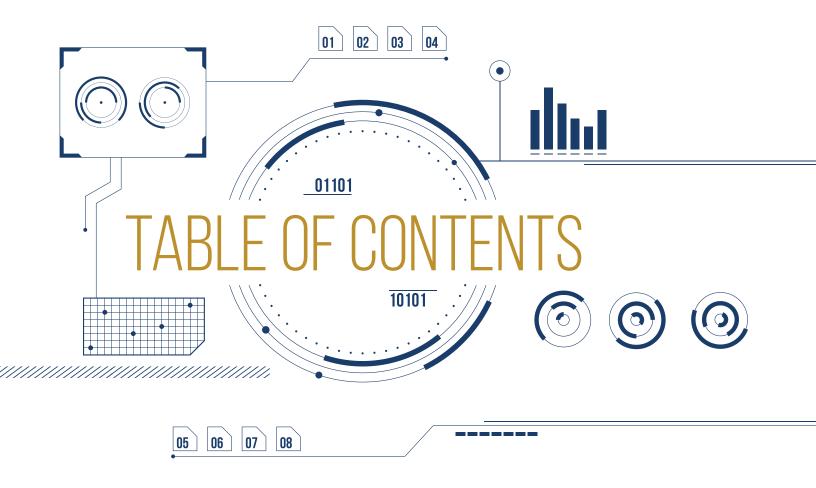# What Superintendents, Treasurers and Teachers Must Know About EMIS:

How reporting data to EMIS goes
hand-in-hand with district opportunity

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INTRODUCTION

In every school district, the data reported through EMIS significantly impacts the services and opportunities offered to students. It is therefore critical for EMIS coordinators to verify that the reported data is accurate and submitted on time, as the information is the sole driver for state-funded student programs and services.

Technology drives forward the operations of a district's administrative responsibilities, especially pertaining to the statewide data collection system: Education Management Information System (EMIS). In Ohio's primary and secondary education sectors, EMIS allows districts to keep track of demographic information, student attendance, course information, financial data and assessment results, among many other functions.

Established by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) in 1989, EMIS ultimately provides school districts with outlined standards and architecture for reporting data.

There are four chief functions of EMIS:

1. *State and Federal Reporting*

2. *Payment Distribution and Funding*

3. *Academic Accountability*

4. *Statewide and District Report Generation*

The functions of EMIS allow school districts to remain accountable and compliant with ODE standards by reporting staff, student, building and financial data. To carry out this reporting process, many districts have EMIS coordinators on staff. However, ODE continuously requires either more data or changes to reporting elements for EMIS, making it challenging for coordinators to stay up-to-date.

For this reason, many districts will partner with information technology centers (ITCs) like NEOnet to navigate EMIS reporting and transfer required data to ODE. This is difficult and time-consuming challenge for schools to manage on their own.

Utilizing an ITC, like NEOnet, for EMIS purposes also allows school districts to address the most important component of EMIS: accurate and compliant reporting. In every school district, the data reported through EMIS significantly impacts the services and opportunities offered to students. It is therefore critical for EMIS coordinators to verify that the reported data is accurate and submitted on time, as the information is the sole driver for state-funded student programs and services.

Since reporting through EMIS is so critical to a district's operations, it is a good idea for other district staff members, other than the EMIS Coordinator, to understand the importance of this district role.

WHAT STAFF MEMBERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT EMIS

NEOnet asked EMIS Coordinators from our partner school districts about the top five facts staff like superintendents, treasurers and teachers should know about EMIS. Here is what we discovered:

1. *Funding is driven by the accuracy of the data reported to EMIS.*

   Registrars, directors of food services, testing coordinators, gifted coordinators/teachers, guidance counselors, special education directors/teachers and attendance clerks, to name a few, are all "stakeholders" in the EMIS reporting puzzle. The student and staff data they encounter on a daily basis is something they should take ownership of. When each person understands that their piece of the puzzle is important for funding, it increases their pride, self-worth and consciousness. We are all in this together to serve and meet our students' needs!

