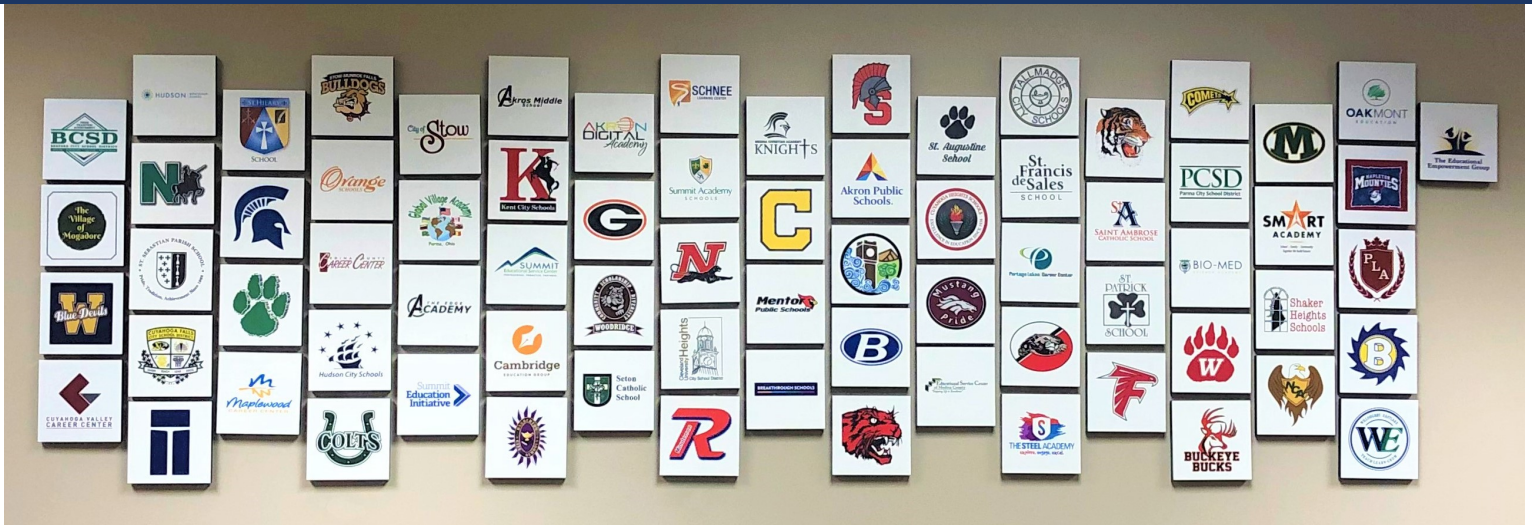# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MATTHEW GDOVIN

As the 2020-21 school year comes to an end, I want to take this time to thank all of our owners for their unwavering support and guidance during this challenging year. Through your support, the council continues to expand services, increase revenues, and empower our owners to improve student education through the use of technology. We are excited to welcome our newest member, Brooklyn City Schools, to the council. With the addition of Brooklyn, NEOnet now supports seventy-three entities representing over 130,000 students. The logos in the image above hang in the boardroom, reminding us of our success and the power of collaboration. Can you identify all of the entities?

We are all hopeful we can soon declare victory over the battle with COVID-19, and as summer approaches, we reflect on what we learned and how this pandemic has changed us. What will school districts do differently next school year, and what practices will be continued? On page two, Beth McMurtire shares pandemic-driven innovation instructors say they will keep using when in-person classes return. Virtual staff workshops, online tutoring and guest speakers, and flexibility with due dates and grading are a few of the examples. What innovations will you keep for the 21/22 school year? Please, share them on our Twitter page #NEOnetOH.

Our owners rely on our website to find critical information that impacts their day-to-day job responsibilities. Based on the recent customer satisfaction survey and owner feedback, the website is getting a much-needed facelift. The updates will include some cosmetic changes, with the primary focus on security and making the website more responsive and easier to navigate and find information.

