MLDS Center
Maryland Longitudinal Data System

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MEMORANDUM

TO: MLDS Governing Board

FROM: Ross Goldstein

DATE: May 26, 2023

SUBJECT: MLDS Center FY 24 Budget

Purpose

The Governing Board is responsible for approving the Center's annual budget (see Ed. Art. § 24-704(g)(4), Annotated Code of Maryland). This agenda item will provide the Governing Board with the FY 24 budget for review and the Center's planned expenditures.

Background

The budget development process starts over a year prior to the start of the fiscal year. The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) develops budget instructions and a maximum agency request amount (target). The agencies compile and submit the proposed budget to DBM, which reviews the budget and makes any necessary cuts or adjustments. Once the Governor's budget is finalized, it is submitted to the General Assembly. The amounts in the Governor's budget may be altered by legislative action. The budget under review is the FY 24 budget allowance provided by the Governor and approved by the General Assembly during the recently concluded legislative session. The Governor's allowance was not changed by the General Assembly.

Summary of FY24 General Fund Budget

This year, the Center's general fund operating budget is $2.86 million, an increase of $320,000 from last year. The change is due to an overall increase in salaries and the addition of three new positions, which was a result of an over-the-target request (see attached) for three additional positions that was submitted and approved this year. The new positions are for a senior database administrator, a data analyst, and a research statistician. The database administrator and the data analyst are both positions that MLDS Center currently has through a contract. Accordingly there is a decrease ($337,000) in the funding for contracts (Object 08).

FY 24 - Budget Breakdown
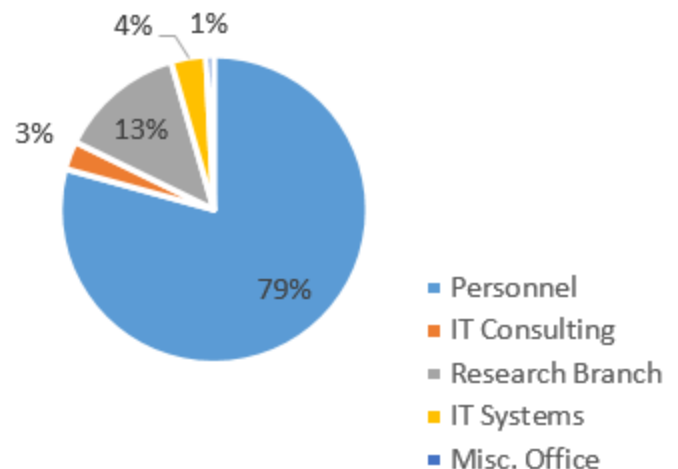
As in past years, the majority (79%) of the Center's funds are used for staff salaries. The remaining funds are for the Research Branch (13%), IT consulting (3%), support for IT systems (4%) and office needs (1%).

As shown in Table 1 below, the Center's annual budget continues to increase year-over-year, while at the same time, the amount available for contracts continues to decrease. Even with the decrease, the Center is able to increase, by $34,000, general funds for the Research Branch, for a total allocation of $380,000.

Table 1. MLDS Center General Fund Appropriation

Object	Title	FY 22 Allowance	FY 23 Allowance	FY24 Allowance	Difference FY23 to FY 24
Obj 01	Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits	1,419,337	1,611,420	2,266,833	+655,413
Obj 02	Technical and Special Fees	900	900	0	-900
Obj 04	Travel	2,150	2,150	$2,110	-$40
Obj 07	Motor Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	14,450	5,000	5,000	0
Obj 08	Contractual Services	946,698	909,120	571,965	-337,155
Obj 09	Supplies and Materials	4,500	3,500	500	-3,000
Obj 10	Equipment - Replacement	5,452	5,452	0	-5,452
Obj 11	Equipment -Additional	5,000	5,000	15,425	+10,425
Obj 13	Fixed Charges	575	575	150	-425
	Total	**2,399,062**	**2,543,117**	**2,861,983**	**318,866**

In addition to the General Funds, the Center has two additional funding sources (see Table 2): federal funds from the Workforce Data Quality Initiative Grant (WDQI)[1]; and special funds resulting from reimbursement of costs received from external researchers.

Table 2. Additional Funding

Source	Object	Amount
Special Funds (from reimbursements)	08 Contracts	$10,000
Federal Funds (from WDQI Grant)	08 Contracts	$425,233

The additional funds from the WDQI grant will primarily be spent on IT consulting services to provide additional resources to manage, document, and load the new data being received as a result of the project. A small portion of the funds will be provided to the Research Branch to provide expertise and support to a team of researchers from BEACON at Salisbury University[2] who are going to conduct an in depth evaluation and analysis of the outcomes of the workforce development programs. The Special Funds will also be used to further enhance the research budget. The Research Branch includes funding for

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[1] The WDQI grant is from the U.S. Department of Labor and is the result of a partnership between the State Department of Labor, the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and the MLDS Center to improve data collection and reporting on WIOA Title I and III workforce development programs.

