



MLDS CENTER

Maryland Longitudinal Data System

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MEMORANDUM

TO: MLDS Governing Board
FROM: Ross Goldstein
DATE: March 5, 2021
SUBJECT: MLDS Center FY 21 Update

Purpose

This memorandum is intended to provide an update on spending for the current fiscal year and to receive approval for unplanned expenditures over \$10,000.

Summary of FY 21 Budget

The Center's FY 21 budget was approved during the June 2020 Governing Board meeting. At the December 2020 meeting an update was provided informing the Board that the Center's budget reduction was only \$50,000 instead of the full 10% budget reduction (\$248,000). The Center identified the following priorities for the surplus funds:

1. Consulting contract for a part-time data analyst - the Center entered into a short duration consulting contract with Robert Murphy, former MLDS Center data analyst. Mr. Murphy provided support for data loading, developing data sets to support reports and data requests, and provided knowledge transfer. The contract was approximately \$13,000 and was successful in helping the Center keep up with work and data loading while having a vacancy in the data analyst position.
2. Funding for the Oracle Database Engineer - this is not a new expenditure; the Center had a contract for an Oracle database engineer. However, the additional funds allow the Center to increase the number of hours for this position.
3. Cybersecurity Audit - the Center planned to use approximately \$40,000 to engage an independent contractor to conduct a cybersecurity audit. However, the Center was informed by DoIT that it wanted to partner with the Center to conduct the first agency security assessment. Because it is the first assessment and DoIT is looking to collaborate with the Center on the delivery of this assessment, there is no cost to the Center for the assessment.
4. Longer term data consulting contract. The Center is working with MSDE Procurement Office to issue a new RFP to procure the services of both a data analyst and a senior Oracle database engineer. The engineer would replace the current contract which is expiring and the data analyst would be added to allow the Center to have access to a data analyst who can provide additional support on special projects. The amount of funding necessary for this will depend on when the procurement is finalized.

New spending priorities:

1. Morgan State University (MSU) Interagency Agreement for Research Services. The Center and MSU are working to finalize a MOU, budget and scope of work that will essentially include MSU as a partner institution providing research and analytic services in coordination with the Center's Research Branch. While the budget has not been finalized, the Center anticipates a budget of \$30,000 annually.

2. Move to New Data Center - the Center is still working with DoIT to finalize plans for moving to a new data hosting environment. Any surplus funds (approximately \$150,000) will be spent to procure software or services necessary to facilitate the move.
3. The Center is working with DoIT and MSDE to procure new computers for staff. Currently, all staff are working remotely using either outdated laptops issued by the Center or their own equipment. The preference, for security, consistency, and improved functionality, is to migrate all staff to a new computer that contains the DoIT image and security software and is maintained and updated by DoIT. The anticipated cost for 15 computers is under \$25,000.

The new equipment is part of the Center’s plans to remain virtual, even after COVID restrictions are lifted. First, staff overwhelmingly prefer working remotely and have been as or more productive than working in the office. Second, the nature of Center work requires quiet concentration. Many staff find working on the 8th floor of the education building distracting given the proximity to the conference rooms. Third, our virtual meetings and seminars have improved attendance at events held for the benefit of our stakeholders. Fourth, the ability to work remotely improves the Center’s ability to recruit and retain skilled professionals who seek that flexibility and can now work anywhere in the world. The Center will continue to have a physical presence and will work to maintain access to conference rooms and meeting spaces to allow in person meetings and check-ins as deemed necessary.

Action

I request the Governing Board’s review and approval of the proposed budget changes.

MLDS Center Appropriation

Object	Title	FY 21 - Allowance	FY 21 - Revised
Obj 01	Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits	1,408,005	1,408,005
Obj 02	Technical and Special Fees	900	900
Obj 03	Communications	0	0
Obj 04	Travel	2,150	2,150
Obj 07	Motor Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	14,450	7,450
Obj 08	Contractual Services	1,036,826	824,500
Obj 09	Supplies and Materials	4,500	4,500
Obj 10	Equipment - Replacement	5,452	5,452
Obj 11	Equipment -Additional	5,000	174,326
Obj 13	Fixed Charges	575	575
	Subtotal Total	2,477,858	
	Agency Mandatory Reduction	-50,000	
	Total	2,427,858	2,427,858

Object 08 Breakdown - Planned

Research Brand Budget	\$346,500
Morgan State University Research Agreement	\$30,000
MHEC Reimbursement	\$115,000
IT Software	\$50,000
Senior Oracle Database Engineer	\$232,000
Miscellaneous (copier rental, charges, supplies)	\$21,000
Database Analyst	\$30,000
Oracle and VMWare	\$15,000
Total	\$824,500