

**EMIS 1.0:  
An EMIS Framework**



**Version 1.0**  
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## EMIS 1.0

### STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EDUCATION

*Each Child, Our Future* is Ohio's shared plan for ensuring each student is challenged, prepared, and empowered for his or her future by way of an excellent prekindergarten through grade 12 education. Part of the plan's purpose is to guide development of state-level education policies and to promote high-quality practices across the state.

The plan includes three core principles, a vision and a goal, four equal learning domains, and ten priority strategies that together will help educators across the state ensure that our students are graduating from high school ready for their futures. The plan talks about equity, highly effective teachers, clear learning standards, and expansion of access to quality learning experiences.

The needs addressed by this plan were informed by the current state of education in Ohio. The current state of education in Ohio was determined in large part by reviewing data. Very often, that data was EMIS (Education Management Information System) data.

As we all work to implement this plan and as we all strive to achieve the goals in this plan, it is the data collected that will inform us of how well we do. Again, that will very often be EMIS data.

### EMIS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The EMIS Advisory Council is authorized under [Ohio law](#) (Ohio Revised Code 3301.0713) to recommend improvements and provide a forum for communication and collaboration between the Department and parties affected by the collection, reporting, and use of EMIS data. The council includes Department staff and representatives of school districts and other entities that regularly interact with data from EMIS.

The Council and its related workgroups have allowed the Department a unique opportunity to facilitate discussions between a diverse group of education professionals from throughout the state. This has led to many recommendations for improvement around specific EMIS-related topics. These recommendations are providing the Department with feedback on current EMIS systems, reports, training, and documentation.

The recommendations also assist the Department in building a framework that allows EMIS to continue to improve the EMIS data collection systems—as well as the documentation, training, and other tools that assist districts with their reporting—which then leads to improved, more complete education-related data.

EMIS data directly impacts state and federal funding, state report cards, and improved education opportunities through even more informed policy decisions at both the local and state levels. EMIS data is also used throughout the state—and the Nation—as researchers look into student achievement levels, graduation rates, effective programs and policies, teacher quality, teacher supply and demand, and countless other studies and research projects all aimed at determining where our kids are versus where they need to be and how to get them there.

Improving data quality is a never-ending project. There are always refinements that can be made to current systems, new systems to be designed, and more robust reporting assistance at all points in the data lifecycle and at all stages of reporting.

## EMIS DATA

There are a few data-related terms that are used frequently in EMIS. Together these terms create the basic building blocks of EMIS data and reporting. You'll encounter these terms frequently and will need to know what they mean and how they fit into the overall picture of EMIS.

A significant portion of the data at your district is sent to EMIS. Data about student enrollments, the courses students take, attendance, district expenses, and staff employment information is all EMIS data. All of this data can be divided into five main EMIS data types: student data, staff data, course data, district and building data, and financial data. The EMIS Manual is separated by these *data types*.

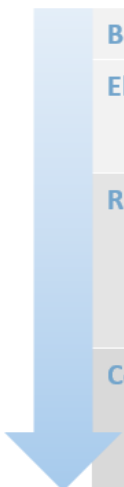
Each bit of information is reported to EMIS in its most basic parts. For example, when reporting staff names, the name is split into three parts: first, middle, and last names. Each of those three parts is reported as a separate *element*: First Name Element, Middle Name Element, and Last Name Element.

All of these data elements are grouped together by the five *data types* listed above. Within each data type, elements are separated and reported by more specific subjects. These smaller "sub types" of data are reported to EMIS by *record*. For example, student assessment data is reported via Student Assessment Records, information about student disciplinary events is reported via Student Discipline Records, and information about staff positions is reported via Staff Employment Records.

These *records* are then reported to the Department in pre-defined groupings or *collections*. For instance, much of a district's student data is reported during the Beginning of Year Student Collection; staff and course data is reported during the Staff and Course Collections; and end of course exam data is reported during the End of Course State Assessment Collection.

The [EMIS Manual](#) includes an overview of EMIS and detailed reporting guidance for all EMIS data. There is a separate chapter of the EMIS Manual for each *data type*. These chapters are then divided into sections by *record*. Each section includes information about all of the *elements* that make up that *record*. The beginning of each Manual section indicates which of the *record's elements* are reported in which *collection*.

See Figure 1 and the *EMIS Building Blocks* document in the appendix for a visual representation of these terms.



