The Education Management Information System (EMIS) Advisory Council Recommendation Report

JUNE 5, 2019

Ohio | Department of Education

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I. Introduction

Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education, *Each Child, Our Future*, sets a vision that each child is challenged to discover and learn, prepared to pursue a fulfilling post-high school path and empowered to become a resilient, lifelong learner who contributes to society. The plan is built upon three core principles: Equity, Partnerships and Quality Schools. The state and its education partners develop and operate several key operational systems to support that work.

The Education Management Information System (EMIS), required by Ohio Revised Code Section (ORC) 3301.0714 since 1989, is Ohio's administrative data system to support crucial functions, including school funding and performance reporting. This data system and its corresponding resources are foundational supports to *Each Child, Our Future*'s core principles. It is the basis on which data informs continuous improvement and shines a light on equity issues. Partners, such as the EMIS Advisory Council, are important contributors to the successful operation of this system. EMIS collects demographic and employment data for approximately 108,000 teachers, including teaching assignments and course codes; demographic, assessment, attendance, program and course data for approximately 1.7 million students; and data on approximately 4,300 school buildings.

The EMIS Advisory Council is authorized under ORC 3301.0713, as enacted by House Bill 21 in September 2018, to make recommendations to the state superintendent to improve EMIS and to provide a forum for communication and collaboration between the Ohio Department of Education and parties in the field involved in collecting, reporting and using EMIS data.

All Council members are appointed consistent with ORC 3301.0713, which requires Council membership to include Department staff, representatives of school districts and other entities that regularly interact with data from the EMIS system. The Council currently consists of 22 members, six are ODE staff (one serving as Chair and another serving as Vice-Chair). External members of the Council include a variety of roles, such as superintendents, treasurers, EMIS coordinators, Information Technology Center (ITC) staff and State Board members. A full list of all Council members can be found in Appendix A.

The goal of the Council is to carefully analyze EMIS and gather both short- and long-term recommendations to present to the state superintendent for consideration. This report is the first set of recommendations being submitted to the state superintendent and represents the Council's work from October 2018 to June 2019.

The five main components of EMIS are the Manual and data requirements, district software, EMIS Data Collector, department data processing and reports and impact. The Council created four workgroups based on these domains and discussed both strengths and challenges associated with each category.

EMIS Manual and Data Requirements

The Department provides the EMIS Manual as a uniform and consistent source of reporting instructions for EMIS data in accordance with ORC 3301.0714. Included in the Manual are data definitions, requirements and reporting procedures to assist districts with the submission, review, validation and correction of data. Topics included in this workgroup's discussions were reporting responsibilities, instructional documentation and communication of changes.

District Software and EMIS Data Collector
Data originate at the school district or EMIS reporting entity. Each entity may choose to report data, for operational purposes, using any student information software (SIS) of their preference. However, EMIS data is to be reported and submitted according to the data definitions, requirements and rules as instructed in the EMIS Manual. Once the data have been reported into the software system, local software extracts EMIS files and transfers the records to the ITC. The Data Collector allows both districts and regional sites to manage the EMIS reporting process. From the Data Collector, users are able to collect and review data and validation reports and submit their data to ODE. Topics covered by this workgroup included SIS, payroll/HR systems, Level 1 validations, user interface, extracts from SIS and report access.

Department Data Processing and Ohio District Data Exchange (ODDEX)
The Department processes the EMIS data submitted and releases data verification reports that are accessible to the school districts. The data verification reports are tools that the school districts, and ITCs, can use to ensure that data have been reported accurately and completely to the Department. The Ohio District Data Exchange (ODDEX) is an application districts use for data verifications and exchanges. Topics discussed by this workgroup included general issues data checks, Level 2 reports and other data files.

Reports and Impact
The Department provides a multitude of reports that allow districts to review their EMIS data, including, but not limited to, reports that include accountability data and reports of data used for funding purposes. One tool that the Department uses for accountability data review is the Secure Data Center (SDC). Topics for discussion by this workgroup included finance and funding reports, the SDC, accountability resources and the report card webpage.

II. Current Status of EMIS

At the first meeting of each workgroup, which took place in February and March, the workgroup members gathered and discussed the current status of EMIS. Their thoughts on a variety of topics relevant to each workgroup are displayed throughout this report.

Members of the **EMIS Manual and Data Requirements** workgroup expressed that the EMIS Manual has evolved and become much more user friendly and searchable in recent years. The group noted that changes are communicated and updated in a timelier manner and links to prior versions of the EMIS Manual are very helpful. Also, the division of the Manual by record type is helpful. Workgroup members agree that the Department provides a wealth of information to the field. Most rely on the EMIS Newsflash and EMIS Release Notes for the most up-to-date information. Workgroup members noted that instructional documentation is easily accessible, very helpful and frequently used. The group also mentioned that the report explanations are comprehensive, easy to understand and noticeably improved in recent years.

Members of the **District Software and Data Collector** workgroup felt that there is good integration between the systems and that the districts' local software handles the data accurately. Additionally, workgroup members like the Data Collector and see it as a major improvement over the prior software/process for EMIS submissions. The Data Collector facilitates transparency over what data is used by ODE and returns information to districts daily. The process of separating EMIS data into subsets of data assists with monitoring submissions, as do the counts of records in prior submissions, the archives of prior submissions and reports and the warnings that indicate a new submission may be missing data. Members also appreciate that reports generated by various offices at the Department are now available in the Data Collector, and while reports (such as the missing reports) often point out more work to be done by the districts, members appreciate the feedback and opportunity to get the data corrected.

Members of the **Department Data Processing/ODDEX** workgroup like that the General Issues data checks provide an early notification/warning of potential issues that allows for an opportunity to correct data before it becomes a bigger issue. They also indicated that the report explanations are useful and appreciate that each check has a specific contact person for questions. Workgroup members had positive comments about the recent updates to the tuition and history modules of ODDEX. They find the ability to extract information, such as special education and testing data, helpful. Members like the view-only access that they can grant to other staff in their districts and appreciate the training available for EMIS coordinators. Workgroup members like the sortable Excel format of the Level 2 reports.

