel and supplies | <u>\$5,000</u> |
| Total | \$100,000 |

3. Technical Assistance in Shift to Common Platforms

This project would require a small, dedicated staff to handle SaaS integration, customization, training, and support. SaaS integration ensures that the platform seamlessly works with other district systems, while customization allows each district to tailor the service desk to their specific needs. A specialized team would also provide ongoing training to help staff adapt to new processes and ensure smooth operation. Additionally, having a support team available ensures timely troubleshooting and assistance, which is crucial to maintaining efficiency and minimizing downtime across all districts using the shared platform.

Centralized SaaS Integration, Customization, Training, and Support:

- 3 technical staff x \$90,731 + \$5,000 equipment = \$287,193*
- * Based on Oakland Schools costs.



Wayne and Oakland ISDs must transition their Jira on-premise systems to a cloud-based version to improve scalability, flexibility, and security. The cloud version will provide enhanced accessibility, enabling better staff access and fostering collaboration across ISDs and districts. This transition will also improve data security, with cloud platforms offering advanced encryption and compliance with regulatory standards.

Estimated costs based on Wayne RESA quote:

- Oakland Schools = \$100,000
- Wayne RESA = \$78,315
- Total: \$478,315

It should be noted that estimates of transition costs for other ISDs range between \$25,000 and \$50,000.

Support for 5 Additional ISDs x \$25,000 = \$125,000

- We estimate 85,000 students served by 5 ISDs (average of ISDs less Oakland Schools and Wayne RESA).

4. Additional Service Desk Staffing

Wayne RESA needs to expand its service desk staff to effectively support 33 school districts it serves. As the demand for IT services and support grows, especially with each district's diverse needs, increasing the service desk team is essential to ensure timely response, reduce downtime, and maintain consistent quality of service. Increased staff will enable more efficient handling of technical issues and requests, ensuring that districts receive the support they need to focus on educational outcomes without technology disruptions.

Estimate: 3 service desk staff x \$90,731 +\$5,000 equipment = \$287,193

* Based on Oakland Schools costs.

5. Incentives for Consolidating District Service Desks

We propose \$10,000 incentives to encourage local districts to transition to a shared service desk model. These funds would help cover the initial costs of implementation, staff training, and necessary system upgrades, easing the financial burden of change. The incentive is designed to motivate districts to adopt the shared model, which will ultimately lead to long-term savings, streamlined operations, and improved IT support across the county. By offering financial support, participating ISDs can foster district collaboration and faster adoption of this efficient, unified service desk system.



25 Districts x \$10,000 = \$250,000

- We estimate 50,000 students served by the 10 districts.

Financial Analysis

After determining costs, we conducted the following financial analysis:

1. Total Cost of Operation (TCO)

The following table summarizes estimated Total Cost of Operation (TCO) for increasing capacity at Oakland Schools, Wayne RESA, and 5 additional ISDs using standardized platforms and operating procedures. It also includes incentives for 25 local districts to consolidate services to ISD service desk.

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total
SaaS	1,800	\$60,332	\$150,288	\$212,419
Standardized SOP	\$100,000			\$100,000
Implementation Support Team	\$287,193	\$295,809	\$304,683	\$887,685
ISD Conversion Costs	\$178,315	\$75,000	\$50,000	\$3,033,150
Increased Service Desk Staff		\$287,193	\$295,809	\$583,002
District Incentives		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Total	563,993	\$768,333	\$850,779	\$2,183,106

- Estimates anticipate a 3% annual cost increase in 2025-26 and 2026-27 except for incentives.

After the initial 3-year implementation, we anticipate:

Annual TCO: \$459,479

For the 25 districts incentivized to participate (50,000 students):

Annual TCO: \$307,641
\$11,832/district
\$6.15/student

2. Return on Investment (ROI)

The MiServiceDesk study was unable to determine a cost savings for ISDs and districts with established MiServiceDesk offerings because cost numbers



included total cost of tickets/issues resolved, including technician dispatch, hardware break/fix, etc., which is not within scope of the service desk we estimated.

However, according to a [2019 SolarWinds study](#), standardizing service desk software and operating procedures and shared staffing can result in:

75% reduction in service desk costs

- **Service Quality Improvements:** improvements in user satisfaction, such as through surveys or feedback, showing the increased quality of IT services.

95% customer satisfaction ratings

- **Scale and Efficiency Gains:** improvements in response times, ticket resolution rates, or reduced downtime across districts, allowing MiService Desk to serve more districts over time (based on \$307,641 TCO):

Districts	<u>10</u>	\$30,764	<u>17</u>	\$18,097	<u>25</u>	\$12,306
Students	20,000	\$15.38	34,000	\$9.05	50,000	\$6.15
			ROI	41%	ROI	60%

- **Statewide SaaS Purchase:** currently, both Help Desk (market) and Workflow SaaS (academic) are purchased at list price. We believe a statewide contract could result in a 25% discount, which would add **1-2% ROI**.