Cybersecurity and the protection of our school district data continue to be our number one priority. You can find cybersecurity best practices and the importance of user training on pages four and five of the newsletter, and page six discusses fiscal data retention. Finally, learn how to get google certified and find more information regarding our Technology Integration service on page three.

I have only highlighted a few of the important items that this newsletter includes. Please feel free to contact me by phone at 330.926.3902 or by email at gdovin@neonet.org if you have any questions about the newsletter contents. And remember that without you there would be no NEOnet!

Matthew Gdovin, Executive Director

Which Covid-Time Practices Will We Carry Over to the New Normal?

BETH MCMURTRIE, THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In the Chronicle of Higher Education article, Beth McMurtrie shares pandemic-driven innovations instructors say they will keep using when in-person classes return. Although written for a university audience, most of these suggestions also apply to K-12:

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Several instructors told McMurtrie that taking time to "simply talk to students" before and at the end of classes "paid off in ways both expected and surprising." Giving students time to talk about what was on their minds helped build relationships and know "the competing pressures in their students' lives." It's part of teachers' realization that the teacher/student ratio of classroom talk needs to bend more toward student talk. "My bet," says Clay Shirky of New York University, "is that the biggest shift from Covid will not be any one tool or technique, but a broadening sense that engagement is not merely something that students 'bring to class,' but is a result of the environment of the class itself, and that environment can be designed to better support or encourage engagement."

ONLINE GUEST SPEAKERS

"I know I could have been doing this for years," says Andrea Bixler of Clarke University in Iowa, "but I was never forced to, so I never did. Now I have guest speakers from around the region (and they could be from much farther afield) join my classes to discuss various topics." And, she added, it's more environmentally responsible because there's no travel.

ONLINE TUTORING

Several instructors reported that offering one-on-one instruction via Zoom greatly increased the number of students who showed up. Continuing this after the pandemic seems worthwhile for tutoring, advising, coaching writing, and other individual support. "Definitely a keeper!" said one instructor.

FLEXIBILITY WITH DUE DATES & GRADING

The concern here is accusations of unfairness or favoritism when an instructor "goes easy" with some students. But during the pandemic, being flexible with deadlines has not been seen as giving students a pass. Kari Morgan, an instructor at Kansas State University, started giving full credit for late work. She checked with her students on adopting that policy going forward, and hearing no complaints, she plans to continue flexible deadlines with no penalty when regular classes resume. "Treating students with respect and care builds trust," says Morgan. "This serves as a foundation for learning. It also allows me to focus on the 'big' issues, and not the nitpicky ones. I mean, really, if I am not going to grade at the stroke of midnight, why does it matter if their work is a bit late?" But she is strict on assignments that need to be handed in as preparation for a specific class, and explains why.

VIRTUAL FACULTY WORKSHOPS

"We have gotten double or triple the attendance we used to have," says Karyn Sproles, dean of faculty development at the U.S. Naval Academy, "and the workshops have been even more interactive through chat and small groups… Not only did they answer questions we asked them to respond to in chat, but they asked questions, answered each other's questions, and posted links to resources."