[2] Business Economic and Community Outreach Network (BEACON) is at the Franklin P. Perdue School of Business at Salisbury University and offers applied business & economic research and targeted outreach programs to a variety of organizations.

subcontracts with the University of Maryland, College of Education and Morgan State University. Finally, in addition to the normal software expenditures (see table 4) the Center plans to allocate $75,000 for Informatica Software and training. Informatica is a data integration tool that will help standardize and streamline the data integration and management processes.

Table 3. Contracts (all funding)

	Total	General	FF	SF
Contracts	**$1,005,000.00**	**$570,000.00**	**$425,000.00**	**$10,000.00**
Research Branch	**$400,000.00**	$380,000.00	$10,000.00	$10,000.00
Software	**$60,000.00**	$30,000.00	$30,000.00	$0.00
IT Consulting (data analyst)	**$165,000.00**	$85,000.00	$80,000.00	$0.00
WDQI Contracting (data analyst and business analyst)	**$305,000.00**	$0.00	$305,000.00	$0.00
Informatica Software and Training	**$75,000.00**	$75,000.00	$0.00	$0.00

Table 4. Software

AWS Backup	$20,000
Oracle	$17,000
VMWare	$10,000
JIRA	$700
MFT	$1,500
SSL	$2,600
Webflow	$450
ERWIN	$2,450
Altaro	$2,700
STATA	$1,800
Total	**$59,200**

Action

I request the Governing Board's review and approval of the MLDS Center FY 24 Budget Plan.

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Memorandum

To: Department of Budget and Management

From: Ross Goldstein, Executive Director

Date: August 25, 2022

Subject: Over the Target Request for FY 24

The MLDS Center over-the-target request addresses personnel needs related to the increase in the Center's workload.

The MLDS Center has been in existence since FY 2013. Given increases in the size and scope of the system, the amount and variety of data that the Center receives, and the demand for research and reporting, three new positions are required to allow the Center to continue to meet user demands and ensure system maintenance and security remain at the highest levels.

Position 1 –Database Administrator
Currently the MLDS Center has maintained a contract since FY 2013 for the services that would be fulfilled by this proposed position. The annual contract cost is approximately $200,000 per year. Creating a PIN for this position would provide a cost savings to the State of close to $100,000 per year and ensure that the individual fulfilling this mission critical role would not be subject to contractual changes or disruptions. A sample Position Description for the position is attached. It uses a Housing and Community Development specific class specification. Nonetheless that specification, grade and step are most in line with the needs of the MLDS Center for this new position.

Consequences - This position is critical for the maintenance and security of the MLDS system. If a new PIN position is not funded, the Center will be required to continue to contract for this position.   Using a contract to fill such a critical position creates risks. First, contracts must be periodically re-competed, which provides the possibility that the Center will not be able to keep the same resource. Second, funding availability for contracts is less certain from year to year. Finally, this critical position has access to all of the Center's personally identifiable data. It is preferable to vest critical access with a state employee rather than a contractor.

Position 2 – Data Analyst
The Center's three data analysts fulfill two key roles that are vital to the MLDS Center's operations. First, they receive and load the data from each of the partner agencies that provide data (see list of data sources below). This task is highly technical and requires considerable expertise to match identities from different data systems into a single cohesive database. Second, the data analysts assemble data sets for researchers, reports, dashboards and data

requests. Given the size and scope of the Center's data system, this task is also highly technical and requires detailed understanding of the data and the requirements for the output product.

The scope of MLDS Center's data has increased over the past few legislative sessions with the addition of data from the Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Human Services, Business and Health Occupations, National Certifiers, and unique data sets for research projects.   Similarly, the amount of output requirements has increased over the past few years. At its inception, the Center had only one annual reporting requirement. The Center now has three annual reports (Dual Enrollment, Career Preparation Expansion Act, and Foster Care) and provides data and analysis to support ten additional reports produced by state agencies (MSDE, MHEC, Labor) and institutions of higher education (community colleges and four-year institutions). Additional output to support the work of the Blueprint's Accountability and Implementation Board is anticipated. Accordingly, to support the increased data and reporting requirements an additional data analyst is needed. A sample position description is attached.

Consequences - The Center is already feeling the consequences of the increased workload without any increase in staffing. Data requests and reporting have been delayed and the addition of new data is also behind schedule. The Blueprint legislation adds additional reporting and research responsibilities for the Center.   Simply put, it cannot all be accomplished without additional support. The Center is currently a contract for the services of a part-time data analyst at approximately $95,000 per fiscal year. If this were a PIN position, the Center would be able to fund a full-time analyst position.

Position 3 – Researcher
The MLDS Center has a half position that is responsible for all of the agency's reporting requirements, including mandated legislative reports, data dashboards and other web content, data requests, and fulfilling other stakeholder data needs (see attached list). With the new requirements for the Center under the Blueprint and the increasing scope of reporting needs, additional staff resources for reporting are needed. A sample position description is attached.

