



Memorandum

To: MLDS Governing Board
From: Ross Goldstein, Executive Director
Date: September 2, 2016
Subject: Agenda Item - Proposed Departmental Legislation

Education Article § 24-702(c), Annotated Code of Maryland, limits the linkage of student data and workforce data records as follows:

The linkage of student data and workforce data for the purposes of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System shall be limited to no longer than 5 years from the date of latest attendance in any educational institution in the State.

This limitation has been a topic of discussion with both the Research and Policy Advisory Board, and the Data Governance Advisory Board. Center staff have also discussed the various repercussions created by this limitation with the P20 Council Workgroup on the MLDS, and in the *Data Gap Analysis* created at the request of that Workgroup. Additionally, Center staff have shared analyses to determine the impact on the System's ability to report longitudinal workforce outcomes as a result of the delinking in the *Monthly Report for March 2016*. This issue has also been discussed at previous Governing Board meetings. The results of these discussions highlighted the fact that the 5-year de-linking requirement:

1. Provides an insufficient amount of time to provide meaningful understanding of the workforce outcomes of students; and
2. Creates an artificial "cliff" in workforce reporting that limits the ability to provide meaningful longitudinal analyses; and
3. Frustrates the ability to compare workforce outcomes of in-state vs. out-of-state postsecondary graduates.

Resolving this limitation will require a change to State law. While the deadline for submitting proposed departmental legislation to the Governor was September 1st, staff of the Governor's Legislative Office confirmed that proposals received within a week or two of the deadline will be reviewed. If the Governing Board is in agreement that the limitation should be addressed, it may be done within the current calendar year. Waiting to address this issue could create data management challenges going forward. I am asking that the Governing Board review the options below for revising Ed. Art. § 24-702(c) to address the de-linking limitation and vote on whether and how to proceed.

Option 1: Adjust the time limitation as determined by the Governing Board in regulation

This option maintains the limitation, but provides a longer period of time (I have suggested 10 years, but it could be 15 or 20) to better analyze student workforce outcomes.

(c) The linkage of student data and workforce data for the purpose of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System shall be limited to no longer than [5] **10** years from the date of latest attendance in any educational institution in the State.

Option 2: Establish the time limitation within interagency agreements for data sharing

This option removes the time limitation and provides that the linkage and storage period will be established in the interagency data sharing agreements as reviewed and approved by the Governing Board. Currently, data storage limitations are established in all of the interagency data sharing agreements. The related issue of data linkage should be treated in a similar fashion. This option provides flexibility to alter the time period as determined by the partner agencies and provides an opportunity for the agency data partners to thoroughly review the storage and linkage timeframes and ensure that it does not create a conflict with their State or federal legal requirements. Moreover, this option allows the Center to act in conformity with state and federal Unemployment Compensation law and make changes based upon subsequent guidance and regulations via interagency agreements rather than by necessitating legislative changes to the MLDSC statute.

(c) The **STORAGE AND** linkage of student data and workforce data for the purpose of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System shall be limited to [no longer than 5 years from the date of latest attendance in any educational institution in the State] **THE TIME PERIOD ESTABLISHED IN THE INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS FOR DATA SHARING AS REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE GOVERNING BOARD.**

Note – [deleted text] and **ADDED TEXTED**