Tech Integration

DAN NIESSEN

NEOnet's annual Educational Technology Conference, NEOTech, was held this past spring. Hundreds of local and non-local educators learned about the effective integration of technology in their teaching and some best practices for teaching during the COVID-19 Pandemic. With this being our first fully online conference, there were certainly challenges to overcome, but we are proud of the quality and quantity of professional learning sessions we offered for NEOTech 2021. Those who registered for NEOTech 2021 can still access all sessions until August 6, 2021 at neotechconference.org. We are happy to announce that NEOTech 2022 will be held in person at the John S Knight Center in Akron in Spring 2022. As with every year, attendees can expect a variety of cutting-edge, relevant sessions full of information for educators and administrators to take back to their schools.
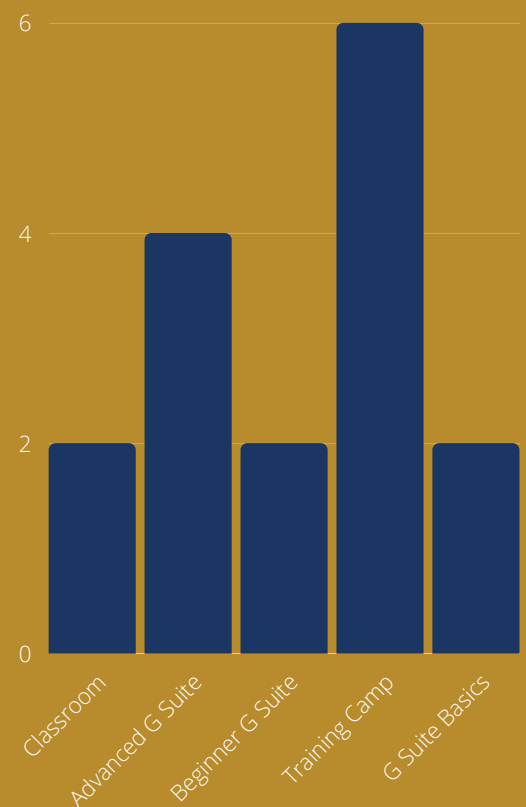
The NEOnet Technology Integration Service has expanded over the past year, both in terms of member districts and services offered. Over the past year, the Technology Integration Service has trained over 1,000 educators on topics such as Google Tools for Education, Remote Learning Resources, Flipped Instruction strategies, EdTech Tools like Edpuzzle, Pear Deck, and Nearpod, and many others. Technology Integration Specialist, Dan Niessen, has also created over 40 high-quality recorded webinars that educators can watch at any time with PD On-Demand. Towards the end of Summer 2021, members will have unlimited access to all PD On-Demand Sessions, while non-members will have access to a small list for free. Teachers from member districts will also be able to watch PD On-Demand to earn Contact Hours or even Graduate Credit. Technology Integration member districts can also expect to see even more PD On-Demand sessions added throughout the coming school year.

Coming up in the Summer and Fall of 2021, Dan will host the Google Certified Educator Workshops and nearly two dozen other Technology Integration training sessions at the NEOnet facility in Cuyahoga Falls. Any teacher may attend these sessions free of charge. Member schools can always call or email Dan to schedule a customized formal professional development session in their district buildings. Members can also schedule Dan for individualized Technology Coaching sessions in district buildings to help teachers successfully integrate technology on a more personalized level. If you have questions about the Technology Integration Service, feel free to reach out to Dan Niessen via email at dniessen@neonet.org or by phone at 330-926-3900 x601106.

"We need technology in every classroom and in every student and teacher's hand, because it is the pen and paper of our time, and it is the lens through which we experience much of our world"

David Warlick

2020-2021 GOOGLE TRAININGS

Bar chart showing training counts: Classroom 2, Advanced G Suite 4, Beginner G Suite 2, Training Camp 6, G Suite Basics 2.

NEOnet
Prompt. Courteous. Knowledgeable.
Support *you* deserve.

Cybersecurity Best Practices
Follow These Steps to Avoid Becoming Ransomware Victims

- Train employees to spot phishing emails, which are often used to deliver ransomware.

- Don't open attachments or click on URLs in unsolicited emails.

- Use unique passwords to access corporate systems and two-factor authentication.

- Monitor remote access logs to spot unauthorized access to corporate networks.

- Regularly back up data. Keep backups separate and offline from normal operations.

- Ensure all devices on your network use up-to-date operating systems and applications.

- Make sure antivirus software is set to automatically update and run regular scans.