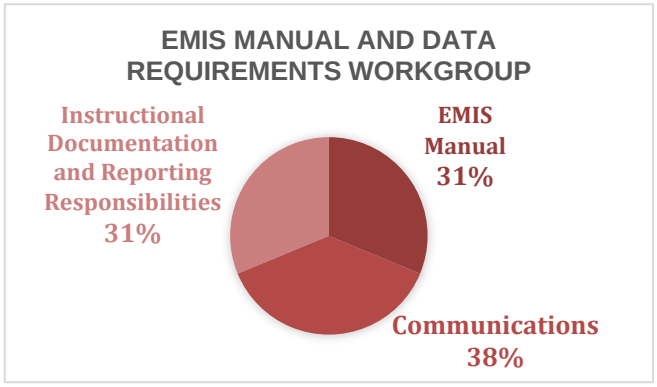
Members of the **Reports and Impact** workgroup felt that there are a lot of reports available to members of the field who are trying to understand their payments. This can be good, but it also creates challenges. It's good because users have different ways to view their payment data depending on the audience with whom they will be sharing the information. Some reports provide high level summary data while other reports provide more detailed data. Dashboard Reports are designed to show each report card measure and component. Data displayed follow the accountability rules, and each report displays preliminary percentages and grades based on data reported in EMIS. The reports for analysis follow the report card accountability rules, are used for diagnostic purposes and may show data broken down differently.

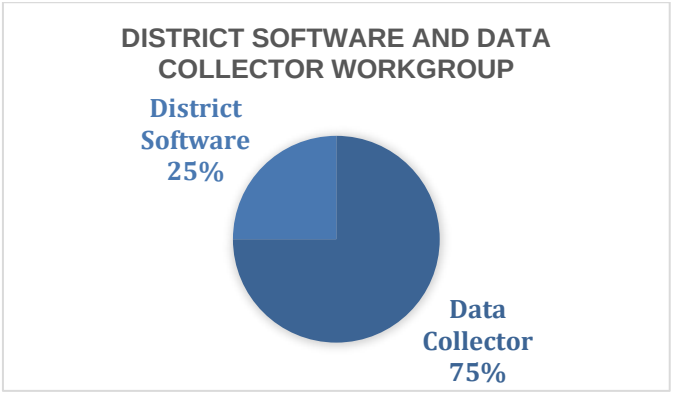
III. Recommendations Overview

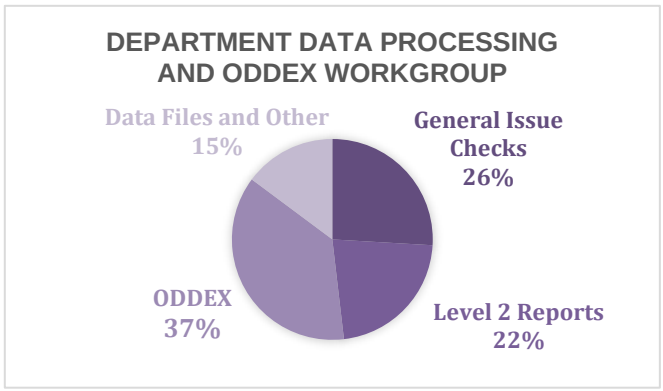
Even with the EMIS improvements made to date, the workgroups identified more than 80 challenges as areas for improvement. These challenges and opportunities had several themes in common across the workgroups. The chart below shows the number of recommendations that address each theme. Each challenge and opportunity could address multiple themes. For example, a recommendation to create a report to snapshot data used to calculate a payment is included in the counts for two different themes: EMIS Reports and Funding.

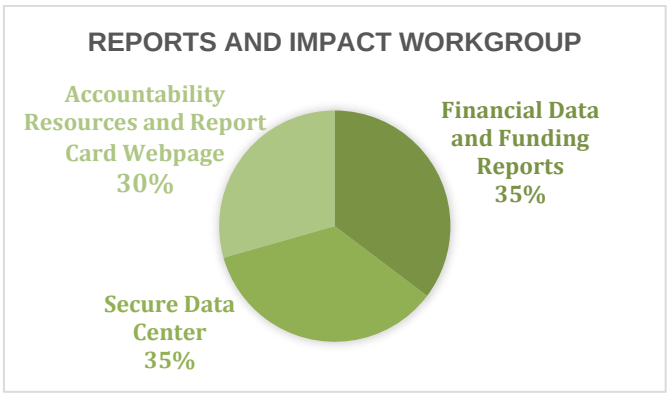
The graphs below show the prevalence of topics within each workgroup. Each workgroup looked at two to four areas of the EMIS system. The percentages displayed reflect the percent of each category of each workgroup. For example, the District Software and Data Collector Workgroup had a combined total of 24 recommendations, with 18 of them about the Data Collector and six coming from the District Software category.

Each workgroup went through a prioritization process to rank either the top two or three challenges and opportunities for improvement that were most important to them, as well as an additional seven or ten challenges and opportunities for improvement that were the next most important to them. The numbers of challenges and opportunities for improvement selected was based on the total count of recommendations developed by the group. This report highlights the top three or four challenges and opportunities identified for improvement within each workgroup. Full lists of the remaining recommendations can be found in Appendix B. These remaining recommendations will be retained by the Council for future consideration in subsequent reports or new workgroups. Some of the remaining recommendations may be implemented by Department staff depending on feasibility and resource availability.









In addition to the individual workgroup challenges, an overarching recommendation was suggested to manage the large volume of data that is required to be reported by districts. These data elements that are collected need to be periodically reviewed to identify which ones are no longer used or required by law and thus need deleted.

