



FALL 2026 NEWSLETTER



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we begin another school year, I want to thank our owners and participating districts for your continued partnership and trust in NEOnet. Everything we do continues to center on our purpose of **improving student education through the use of technology.**

This fall, our focus continues to be on helping districts strengthen their technology environments while also finding ways to improve efficiency and simplify operations. Throughout this newsletter, you will see examples of that work across many areas of NEOnet.

We continue to make significant investments in the reliability and security of our network infrastructure. Our latest network upgrades provide additional capacity, resiliency, and protection as the demands placed on district networks continue to grow. At the same time, **NEOnet Identity/Login** represents another important step forward, providing districts with a more secure and streamlined approach to identity management, single sign-on, and one-click access to the applications school district staff use every day.

Technology continues to change quickly in the classroom as well. Our Educational Technology team remains focused on helping educators understand and effectively use emerging tools, including artificial intelligence, while providing professional development and resources that support teaching and learning.

As we look ahead, our goal is not simply to offer more technology. We want to help districts make better use of the technology and services already available to them, reduce manual processes, improve access to information, strengthen security, and ultimately create efficiencies that allow more resources to remain focused on students.

Our partnership with you makes this work possible. As you read through this newsletter, please reach out if you have questions, ideas, or opportunities where NEOnet can provide additional support. We value your feedback and will continue looking for ways to improve the services we provide.

Remember, without you, there would be no NEOnet. Matthew Gdovin, Executive Director

FY27

LOOKING AHEAD

STRONGER DISTRICTS.
BRIGHTER FUTURES.

Future Scout

As your Future Scout, NEOnet is always looking ahead—exploring new opportunities, anticipating challenges, and preparing for what's next. In FY27, we are focused on initiatives that strengthen security, streamline operations, reduce paper, and make better use of data to support our districts.

These initiatives build on our commitment to provide innovative, efficient, and valuable services that help districts operate more effectively and create more opportunities for students and staff.

1 Expand MFA into Core Applications



Implement multi-factor authentication across NEOnet's core applications to strengthen security and protect district data.

2 Eliminate Paper W-2s and 1099s



Enable owners to transition from printed W-2s and 1099s to secure electronic delivery.

3 Eliminate Paper Timesheets



Transition owners from paper-based timesheets to electronic timekeeping processes.

4 Integrate Attendance Systems



Improve integration between district attendance systems and core applications to reduce manual processes and improve data accuracy.

5 Improve Data Integration Between Core Systems



Establish a single source of truth for employee and student information across core systems.

6 Expand Single Sign-On (SSO)



Expand SSO across core applications to simplify access and improve security.

7 Automate Employee Onboarding and Offboarding



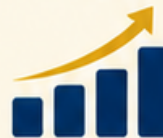
Automate account creation, permissions, and deactivation using authoritative data sources.

8 Expand Electronic Workflows and Approvals



Expand electronic processes for purchasing, leave requests, reimbursements, and other administrative functions.

9 Develop Data Dashboards and Analytics



Provide districts with timely, meaningful data and insights to improve operations and support informed decision-making.

10 Expand Electronic Employee Records



Reduce reliance on paper personnel files and forms by expanding secure electronic employee records.

Continuing the STEM Commitment

DISTRICT SHOWCASE: WADSWORTH CITY SCHOOLS

FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY EARNS FIVE-YEAR STEM REDESIGNATION

Franklin Elementary School has earned a five-year STEM redesignation from the Ohio STEM Committee, extending its designation through 2031. As the only STEM-designated elementary school in Northeast Ohio, Franklin integrates science, technology, engineering and mathematics throughout the school day.

Students apply STEM principles through hands-on, real-world projects that encourage critical thinking, collaboration, problem-solving and perseverance. From creating a school map for visitors to developing solutions for playground challenges and designing enrichment activities for Akron Zoo animals, students see how their ideas can make a difference in their school and community.

The redesignation recognizes the continued efforts of Franklin's teachers, students and community partners to make STEM learning an everyday part of the elementary experience.

NEOnet Repair Center

REPAIRCENTER@NEONET.ORG

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT BEYOND THE REPAIR

From routine repairs to device preparation and onsite support, NEOnet's Repair Center helps districts keep their technology working and ready for use. Our experienced team provides flexible services tailored to each district's needs, helping extend the life of devices and simplify technology management.