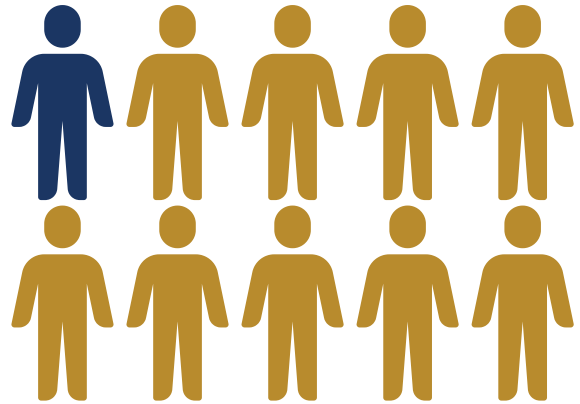- If hit by a ransomware attack, have a plan ready for how you will respond.

CYBERSECURITY ATTACKS
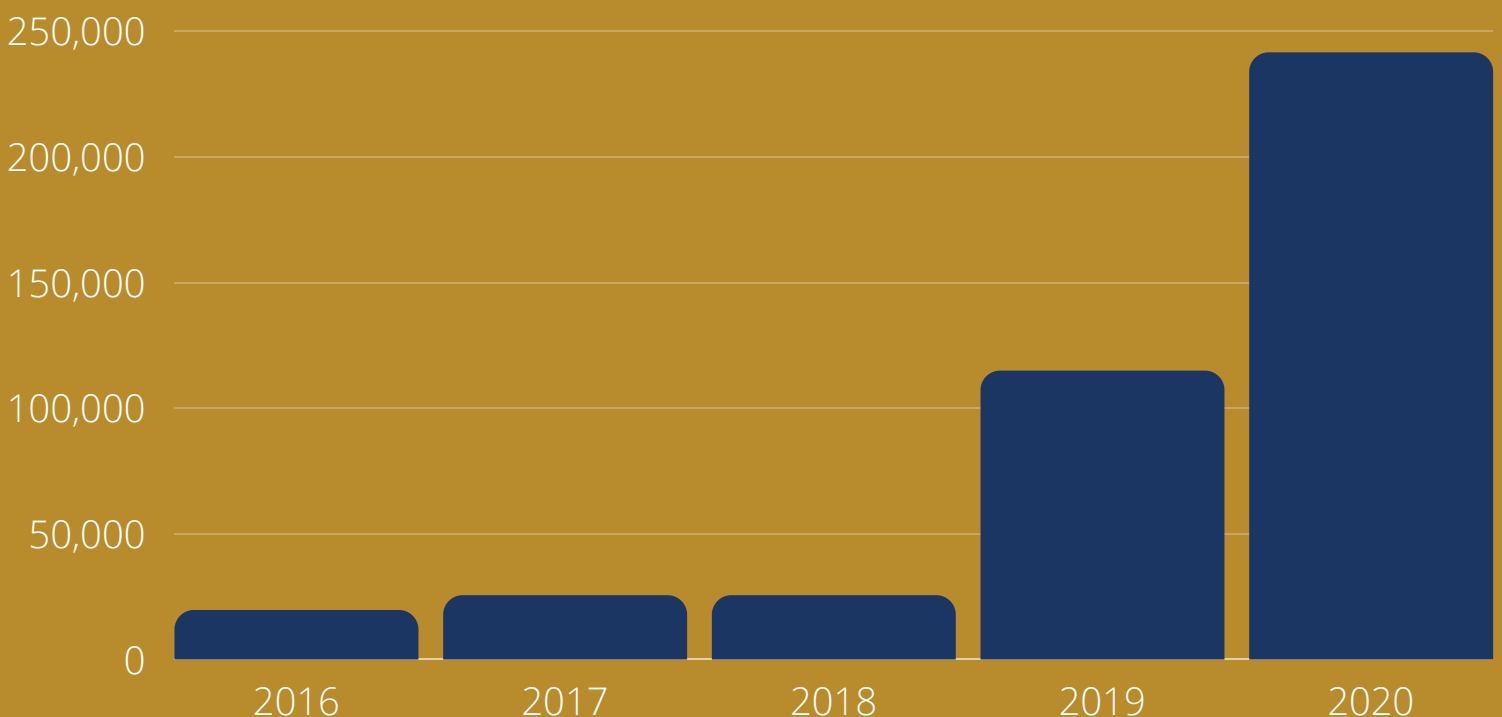
PhishingBox

CODY LYONS

PhishingBox is an online tool for performing social engineering testing. With PhishingBox, easily conduct simulated phishing attacks to test and train employee security awareness.

1 IN 10
PEOPLE FALL FOR PHISHING ATTACKS

Real-World Phishing Simulations Reduce the Human Risk

The human element is often the weakest component in a company's security, and attackers exploit this fact. Phishing attacks are on the rise and more sophisticated than ever.

PhishingBox allows you to control every aspect of your phishing awareness program, with pre-configured customizable phishing tests and online courses. Keep your employees at the highest level of security awareness through continuous training and testing.

PHISH

Continuously phish your employees to maintain a high level of security awareness. Our System has preconfigured phishing templates or you can build your own.

TRAIN

Train your employees on the risk and prevention of phishing using teachable moments or complete courses. Select from our established courses or create your own.

ANALYZE

Analyze test results and validate security awareness with robust reporting. Obtain aggregate reports or get details on specific personnel.

QUESTIONS?
CONTACT: CODY LYONS
EMAIL: LYONS@NEONET.ORG
PHONE: 330-926-3900 EXT.601119

Data Retention - Classic State Software

MIKE HOFFMAN

As a public entity, a clear and robust data storage and retention policy of records and reports is crucial. Public requests for such records can make it even harder to decide what data needs to be stored, when reports are no longer serving a purpose and/or when reports that may have reached the end of the retention period and need purged. NEOnet completed this task in 2009 when we enacted our current data retention policy and review it periodically for any updates we may need to make. It is also important that all local, state and federal guidelines are followed. For example, Ohio Revised Code 149.41 states that a records commission will be created by each district or ESC. Each records commission "shall be composed of the president, the treasurer of the board of education or governing board of the educational service center, and the superintendent of schools in each such district or educational service center" and "shall meet at least once every 12 months".