Building Block	Description	Examples
<b>Element</b>	Each bit of information is reported in its most basic parts. These basic parts are <i>elements</i> .	First Name Element Middle Name Element Last Name Element
<b>Record</b>	Within each data type, elements are separated and reported by a more specific subject. These subdivisions of data are collected and reported by <i>record</i> .	Staff Demographic Record Student Assessment Record Student Discipline Record
<b>Collection</b>	Records are reported to the Department in pre-defined groupings. This reporting is done by <i>collection</i> .	Final Staff/Course Collection Beginning of Year Student Collection Fall Early Learning Assessment Collection

**Figure 1.** EMIS Building Blocks

## DATA CYCLE, IMPACTS, AND USES

There are many original sources of EMIS data. A few examples include enrollment forms, absence information, withdrawal notices, student demographic data, and discipline information. From these original sources, the individual pieces of data are entered into districts’ local systems—their student information system (SIS) or payroll system, for example—for upload to the data collector, which is hosted at the Information Technology Center (ITC) with which each district contracts.

From the data collector, data moves both to the State Software Development Team (SSDT) and to the Department. Data that goes directly to SSDT includes student names and addresses and is used to populate the Ohio District Data Exchange (ODDEX). This data goes directly to SSDT and never enters the Department because the EMIS office at the Department is legally prohibited from having, seeing, or using personally identifiable information for students.

Data that goes from the data collector to the Department is used for many different uses. A few examples are EMIS reports that are returned to the districts for review and verification of their data, local report cards, and funding.

See Figure 2 for a visual representation of the EMIS data cycle. Also see the *EMIS Data Cycle, Impacts, and Uses* document in the appendix.

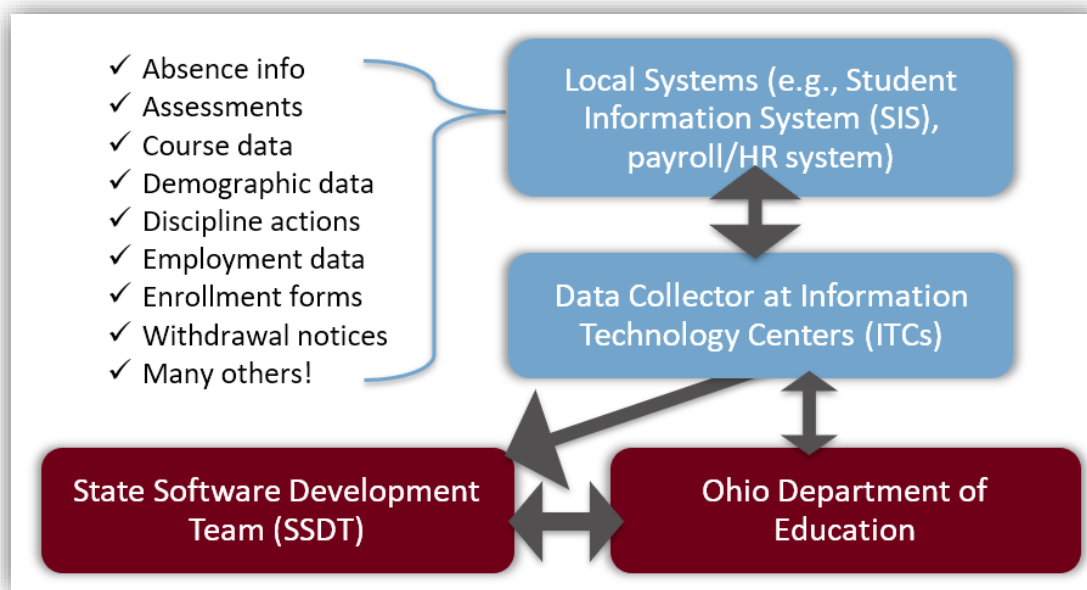


Figure 2. EMIS Data Cycle

## DATA TEAMS

Much like education itself, reporting education data is a team sport. There are multiple people in any given district who are impacted by and have an impact on the district's EMIS data. There are also multiple data owners in any given district. Though the following list is neither comprehensive nor complete, it is an example of the range of staff members impacting your district's EMIS data. Though the position titles listed below may not align with a particular district's staffing, the job duties included are what is important.

The people filling these positions all have ownership of a portion of a district's EMIS data and should be included on a district's Data Team. It is important for all members of a Data Team to understand their role on the team. They should know the impact of their data on the Ohio report cards, district funding, and state and federal policy making. They should also understand the wide-ranging uses of EMIS data and the variety of stakeholders regularly using EMIS data. See the *Data Cycle, Impacts, and Uses* and *Enrollment to Graduation... and Beyond!* documents in the Appendix for more information.