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
A large volume of data is required to be reported by districts.		Periodic review of data elements to identify items that could be deleted if they are not used or required

The next four sections of this report provide more detail about the top recommendations from each workgroup, including their challenges and short- or long-term opportunities for improvement.

IV. EMIS Manual and Data Requirements Recommendations

Challenge #1	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
Not enough direct "How To" documents as a reference when attempting to report specific situations.	Develop more situational "If this, then that" examples in the EMIS Manual. Similar to the examples in 2.1.1.	Establish an internal review and revision of the EMIS Manual.

This challenge was tied with Challenge #2 below. It encompasses the overall difficulties the field encounters with EMIS reporting, particularly when attempting to report specific situations that are outside of "normal" reporting circumstances. Many of the challenges noted during the workgroup's discussions revolved around the overall content and functionality of the EMIS Manual. The opportunities for improvement include adding more situational "if this, then that" examples throughout the EMIS Manual, similar to what is currently done in Section 2.1.1. Additionally, completing an internal review and revision of the EMIS Manual, which will consist of, but not be limited to, a page by page, section by section review, removing outdated information and adding references to report explanations, policy information, valid test combinations and Appendix J (Situations) throughout the Manual. This challenge is related to the Reports & Impact Workgroup's Challenge #3. This workgroup stated that the SDC is difficult to navigate and is not user friendly. Part of this Opportunity for Improvement includes creating "how to" documentation that would assist users of the SDC.

Challenge #2	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
Lack of a centralized location for EMIS communications.	Create a one stop shop for all recent Department EMIS communications.	Establish one place to communicate with districts that is searchable and has live issues that are affecting a large population.

This challenge encompasses the overall difficulties associated with navigating the many ways the Department communicates EMIS information and the workgroup's concern with how to ensure important information is not being missed or overlooked. The opportunities for improvement include creating a "one stop shop" for all recent ODE EMIS communications as a resource for the field. This will be located on EMIS's webpage and will include all EMIS communications for the past month, with live links that will easily allow the user to access the information. The long-term opportunity for improvement will include a central location that allows the Department to communicate "hot topic", real time EMIS issues that are affecting a large group of people.

Challenge #3	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
It is difficult to explain EMIS reporting to administrators and other staff who have not had EMIS reporting training.	Include SDC information in EdConnection that specifically targets superintendents. Integrate communications for superintendents and treasurers into EMIS Newsflash subscriptions.	Develop webinars and/or training for other key players, such as superintendents, principals, treasurers, etc.

	Create an EMIS glossary of common EMIS terms.	

This challenge encompasses the overall difficulties EMIS coordinators face when working with other staff and administrators who haven't had the typical EMIS reporting training and could benefit from documentation, webinars and trainings targeted at specific groups and topics. The opportunities for improvement include adding specific information pertaining to the reports provided in the SDC in EdConnection to help educate and inform superintendents about their data and encourage them to use the SDC to review their data before the release of the Report Card. The creation of an EMIS glossary, located as a resource on the EMIS webpage, will also be created to assist the field with familiarizing themselves with common EMIS terms. The long-term opportunity for improvement includes the creation of video tutorials/web-based trainings for other significant staff members, such as superintendents, principals, treasures, testing coordinators, guidance counselors, etc. This challenge is related to the Department Data Processing/ODDEX Workgroup's Challenge #1. This workgroup stated that EMIS coordinators find it challenging to give data checks to other district staff for assistance with collecting and correcting data. Other staff do not always understand the relevance of the information presented to them. Part of this Opportunity for Improvement would include creating webinars and additional trainings directed at specific users such as superintendents, principals, treasurers, guidance counselors, gifted coordinators, etc.

V. District Software and EMIS Data Collector Recommendations

Challenge #1	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
EMIS coordinators often need information in one place from multiple reports. There is no way to see everything about a single student in one place. Staff have to spend too much time on VLOOKUPs or other types of merges before they can efficiently review data.	Determine combinations of data that would be most helpful and the feasibility of adding pre-defined reports to join that data within the Data Collector.	Consider adding methods to join reports on-demand within the Data Collector. Determine if there is any way to add names to received files and implement functionality. Create a report writer so that self-designed reports can be generated, which would help when dealing with auditors and civil rights data that must be sent to federal government agencies.

Although the Data Collector includes many reports, there is no functionality within the Data Collector to customize those reports. Therefore, when an EMIS coordinator needs assistance from other staff members in the district, they often have to modify the provided reports. Examples of modifications include adding a student's name, limiting the number of rows in the report to just the rows the staff person needs to review and combining specific fields from two or more different reports to present a full view of the information on a student. VLOOKUP is a function within Excel that allows you to merge data between reports, but not all EMIS coordinators are comfortable with using this function. Setting up a VLOOKUP each time a report is updated can be time consuming. This challenge is related to the Department Data Processing/ODDEX Workgroup's Challenge #3. This workgroup stated that the FTE Detail report does not display some information that would be useful in correcting issues associated with EMIS data reporting. Part of this Opportunity for Improvement would include determining what additional data could be provided in the FTE Detail report.

Challenge #2	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
The Assessment Missing Lists do not account for more scenarios in which a district may not have an assessment for a student.	Update the Assessment Missing Lists to include situations in which a student is accelerated or has taken alternate assessments.	Evaluate adding new EMIS data that would enable all situations that impact missing lists to be considered, making missing lists 100 percent inclusive.

One of the primary tools for assessment reporting that the Department publishes in the Data Collector is an assessment missing list for each collection. In general, the Department uses the assessment results file from the assessment vendors, in combination with enrollment and other information in EMIS, to create a list of students that most likely need assessment records reported in EMIS. Since this process is not 100 percent precise in predicting who needs a particular assessment record, EMIS coordinators have to spend time in the summer researching each case to determine if a particular student on the missing list really needs an assessment record reported, and the codes to be used on that assessment record.

