



# MLDS CENTER

Maryland Longitudinal Data System

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** MLDS Governing Board  
**FROM:** Ross Goldstein  
**DATE:** September 4, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Annual Report Recommendations

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### **Purpose**

The *Annual Report on the Maryland Longitudinal Data System and Center*, is a requirement under § 24-705, Annotated Code of Maryland. One of the required sections of the report is to provide the Governor and General Assembly with, “any other recommendation made by the Governing Board.” While the report is not due until December, the purpose of this agenda item is to allow the Board time to consider and discuss possible recommendations.

### **Background**

Attached you will find a compilation of recommendations made by the Governing Board in prior reports.

### **Discussion**

The Research and Policy Advisory Board discussed possible recommendations at their September 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is implementing two new collections for non-credit data from community colleges and private career school data. Both of these data collections are important, but currently unstudied components of the workforce development pipeline. The Governing Board could consider a recommendation in support of these collections and the Center’s involvement in their development and design.

Data needed to understand the pipeline from education to a career in teaching does not include teacher certification. Representatives from MSDE in attendance at the RPB meeting noted some of the considerations for collecting and providing certification information. Nonetheless, the Governing Board has already noted the importance of this information during the discussion of the Data Gap Analysis at the June 2020 Governing Board meeting. During that discussion the Board decided to make teacher certification its own data gap and assign it a high priority. Accordingly, the Governing Board could consider a recommendation on this topic as well.

### **Action**

No action required.

**Annual Report**  
**Recommendations by the Governing Board**  
**2011 - 2013**

**2011-2012**

No recommendations were made.

**2013**

1. During the development and consideration of the MLDS Center's first year budget, there was some discussion of having the MLDS Center become a self-funded agency. While outside funding can and will be sought by the Center, the Governing Board still recommends continued full state funding of the MLDS Center. First, a continued investment of state funds is necessary so that the Center has time to mature the system fully and grow its research and policy reputation in order to compete successfully for outside funding. Second, while outside funding can help offset the amount of required state funds, becoming fully self-funded will result in the Center's research agenda being dictated by the funders – not by the Governing Board or state policy makers.
2. Hiring high-level information technology staff, especially staff with certified security credentials, has proven to be very difficult. The Governing Board recommends that the Department of Budget and Management, perhaps in conjunction with the Department of Information Technology, review state personnel salary guidelines and other incentives that may help state agencies successfully attract and retain high level information technology employees to support complex systems.

**2014**

1. The Governing Board recommends that these standards and protocols be established prior to the release of public information from the MLDS.
  - a. The accuracy of information reported by the Maryland Longitudinal Data System is of the utmost importance to the Governing Board and the Center. Accuracy is affected by the quality and completeness of the data received, the ability of the Center to match that data across sectors (early childhood, PK-12, higher education, and workforce), and the manner in which the information is presented to the public.
  - b. The Governing Board therefore recommends that the Center develop, for Board review and approval, a set of standards and protocols for assessing the accuracy of information reported to the public. The standards should include:
    - i. An assessment of whether the data relied upon for a report is sufficiently complete to support the information reported;
    - ii. An assessment of whether the information presented can be reconciled against other sources;
    - iii. Criteria for determining whether information based on incomplete data is appropriate to be reported; and
    - iv. Methods for informing the public regarding the information published by the Center.

## **2015**

1. The Governing Board recommends that the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Higher Education Commission continue to enhance the data provided to the Center.
2. The Governing Board also recommends a detailed review of at risk populations with a focus on identifying appropriate information to better research and understand the educational and workforce outcomes of those populations.

## **2016**

1. Support legislation amending Education Article § 24-702(c), Annotated Code of Maryland to increase the amount of time a student record may remain linked to a workforce record in the Maryland Longitudinal Data System. Specifically, the legislation increases, from 5 years to 20 years, the amount of time that a student record may remain linked to a workforce record after the student's last enrollment in a Maryland educational institution. Having only five years of workforce data is insufficient to provide a meaningful understanding of student workforce outcomes. Increasing the linkage to 20 years will provide a more meaningful period of time to assess a student's workforce history and provide a more complete understanding of that student's workforce outcomes; resulting in better policy analysis and insights.
2. The MLDS Center should develop and implement a communication plan that creates awareness of MLDS output and information, establishes a better understanding of how longitudinal data can be used to help drive decision making, and generally provides a systematic approach to engaging stakeholders.
3. In recognition of the important role of apprenticeship programs as a strategy for improving workforce outcomes of Maryland students and the interest in the topic expressed by the Governor's P20 Leadership Council, the MLDS Center should continue to work with the Governor's P20 Council to explore ways to grow and analyze apprenticeship data.

## **2017**

The Maryland Longitudinal Data System Governing Board recommends that Center output should include a section on any limitations in the analysis due to the lack of data collected and reported to the Center. Included in the discussion of limitations should be any necessary cautions about how the noted limitations may impact the interpretation of the output. Prior to each June meeting of the Governing Board, staff should analyze these limitations and make recommendations to the Governing Board on actions needed to address these data deficiencies.

## **2018**

The MLDS Governing Board recommends that the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education include, in its final recommendation to the General Assembly on the subject of Governance and Accountability, a role for the MLDS Center to serve as the primary resource for data driven research and analysis on how the implementation of the changes established by the Commission affect student performance and outcomes.

**2019**

The MLDS Governing Board recommends that the MLDS Center pursue an increased budget allocation to allow for continued and projected research and collaboration with State policy makers and to meet the ongoing operations and maintenance needs of the data system and the Center.