- **Assessment coordinators** are responsible for knowing which students took which assessments, which students did not test and why, and assessment scores. These are all examples of assessment data that go into the building and district achievement grades on a district's report card. See *EMIS Manual Sections 2.8 Student Assessment Record and 2.8.1 Assessment Area Codes*.
- **Attendance staff** enter data that goes into building and district attendance rates. See *EMIS Manual Section 2.4 Student Standing Record*.
- **Building principals or assistant principals** review data regarding student discipline. See *EMIS Manual Section 2.11 Student Discipline Record*.
- **Building secretaries** enter student data that goes into the subgroups by which data on the report card is separated. See *EMIS Manual Sections 2.5 Student Attributes – Effective Date Record and 2.6 Student Attributes – No Date Record*.

- **Career technical directors** enter and review data that appears on the report card and drives career-technical funding. See *EMIS Manual Chapter 3 Staff Records and Chapter 4 Course Records*.
- **Curriculum directors** are responsible for course data that impacts the licensure numbers on the report card. See *EMIS Manual Chapter 4 Course Records*.
- **EMIS coordinators** are the EMIS data stewards.
- **Enrollment staff** enter students' demographic information to districts' local student information systems upon student enrollments. See *EMIS Manual Sections 2.2 Student Demographic Record and 2.3 Student Demographic – Race Detail Record*.
- **Food services directors** are responsible for economic disadvantage data, which impacts subgroups on the local report card. See *EMIS Manual Section 2.5 Student Attributes – Effective Date Record*.
- **Gifted coordinators** identify gifted students and review gifted reports and data. See *EMIS Manual Section 2.10 Student Gifted Education Record*.
- **Guidance counselors** make sure students are on track to graduate with their cohorts and review College Credit Plus data. See *EMIS Manual Chapter 2 Student Records and Chapter 4 Course Records*.
- **Human resources staff** are familiar with staff qualifications and licensure and are involved with hiring. See *EMIS Manual Sections 3.3 Staff Demographic Record, 3.4 Staff Employment Record, and 4.3 Staff Course Record*.
- **IT staff** make sure systems are running effectively and efficiently, ensure data security, and assist the district with the choice of local software that best meets the district's data needs.
- **Payroll staff** are responsible for much of the staff data that is reported to EMIS. See *EMIS Manual Sections 3.3 Staff Demographic Record and 3.4 Staff Employment Record*.
- **Special education staff** enter and review data that impacts special education funding and the gap closing grade on the report card. See *EMIS Manual Section 2.13 Student Special Education Record*.
- **Superintendents** are the leaders of their districts and can instill a data-focused culture throughout the district and can lead the way for their district's creation of an EMIS framework that results in the most accurate EMIS data reporting possible.
- **Treasurers** are the fiscal leaders and advisors of the district and control the district's financial data. See *EMIS Manual Chapter 6 Financial Records and Chapter 7 Five-Year Forecast Records*.

## EMIS COORDINATORS

When EMIS began, it was small enough that few districts had a full-time EMIS coordinator. The duties associated with EMIS reporting were simply added to another employee's job description. Over the years, EMIS has grown. There are now more than 30 different records that together include several hundred elements. These records and elements are all included in the now nearly 1,000 page EMIS Manual. There are more than 30 different collections that together span the entire calendar year. With the exception of a few of the smallest districts, EMIS reporting is now a full-time job that requires one or more employees whose job is focused wholly on coordinating the reporting, review, and revision of EMIS data.

Given the work required to report a district's data to EMIS, two lists have been developed to assist districts with staffing their EMIS coordinator positions and in determining professional development needs. The first list includes the roles of an EMIS coordinator and is based on the work required for a district's data to be accurately reported. The second list includes the essential skills required to carry out the role of an EMIS coordinator. See Figure 3 for an abbreviated version of each of these lists. See the *EMIS Coordinators: Roles & Skills* document in the appendix for longer, more complete versions of these two lists.

#### **ROLE OF AN EMIS COORDINATOR**

The following list includes many of the most common and important roles of a district's EMIS coordinator.

- ◆ Differs by district.
- ◆ Liaison between the district and the district's Information Technology Center (ITC).
- ◆ Interpret EMIS reporting requirements for the district using the EMIS Manual.
- ◆ Ensure the accuracy, completeness, and transfer of data to EMIS.
- ◆ Coordinate data collection and verification processes.
- ◆ Communicate EMIS requirements to staff within the district.
- ◆ Work with members of the data team to troubleshoot data reports.
- ◆ Investigate and trouble-shoot various error reports.
- ◆ Assist district staff with understanding and interpretation of EMIS reports.
- ◆ Interpret data and other statistical information.

#### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS OF AN EMIS COORDINATOR**

The following list includes many of the skills required to carry out the role of an EMIS coordinator.

