



**Maryland Longitudinal Data System Governing Board  
Special Meeting Minutes - January 18, 2023**

The meeting of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Governing Board was held on January 18, 2023, via teleconference. Dr. Sylvia Lawson, acting on behalf of MLDS Governing Board Vice-Chair Mr. Choudhury, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

**The following Governing Board members were in attendance:**

- Dr. Sylvia Lawson, Deputy Superintendent for School Effectiveness, Maryland State Department of Education (Designee for Mr. Mohammed Choudhury, Superintendent)
- Dr. Nancy Shapiro, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Education & Outreach, University System of Maryland (Designee for Dr. Jay Perman, Chancellor)
- Mr. John Irvine, Director and Research and Evaluation, Department of Juvenile Services (Designee for Mr. Sam Abed, Secretary)
- Mr. Gregory James, Deputy Secretary for Operations, Department of Human Services (Designee for Secretary Padilla)
- Mr. Matt Power, President of the Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association
- Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director, Maryland Association of Community College
- Dr. Phyllis Keys, Acting Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of Finance, Morgan State University (Designee for President Wilson)
- Ms. Laurie Kendall-Ellis, Executive Director, State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners
- Mr. Maurice Good, Program Director, Maryland New Directions
- Mr. Chris Biggs, Information Assurance Manager, Raytheon Company
- Dr. Susan Sterett, Professor of Public Policy, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

**The following MLDS Center staff were in attendance:**

- Mr. Ross Goldstein, Executive Director, MLDS Center
- Dr. Angela Henneberger, Director of Research, MLDS Center and Research Assistant Professor, University of Maryland, School of Social Work
- Dr. Ann Kellogg, Director of Reporting Services, MLDS Center, and MHEC Liaison
- Ms. Molly Abend, Data Management Coordinator, MLDS Center, and MSDE Liaison
- Mr. Alan Dunklow, Assistant Attorney General
- Ms. Chandra Haislet, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Assessment, Accountability, and Performance Reporting, MSDE
- Dr. Matthew Duque, Executive Director, Office of Research and Strategic Data Use, MSDE
- Dr. Jordan Rickles, Principal Researcher, American Institutes for Research
- Ms. Rachel Hise, Executive Director, Accountability and Implementation Board

## **External Research - New Application**

### Project Overview

Dr. Lawson thanked the Board for the opportunity to share information about the College and Career Readiness study. She then asked Chandra Haislet to provide an overview of the context for the study and the timeline for the project.

Ms. Haislet began by noting that this information was presented to AIB (Accountability and Oversight Board) on December 15th. Next she noted that this study is a requirement under the Blueprint, which requires MSDE to contract with an external research entity. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) was selected to conduct an empirical study of the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to succeed in the first year of Maryland community college course work. The study consists of two parts:

1. Quantitative Study - MLDS data are being used for this study. Specifically, data will be used to: measure the relationship between the interim CCR standard and student readiness to succeed in entry-level credit bearing coursework; and explore additional possible measures of student readiness beyond the interim CCR standard.
2. Content and Standards Alignment Study - This study will: complete a deep content analysis to determine the levels and types of literacy in reading, writing and mathematics that are needed to succeed in entry-level courses; explore alignment of Maryland CCR standards to the content of entry-level credit-bearing postsecondary courses, postsecondary training, and remedial postsecondary courses; and examine top-performing educational systems and consider potential sources of bias in assessments used to determine CCR. This part will require a considerable amount of engagement with stakeholders, and this has already begun.

Next, Ms. Haislet provided an overview of the research entity partner AIR, noting their qualifications and the fact that their winning proposal demonstrated a superior understanding of the work required. The timeline for the project requires AIR to submit their final research report to the Governor and the General Assembly by September. Ms. Haislet provided other milestones in the project timeline and noted that the timeline will include opportunities for focus groups and engagement of stakeholders. Finally, in addition to other outreach activities, MSDE will conduct listening sessions and engagement opportunities. MSDE wants to be transparent, listen to stakeholders, and share status updates for stakeholders.