MEET THE REPAIR TEAM



JOHN GILL,
DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY
SERVICES COORDINATOR



TED HADDAD,
DESKTOP SUPPORT
SPECIALIST



ELLIOT ZOLLA,
DESKTOP SUPPORT
SPECIALIST

Building the Next Generation of the NEOnet Network

CHRIS ZOLLA

In our summer newsletter, we shared several steps NEOnet was taking to strengthen the reliability, security, and resiliency of our network. Those efforts included accelerating the replacement of our firewall infrastructure, improving our communication systems, and evaluating additional technologies to better protect the services our member districts rely on every day. Over the past several months, we have made significant progress on those commitments. NEOnet has now completed the implementation of our new next-generation firewall infrastructure. The new platform provides substantially greater performance and resiliency than the equipment it replaced and gives us additional capacity to accommodate the continued growth in Internet traffic across our member districts. This was a significant infrastructure investment and represents an important step in preparing the NEOnet network for the increasing bandwidth and cybersecurity demands of K-12 environments.

The firewall replacement, however, is only one part of a much larger modernization of NEOnet's network and security infrastructure. We are currently implementing new Centripetal security appliances that will add another layer of protection to the NEOnet network. These systems are designed to identify and block potentially malicious network traffic before it reaches critical resources, complementing our existing firewall and cybersecurity technologies. NEOnet is also implementing new dedicated Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) protection appliances. DDoS attacks attempt to overwhelm Internet infrastructure with large volumes of traffic, potentially disrupting access to online resources and services. Our new DDoS platform will provide significantly greater capacity to identify and mitigate these attacks while minimizing their impact on legitimate network traffic. Together, these technologies further our layered approach to security, where firewalls, threat intelligence, DDoS mitigation, network monitoring, and other protections work together rather than relying on any single technology to protect the environment.

Importantly, these investments are not being designed around today's bandwidth requirements alone. The new Centripetal and DDoS infrastructure is capable of supporting connectivity at speeds of up to 100 Gbps, providing NEOnet with substantial room for future growth. The move toward 100 Gbps-capable infrastructure is part of a broader effort to modernize the NEOnet network from end to end. Internet usage across K-12 environments continues to grow as districts increasingly depend on cloud applications, online curriculum, video, collaboration platforms, cybersecurity services, and other Internet-based resources. Our infrastructure must be prepared not only for what our districts require today, but for what they will require years from now.

There is still work underway, and additional improvements are planned as we continue modernizing the NEOnet network. However, the progress made since our summer update represents a significant milestone. The new firewalls are operational, additional security and DDoS protections are being deployed, and the foundation is being established for a network capable of supporting 100 Gbps connectivity. Our goal remains straightforward: to provide our member districts with a network that is reliable, secure, scalable, and prepared for the future. These investments represent another major step toward that goal.

FY27 NEONET TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- October 1, 2026 - Tech Apps Extraction Session to Follow
- November 5, 2026 - Cybersecurity Working Session to Follow
- December 3, 2026
- January 7, 2027
- February 4, 2027
- March 4, 2027 - Cybersecurity Working Session to Follow
- April 8, 2027
- May 6, 2027

Lunch will be provided at the end of each Regular Meeting

**Technology Touch Base Zoom Meetings are held every Friday
via Zoom.**

NEOnet Identity: Secure Access for Today's Districts

ANDY MELICK

School districts are using more applications than ever before, and each system creates another access point that needs to be secured. At the same time, cybersecurity expectations continue to grow, especially as districts prepare for the requirements of HB 96 regarding the protection of data, systems, and user accounts.

NEOnet Identity was built to help member districts meet that challenge.

NEOnet Identity brings together secure login, Single Sign-On, Multi-Factor Authentication, directory synchronization, application access, and NEOnet support into one managed package. For NEOnet member districts, this service is available at no additional cost.

WHAT NEONET IDENTITY INCLUDES

NEOnet Identity includes three connected pieces:

NEONET LOGIN

The secure sign-in layer is used to access connected applications.

MINIORANGE IDENTITY & ACCESS MANAGEMENT

The SSO and MFA hub that manages authentication, application access, policies, and user assignments.

IDENTITY SYNC

The synchronization tool that keeps MiniOrange aligned with the district's existing source of truth, such as Google Workspace, Microsoft Entra ID, Active Directory, or LDAP.

Districts do not need to replace the systems they already use. Google, Microsoft, Active Directory, or LDAP can remain the district's source of truth. NEOnet Identity helps securely connect users to the applications they need.

The goal is simple:

DISTRICTS KEEP CONTROL OF THEIR USERS. NEONET HELPS SECURE HOW THOSE USERS ACCESS APPLICATIONS.