Challenge #3	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
Additional Level 1 check or additional information on a report do not exist which would simplify work locally to review and use the data.	Develop process for users to request changes to checks and reports for evaluation by ODE. Some possible changes suggested by workgroup members include: • Staff enrollment headcount report • Staffing profile • Blank county of residence • If percent of time is less than 100 and no sent to reported • 100 percent of time and no courses • Checks on IRNs reported for CCP • Staff and course – cross check start and end dates and IRNs reported • Disability reported on FD vs GE • FE exemption record this year versus last • FB acceleration check this year versus last • Blank FY started 9th grade element • Retention for repeat kindergarten and high school tests retake • March D Follow up data missing at element level • Preview of March students for future year • District relationship of 1 with no attendance • Assessment Pre-ID files from EMIS data • Gifted ID across LEAs and years • Make sure 230 course check includes course and employment dates	

EMIS coordinators spend a large amount of time verifying the data that they upload from their SIS and payroll systems into the Data Collector. Part of the data validation and submission process is the Department running many checks on the data to identify records that may need additional review. The more the Department can use the automated system to identify possibly problematic records, the less time it takes the EMIS coordinators to make corrections. Although ODE has always taken enhancement requests through the EMIS Helpdesk, only ITCs can submit through the Helpdesk.

VI. Department Data Processing and ODDEX Recommendations

Challenge #1	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
EMIS coordinators find it challenging to give data checks to other district staff for assistance with collecting and correcting data. Other staff do not always understand the relevance of the information.		Create multi-audience training/documentation for district staff to help them interpret EMIS data and understand the importance of their role related to EMIS data.

This challenge addresses the lack of resources to help non-EMIS personnel interpret EMIS data and understand the importance of their role related to EMIS data. School district staff and administrators who are not EMIS coordinators could benefit from general documentation, webinars and online trainings targeted at specific topics. The long-term opportunity for improvement includes the creation of video tutorials/web-based trainings for superintendents, principals, treasures, testing coordinators, guidance counselors, special education coordinators, etc. The Department will work with various stakeholders to ensure resources and content are relevant and useful to each audience. Such resources would in turn support EMIS coordinators in doing their jobs more effectively. This challenge is similar to the EMIS Manual and Data Requirements Workgroup Challenge #3 as both challenges are related to creating resources for non-EMIS users.

Challenge #2	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
Lack of frequent feedback about data reporting during the collection.	Provide general issue checks earlier in the collection and more often toward the end of the collection, when possible.	Provide districts with more frequent feedback about data reporting during the collection.

Districts expressed the need for more frequent feedback in the form of data checks during open collections. More feedback would mean that districts would have more opportunities to report updated information and see the results of their attempts to correct data more quickly. This is especially useful toward the end of a data collection when much of the fine-tune data correction processes happen. The short-term opportunity for improvement is, when possible, to provide general issue checks earlier in collections and more often toward the end of collections. The Department will prioritize which checks will be most useful for districts to receive multiple times a week in order to balance the overall amount of information an EMIS coordinator receives during that time.

Challenge #3	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
The FTE Detail report does not display some information useful to correcting issues associated with data reporting. For example, a student's total FTE and the percent of time reported by other districts.		Review information displayed in FTE Detail report to determine what additional data could be provided. Consider adding the LRE data, a student's total FTE and percent of time reported by other districts.

Currently, the FTE Detail report does not display some information that would be useful in correcting issues associated with EMIS data reporting. More funding-related information in one place would make it quicker and easier for EMIS coordinators to research and resolve issues. For example, a student's total FTE, LRE data and the percent of time reported by other districts would be helpful information for consideration.

VII. Reports and Impact Recommendations

Challenge #1	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
Data are not stored in one single place and it's often hard to understand because of its complexity.	Create an all-in-one funding report for reconciliation that provides more transparency regarding how numbers are calculated for SFPR.	

This challenge was tied with Challenge #2 below. The School Finance Payment Report (SFPR) is a comprehensive document that walks a user through every step of the foundation funding calculation and allows treasurers and other stakeholders to understand the detail behind the payments made to each school district. The SFPR creates transparency in the area of school funding and instills confidence in the accuracy of the data and calculations used to make payments. The SFPR contains several segments, a Summary Calculation Page, a Calculation Factors and Parameters Page and a Detailed Funding Component Calculation Page. Data from multiple EMIS reports are used to process state foundation payments. This creates unnecessary complexity. Workgroup members asked for an all-in-one funding report to make it easier for users to understand payment calculations and identify all elements used to calculate state funding. The Reports and Impact Workgroup's Challenge #1 is substantially similar to the EMIS Manual and Data Requirements Workgroup's Challenge #3.

Challenge #2	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
Lack of understanding what files correlate with payments. Treasurers cannot reconcile payments to students funded.	Create a snapshot report when data is pulled for payments to help treasurers with reconciliation.	Create a tool to show all the data reported for each single payment so that treasurers can reconcile each payment quickly and easily.

The second challenge identified by workgroup members is very connected to the first. Traditional school districts receive school foundation payments from the state twice a month, and community schools and joint vocational school districts receive payments once a month. The Department uses a snapshot of data for all schools when making these payments. However, this snapshot is not captured and made available to schools. Instead, EMIS coordinators and treasurers pull reports around the time the Department generally creates this snapshot for payment processing. Workgroup members asked for a snapshot report to make reconciliation easier and instill greater transparency and confidence in the payment process. The Reports and Impact Workgroup's Challenge #2 is substantially similar to the District Software and EMIS Data Collector Workgroup's Challenge #3.

Challenge #3	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
SDC is difficult to navigate and not user friendly.	Develop the capability in the SDC to switch from one building to another on same report without having to start over in running the report.	Add links to the relevant EMIS Manual sections in the form of pop-up windows to help SDC users see information about the calculation/EMIS data elements as they are reviewing their grades.

