



Wes Moore
Governor


Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

Cassie Motz
Chair

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

To: Ross Goldstein, Executive Director, Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center

From: Ann Kellogg, Ph.D., Director of Reporting Services and MHEC Liaison 

Date: September 11, 2024

Subject: Next steps for Maryland Participation in Postsecondary Employment Outcomes

Under the direction of Secretary Rai and Assistant Secretary Dow, I have been asked to provide you with a written update on the next steps regarding MHEC's involvement with U.S. Census Bureau's Postsecondary Employment Outcomes (PSEO) experimental tabulations. I write this memo in my role as MHEC's liaison to MLDS Center and this memo represents my conversations with MHEC leadership, including Dr. Barbara Schmertz, Director of Research and Policy Analysis. I also share this memo in advance of the upcoming MLDS Governing Board meeting, scheduled for September 13, 2024.

Introduction

During the 2024 legislative session, [SB 444 / HB 634](#) - *Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center - Student Information - United States Census Bureau* - (Chapter 64) was passed. This legislation allows the governing board of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (MLDSC) to authorize the redisclosure of data to PSEO. This topic was discussed at the June 14, 2024, MLDSC governing board meeting and the MLDSC was charged with providing an update on the next step in this process at the September 13, 2024, governing board meeting.

The purpose of this memo is to inform the MLDSC of the Maryland Higher Education Commission's (MHEC) decision to serve as the agency of record for sharing data with PSEO.

Discussion

MHEC fully supports the mission of the MLDSC and considers the MLDSC a valuable partner in providing MHEC with data analysis to make informed policy decisions.

At this time, MHEC believes that it is the appropriate agency for preparing the data files and sharing data with PSEO for the following reasons:

1. One of the important benefits derived from being the agency sharing data is PSEO Coalition membership. Members of the PSEO Coalition:
 - Attend regular meetings with Coalition members and receive technical assistance with collections and data use, and
 - Engage with Census staff to influence future directions for data collection and data use, including the development of policy-relevant reports.

These opportunities have more direct and immediate value to MHEC as opposed to MLDSC as MLDSC is not policy-making.

2. As the state's higher education authority, MHEC believes it should retain control over the data definitions related to college enrollment and college graduation that will drive the data shared with PSEO. MHEC also believes it should prepare the data files to be shared, share the constructed files, validate the data from PSEO, and serve as the repository for all shared data. The process for preparing the files to be shared is complex and requires many critical decisions, decisions that should be made by the state's higher education authority.

Next Steps

We are providing this information now, as this topic was discussed at the June 14, 2024, MLDSC governing board meeting and the MLDSC was charged with providing an update on the next steps in this process at the September governing board meeting.

MHEC has requested that Kimberly Smith Ward, MHEC's Assistant Attorney General and Principal Counsel, review the MOU provided by the Census to determine if any of the conditions within the Census's MOU would prevent MHEC from sharing the data that are required to participate in PSEO.

MHEC is also investigating options for securing the funding resources needed to launch this initiative. The project is labor intensive and cannot be undertaken with existing staff. Additional staff (either permanent or temporary) are required to participate in PSEO.