ALREADY DELIVERING RESULTS

NEOnet Identity is already being used across districts and applications throughout the region.

Current usage includes:

- 59 districts using NEOnet Login
- 47 districts using USAS and USPS SSO

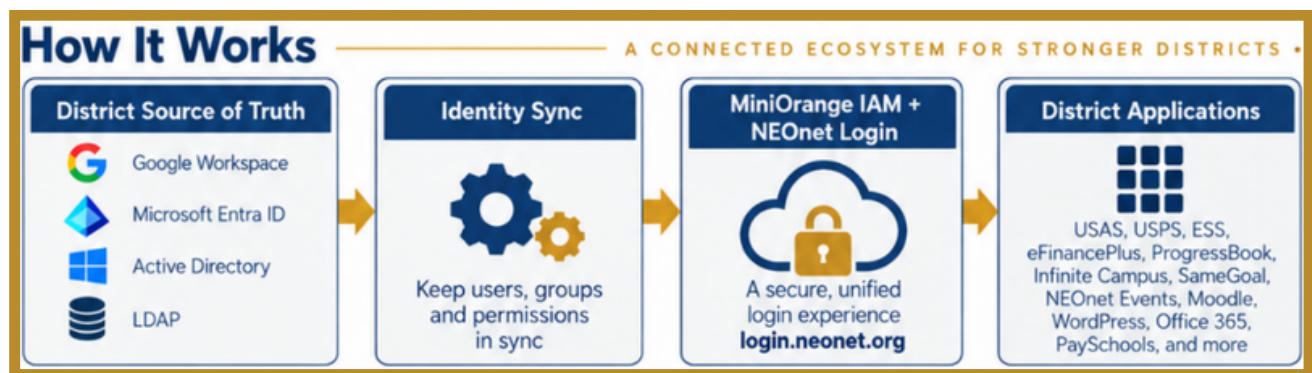
- 41 districts using Employee Self Service
- 18 districts using ProgressBook Suite
- 15 districts using NEOnet Events
- 15 districts using SameGoal
- 11 districts using Infinite Campus
- 10 districts using IPDP

Districts are also using the platform with eFinancePlus, Google Apps, Office 365, Frontline, Moodle, WordPress, PaySchools, ParentSquare, Cisco Meraki Dashboard, WebHelpDesk, Securly Classroom, Secure Files, Canva for Education, OpenAI / ChatGPT-related tools, and other district systems.

These numbers show that NEOnet Identity is not a future concept. It is already helping districts simplify access and improve security.

A PACKAGE DESIGNED FOR DISTRICTS

The value of NEOnet Identity is that it connects the full identity picture:



This gives districts a secure and scalable way to manage access without rebuilding their entire identity environment.

NEOnet Identity can also support shared applications used by multiple districts or agencies. Users can sign in with their own district credentials while the application receives a consistent, trusted login through NEOnet Identity.

GETTING STARTED

A good first step is to review your district's current application access and identify where SSO or MFA would provide the greatest value.

NEOnet can help review your source of truth, current applications, MFA needs, sensitive systems, and opportunities to reduce manual account management.

To learn more or schedule a walkthrough, contact:

MiniOrange@NEOnet.org

NEOnet Identity gives districts the tools, support, and peace of mind needed to move forward with stronger, simpler, and more secure application access.

Emergency Calling & Location Accuracy

CYRUS ELDER

Kari's Law and Ray Baum's Act established important requirements for emergency calling from multi-line telephone systems. Kari's Law requires that users be able to dial 911 directly without first dialing a prefix, such as 8 or 9, and that designated personnel receive notification when a 911 call is placed. Ray Baum's Act requires that emergency calls provide a dispatchable location, giving emergency responders information that helps identify where the caller is located within a building or campus. Together, these requirements are designed to improve emergency response times and ensure that first responders can quickly locate individuals who need assistance.

MAINTAINING LOCATION ACCURACY IN MODERN VOIP ENVIRONMENTS

Maintaining accurate emergency location information can be particularly challenging in modern VoIP environments. Unlike traditional telephone systems, where a phone number was often permanently associated with a specific physical telephone jack and location, VoIP devices can be easily moved throughout a building or campus. A phone may be unplugged from one office and connected in another location, potentially resulting in the emergency system reporting an incorrect location unless the network and emergency calling systems are properly configured and maintained.

This creates an ongoing responsibility to ensure that phone locations, network information, and emergency response location data remain accurate as devices are moved, offices are renovated, and network infrastructure changes. Accurate E911 information requires coordination between the phone system, network infrastructure, and emergency response systems to ensure that when a 911 call is placed, responders receive the most accurate and actionable location possible.