As we move closer to the end of life (December 31, 2022) for our Classic State software, the discussion of data retention of the many years (or decades) of data stored on the system is in front of us. Over the last few years, we have diligently been moving districts' fiscal data from Classic State Software to either eFinancePlus or Redesign State Software. The State Software Steering Committee, consisting of a mix of ITC and district treasurers from throughout the state, have been curating a working list of reports that can be run out of Classic State Software. Some of these reports include USAS/USPS CDRom reports, W2 data, Job History and previous pay slips. Once the fiscal software conversions have been completed, the process of running these reports against the legacy data will be at the forefront of the NEOnet Technical Applications Support Team (TAST).

Over the next year, TAST will be conversing with you through fiscal meetings at NEOnet, email and at times directly with your district to discuss what data will be covered in the reports and if there is any other data you may need to preserve. We will want to verify any other data that would fall under your current data retention policy is included along with who will need access to these reports.

Points to Consider When Dealing with These Reports & Data Retention

- NEOnet retention policy for financial data in most instances is seven years.

- NEOnet will store most reports that we export as a service to the shareholders. The shareholders are responsible for following any local retention policies that may supersede NEOnet policy.

- Some records requests are not subject to public view.

- Requests with sensitive data may have information redacted to insure all privacy concerns.

DID YOU KNOW NEONET OFFERS CABLING SERVICES?

Keep your district's cabling clean, neat, and secured using NEOnet's Cabling Services. Cabling Services include cable installation and repair of data cabling.

NEONET CABLING SERVICES

BEFORE

AFTER

QUESTIONS?
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