Dr. Lawson thanked Ms. Haislet for the presentation and reiterated MSDE's commitment to stakeholder engagement.

### Discussion

Mr. Power noted that there are concerns that were raised at a prior higher education segmental meeting about the study, the level of engagement, and the impact of the study on higher education. Those concerns were not addressed. Further, the current meeting is taking place hours before the new administration is being sworn in; leaving them with no representation on the Board (whereas once the administration is in place at least a quarter of the seats would be held by the new administration appointees). In light of these facts, Mr. Power asked for an explanation for why the decision is being expedited in this manner. Dr. Lawson and Ms. Haislet noted that there is a legislative requirement to complete the study by September 2023. They also noted that there has been transparency and an

opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions. Mr. Power asked whether it would be possible to wait one more week and have the new administration in place for this decision.

Dr. Lawson reiterated that the project timeline is tight and work needs to begin. Dr. Lawson asked Rachel Hise, Executive Director of the AIB for her input. Ms. Hise affirmed that the study, mandated by the Blueprint, must be done by September. AIB has not considered recommending an extension. Finally, Ms. Hise noted that while there may not have been enough outreach leading up to this point, MSDE appears open to engagement and outreach and is planning a process to conduct presentations and opportunities to interact.

Dr. Keys pointed out that the timing of the listening sessions conflicted with the academic break and did not provide sufficient notice to allow them to prepare for those discussions. Further, the working timeline of the report does not appear to include time for input. Dr. Lawson responded by noting that the scope of the study is established by the RFP and that is what AIR is contractually obligated to study. Accordingly, there cannot be input on the focus of the study. Dr. Keys responded by asking what are the implications of the study for higher education once it is complete. Ms. Haislet responded by reiterating plans for engagement, especially in the qualitative study, and stated that MSDE will provide findings from the study to stakeholders along the way, including what MSDE plans to do with that information. Ms. Hise added that the goal of the study is to align K-12 and postsecondary education by identifying what students need to know to be able to be successful in entry-level courses and postsecondary training programs. This will have implications for higher education because it will impact the students (hopefully for the better) coming to higher education.

Dr. Phillips began by noting his strong support for standard setting. However, he also stated that he is not in a position to vote on this study at this time since there needs to be more engagement with higher education and an opportunity for him to discuss with his stakeholders (community college presidents).

Dr. Sterett acknowledged the important process concerns and spoke about her concern that the study's focus on readiness is limited to academic preparation and pays not attention to an area of readiness that higher education has been focused on: readiness to succeed in the college environment: i.e. ability to manage unstructured time and attending officer hours.

Mr. James noted that while he has no issues with the merits of the study, he is not comfortable with the timing of the vote three hours before the new administration is sworn into office. While the Board can legally make this decision, it is effectively binding the new administration to something it does not have an opportunity to comment or vote on.

Dr. Shapiro stated that CCR is the fulcrum for the success of the entire Blueprint and feels strongly that there needs to be a Secretary of Higher Education at the table while making this important decision.

Dr. Lawson responded that other votes have been taken by the Governing Board while members (including secretaries) were absent. Further delays will impact their ability to complete this research in a timely manner.

In response to a question from Mr. Bigg, Mr. Goldstein responded that once the new Governor is sworn in, the appointed secretaries are able to assume their role on the Board (confirmation is not required). However, the Secretary of Higher Education is different - the Commission has to provide the Governor with names from which to select the Secretary. Dr. Lawson responded by noting that Superintendent Choudhury has been in communication with members of the new administration.

**Motion:** Dr. Phillips made a motion to delay the vote until there is a Secretary of Higher Education and a Chairman of the Governing Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Power.

Ms. Haislet again noted that due to procurement delays, the project is starting late and further delays will impact the researchers' ability to complete the project in the required timeline. Mr. Goldstein suggested that if the Board chooses to delay the vote, the Board could grant approval to allow the researchers to start their initial research.