Whether or not your district is a hosted voice customer, we're always happy to help. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions you may have about your district's emergency calling systems or E911 requirements.

For additional information or assistance with your district's emergency calling systems or E911 requirements, please contact phoneservices@neonet.org.

NEOnet's Technology Integration Services and the Latest EdTech News

JULIA TILTON & DAN NIESSEN

NEOnet's Technology Integration department is dedicated to supporting educators by bridging the gap between classroom instruction and modern digital tools. Led by Senior Technology Integration Specialist Dan Niessen, the department serves as a vital resource for schools in Northeast Ohio, helping teachers integrate technology seamlessly into their curriculum. To accommodate different learning styles, budgets, and schedules, NEOnet provides three core professional development pathways: customized On-Site PD, flexible PD On-Demand, and weekly free live webinars.

Through these services, NEOnet member schools can access customized, on-site professional development at no additional cost, while other Northeast Ohio schools can book training for a small fee. The department offers a diverse menu of over 70 sessions covering key categories like AI in Education, Google Tools, Canva, and teaching pedagogy. For educators seeking maximum flexibility, the PD On-Demand program on the new NEOnet Learn platform provides free access to over 80 pre-recorded courses, allowing participants to earn CEU certificates at their own pace. Additionally, in partnership with Ashland University, participants can earn up to three graduate credit hours for \$185 per course, featuring timely, self-paced classes like Responsibly Implementing AI in the K12 Classroom and Deep Dive into Google Tools.

In recent educational technology news, classroom tools are continuing to become more and more integrated and powerful. For example, Gemini's integration within Google Classroom has been enhanced to make rubric creation simpler by allowing teachers to generate rubrics with AI directly on the assignment creation page. Furthermore, when enabled by administrators, students of any age can access a Gemini tab inside Google Classroom to transform their course materials into interactive study aids like flashcards and practice quizzes. Outside of Google's ecosystem, the popular assistant tool Brisk Teaching has launched Brisk Printables, which empowers educators to instantly transform existing teaching materials into ready-to-print worksheets, mind maps, and Venn diagrams to streamline daily prep.

Other notable news highlights a rebranding effort where NotebookLM transitioned to its new name, Gemini Notebook, while maintaining all of its core features. This platform now supports automatic source syncing, meaning any changes made to connected Google Docs or Sheets will instantly carry over, and users can even automate adding Drive files and YouTube URLs to their notebooks as part of a recurring workflow in Workspace Studio. Additionally, Google Apps Script has officially become a core service, giving educators the confidence that custom-built web apps protect user data and will not share it outside the organization. Educators and school leaders are encouraged to explore these new resources on NEOnet Learn at learn.neonet.org and contact the NEOnet Tech Integration team at dniessen@neonet.org or jtilton@neonet.org.

Library Services Updates

TAMRA DUGAN

NEONET SHARED OVERDRIVE/SORA COLLECTION

Coming soon to the collection, more than 2500 simultaneous use resources. This means students don't have to place holds and teachers can use the titles for full classes all at once! The collection includes:

- 50+ read alouds with narration for emerging readers
- 160+ audiobooks
- 450+ fiction ebooks
- 2000+ non-fiction ebooks

For those middle schools participating in the Kent State Reading and Writing Festival, ebook and audiobook copies of those titles are now available. This year's titles are:

- Four Found Dead (Natalie Richards)
- Codebreaker (Jay Martel)
- The Rig (Joe Ducie)
- Two Perfect Lies (Natalie Richards)
- Louder Than Hunger (John Schu)
- Between Shades of Gray (Ruta Sepetys)

INFOHIO RESOURCE CHANGES

World Kids Almanac is now **InfoLAUNCH Elementary**, and will contain resources for grades K-8. Content includes articles, videos, games and activities for students and handouts, maps, graphic organizers, and science diagrams/projects for teachers.



ParentAccess Mobile App Gets New Features and Improvements

STUDENT SERVICES

The **Frontline ProgressBook Parent & Student mobile app** has received several updates to make it easier for parents and students to track student information, assignments, homework, grades, and important reminders. Two recent releases—**version 1.2.0 in July 2026** and **version 1.2.1 in August 2026**—introduced several helpful improvements.

NEVER MISS AN ASSIGNMENT WITH REMINDERS

One of the biggest new features is the ability to set **reminders for upcoming assignments and homework**.