This challenge was tied with Challenge #4 below. The SDC is the data tool used by districts to check their report card data for accuracy and completeness. A general challenge voiced by workgroup members was that the SDC is difficult to navigate and is not user friendly. Two examples were given to support this statement. Reports can be generated for an individual school or for the district as a whole. If a user generates a report for one school in the district and wants to see that same report for another school, the tool will not let them switch schools quickly and efficiently. Workgroup members asked for the capability to switch schools within a report without having to start over from the report's homepage. When checking data, a user often needs to cross reference the EMIS Manual to help determine if there are errors in the data. Workgroup members said the tool would be more efficient if there were links to the relevant sections of the EMIS Manual added to the reports.

Challenge #4	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement
SDC reports need to be more student centered.		Recommend a law change to allow ODE to collect names in addition to SSIDs so they can be added to the reports.

Reporting and checking data is a huge task and is often more than one EMIS professional can handle in the time allotted. Others in the district can help in checking data, but those staff members know their students by name, not by State Student ID (SSID). EMIS professionals spend a lot of time manipulating reports exported from the SDC to add names and other identifiers to the data (through the VLOOKUP function in Excel) so that non-EMIS personnel can use them. Workgroup members asked for a law change to allow the Department to collect names in addition to SSIDs. The Reports and Impact Workgroup's Challenge #4 is substantially similar to the District Software and EMIS Data Collector Workgroup's Challenge #1, the EMIS Manual and Data Requirements Workgroup's Challenge #3 and the Department Data Processing/ODDEX Workgroup's Challenge #1.

VIII. Appendix A: Membership

Council Membership

The Council members are appointed by the state superintendent through a nomination process. In addition to Department staff, nominees are from the following:

- Ohio Association of EMIS Professionals
- Buckeye Association of School Administrators
- Ohio Association of School Business Officials
- Ohio Association of Career-Technical Superintendents
- Information Technology Centers
- Large Urban School Districts
- Community Schools
- State Board of Education
- Other organizations as determined by the state superintendent.

Council Members:

Elizabeth Davis, SouthWest Ohio Computer Association (SWOCA)
David Ehle, Ohio Department of Education
Beth Fletcher, Ohio Department of Education
Carrie Herringshaw, Penta Career Center
Kirsten Hill, State Board of Education
Tammy Hrosch, META
Carla Isaac, Charter School Specialists
John Kellogg, Westerville City School District
Karl Koenig, Ohio Department of Education
Renae Lyons, Mid-East Career and Technology Center and East Guernsey Local School District
Tim Meister, Four County Career Center
Lisa McCullough, Ohio Hi-Point Career Center
Marianne Mottley, Ohio Department of Education
Amber Myers, Springfield City School District
Emily Passias, Ohio Department of Education
Aaron Rausch, Ohio Department of Education
Kim Rhoads, Lake Geauga Computer Association
Penny Rucker, Beavercreek City School District
Julie Sellers, Cincinnati Federation of Teachers
Ryan Shively, Northwest Ohio Computer Association (NWOCA)
Diane Smith, Accel Schools Ohio
Jenny Wall, Wall to Wall Reporting
Todd Yohey, Lebanon City School District

Workgroup Membership

The workgroup members consist of Department staff, Council members and individuals nominated by Council members. External members of the Council include a variety of roles, such as superintendents, treasurers, EMIS coordinators and Information Technology Center (ITC) staff.

EMIS Manual and Data Requirements Workgroup Members:
Sue Amburgey, SouthWest Ohio Computer Association
Ashley Castle, Ohio Department of Education
Linda Cannon, Westerville City School District
Kristie Chandler, Springfield Local School District
Matthew Danzuso, Ohio Department of Education
Richard Hall, Mid-East Career and Technology Center
Melissa Hennon, Ohio Department of Education
Tammy Hrosch, META Solutions**
Cathy Leichliter, Ohio Connections Academy
Renae Lyons, Mid-East Career and Technology Center and East Guernsey Local School District**
Troy Merillat, Ayersville Local School District
Kim Rhoads, Lake Geauga Computer Association**
Annette Sennish, Sandusky Perkins Local School District
Elaine Thirion, Euclid City School District
Leanne Weeks, Tolles Career and Technical Center

District Software and Data Collector Workgroup Members:
Brooke Click, Penta Career Center
Elizabeth Davis, SouthWest Ohio Computer Association**
David Ehle, Ohio Department of Education**
Beth Fletcher, Ohio Department of Education**
Susan Ganim, Little Miami Local School District
Sherry Halliburton, Lake Geauga Computer Association
Novalee Hillard, Franklin City School District
Roger Holbrook, Ohio Department of Education
Sharon Meek, Monroe Local School District
Helen Mills, META
Patience Moody Rush, Connect ITC and ESC of Northeast Ohio
Adam Pittis, East Guernsey Local School District
Ryan Shively, Northwest Ohio Computer Association (NWOCA)**
Diane Smith, Accel Schools**
Jenny Wall, Wall to Wall Reporting**

Department Data Processing and ODDEX Workgroup Members:
Annie Epperson, Licking Area Computer Association (LACA)
Krista Foley, Lebanon City School District
John Kellogg, Westerville City School District**
Kylea Kimmerly, Beavercreek City School District
Tami Kunesh, Four County Career Center
Amber Myers, Springfield City School District**
Ruth Niese, Liberty Center School District
Janis Orlando, Mentor Public Schools
Julie Sellers, Cincinnati Federation of Teachers**
Missi Valenti, Midview Local School District
Erica Weaston, Ohio Department of Education
Cristia Weisbrod, Kings Local School District
Judy Williams, Washington Local School District
Teresa Williams, ODDEX

