1. **What is the status and progress of your continuous improvement plan for this past year? Briefly describe your goals, current status, and an overview of your ITC's efforts towards completion of your plan and activities.**

   NEOMIN's continuous improvement plan for the 2017-2018 school year was very successful. Goals in each service area were completed, and if a goal was not completed, it was started and we are continuing to work towards achieving those goals.

   In the fiscal services area, one of NEOMIN's main goals was to continue the implementation of a eFinance Plus from Powerschool. We originally had six districts sign up for NEOMIN's second wave and we successfully completed the implementation for five of the six districts going live on the target date of January 1, 2018. This was a big accomplishment for NEOMIN taking on six districts with only two fiscal support positions, and one of them was new in October of 2017. NEOMIN is very proud to accomplish such success with limited personnel.

   While another of NEOMIN's goals was to implement Strategic Solutions for districts that may desire to implement the package, there were no districts that requested to implement over the past year.

   Each year a goal of NEOMIN's is to continue doing a great job of supporting EMIS and any reporting related to EMIS. This was once again a successful goal as we provided more training and assistance to both novice and expert users. NEOMIN continues to offer its usual EMIS trainings along with any requested trainings that are beyond our normal schedule.

   One of our student service goals was to expand the utilization of the DataMap product to our districts. While we our goal of showing product demonstrations was reached, further implementation by districts did not happen in the past year.

   An additional area of positive progress towards NEOMIN's plan for the 2017-2018 year was adding more training dates for various topics with a focus on Microsoft Excel. Providing more training helps our districts more efficiently sort through data of any kind, which in turn makes them more efficient at their daily duties. These additional trainings and topics generated positive feedback and NEOMIN looks forward to offering them in the future.

   NEOMIN continued this past year to offer many one on one trainings to its districts needing a more personalized training environment. One on one training topics can range from attendance letters to GradeBook training and nearly anything else our districts may ask. These trainings are always well received and will continued to be offered this upcoming year.

   Over the past year, NEOMIN library services focused on the marketing and distribution of INFOhio materials along with overall library materials and resources. NEOMIN's goal was to expand and train on its iSearch local implementation, which it did by holding trainings in both of the counties in which we serve districts. These trainings were the primary method used to get district personnel the knowledge needed to utilize this tool.

   NEOMIN's technical team had several large projects over the past year that were very much successful. The first successful project was the implementation of our self-service password

utility. Previous to this tool, district staff would need to place help desk requests to have NEOMIN staff reset their passwords for services that used NEOMIN's Active Directory. Now users can navigate to this tool's website and change their password by answering security questions that were set up by the user.

Another goal from the past year was to transition to a new backup and recovery software. This was completed in the spring of 2018. We have had many districts implement the new server due to its affordability and it has been a great addition to our services. We have kept our State Software Alpha server with the Management Council backup service due to the nature of the backups and its audit requirements.

The last technical team goal was to expand the hosted server, wireless, and VoIP service. While expansion of the service was not reached, renewals in all of these service areas was achieved which continues to give our districts great service options in areas that rely on year in and year out.

A final goal as an organization was to implement a new web site. While this goal was not completed, it was started and various web site tools are being tested to see which best fits our needs. This goal will be continued in the upcoming year as time and resources permit. This is an important goal to help with accessibility of the web site and its tools for all of our users.

2. **What are the key areas of improvement you plan to address this coming year? Why were these key areas included? Were any needs identified in your ITC's results from the common customer satisfaction survey or your local survey? Provide an overview of the activities and professional development planned to address these key areas and describe what you hope to accomplish this year with those activities.**

In fiscal services, our largest area of improvement for this year will be to continue our migration to eFinance Plus. We have 4 districts planning to go live during the 2018-19 school year. This improvement area is included so districts have the chance to implement and work with an up to date financial package and no longer use antiquated technology of the current system. The new package will also allow districts to have most of their financial tools in one package, and no longer use multiple packages to accomplish their daily goals. The activities and professional development planned for this goal is extensive training by NEOMIN staff with the participating districts, along with private workshops where districts can come in as needed to work on milestone goals. There are approximately 20 days of training over a six month period to accomplish the goal of implementing the new package. We hope to accomplish a go live date of January 1, 2019. NEOMIN staff will be attending meetings, conferences, and conference calls to keep them up to date on the software package.