Consequences - As stated above, the Center is at its absolute capacity under our existing staffing levels. The Center will need to reject output requests or cancel existing ones to meet new demands. This may mean the state agencies supported by the Center will be unable to fulfill their federal reporting requirements, something that could result in lost funding to the Maryland public school systems and the adult education system.

Summary
The Center's first budget year was FY 13. At that time the Center was allocated 14.5 PINs. One PIN was moved to DoIT and another was moved to MSDE (half-PIN for AAG). That leaves 13 PINs, of which three have 50% of their assigned duties for another agency. Ten years later, the scope and volume of the data and required output have both increased significantly without any additional staff resources being added to the Center to allow it to meet these new demands.

Finally, because two of the positions being requested would eliminate the need for an expensive service contract, the addition of these three PINs only results in a modest increase to the Center's budget. The increase will allow the Center to timely meet its increased demands and allow the State to fully realize the investment it has made in the MLDS.

List of Reporting Duties
1. Annual Report on the Maryland Longitudinal Data System and Center (legislative mandate - see § 24-70
2. Annual Report on High School Graduates' Outcomes Five Years after Graduation (legislative mandated. - see Ed. Art. § 24-703.1(a), Annotated Code of Maryland.
3. Annual Report on former children in out-of-home placements and how out-of-home placement affected participation in higher education. - see Ed. Art. § 24-703.1(b), Annotated Code of Maryland.
4. Annual data request for the Department of Legislative Services on Maryland Public School Pathways.
5. Annual data request for the Department of Legislative Services on the credit accumulation and course-taking patterns of Maryland Public School Students who are dually enrolled.
6. Annual data request for the Maryland Business Roundtable: Maryland Scholars Program.
7. Annually produce and maintain approximately 60 dashboards and other data analyses and summaries.
8. Oversee production of approximately 20 additional data requests received annually.
9. Conduct outreach for stakeholders of the Center.
10. Annual data request for the Maryland State Department of Education on the college and workforce outcomes of students enrolled in special education in Maryland public schools. These data are used to support reports to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).
11. Annual data request for the Maryland Department of Labor's Division of Workforce Development & Adult Learning on the workforce outcomes for individuals participating in Adult Education programs. These data are used to support reports to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE).
12. Annual data request for the Maryland State Department of Education on the college and workforce outcomes for individuals participating in Career and Technical Education programs. These data are used to support reports to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE).
13. Annual data request for 22 Maryland institutions of higher education and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) on the workforce outcomes for students who complete a traditional teacher preparation program approved by the Maryland State Department of Education. The data provided contribute to MSDE's Traditional Program Annual Report (TPAR).
14. Annual data request for 16 Maryland Community Colleges to provide workforce outcomes for graduates as required by the Performance Accountability Report (PAR) that is required by the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

15. Annual data request for the 22 Maryland institutions of higher education on the workforce outcomes for students who complete initial licensure and advanced programs to become K12 teachers or administrators at the graduate and undergraduate levels. This annual report is required to fulfill accreditation reporting requirements for the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).
16. Participation, support, and reporting for the *Commission to Study the Health Care Workforce Crisis in Maryland (*see Chapter 707 and 708, Laws of 2022).

List of Data Sources
1. MSDE
   a. Attendance
   b. Completion
   c. Assessment
   d. Discipline
   e. Early CHildhood
   f. Staff
   g. Schools
   h. **NEW** - Teacher Certification (anticipated)
2. MHEC
   a. Enrollment
   b. Degrees
   c. Credits and Grades
   d. Financial Aid
   e. **NEW** - Student Registration System
   f. **NEW** - Course Information System
3. Labor
   a. Wages
   b. Industry
   c. GED and NEDP
   d. Apprenticeship
   e. Laces
   f. **NEW** - Business Licenses
4. DJS
   a. Intake Services
   b. Detention and Community Detention
   c. Probation and After Care
   d. Committed Residential Programming
5. MDH - Health Occupations Boards
   a. **NEW** - Health Occupation Licenses
6. DHS - Child Welfare Data
   a. **NEW** - Out-of-home placement
      i. Supervising jurisdiction;
      ii. Removal reason;
      iii. Characteristics at the time of removal;

        iv.   Return reason;

        v.   Placement start and end dates; and

        vi.   Placement type;

   b. **NEW** - Family preservation services

        i.   Supervising jurisdiction;

        ii.   Type of family preservation service; and

        iii.   Service start and end dates; and

   c. **NEW** - Child protective services

        i.   Type of child protective service response;

        ii.   Date on which child protective services responded;

        iii.   Alleged maltreatment type;

        iv.   Disposition of an investigative response by child protective services; and

        v.   Date on which child protective services completes a response.

7. Miscellaneous

   a. MVA

   b. National Student CLearinghouse

   c. **NEW** - Computing Certification (National Certifies including, Microsoft, CompTIA, Oracle)