



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the MLDS Governing Board

FROM: Ross Goldstein, Executive Director
Angela Henneberger, Ph.D., Research Director

DATE: August 26, 2016

SUBJECT: Proposed Changes to the MLDS Research Agenda

Purpose

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide information to the Governing Board on proposed changes to the MLDS Research Agenda (see attached).

Background

The MLDS provides the ability to examine student preparation, progress and outcomes over time, across PreK-12, postsecondary education and training, and the workforce. Establishing the Research Agenda is the duty of the MLDS Governing Board (see Ed. Art. § 24-704(g)(5), Annotated Code of Maryland). The proposed changes to Research Agenda reflect the Center's ongoing commitment to longitudinal analyses of critical education and workforce transitions and outcomes.

Summary of Proposed Changes

1. *Add – Footnote to introduction, Section A – K-12 Readiness, and Question 1 – What is the impact of early childhood education experiences and programs on children's school readiness and K-12 outcomes?*

Explanation: The Center collects early childhood data but does not have any questions related to early childhood student outcomes. This section and question begins to address the topic of early childhood student outcomes. When considering this section, it should be noted that the introduction to the Research Agenda states that all research will “focus on what happens to students before and after critical transitions, and not on topics that could otherwise be researched by one partner agency using its own data.” The proposed footnote addresses this contradiction. While early childhood education to K-12 represents a critical transition, it is also a topic that can be researched by MSDE as the owner of both data sets. MSDE has been consulted on the inclusion of this topic.

2. *Add - Question 6* –Which educational programs help to academically prepare students to enter higher education and/or workforce?

Explanation: As stated in the legislation establishing the MLDS Center, part of the function and duty of the Center is to “conduct research relating to (i) the impact of State and federal education programs.” (see Ed. Art. § 24-703(f)(5), Annotated Code of Maryland) . Since there are currently no research questions regarding the impact of State and federal programs, this question establishes program analysis as a topic to be researched by the Center.

3. *Remove – Question 5* – Assess the need for inclusion of online education data.

Explanation: The Center completed a report on this topic and no further research or reporting is needed. Instead, see # 5 below for a question on the outcomes of students who take online courses.

4. *Add – Question 13* – What are the postsecondary and workforce outcomes for students who take online courses and/or complete degrees online?

Explanation: As stated in the Center’s report on the inclusion of online course taking data, this segment of education is taking on a greater significance that should be studied by the Center.

5. *Remove – Question 17* - Assess training and retention of early childhood workforce in Maryland.

Explanation: This specific question was addressed in a recently completed Center report. Any future analysis on this topic would fall under the new question #22 (see below).

6. *Add – Question 22* - What are the teaching outcomes of teachers prepared in Maryland institutions of higher education?

Explanation: The legislation establishing the MLDS Center, also includes the requirement to “conduct research relating to (ii) the performance of educator preparation programs; and (iii) best practices regarding classroom instruction, educational programs and curriculum, and segment alignment” (see Ed. Art. § 24-703(f)(5), Annotated Code of Maryland). Since there are currently no research questions regarding educator preparation programs or classroom instruction, this question establishes an initial research question on educator preparation and its impact on teaching outcomes.

Action

We are requesting the Governing Board’s approval of the proposed the changes to the Research Agenda.

Attachment



RESEARCH AGENDA

The Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) provides the ability to examine student preparation, progress and outcomes over time, across PreK-12, postsecondary education and training, and the workforce. Establishing the Research Agenda is the duty of the MLDS Governing Board (see Ed. Art. § 24-704(g)(5), Annotated Code of Maryland). This revised Research Agenda reflects the Governing Board's commitment to longitudinal analyses of critical education and workforce transitions and outcomes. Accordingly, the research agenda of the MLDS Center will focus on what happens to students before and after critical transitions and not on topics that could otherwise be researched by one partner agency using its own data.¹

To that end, all research analyses, and therefore research reports intended to inform policy and programming, will utilize data from at minimum two of the three partner agencies providing data to the MLDS Center:

- 1) Maryland State Department of Education;
- 2) Maryland Higher Education Commission; and
- 3) Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.

For example, all analyses of the postsecondary readiness, access, persistence and completion will be examined, when available, in the context of the academic experiences, achievement, and life circumstances of Maryland students in the PreK-12 education system and/or prior workforce experiences. Similarly, all analyses of the workforce transition or outcomes will be conducted in the context of the academic experiences, achievement, and life circumstances of Marylanders, which may include PreK-12 data, postsecondary education or training data, or both, as well as prior workforce experiences.

The Center research analyses may also include data from sources other than these three agencies as the Center grows and the sources of data expand.

Finally, all research analyses of each of the following research questions will include examinations of how results vary by different critical student subgroups and backgrounds (which is MLDS – Question 15). Such subgroups and backgrounds, for example, include: 1) race or ethnicity, 2) gender, 3) socioeconomic status, 4) language, 5) ability, and 6) setting.

A. K-12 Readiness

1. What is the impact of early childhood education experiences and programs on children's school readiness and K-12 outcomes.

B. Postsecondary Readiness and Access

2. Are Maryland students academically prepared to enter postsecondary institutions and complete their programs in a timely manner?

¹ With the exception of early childhood and K-12 outcomes (section A below), which are both from MSDE.

3. What percentage of Maryland high school exiters go on to enroll in Maryland postsecondary education?
4. What percentage of Maryland high school exiters entering college are assessed to need to take developmental courses and in what content areas?
5. Which financial aid programs are most effective in improving access and success (i.e., retention and graduation) for Maryland students?
6. Which educational programs help to academically prepare students to enter higher education and/or workforce?
- ~~5. Assess the need for inclusion of online education data.~~

C. Postsecondary Completion

7. How likely are students placed in developmental courses to persist in postsecondary education and transfer and/or graduate?
8. Are community college students able to transfer within the state to 4-year institutions successfully and without loss of credit?
9. What are the differences in performance, retention, and graduation, including time to degree, of students who initially matriculate at a Maryland community college and transfer to a Maryland 4-year institution versus those who initially matriculate at a Maryland 4-year?
10. What are the differences in performance, retention and graduation, including time to degree, of students beginning in dual enrollment programs, at 2-year institutions and at 4-year institutions?
11. What are the characteristics of 2-year institutions that are allowing students to persist most effectively and either graduate or transfer?
12. Which 4-year institutions are graduating students most effectively and in the timeliest fashion?
13. What are the postsecondary and workforce outcomes for students who take online courses and/or complete degrees online?

C. Workforce Outcomes

14. What happens to students who start at community colleges and do not go on to 4-year institutions?
15. What are the educational and labor market outcomes for individuals who use federal and state resources to obtain training at community colleges or other postsecondary institutions?
16. What economic value do noncredit community college credentials have in the workplace?
17. Are exiters of Maryland colleges successful in the workforce?
18. Assess STEM post-graduate student state and regional job acceptance and retention.
- ~~17. Assess training and retention of early childhood workforce in Maryland.~~
19. What are the workforce outcomes for Maryland students who earn a high school diploma (via high school graduation or GED[®]) but do not transition to postsecondary education or training?

20. What are the workforce outcomes for Maryland high school students who complete Career Technical Education coursework, who either enter the workforce directly or also obtain postsecondary education or training?
21. What are the workforce outcomes of Maryland high school non-completers? (new)
22. What are the teaching outcomes of teachers prepared in Maryland institutions of higher education?