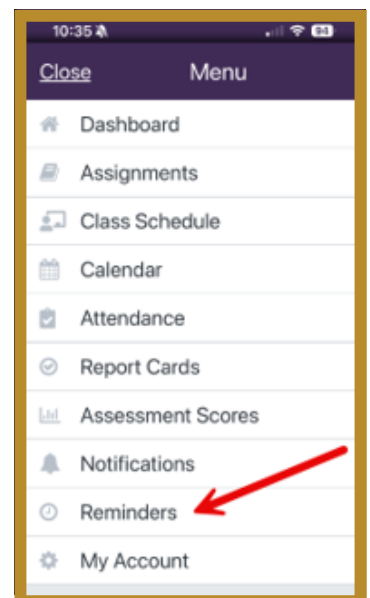
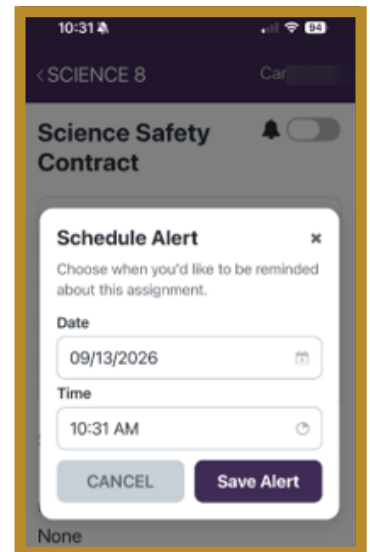
Parents and students can choose an assignment, select the date and time they would like to be reminded of, and save the reminder. At the scheduled time, the app will send a **push notification** to the mobile device.

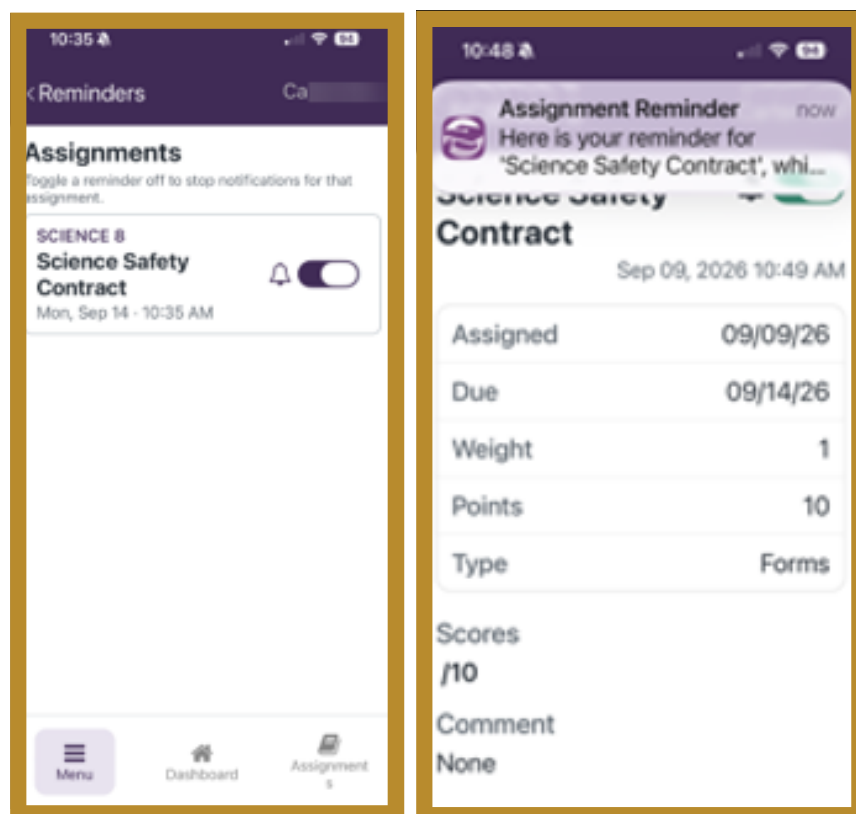
The notification includes the assignment name and due date. Tapping the notification takes the user directly to the assignment details in the app.

Reminders can be set from:

- **Assignments > Assignment Details**
- **Assignments > Posted Homework**

A new **Reminders** option has also been added to the app menu. From there, users can view their scheduled reminders, organized by assignments and homework, and disable reminders they no longer need.