2. *District policies and procedures must be shared with the school's EMIS coordinator to ensure reporting is complete and accurate.*

   When district administration creates building policies and procedures regarding reportable elements such as attendance, discipline, gifted, testing, special education, career education, etc., EMIS should always be kept in mind. Ideally, including your EMIS coordinator in the meetings and conversations when adding or changing a procedure will ensure adjustments are compliant and will not affect your funding.

3. *Accountability measures are impacted by more than just test scores.*

   There are additional data pieces that impact the way test scores are reported to the public in the local report card.

   For instance:

   • Student subgroup information needs to be reported accurately to ensure it calculates correctly.
   • A student's mobility between districts and between buildings matters when it comes to student assessment.
   • The business rules that the ODE adopts for which kids count and where their scores are included are complex, so staff must be able to access and understand testing requirements.

   Building staff will typically be the frontlines for knowing student details that potentially impact inclusion or suppression from a data set. Keeping an open dialogue with your EMIS coordinator is imperative.

4. **EMIS can only report what data "owners" communicate.**

    The importance of precisely entering, tracking and analyzing data for your districts' students and staff is key. Utilizing software ranging from a student information module that captures demographics and test scores, special services platform to write forms and track a student's special needs, or a payroll system to track your staff credentials, are all important pieces of the puzzle. If any student or staff element is missed or not communicated to your EMIS coordinator, the district suffers.

    Additionally, the "owners of data" should maintain a healthy, professional development path on the software used to track the data. Software improvements are released often, which will not only help your daily tasks, but also with timely reporting of the EMIS data.

5. **Staying up to date with changes to the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) pertaining to educational data is critical to accurate EMIS reporting.**

    Legislation and reporting elements are constantly changing to help improve a student's education. When district administration like superintendents, curriculum directors, gifted coordinators and treasurers are informed of these modifications, it benefits the entire student population. Reviewing and comprehending ORC together with your EMIS coordinator is a great place to start!

By keeping these five key points in mind, districts can make sure their reporting aligns with the expectations of the ODE and maximizes funding opportunities.

EMIS

NEONET IS HERE TO STREAMLINE YOUR DISTRICT'S EMIS REPORTING

In every district, EMIS coordinators are central to understanding the requirements of reporting, which are constantly being revised according to legislature and new software changes.

Due to the complexities process of EMIS reporting, NEOnet is proud to offer two unique solutions for EMIS coordination that will assist in professional development and data collection in a manner that meets state requirements.

Our Solutions:

- **EMIS Connections** – The NEOnet EMIS Services Team offers an EMIS Connections page on our website, a one-stop shop to keep EMIS coordinators connected to professional development opportunities. These sessions range from monthly workshops to informational opportunities for new coordinators and are presented by NEOnet, ODE, the Management Council of the Education Computer Network (MCOECN), the Ohio Association of EMIS Professionals (OAEP) and more. As part of NEOnet's EMIS service offering, NEOnet offers free workshops to help keep members updated and connected to EMIS requirements to guarantee school districts' data accuracy and funding.

- **Shared Service** – NEOnet also offers a shared service solution, where in-house EMIS coordinators can report school districts' required data. NEOnet will coordinate EMIS reporting, conduct training and provide support for key district personnel who rely on EMIS data.

  Furthermore, NEOnet uses an "EMIS Wheel" model to ensure that every 'spoke' of the district's EMIS reporting is maintained and communicated to those involved. NEOnet's shared EMIS coordinators attend many professional development opportunities, saving districts money on travel. The coordinators can also attend information technology center's EMIS coordinators' bi-weekly calls from ODE to hear updates firsthand.

By implementing the solutions NEOnet has to offer, districts will be able to go above and beyond the state's necessary requirements. In addition, NEOnet's knowledgeable team of EMIS experts are equipped to provide the support districts deserve.

If your school district is interested in any EMIS services, please contact NEOnet today.

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