Mr. James noted his concern with an open ended postponement and suggested that a date certain - i.e. one week - be established. Dr. Phillips noted his openness to all friendly amendments. Mr. Biggs noted his opposition to a delay for secretaries to be in place, arguing that this is an action that began under the old administration and it is therefore valid for it to be approved while the old administration is still in office.

**Revised Motion:** Dr. Phillips revised his motion to delay the vote for two weeks, but allow preliminary research to begin until the vote takes place. Mr. Power seconded the revised motion.

Mr. Irvine asked what is being delayed if the researchers are beginning their research. Mr. Goldstein responded that approval of the project is being delayed. If after two weeks the Board returns and does not approve the project, the work will have been for nothing. The delay will provide time for all parties to understand and approve the scope of work. Dr. Lawson reiterated that the scope of work cannot be altered - it is subject to the contractual agreement between MSDE and AIR. Mr. Goldstein clarified that the issue isn't not the scope of work but how the scope of work is operationalized. Ms. Haislet responded that the challenge is that the scope of work is defined in the Blueprint and the contract. But there are ways to operationalize the study and it is important for the researchers to get access to the data so that they can refine how they approach the study. Dr. Shapiro noted that the Research and Policy Advisory Board (RPB) did not approve the project. They had questions and made several suggestions to refine the research plan. Accordingly, since the full process has not been completed, Dr. Shapiro suggested that during the two weeks the RPB should meet and consider the project proposal again.

Dr. Lawson requested clarification about the approval process and examples of "operationalizing the questions." Mr. Goldstein responded that the Center did follow the normal procedures: an internal meeting with the researchers and an RPB meeting for the researchers to present and discuss the project. There was a lot of feedback and questions at that meeting; and RPB did not provide a clear recommendation to move forward. If there had been more time the Center staff would have worked with the researchers to refine the proposal to get consensus. In response to a question from Dr. Lawson, Mr. Goldstein clarified that the project does not require the proposal to go back to the RPB. But if the Governing Board wants that to happen, it can be accommodated. Also in response to a question from Dr. Lawson, Mr. Goldstein indicated that projects had gone before RPB more than once (noting a prior

instance at MSDE's request). Mr. Goldstein also clarified that no one has raised concerns about AIR. They are well known and respected. Finally, Mr. Goldstein turned to the question regarding operationalizing the study and noted that there was discussion and disagreement about one of the quality measures being proposed: postsecondary degree attainment. Dr. Kellogg provided a detailed overview of the Center's project review process, noting that there is often a lot of discussion and refinement throughout the process. Further, Dr. Kellogg confirmed that the issues being raised are not about the scope of the project. Instead the focus has been clarifying measures and refining data use.

**Board Action:** There were eight affirmative votes: Mr. Irvine, Dr. Keys, Dr. Shapiro, Dr. Phillips, Mr. Power, Dr. Sterett, Mr. Good, Ms. Kendall-Ellis and Mr. James. There were two votes in opposition: Dr. Lawson and Mr. Biggs. The motion was approved.

In the absence of a Chair, Mr. Choudhury, in his capacity as Vice-Chair, will call for a second meeting in two weeks.

**Motion** - Mr. Power made a motion to have the RPB meet with AIR for another review and discussion of the CCR proposal. The motion was seconded by Dr. Shapiro.

**Board Action** - There were six affirmative votes: Mr. Irvine; Dr. Keys, Dr. Shapiro, Dr. Phillips, Mr. Power, Mr. Biggs, and Mr. Good. There were two votes in opposition: Dr. Lawson and Dr. Sterett. Mr. James abstained from voting. Ms. Kendall-Ellis was no longer present. The motion was approved.

**Closing**

Mr. Biggs made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. James. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ross Goldstein  
Executive Director

**Approved:** February 1, 2023