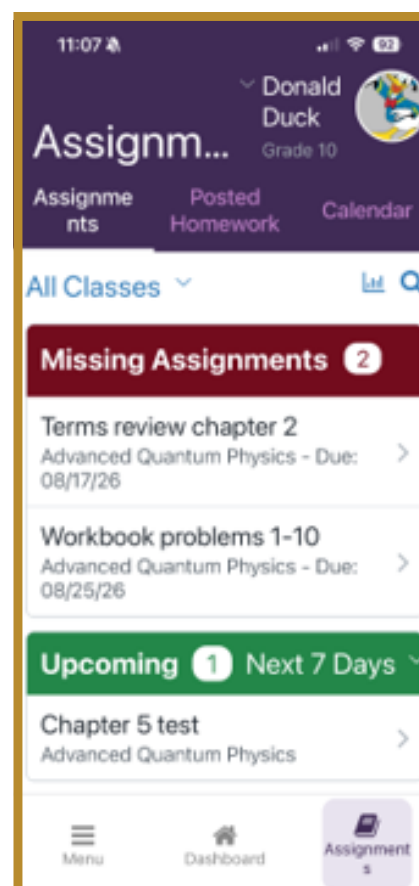
ASSIGNMENTS ARE EASIER TO SEE

The Assignments area has been updated to make information easier to scan.

Assignments are now organized into more clearly defined sections: Missing, Due, and Upcoming. The section headings have been given more visual distinction so parents and students can quickly identify what needs attention.

Assignment Details and Posted Homework have also received visual improvements to make the different sections and items easier to navigate.

The **Grades** area of the Dashboard has also been updated. Classes are now displayed in more clearly defined sections, making it easier to find information for a specific class.



Important FY27 EMIS Changes

EMIS SERVICES

Every new school year brings updates to EMIS reporting. The Ohio Department of Education has published a number of changes for the 2026–2027 school year. Below are several important updates districts should be aware of as they begin FY27 reporting.

Additionally, to view all Fiscal Year 2027 EMIS Changes:

<https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Data/EMIS/EMIS-Documentation/EMIS-Changes/Fiscal-Year-2027-Changes>

KINDERGARTEN STAGGERED START REPORTING — EMIS CHANGE 27-79

A new **C_KGSTGSTR** attribute has been added to the Organization General Information (DN) Record to support districts that use staggered start dates for kindergarten students.

Ohio law allows kindergarten calendars to include up to three days at the beginning of the school year for implementing a staggered start. Districts will report one C_KGSTGSTR record for each day a particular kindergarten attendance group does not attend school on or after the first day of school identified on the Grade Schedule (DL) Record.

What districts need to know: The first day of school reported on the Grade Schedule should generally remain the same for all kindergarten staggered-start groups. The C_KGSTGSTR attribute identifies the days individual groups do not attend during the staggered-start period.

ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED REPORTING — EMIS CHANGE 27-42

Reporting guidance for the **Disadvantage** element has been updated, including the removal of Options **4** and **5**.

Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, students attending districts or buildings participating in **Provision 2 or the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)** of the National School Lunch Program are **not automatically considered economically disadvantaged for EMIS reporting**.

Options 6 and 7 remain available to minimize reporting changes for students previously reported with those values. Reporting Option 1 or 6 is considered equivalent, as is reporting Option 3 or 7.

What districts need to know: CEP or Provision 2 participation alone can no longer be used to determine that a student should be reported as economically disadvantaged.

COLLEGE CREDIT PLUS PROMOTION – EMIS CHANGE 27-29

A new attribute has been added to EMIS Manual Section 5.3 to indicate whether districts and schools provide information about and promote the **College Credit Plus (CCP)** program. This information was previously collected through a survey.

Districts and schools serving at least one student in grades 9-12 must report:

- **Y** – The entity provides information about and promotes CCP.
- **N** – The entity does not provide information about and promote CCP.
- **A** – The entity does not serve any students in grades 9-12.

What districts need to know: This information is moving from a survey into regular EMIS reporting for FY27.

K-3 MATHEMATICS DIAGNOSTIC REPORTING – EMIS CHANGE 27-19

FY27 introduces EMIS reporting for **mathematics diagnostic assessments administered to students in grades K-3**, as required by Ohio Revised Code §3301.079(D).

The district, STEM district, community school, or state organization in which the student is enrolled when the assessment is administered is responsible for reporting the result.

Mathematics Diagnostics (MD) will be reported through the **Diagnostic (A) Collection**, with the specific assessment identified using the appropriate Assessment Area Code.

What districts need to know: K-3 math diagnostic results are now part of EMIS reporting, so districts should ensure processes are in place to capture and submit this assessment data.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE REPORTING – EMIS CHANGE 27-11

Several changes have been made to the **Student Discipline (GD) Record**, including removal of the Victim of Student Violence element, revised option wording, new FAQs, and additional reporting guidance.