Another area of planned improvement for NEOMIN's fiscal area is the implementation of any third party products that interface with State Software for those districts still using it. These products may be document management systems, requisition workflow systems, or anything that may interface with State Software and improvement business operations. Staff will work

with these vendors to help them implement the software and transfer knowledge so it can be supported.

A continued key area in which NEOMIN tries to improve on each year is EMIS reporting. NEOMIN's team continues to help ensure successful reporting of all EMIS data. Our districts are highly dependent on NEOMIN's support staff to keep them up-to-date on EMIS reporting and guidelines. Our staff has always provided outstanding help and we will continue to help and build upon our expertise that is needed as EMIS reporting evolves. Attending EMIS alliance training as well as EMIS conference calls keep staff knowledgeable on EMIS issues.

An area of improvement for student services again this year will be expanding our product offering of data analysis and assessment tools. NEOMIN only has 4 districts using a tool such as DataMap, but we hope to implement more this year. NEOMIN hopes to show product demonstrations at Principal, Administrative team, and other special interest group meetings so users can see how beneficial these tools can be, and how it can show the areas of curriculum which should be focused on for higher achievement. Our beliefs are if districts begin using tools like DataMap, they can target areas needing more attention, and achieve overall higher performing students.

Another area of improvement for the student service team will be to once again add more trainings on Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access. We are including this goal in attempts to help our district personnel become more efficient with these products when looking at student and EMIS data. Giving personnel the skills needed to sort, filter, and extract data in these programs will assist in their everyday job of data analysis. Our goal is to offer several trainings in each of our two counties, giving ample opportunity to attend on the topics.

For the upcoming year, NEOMIN library services will continue to focus on the marketing and distribution of INFOhio materials along with overall library materials and resources. Our plan is to attend meetings with Principals and Administrative teams to provide them the knowledge of the great tools available through INFOhio. NEOMIN feels even though library staff may by aware of these resources, that other personnel in the building may not be, so NEOMIN wants to help relay the message and these tools district wide.

The technical team has been and will continue to be busy on improvements for Fiscal Year 2019. The first area of improvement that was started in July 2018 was the implementation of a new enterprise firewall. Previous to the new firewall appliance, each NEOMIN district was firewalled together along with NEOMIN from the public internet. The new firewall has been configured so that each district has its own virtual firewall, making each district a separate entity from each and the public internet. This provides much more security that even before. Districts now require security rules even between districts and the NEOMIN datacenter making the consortium much more secure. If one district has some sort of issue, it will only affect that district and not the other consortium members. The knowledge required to implement this new appliance achieved through vendor support, manuals, and online tutorials. These methods will be used for ongoing support as well.

Another change for the technical team that has already been started is the transition to a new content filtering solution. The former solution was not able to be expanded without purchasing

all new equipment which was not cost effective. NEOMIN chose to use the content filtering solution that is integrated with the new firewall appliance. This give NEOMIN staff and the districts one interface to manage firewall rules and filtering policies, all while being much more efficient in operation and reporting. Professional development for this new platform was again given by vendor support, manuals, and online tutorials.

A final major improvement area in the technical services area is the implementation of a new server infrastructure. The existing infrastructure was implemented 10 years ago in June 2018, so it was time to implement greater processing, memory, and storage technologies. NEOMIN was able to save money in maintenance fees by utilizing new equipment as well as save on licensing fees for VMware due to decreasing the number of server hosts in the environment. Even though new equipment was implemented, professional development was very minimal due to already having a similar infrastructure.

An ongoing goal of NEOMIN's technical team is continuing to expand and improve its hosted VoIP and wireless services. NEOMIN currently hosts VoIP services for 5 districts, and wireless services for 34 buildings. While no new districts were added to this service last year, many renewals were completed with existing districts using these services. Continuing to offer these hosted solutions grants the district staff more time to focus on educational technology in the classroom. NEOMIN staff plans to attend various webinars and/or training classes to keep up to date with the technologies we have implemented as well as looking at new and upcoming technologies. Staying up to date helps deploy the latest functionality in wireless and VoIP technologies that our districts request from our service.

NEOMIN would like to continue a goal from last year that affects each of our service areas, which is to implement a new website that is mobile friendly and efficient. We plan to utilize our technical staff to develop the site and use local resources to host the site. We hope the new functionality will help our users navigate and work more efficiently when needing anything from NEOMIN. This goal was included as we continue to strive for more efficiency in every way possible, all while continuing to deliver great service and support.