Reports and Impact Workgroup Members:
Sheri Ballman, Mason City School District
Teri Belt, Miami Valley Career Center
Cheryl Geisler, Fairfield City School District
Carrie Herringshaw, Penta Career Center**
Carla Isaac, Charter School Specialists**
Lisa McCullough, Ohio Hi-Point Career Center**
Tim Meister, Four County Career Center**
Yvonne Morton, Eaton Community Schools
Marianne Mottley, Ohio Department of Education**
Aaron Rausch, Ohio Department of Education**
Stephanie Rouse, Switzerland of Ohio Schools
Penny Rucker, Beavercreek Local School District**
Bill Wagner, Ohio Department of Education
Karen Wilson, Miami Valley Educational Computer Association
Todd Yohey, Lebanon City School District**

** Indicates the workgroup member is also on the EMIS Advisory Council

IX. Appendix B: Future Opportunities

While the majority of this report highlights the top three or four challenges and opportunities for each workgroup, the Council will retain the remaining recommendations for future consideration in subsequent reports, new workgroups or potential implementation by Department staff, depending on feasibility and resource availability. Each recommendation contains its challenge and short- and/or long-term opportunities for improvement with related recommendations to the top priorities from each workgroup, if applicable. Staff at the Department have also signified whether each recommendation is expected to be completed by June 30, 2019.

EMIS Manual and Data Requirements

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
4. Lack of instructional documentation pertaining to the functionality and use of information provided in the SDC.	Create instructional documentation for SDC.		Reports and Impact #3	
5. Searching the EMIS Manual for specific data elements is difficult.	Create Element list by Record to assist with locating specific data elements. Also an additional list that details when that element is collected.	Research potential solutions to assist with EMIS Manual searching.		
6. EMIS 101 document needs updated and added to the EMIS Manual.	Update EMIS 101 document.			
7. The EMIS Manual should have links to other related items (related sections, report explanations, etc.).		Research possibility of using newer technology to make the Manual “webpages” rather than .pdf documents to accommodate more functionality.	Reports and Impact #3	
8. EMIS Helpdesk ticket searching is difficult when trying to find information.	Continue to work with MCOECN to improve Helpdesk functionality taking all users into account.			X
9. Most up to date department documentation is not always retrieved via search.	Research current ODE website search engine optimization parameters; request changes if needed.			

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
10. The EMIS Manual is not situational and has archaic qualities.		Research possibility of integrating newer technology to make the Manual "webpages" rather than .pdf documents.		
11. Districts would prefer the EMIS Manual was updated at the same time the change was communicated with the ITC.		Internal review and redesign of ODE EMIS Manual change process.		
12. EMIS Newsflashes being sent out on Fridays is not preferred.	EMIS Newsflashes would come out on Monday mornings at 7 a.m., instead of late Fridays.			X
13. Unable to search past Newsflashes for specific information.	Research solution to assist with Newsflash searching.			
14. Some information from ITCs does not flow to the districts in a reliable/timely manner.	Include link to ITC Conference call minutes in a Newsflash once notes are published.			X
15. EMIS change calls being rescheduled causes issues.	Do not reschedule EMIS change calls (only cancel them). Either schedule two EMIS change calls per month to hold date and time, or just wait until the following month's call.			X
16. ODE ITC EMIS Training presentations are difficult to search.	Research solution to assist with these searches.			

District Software and EMIS Data Collector

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
4. The Data Collector includes a lot of information; this can make it especially difficult to make sure you are reviewing all important, updated items, even for experienced EMIS coordinators. New or novice coordinators can be completely overwhelmed.	Add a messaging section to the first tab of the Data Collector to allow ODE to point out important updates and issues that need to be addressed.	Consider adding some type of Dashboard view within the Data Collector.		X Short-term opportunity completion expected by June 30
5. Level 2 Reports from closed collection windows are difficult to find when needed for other purposes (such as audit requests or civil rights reporting).	Update Data Collector to make it easier to find archived reports from prior closed collections.	Improve understanding of data needs of auditors and consider reports/instructions to make the audit process easier. Explore CRDC and how EMIS reports could assist with completion.	Reports and Impact #2	X Short-term opportunity completion expected by June 30
6. SIS vendors need more time to implement changes, including both updates to the software and time to train local staff. Need for time is made worse by some vendors refusing to make changes until published in black and white.	Decrease, when possible, the amount of time between when a change is announced and final details are published. Provide information as it's available.	Work with vendors to try to identify ways to communicate change details so that change implementation can begin even if not all change details are published in manual. Include importance of changes and collection timeframe in addition to when the data is due.		
7. Sometimes it is difficult to get buy-in from district staff members beyond the EMIS coordinator. Buy-in improves data quality. It needs to be easier for non-EMIS coordinators to access and use the data.	Integrate access to the Data Collector with logins currently used by all district staff to access ODE applications (SAFE/ OH|ID). Give districts control over which staff within their district can access	Understand roles and needs of non-EMIS coordinators to design new reports (special ed, gifted and CTPDs are examples) and functionality that will make it easier for them to contribute to the quality and accuracy of their district's data submissions.	- EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3 - Reports and Impact #4 - District Software and EMIS Data Collector #3	

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
	which reports/processes within the Data Collector.			
8. For Staff and payroll software processes, the EMIS collection calendar and staff rollover for the new year and not in alignment.	Work with HR vendors to understand the problem and explore solutions; discuss within ODE and with the field the possibility of closing staff data earlier in the summer.			
9. Lack of understanding what files correlate with payments.	Develop the ability to snapshot files that correlate with payments.		Reports and Impact #2	X
10. Guidance counselors have to keep track of each year's different grad requirements and keep up with constant changes.		EMIS cross tracking graduation data and requirements would be helpful.		
11. Lack of training for other staff and administrators who enter data into the local software makes the process more challenging because they don't understand what/ how data can be used other than on the local report card.	Integrate training and communication for superintendents, treasurers, principals and other district stakeholders on how local SIS data is used by ODE via EMIS.		- EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3 - Department Data Processing/ODDEX #1 - Reports and Impact #4	
12. Reports tab is not user friendly, especially for new or novice users. Currently, for these types of users to benefit from the Data Collector, the EMIS coordinator has to do a lot of hand-holding.	Add a new view in the Data Collector designed with the novice user in mind, without removing current functionality needed by EMIS coordinators.			X