One of the most significant changes involves how multiple discipline actions are reported. A separate Student Discipline record must now be submitted for **each Type of Discipline administered and served by a student for an incident**.

A GD Record is only reported when a student receives a discipline action **and serves at least a portion of that action**. Additional guidance has also been added for discipline that spans multiple school years.

What districts need to know: A single discipline incident may now require multiple GD Records when more than one type of discipline is administered and served.

NEW STAFF VACANCY REPORTING – EMIS CHANGE 27-3

FY27 introduces a new **Staff Vacancy (CR) Record** to collect information about open positions that districts intend to fill.

The record is required during both the **Initial Staff and Course (L) Collection and Final Staff and Course (L) Collection** for applicable position codes. Reporting applies to public districts, joint vocational school districts, community schools, STEM schools, and educational service centers.

A vacancy should be reported in the school year in which the entity **intends to fill the position**, regardless of whether the position is ultimately filled. If an unfilled position remains open into the following school year and the district still intends to fill it, the vacancy must be reported again in that year's collection.

What districts need to know: Districts will need a process for identifying and tracking applicable open positions so Staff Vacancy records can be accurately reported in both Staff and Course collections.

What's New in eFinancePlus?

SUSANNE SEARL

eFinancePlus receives updates each month, and sometimes new features can be easy to miss. One recent enhancement worth taking another look at is the **OH Fund Activity Report**, which now has an Excel reporting option.

OH FUND ACTIVITY REPORT NOW AVAILABLE IN EXCEL

If you are used to running the OH Fund Activity Report as a PDF, you now have another option!

An enhancement added the ability to generate the **OH Fund Activity Report in Excel**.

The Excel workbook includes five separate tabs:

- **Fund Summary**
- **Revenue Detail**
- **Revenue Summary**
- **Expenditure Detail**
- **Expenditure Summary**

The Excel version also gives you something the PDF version does not: the ability to select a **Start Year and Period** and an **End Year and Period**.

This allows you to generate Fund Activity data across a range of up to **three years**, regardless of the current fiscal year. This can be especially helpful when you want to compare activity across fiscal years or work with the report data outside of eFP.

INCLUDE ZERO DOLLAR TRANSACTIONS

You may have also noticed a new **Include Zero Dollar** transactions checkbox on the Fund Activity Report.

If you select this option, eFP will include budget codes and accounts that have zero-dollar budget transactions that meet your report criteria.

It will not pull in accounts that have no transactions at all, so you don't have to worry about filling your report with completely unused accounts.

The **Include Zero Dollar transactions** option works with both the PDF and Excel versions of the Fund Activity Report.

You can find the report under:

Fund Accounting > State > State - OH > Fund Activity

If you have always used the PDF version of the Fund Activity Report, give the Excel option a try the next time you run it!

EFP TIP: WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, CLEAR YOUR CACHE!

You've probably heard us say it before: **"Try clearing your cache."**

We promise, we're not just saying it because we don't know what else to try!

eFinancePlus is updated regularly, but your browser sometimes likes to hang onto pieces of the older version. When that happens, you may see a page that doesn't load quite right, a button that suddenly isn't cooperating, or something that worked yesterday but is acting strangely today.

If something in eFP suddenly seems off, especially after an update, start by refreshing the page. If that doesn't work, try signing out, clearing your browser cache, closing and reopening your browser, and then signing back in.

Does clearing your cache fix everything? Unfortunately, no. But it fixes enough strange browser behavior that it is always worth trying!

And if that doesn't do the trick, send us the details at fiscalhelp@neonet.org and we'll be happy to take a look.

STRS Post-Advance Reporting: Next Steps for Payroll

RACHEL CAUDILL

With the STRS Annual Report deadline wrapped up and summer stretch pay distributions concluding, payroll departments must navigate the STRS post-advance reconciliation phase. This window ensures that actual summer payroll disbursements match pre-reported accrued estimates, member accounts are balanced, and service credit entries are verified before getting too far into the new fiscal year.

Now is the perfect time to work on any corrections needed!

POST-ADVANCE FOCUS AREAS

- **Balance Accrued Contributions:** Reconcile summer stretch pay (wages earned by June 30 but paid in July and August, and sometimes the first pay in September) against figures reported on your STRS Annual Report.
- **Resolve Discrepancies with STRS:** Look for reports on the STRS Employer Self Service Account Portal asking for verification related to member contribution variances, service credit calculations, deposit and service verification, or reemployed retiree status.
- **Finalize Open Transactions:** Ensure all remittance adjustments, backpostings, and account balancing items are completely settled.