- ◆ Ability to work collaboratively with other staff members in the district.
- ◆ Ability to work with spreadsheets.
- ◆ Dedication, commitment, honesty, and integrity when reporting district data to the Department.
- ◆ Effective communication (verbally and in writing).
- ◆ Efficient and effective in meeting deadlines.
- ◆ Good organizational skills.
- ◆ Multitasking.

**Figure 3.** Roles & Skills of an EMIS Coordinator

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

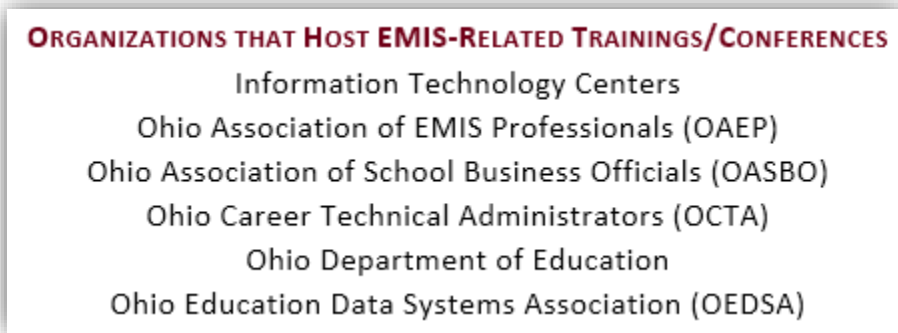
EMIS-related professional development and training opportunities are available throughout the year and around the state. Some of these opportunities are directed to certain members of your data team. For example, a conference hosted by the Ohio Association of School Business Officials is geared more toward your treasurer and payroll staff, while a conference related to special education issues is geared more toward your special education coordinator and staff. However, there are two areas in which all members of your data team should receive annual training: ethics and data privacy. It has become common for employees in a range of fields to have an annual training requirement in both ethics and data privacy.

When districts file data appeals, part of the application includes the development of a corrective action plan (CAP) to hopefully avoid the need for future appeals. These CAPs may require that the EMIS



coordinator or other staff members attend certain trainings or a certain number of trainings. Whether a district is taking part in available training may impact the approval of a data appeal.

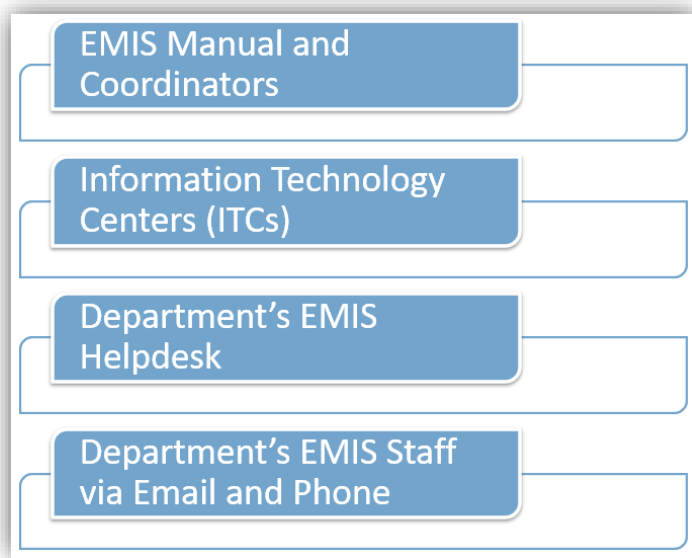
See Figure 4 for a list of organizations that regularly provide EMIS-related professional development and training for district staff. For more information regarding EMIS-related professional development and training opportunities, see the *Inventory of Existing Professional Development & Training Opportunities* document in the Appendix.



**Figure 4.** Organizations that Regularly Present EMIS-Related Material

## WHERE TO FIND HELP

EMIS encompasses a great deal of data. Given updates to federal laws, state laws, board resolutions, and policy, EMIS is not static. There is a hierarchy of support available for EMIS reporting questions and problems. EMIS coordinators, the EMIS Manual, and other available resources should always be consulted first. When additional information and help is needed, the appropriate ITC should be contacted. When the appropriate ITC cannot answer the question or resolve the issue, the EMIS helpdesk is the next level in the hierarchy. Questions in the EMIS helpdesk are handled by the EMIS staff at the Department. The final level of the hierarchy of support is contacting EMIS staff at the Department directly.



**Figure 5.** Hierarchy of Support

Whenever possible, follow this support hierarchy. This allows for a triage of questions/issues, thus cutting down on the number of questions the Department receives and decreasing response times. This also allows you to receive a written response from the Department.