Recommendation

We found it feasible to implement a MiServiceDesk model that significantly improves IT service delivery across Michigan’s Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) This approach would streamline IT support, enhance operational efficiency, and address the challenges of resource allocation in smaller or under-resourced districts.

Statewide scale and efficiency gains result in 42% to 62% ROI.



We recommend implementing a shared service desk platform with Oakland Schools and Wayne RESA, assisting them in upgrading to Cloud-based Software-as-a-Service and leveraging their economies of scale, allowing districts to pool resources, reduce redundancy, and benefit from consistent service desk practices.

This model will also ensure faster ticket resolution times, improve service desk reliability, and offer equitable access to advanced IT support across all districts, regardless of size or funding.

This model should be designed to accommodate additional ISDs as they express interest in joining the MiServiceDesk initiative. The shared platform will also allow customization based on district-specific needs while maintaining overall consistency across the state.

This project therefore qualifies for State School Aid Act Section 12.c funding and we recommend an ISD, in partnership with Oakland Schools and Wayne RESA, apply for implementation funds to cover initial setup costs, training, and system customizations.

Appendix: A: MiServiceDesk Logic Model

Overall Goal:

To provide a centralized, scalable, and sustainable service desk model operated by Michigan’s Intermediate School Districts that enhances operational efficiency, improves IT service delivery, and ensures consistent, equitable access to support services across Michigan’s educational landscape.

1. Inputs
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise from MiNOC and MAISA • Service desk software and infrastructure • Funding from state and educational grants • Existing partnerships with ISDs • Technical staff with service desk and IT certifications
<p>Stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) • Local Education Agencies (LEAs) • Michigan Department of Education (MDE)
2. Activities
<p>Establishing Centralized Service Desk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a unified service desk system • Create standardized ticketing and issue resolution workflows • Ensure 24/7 service desk support for all ISDs
<p>Training and Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer training programs for IT staff and end-users • Provide ongoing technical support and troubleshooting for service desk systems
<p>Partnership Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen collaborations with ISDs • Engage new stakeholders and potential partners to expand the service desk model
<p>Infrastructure Enhancement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate existing IT infrastructure with centralized service desk operations



- Enhance IT support tools for scalability, flexibility, and efficiency

3. Outputs

Services Provided:

- Centralized service desk support for IT issues such as hardware troubleshooting, software support, and login assistance
- Ticketing and escalation for Level 1 IT support needs
- Professional services, including service desk customization and integration with existing district systems

Training Programs:

- Workshops and training sessions for service desk staff and end-users
- Development of knowledge base resources and self-service guides for end-users

Partnership Agreements:

- Signed agreements with ISDs and LEAs for service desk services
- New partnerships with educational technology providers

4. Outcomes

Short-term:

- Increased adoption of MiServiceDesk services across Michigan ISDs
- Improved response times and issue resolution rates for IT support
- Enhanced technical support skills and capabilities for service desk staff

Medium-term:

- Cost savings for ISDs through centralized service desk operations
- Greater operational efficiency and reduced IT overhead for schools
- Strengthened collaboration between ISDs in IT support management and processes

Long-term:

- Sustainable operation of MiServiceDesk with demonstrated ROI
- Equitable access to high-quality IT support services for all Michigan schools
- Recognition of MiServiceDesk as a model for centralized IT support in education

Appendix B: Wayne RESA Districts

1. **Allen Park Public Schools**
2. **Crestwood School District**
3. **Dearborn City School District**
4. **Dearborn Heights School District No. 7**
5. **Detroit Public Schools Community District**
6. **Ecorse Public Schools**
7. **Flat Rock Community Schools**
8. **Garden City Public Schools**
9. **Gibraltar School District**
10. **Grosse Ile Township Schools**
11. **Grosse Pointe Public Schools**
12. **Hamtramck Public Schools**
13. **Harper Woods School District**
14. **Highland Park Public School Academy**
15. **Huron School District**
16. **Lincoln Park Public Schools**
17. **Livonia Public Schools**
18. **Melvindale-Northern Allen Park Schools**
19. **Northville Public Schools**
20. **Plymouth-Canton Community Schools**
21. **Redford Union Schools**
22. **River Rouge School District**
23. **Riverview Community School District**
24. **Romulus Community Schools**
25. **Southgate Community Schools**
26. **South Redford School District**
27. **Taylor School District**
28. **Trenton Public Schools**
29. **Van Buren Public Schools**
30. **Wayne-Westland Community Schools**
31. **Westwood Community Schools**
32. **Woodhaven-Brownstown School District**
33. **Wyandotte Public Schools**

