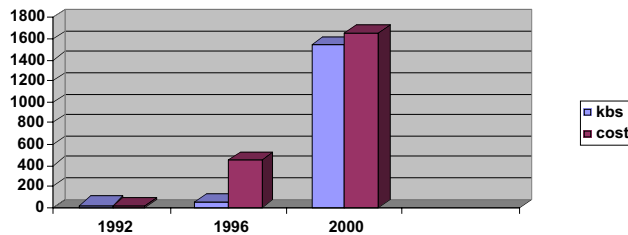


# Outlining a Need for Telecommunications in K12 Schools and Libraries in Minnesota

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This document outlines the growing need for high speed Internet access and Interactive Television (ITV) for K12 schools and public libraries in Minnesota. The disparity of telecommunication costs statewide causes an inequitable situation on a cost per pupil formula and puts additional burdens on already tight budgets. In addition the need for more bandwidth continues to grow as schools refine how they do business in an electronic world putting more emphasis on digital means to pay the bills and to be more accountable to their constituents. The telecommunications connections for schools and libraries are a life giving arteries to the survival of communities statewide. Funding telecommunications should be a state priority as we continue in the digital millennium. TAG was an imitative that upgraded schools out of the dial-up Internet era to network connected schools. TARP helped schools gain broadband access and allowed E-reporting and finance. RTLA allowed public libraries to share a statewide database accessible from anywhere in the state. But the State of Minnesota will get bypassed by states with better data infrastructures if we don't start planning for the future now, status quo means going backwards with telecommunications. We can not allow our students, our communities and our State to go backwards in the digitalworld.



## Bandwidth.History

**1992** saw 28 kbs dial up lines for \$20 a month.; **1996** brought networked 56k, \$450/month lines.; and **2000** T-1 (1.5mbs) cost \$1-2,000 a month. Some districts share bandwidth via a coop, decreasing costs while increasing bandwidth availability; Projected bandwidth needs for **SY05** is 3 megs at \$3,000 per month.

## MITN ITV STATS for 2002-03

**81,550** hours of daytime programming over the course of the year.

**2,843** students taking ITV classes each day

**4,075** college credits obtained during the school day, in high school via ITV

## Disparity Between Sites

Due to the nature of telecommunications and where LATA boundaries are, and service is provided, a cost for a standard data connection, a T-1 (1.544 mbps), varies greatly even in the same county. Costs are NOT in proportion to student population but are reflective of what resources are available from telephone companies in that area. For Example:

School	County	circuit	Cost/month	cost annual	PPUcost
Northome	S.Koochinching	T-1	\$ 2,260	\$ 27,120	\$ 96.86
Indus	S.Koochinching	T-1	\$ 3,366	\$ 40,392	241.87
Hutchinson	McLeod	T-1	\$ 1,142	\$ 13,704	4.26
Glencoe-SL	McLeod	T-1	\$ 1,890	\$ 22,680	12.08
Mtn. Lake	Cottonwood	T-1	\$ 1,698	\$ 29,376	52.45
Edgerton	Pipestone	T-1	\$ 2,952	\$ 35,424	141.13
Sartell	Stearns	T-1	\$ 621	\$ 7,452	3.05
Paynesville	Stearns	T-1	\$ 2,672	\$ 32,064	23.22

## Testimonials

*"ITV is a wonderful tool for enabling small school districts to offer classes they normally couldn't offer. ITV enables small schools to afford a class even if the actual number of students in a class is small. ITV is a wonderful opportunity for schools to increase the number of classes they offer. I love my ITV students!"*

**Hege Herfendal**, LCTN German Teacher

*The Internet is an invaluable research tool for my seniors. In a small school, we have limited access to print material; my students go Online to find information from magazines and newspapers our school cannot carry. I also use email to communicate with parents about their children's progress in my class. No long distance charges or telephone tag. E-communication is convenient and effective.*

**Carol Sanders**, Senior High English teacher, Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa High School

*We are in the process of implementing a HomeWork hotline phone system that utilizes VoIP trunking between schools. This will enable a students to place a local call to a call center staffed by education personnel for help with homework. Those personnel may*

*be located in the same town as the student, or may be located several counties away. From the student's point of view, all calls to the homework center will be to the local school. The call center also has a web interface which allows the student to request help via the internet. The appropriate teacher/tutor receives web notification and then calls the student.*

**Rod Wrege**, Minnesota Telemedia

*I am a Bookkeeper with a small school district. I rely on the Internet for all information, correspondences that I do for the school district. It is used 100% of the time for both Payroll and financial reporting, as well as for all Students accounting for the school district. The Internet is a very important tool for the Business offices of all districts and feel there is a urgent need for increased funding of the ITV Telecommunications services through out the state for the school systems. Due to the TARP funding cut we now have to carry these dollars on our already depleted budgets.*

**Becky Stromley**, Bookkeeper, Buffalo Lake – Hector School District #2159

*We allow parent access to grades, attendance, etc over our network. We also run a SpedForms server from our site for access from six other district - members of Minnesota Valley Coop Center. We are planning to set up web-based SpEd Forms, JMC Online Attendance & Grading & Parent Access.*

**Karen McCoy**, Technology Director YME

*We have used these resources for enrichment to our 5th grade program. We study space in science (connected to NASA via ITV), and have used the elephant sanctuary in Tennessee (via ITV). in our theme "In the Wild". We also use the internet for research. They have to do research for their book project and for spanning the globe. Our most unique ITV link was with a culturally diverse school district in Ontario, California which was an eye opening experience for our mostly rural students.*

**Brian Korf**, 5th Grade Teacher, Lester Prairie

*We are presently using PlatoWeb Learning (can be accessed by any student, but used particularly for ALP, summer school, & some advanced learners), Individual Learning (reading program via web).*

**Karen Chastek**, Technology Coordinator/Teacher, Glencoe-Silver Lake

*Without quality internet access in our school, we cannot exploit the many benefits of streaming video applied to classroom teaching and learning being done on a daily basis in our building.*

**Rob Anderson**, Principal, Willmar Senior High School

*What would Minnesota be like without running water and electricity? Water and electricity are as essential to Minnesotans as ITV and internet is to education. ITV allows me to offer the same range of class offerings in rural Minnesota that are available in the metro area. Internet brings staff development and current research into my school district. Internet allows one person to accomplish what it took several to do just a few years ago.*

**Pamela Kirsch**, Principal, McLeod West District #