3. **How do you obtain input from customers, governing board, and staff in identifying the key areas identified in question #2? Did you do anything new or different in developing your new plan?**

Active training sessions are a method where NEOMIN tries to gain information on how it can improve. Training surveys are given at the end so attendees can offer opinions on the training material, the trainer, and how NEOMIN can improve to make training sessions more effective.

NEOMIN also plans to participate in the MCOECN common customer satisfaction survey this year. This is a tool used to gage how well NEOMIN is doing in regards to customer satisfaction. NEOMIN has received excellent results in the past and will continue using the survey to help keep out site aligned with our overall goal of great customer satisfaction.

For governing board input, NEOMIN holds at least 4 meetings per year, usually on a quarterly basis. If a special meeting is required, it will be added accordingly with members' schedules. The governing board also has a sub-committee which is titled the NEOMIN planning committee. This committee is composed of 4 members of the 10 member governing board which meets to discuss various topics on how to improve NEOMIN and the overall direction of our ITC. These topics are then discussed further when the entire governing board members are present at a regular or special meeting. Discussing topics of interest with the planning committee and full governing board help NEOMIN to keep improving and help provide services that districts request.

Staff members provide input during regular team meetings as well as staff meetings as a whole. These meetings are held to discuss current projects as well as any future projects or areas that need improving. When the NEOMIN staff meets as a whole it gives everyone a time to share their work and projects with other staff members that do not normally work in other areas on a daily basis. Ideas on how things can move forward and how we as a staff can better NEOMIN and its districts is always a goal at our team and staff meetings.

Last but certainly not least are User group meetings held in each core service area each month. Monthly user group meetings with each service area is an invaluable tool that gives great feedback. These meetings give district staff the ability to have open discussions on what is working in their service area as well as what may need improved or expanded upon. Open discussions during onsite meetings also gives district personnel a chance to discuss topics and is a great way to gain input from others who may be looking for similar information.

While NEOMIN has not changed its plan on how it obtains input very much, it continues to look at the data it collects to ensure we are meeting the needs of our districts in all areas possible.

4. **Highlight examples of new or recent collaboration with other entities, or new products or services where collaboration could be valuable. Do you anticipate these efforts will directly contribute to your ITC's service improvement? If so, explain.**

One of NEOMIN's most recent and largely adopted collaboration efforts is the change to our hosted backup solution. We recently moved to new backup client software and offsite storage, which is saving NEOMIN and our districts money. NEOMIN's districts are looking to collaborate more now than ever for offsite backup due to lower cost and the ease of use. Districts can now backup large amounts of data offsite for a very inexpensive cost.

Another recent collaboration effort is with the Management Council. Over the past year, they have inquired about products that would be valuable to ITCs and their districts to see if purchasing power was possible. The most recent products that NEOMIN has been able to offer our districts are KnowBe4 and Go Guardian. Typically the cost of these products are too expensive for typical districts to purchase on their own, so the group effort and collaboration

done by the MCOECN has helped NEOMIN and its districts take advantage of these products at a reduced cost.

While NEOMIN has always helped its districts in any way possible, in the past, districts would often work directly with vendor support to obtain support for those products. This type of interaction used to be the case as well for software products that interface with student data. This model of vendor support working directly with district staff is sometimes valuable, but often it takes more time since the district most likely has not seen the problem before, where perhaps NEOMIN staff has already worked with the problem. While collaborating with vendor support has always happened, NEOMIN has increased this collaboration recently to obtain faster problem resolution.

A continued area of collaboration for NEOMIN is of course with its districts. We make every effort to offer products and services they request at the best possible cost. Some examples of services offered beyond our core services are hosted VoIP, managed wireless, and hosted virtual servers. Districts agree that collaborating with NEOMIN on services give them great service and support which may be hard to achieve with other organizations.

I feel that all of the above collaboration examples directly contribute to NEOMIN's service improvement. Collaborating with these entities will contribute by way of cost savings, work efficiency, or both.

Collaboration is always an item NEOMIN aims to improve on each year as it makes sense to do so. We hope that more opportunities for collaboration arise where NEOMIN can use those efforts to offer more great services and support.