### ***EMIS Coordinators and EMIS Resources***

District staff who need assistance reporting, reviewing, or understanding EMIS data should work with their EMIS coordinator. EMIS coordinators are responsible for the accuracy, completeness,

and transfer of EMIS data. The EMIS Manual is the primary source of reporting guidance. Between the district's EMIS coordinator and the EMIS Manual, many questions can be resolved.

The Department has a great deal of information and many useful resources available for assistance with understanding and reporting EMIS data. Links to many helpful resources can be found on the [EMIS Homepage](#). Though not comprehensive, the list below includes many of the most useful and most used EMIS resources.

- [EMIS Data Collection Calendar](#). EMIS Data Collection Calendars are available by fiscal year. Each calendar includes the collection name and the collection's open date and close date. Those reporting EMIS data must submit their information as outlined in the schedules unless a waiver has been granted.
- [EMIS Manual](#). The EMIS Manual provides a uniform and consistent source of reporting instructions for EMIS data. The Manual includes data definitions, requirements, and procedures to assist districts with the submission, review, validation, and correction of data.
- [EMIS Newsflashes](#). These are periodic communications sent to school district staff, software vendors, and other interested parties who work with EMIS data in some capacity. They feature late-breaking news and links to current resources and tools related to EMIS data reporting, as well as reminders and information about upcoming collections, appeals, and trainings. To sign up to receive EMIS Newsflashes, click the red envelope at the top or bottom of any Department webpage, then follow the instructions.
- [Release Notes](#). Each time a new manifest is posted (whether it is the first or the twelfth version of the manifest), there is also a new Release Note posted. Release Notes include a description of the collection, details regarding what and when to report, who must report for the collection, and information regarding outstanding known issues.
- [Report Explanations](#). Report Explanations provide detailed explanations of the various EMIS reports, which can be used to submit and verify EMIS data.

For additional information about these and other resources, see the [EMIS Communications and Information](#) webpage.

### ***Information Technology Centers***

ITCs host the data collector, which is how data is transferred from the districts to the Department and from the Department to the districts. ITCs provide training opportunities to their districts throughout the year. If an EMIS coordinator needs assistance with EMIS reporting, the ITC should be contacted as the second level of support. Most issues can be resolved and most questions can be answered by ITC staff. This includes issues with SSIDs, access to IBM (for SSIDs), and assistance with the student information system used by your district.

### ***EMIS Helpdesk***

The third level of support is the EMIS helpdesk. ITCs can direct EMIS reporting questions or technical issues to the Department's EMIS office and to SSID through the EMIS helpdesk. EMIS reporting questions will be answered by EMIS staff at the Department. Technical questions may be answered by the

Department or by SSDT. ITC staff also have access to search the EMIS helpdesk for previously answered questions.

### ***Contacting the Department's EMIS Office***

EMIS coordinators/district personnel should go to their ITC or through their ITC to the EMIS helpdesk in the majority of instances. If EMIS coordinators/district personnel feel that a question is not appropriate for this pathway or if this pathway has been followed and there is still no adequate answer, then contacting the Department's EMIS office directly is an option.

Please note that districts that want to be able to refer back to a particular answer from the Department should get that answer in writing. The Department's EMIS office can be reached at [emis@education.ohio.gov](mailto:emis@education.ohio.gov) and 614-387-0395.

Note that the Department's EMIS office is legally prohibited from having personally identifiable information about students. That is one of the main reasons that statewide student identifiers (SSIDs) were created. IBM is the vendor that works with SSIDs. The SSID/IBM helpdesk is available for assistance with SSID issues and can be found via your ITC. Do not include a student's personally identifiable information—e.g., name, address, parent name, social security number—in communications with the Department's EMIS office.

### ***Additional Help***

For policy questions—not EMIS reporting questions—contact the appropriate business office at the Department. Contact information can be found on the Department's website or by calling 877-644-6338 and asking to speak with someone in the relevant office.

Area coordinators and fiscal consultants can assist with a number of issues, including determination of district of residence, excess costs, open enrollment, financial reports, and financial issues. Lists of area coordinators and fiscal consultants can be found on the [Department's website](#), along with more complete lists of the topics with which they can assist.

## **APPENDIX**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The documents in this Appendix have been developed to also function as stand-alone documents that can be printed individually and shared with others in your districts to help them better understand EMIS data and reporting. These documents can also be found as individual .pdfs on the EMIS website.

#### ***Documents Included***

- EMIS Coordinators: Roles & Essential Skills
- Inventory of Existing Professional Development & Training Opportunities for EMIS Coordinators
- Data Cycle, Impacts, and Uses
- EMIS Building Blocks
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