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
13. Progress has been made on consolidating feedback to districts in one location, but it is still sometimes hard to know where to review- in the Data Collector, SDC, or some other system.		Determine the core needs met by the SDC and other ODE systems related to EMIS data reporting, and determine if enhancements could be made to the Data Collector to allow those needs to be met within a single system.	Reports and Impact #1	
14. Address information sometimes looks correct in the SIS but does not transfer to ODDEX correctly.	Improve training and documentation on how address information is loaded into ODDEX. Review Contact Collection Request to determine if common issues can be flagged before the data is submitted.	Explore EMIS and/or ODDEX changes that would resolve any issues that cannot be resolved with edit checks and training.	EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	
15. Some Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) data is not included in the SIS and/or not aligned with EMIS data.		Understand gaps between Federal CRDC data needs and current EMIS data set to consider possible EMIS changes that would assist with CRDC reporting.	District Software and EMIS Data Collector #3	
16. Trusting that vendors are 100 percent EMIS compliant and support all record types and will be timely with updates. The LEA makes software adoption decisions and needs this information when there is a software decision.	ODE collects and shares information on what software supports and how changes are implemented.			
17. ODE does not always communicate when a processing issue causes data to not update overnight.	Continue to provide timely communication to districts and provide training on how users can see if data has been updated.	Add additional processing information into ODDEX and the data collector where appropriate.	EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #2	

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
18. CTE does not have some reports that other LEAs receive, such as reports on grad data.	Review reports available for CTE and develop new reports as needed.	Develop training on how data from different entities (such as JVSD and home LEA) impact both entities.	- EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3 - District Software and EMIS Data Collector #3	
19. The EMIS Manual does not have links to other related items and is not comprehensive.		Internal review and revision of the EMIS Manual (This is being addressed by multiple workgroups).	- EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #1 - Reports and Impact #3	
20. Last minute extensions to a collection window are helpful but would be more beneficial if more notice could be given.	Consider if extensions will be needed earlier in the window, and review how extensions are communicated to ensure users know about them ASAP.		EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #2	X
21. Local SIS software and EMIS/ODDEX do not always integrate well. a. Some SIS software thinks there is an EMIS issue when an issue doesn't exist. b. ODDEX files are too big to transfer to PowerSchool and causes timing out issues.		Improve documentation of EMIS checks so that SIS vendors who choose to apply EMIS checks in their software can do so accurately.	EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	
22. Data Collector is not navigation friendly to other related parts of EMIS.	Create a tab in the Data Collector that includes links that go to other parts of EMIS (to ODDEX, documentation, OEDS, etc).			X
23. Terminology of "fatal" error is misleading.	Update/ clarify terminology of "fatal" to "critical" error.	Review nomenclature used for giving feedback to districts and make needed changes based on analysis.		

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
24. The last updated date on Level 2 Reports sometimes stays the same which causes confusion on whether the data was updated.	Review date updating process, related training and how the information is displayed within the Data Collector.			

Department Data Processing and ODDEX

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
4. The History is missing additional useful demographic data included from EMIS reporting, such as grade level, LEP status, disability, disadvantagement, gifted identification, etc.	Add more student demographic EMIS data to the History.			X
5. Districts do not know which data were used to calculate each payment.	Create a snapshot report that shows the data that was used to calculate each payment.		Reports and Impact #2	X
6. Currently there is no open enrollment module (like SOES) to allow for verification of students who are open enrolled in and out of a district.		Gather use cases and business requirements for open enrollment data exchange, including the ability to share the information on open enrollment forms.		
7. Districts are not notified when a comment is added to a flag in the system.	Create basic email notifications for when a comment is added to a flag.	Facilitate a larger conversation with the field		

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
		regarding what notification might look like and how to improve the ability of users to manage their contact information in ODDEX.		
8. Prepared for Success file is cumbersome to use. Guidance counselors do not understand the relevance of the Prepared for Success data and how to use the file to correct data.		Create reports in the SDC for Prepared for Success data that are easier to navigate, including the ability to drill down to student and check each piece of data separately. Create reports and data checks to help districts flag potential issues. Create instructional documentation and/or web-based training modules to educate multiple staff at districts about reviewing prepared for success data.	- EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3 - District Software and EMIS Data Collector #1 and #3	
9. Districts are unable to sort information displayed in the Student Cross Reference (SCR).	Create sortable headers in the SCR.			
10. It is difficult to find various data files in the Data Collector.	Provide web-based training for multiple audiences at districts to help districts better utilize the Data Collector to find		EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
	and filter for data files with a link to training.			
11. Districts are not able to easily access archived reports from the prior year.	Provide training to help districts better utilize the Archive capabilities in the Data Collector. Update Data Collector to make it easier to find archived reports from prior closed collections.		EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	
12. Districts are unsure when to expect updated data checks. It is difficult to plan and prepare accordingly.		Create resources that provide more information to districts about the timeline associated with checks.	EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #2	
13. Districts do not have validation from the Department that they are not receiving any data checks. They are concerned they might be overlooking and missing them.		Evaluate opportunities for creating a report or other notification to the field regarding their status as it relates to data checks.	EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #2	X
14. Districts are unclear about where they stand overall with their data reporting during a data collection.		Evaluate opportunities for creating more summative checks or reports that show a percentage of completion for specific collections.		
15. District staff, other than EMIS coordinators, do not utilize ODDEX effectively because they do not always understand the relevance of the information displayed.	Create online training content for multiple audiences in the district to help with very basic ODDEX navigation and relevance of information		- EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3 - Department Data Processing/ODDEX #1	