STEPS TO FOLLOW

- Go to Core>Organization>STRS Advance Configuration. Verify the Advance Amount and Amount Paid Back fields both equal zero. Verify the Advance Mode box is unchecked.



The screenshot shows the 'STRS Advance Configuration' page within the 'Core' system. The page has a navigation bar at the top with links: Home, Core (highlighted), Payments, Payroll, Processing, Reports, System, Utilities, and USAS Integration. Below the navigation bar, the page is divided into two main sections: 'Organization Detail' on the left and 'STRS Advance Configuration' on the right. In the 'Organization Detail' section, there is an 'Edit' button and the text 'Organization Detail' and 'Organization'. In the 'STRS Advance Configuration' section, there are three input fields: 'Advance Amount' with a value of '0.00', 'Advance Mode' with an unchecked checkbox, and 'Amount Paid Back' with a value of '0.00'. There is also a partially visible 'Submitted to STRS' field at the bottom right.

- If there are values greater than zero and the Advance Mode box is still checked, you will need to find the discrepancies.
- The following Pay Types will affect the Core>Organization>STRS Advance Configuration>Amount Paid Back value.
 - Dock
 - Retro
 - Termination
 - Pay off accrued wages
 - If any of these Pay Types were used while in Advance Mode, and not accounted for on the Annual Report, these payments may have caused discrepancies.
- Go to Reports>STRS Reporting>Check STRS Advance
 - In order to pick up all Advance Mode pays, enter the Stop Date of the first payroll that includes Advance information as the Start Date.
 - Enter the Stop Date of the last payroll that included Advance information as the Stop Date.
 - This report shows actual contributions submitted for each employee per pay. Verify the amounts for each employee equal the amounts reported on the Annual Report.
- Report any discrepancies to STRS as prior year corrections.
- Keep good records for audit purposes.
- Submit a helpdesk ticket to fiscalhelp@neonet.org letting us know you are still in Advance Mode, and that you have found the discrepancies and resolved the issue with STRS. The dedicated NEOnet Fiscal Services Team will then be able to take the district out of Advance Mode and set the fields back to zero.
- If something should have been applied to prior year wages, but was paid in the new fiscal year outside of Advance Mode, Core>Adjustments will need to be created as follows:
 - Payroll Item - 450
 - Type - Total Gross
 - Transaction Date - Any date within the current fiscal year
 - Amount - Enter a negative amount equaling the portion of the payment that should not be reported in this fiscal year
 - Description - For audit purposes
 - To Date Options - Check the Fiscal Year To Date box only
 - Save
 - Payroll Item - 591

- Type – Amount Withheld
- Transaction Date – Any date within the current fiscal year
- Amount – Enter a negative amount equaling the portion of the contribution that should not be reported in this fiscal year
- Description – For audit purposes
- To Date Options – Check the Fiscal Year To Date box only
- Save
- Payroll Item – 691
- Type – Board's Amount of Payroll Item
- Transaction Date – A date within the current fiscal year
- Amount – Enter a negative amount equaling the portion of the board's contributed amount that should not be reported on this fiscal year
- Description – For audit purposes
- To Date Options – Check the Fiscal Year To Date box only
- Save

BEST PRACTICES FOR PAYROLL STAFF

- **Earned vs. Paid:** Ensure contributions reflect when service was earned (July 1-June 30) rather than when the pay period and pay date fell, as summer stretch adjustments are the most common source of variances.
- **Maintain Audit Trails:** Retain copies of all correction files, resubmitted payroll files, screenshots, and confirmation logs in your fiscal records. Be very detailed!
- **Monitor STRS ESS Portal Status:** Regularly check the "Employer Reports" banner on STRS ESS Portal to confirm that post-advance updates display a status of "Complete" rather than "Initial" or "Pending".

ONE FINAL STEP

- Do you have any Retire/Rehires new to this status this fiscal year?
 - Make sure the Rehire Retiree box is checked on the employee's 450 Payroll Item (or 400 for SERS employees) and the rehired date is entered.
 - If this step was not completed prior to the employee's first day of employment with this new status, additional adjustments will need to be created now to assist with current fiscal year-end balancing.
 - Make sure to report this new status to the appropriate retirement system.

Reach out to fiscalhelp@neonet.org with any questions.

CONTACT US: 330-926-3900 * Press 0 for the HelpDesk

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