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
	available, including available roles to assign. Training should include all roles, including test coordinators.			
16. Districts cannot extract groups of students from ODDEX in places other than the assessment module.		Gather use cases and requirements for which groups of students need to be extracted and for what purposes.		
17. ODDEX is difficult to navigate with regards to moving between modules to reference information about a student. An example is the need to see information from the History module while using the Tuition module.		Gather use cases and business requirements regarding how to make it easier to move between modules for same student or to see selected data from one module in another module.		
18. Higher Education College Credit Plus (CCP) data upload timelines are unknown and not on a schedule.	Add notification capability in ODDEX regarding when ODE has loaded higher education CCP data.	Determine additional ways to facilitate timely data reporting and uploading of higher education data in ODDEX for the purposes of CCP.		
19. Teacher Licensure Report is difficult to use efficiently and effectively.	Create training or documentation to help districts use the report more effectively.	Review the invalid certification program for opportunities for improvement.	EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	
20. There is not currently a result code in the adjustments that specifically flags newly identified special education students.		Review result codes for special education in the adjustments to determine feasibility and im-		

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
		pact of creating new result code for this situation.		
21. Districts are concerned that fatal errors cannot always be removed or addressed because the data is already reported accurately (e.g. out of state tuition students and non-disabled preschool students). Fatal errors remaining after the collection is closed are difficult to explain or justify to district leadership.		Better document what error codes mean and engage the field on if additional or different error codes or language would be helpful.		
22. Districts find it difficult to locate their data checks in the Data Collector.	Provide training to help districts better utilize the Data Collector to find and filter for checks. Add a messaging section to the first tab of the Data Collector to allow ODE to point out most important updates and issues that need to be addressed.		EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	
23. Districts cannot upload a document (i.e., journal entry/invoice/court documents/proof of residency) in the Tuition module.	Add functionality to upload a document in the Tuition module.		District Software and EMIS Data Collector #1	X
24. EMIS coordinators do not have access to view the CTE26 application and therefore have difficulty reporting CTE program of concentration, course data, etc.	Consult with Office of CTE regarding granting EMIS coordinators read-only access to the CTE26 application	Investigate opportunities for summative reports or other information to assist in analysis of a CTE 26.		

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
25. Using a VLOOKUP to find student name is difficult and cumbersome.	Create training resources to help districts use existing resources. Determine combinations of data that would be most helpful and feasibility of adding pre-defined reports to join that data within the Data Collector.	Explore alternative options to allow districts to analyze information more efficiently.	- EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3 - Reports and Impact #4 - District Software and EMIS Data Collector #1	
26. Difficult to find general issues in the Data Collector.	Provide guidance and training on how to find general issues in the Data Collector.			
27. Contact information in ODDEX is sometimes missing.	Improve training associated with adding contact information in ODDEX.	Investigate the business rules and implications of requiring contact information in ODDEX.	EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	

Reports and Impact

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
5. Many school personnel don't understand the codes reported in EMIS today impact the funding	Create more awareness and communication to all district personnel on the role that EMIS data plays in supporting teachers in their services to students.	Generate report card resource documents specifically to help "non-EMIS" personnel better understand the relationship between EMIS reporting and funding they receive to support students.	- EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #2 - Department Data Processing/ODDEX #1	

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
they receive tomorrow to support all students.				
6. The report card is not simple and easy to read like it is intended to be.	Review each page of the report card website to simplify the language so that parents can better understand what is being measured or reported.	Create "voice over" options to explain what each measure of the report card means.		
7. The letter grades are not a true picture of districts' and schools' performance.	ODE will facilitate a discussion with stakeholders to find ways to make the report card tell a story.	Work with stakeholders to help readers know about the good things schools are doing with their students.		
8. Reports are too complex when trying to share and explain with district administration and board members.	Simplify the SFPR report.	Add short videos to explain the various pieces of the funding formula (i.e. excess costs tuition payments, etc.).		
9. Lack of training for other staff and administrators makes the process more challenging because they don't understand reports.	Leverage the education stakeholder groups (BASA, OSBA, OASBO, etc.) to offer EMIS/funding/report card sessions at their conferences/annual meetings and also reach out directly to districts and ESCs to offer training to people who are new to those key positions.		- EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3 - Department Data Processing/ODDEX #1	
10. Lack of understanding about report card measures.	Create more training through short webinars that explain a specific report card element.		EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	
11. A member of the EMIS Advisory	(NOTE: The original "combined committee" disbanded after issuing its report in late 2018.)	If a new workgroup or combined committee is created in the future, include a representative		

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
Council should be added to the State Board of Education's "combined" report card/accountability committee so that a data person can contribute to the discussions.		from the EMIS Advisory Council on that new group's membership.		
12. The six-line description on the report card landing page is too long and needs to be refined.	Refine the report card landing page language to include a more "personal" message geared to parents.	Add a "human element" to the report cards by creating a video that welcomes readers to the page and explains the purpose of the report cards.		
13. No reports exist with data about benefits/health insurance.		Create a new funding report which contains data about benefits/health insurance.		
14. No reports exist to help districts see data about at-risk students and mental health/social-emotional learning.	Create a new report which contains data about at-risk students and mental health/SEL.			
15. Many reports allow users to disaggregate only by a single subgroup.	Make reports drillable to multiple subgroups.			

Challenge	Short-term Opportunity for Improvement	Long-term Opportunity for Improvement	Related Recommendation	Completion expected by June 30 (unless noted otherwise)
16. The value-added report card measure is difficult to explain.	Develop a simple resource (something that does not focus on the technical calculations) for districts to use to explain the value-added measure.		EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	
17. Because so many districts are on the guarantee, we need a way to explain what it means and why budget reconciliation still is needed.	Create resources/ videos explaining what it means to be on the guarantee and why it happens. Also create a resource to explain the effects of the guarantee on the budget.		EMIS Manual and Data Requirements #3	