



Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center Governing Board Meeting Minutes for December 13, 2024

The meeting of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center Governing Board was held on December 13, 2024, via teleconference. Ms. Portia Wu, Chairman of the Governing Board 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:

Ms. Portia Wu, Secretary, Maryland Department of Labor
Dr. Sanjay Rai, Secretary, Maryland Higher Education Commission
Dr. Jennifer Lynch, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Education & Engagement, University System of Maryland (Designee for Dr. Jay Perman, Chancellor)
Mr. Geoff Sanderson, Deputy State Superintendent, Office of Accountability, Maryland State Department of Education (Designee for State Superintendent Wright)
Dr. John Irvine, Director, Office of Research and Evaluation, Maryland Department of Juvenile Service (Designee for Secretary Schiraldi)
Dr. Sharmin Hossain, Chief Data Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Human Services (Designee for Secretary Lopez)
Mr. Matt Power, President, Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association
Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director, Maryland Association of Community Colleges
Dr. Tiffany Thompson, Institutional Research, Morgan State University (Designee for President Wilson)
Mr. Jason Dykstra, Chief Accountability Officer, Instructional Data Division, Anne Arundel County Public Schools
Ms. Hussainatu Blake, Education and Workforce Strategist, Patrick J. McGovern Foundation

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. Roy Enehiroana, Data Analyst, MLDS Center, and Labor Liaison
Ms. Tejal Cherry, Chief Information Officer, MLDS Center
Ms. Jeaneen Johnson, Assistant Attorney General

Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Ms. Wu asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 13, 2024 meeting. Dr. Lynch made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Dykstra. The motion was unanimously approved.

Center Output

Reporting Services

Dr. Ann Kellogg presented the Reporting Services priorities for the current fiscal year and the work completed to date on those priorities. The Reporting Services team completed an initial analysis of wage outcomes for non-credit education completers at Maryland community colleges. That information was shared with MHEC and incorporated into their dashboards. The information was also highlighted in a study conducted by Rutgers University. The analysis showed that completion of noncredit education programs positively impacted quarterly wages. Dr. Kellogg also stated that the *Brain Gain* and *Working While in College* reports were updated. Dr. Kellogg reported that the required annual output was also completed. That output includes legislative mandated reports as well as reports completed at the request of partner agencies (DHS, DJS, MSDE, and Labor) to support state and federal reporting requirements. Dr. Kellogg also noted that the Center completed the first set of analyses for Correctional Education in close collaboration with the Division of Correction (DPSCS) and Correctional Education (Labor).

Next, Dr. Kellogg provided the Board with an overview of the plan to fulfill the college specific reporting requests on graduate outcomes that the Center receives from colleges. Mr. Alex Handler is working on an interactive, self-service portal that the colleges can use to create their own reports. The tool will allow them to disaggregate their reports by demographic characteristics, major, and the labor sector in which the graduate is employed. The project is in the testing phase.

The Reporting Services team also completed dashboard updates to add additional years of data and new data points. The dashboards were updated in December because they are utilized by legislative staff for session related reports and analyses. Dr. Kellogg noted that the financial aid dashboard now includes information on students utilizing the Promise Scholarship. The team also refreshed dashboards on college graduates going into teaching.

Chairman Wu raised the issue of how to make sure that people know about this work and are utilizing it. Dr. Kellogg responded that recently Center's work was included in an online digital library hosted by the U.S. Department of Education. The library provides metrics of access and use of Center reports and we will be reporting those metrics to the Board in the *Monthly Report*.

Research Branch

Dr. Henneberger provided an update on Research Branch output over the past year and highlighted dissemination strategies that have been undertaken to help broaden the audience for who is accessing research. The Research Branch has two overarching priorities: (1) conducting in depth statistical analyses to support causal inference and inform policy; and (2) methodological documentation.

Dr. Henneberger noted that the number of research projects have grown and stakeholders requested a catalogue of projects and their status. This led to the development of the *Project Tracker*, which is available on the MLDS website. Dr. Henneberger demonstrated the tracker and its capabilities.

Another new initiative to help disseminate information is the creation of Research Briefs. The briefs will all use a common format that was developed by a Goucher College intern. The briefs translate findings into a short three to five page digestible article designed for a non-research audience. It includes data visualizations and strategies for communicating key findings.

Finally, Dr. Henneberger informed the board that the Research Branch had its work featured in 20 national outlets and had 16 publications in blogs and peer review journals.

Data Inventory

The Division of Correction (DoC) within DPSCS collects data on inmates who have been sentenced to a term of 18 months or longer. Ten data elements were approved at the September 2024 meeting and four more are being proposed for inclusion:

1. Admission Date
2. Number of Prior Incarcerations
3. Type/Category of Offense
4. State of Residence and Commitment

In response to a question about the need for the state of residence data element from Mr. Dykstra, Ms. Abend responded that it is a useful element for the identity resolution process.

Board Action: Dr. Phillips made a motion to approve the new corrections data elements from DPSCS, which was seconded by Mr. Power. The Board unanimously approved the addition of the data elements.

Suppression Policy Update

Ms. Abend began by providing an overview of the suppression policy, which was approved at the last meeting:

The MLDS Center will balance the mission to provide meaningful information to Maryland stakeholders with the need to protect individuals' privacy. The MLDS Center provides comprehensive and valuable information to Maryland stakeholders about student outcomes to guide policy while implementing efforts to reduce the risk of inadvertent disclosure of information about individual students and workers.

Part of the new policy includes the creation of a Disclosure Review Advisory Board (DRAB). Ms. Abend reviewed the timeline for the creation of the DRAB. Next, Ms. Abend reviewed the proposed charter for the DRAB. The charter states that the DRAB is established to ensure ongoing input and participation from MLDS Center's key stakeholders. The DRAB will provide input and consultation on the MLDS Center's suppression policy and procedures, the implementation of the policy and procedures, and disclosure risks. Finally, the charter establishes the membership of the DRAB and when meetings will be held. The charter also specifies that DRAB members will have to have at least "view only" access to MLDS data.

In response to a question from Mr. Power, Ms. Abend responded that the DRAB, like the other advisory boards, will not be an open meeting. Mr. Dykstra noted that this type of monitoring and data protection are critical to ensuring student data privacy is maintained at a high standard.

Annual Report

Mr. Goldstein began by noting that the Governing Board is required to submit the Annual Report pursuant to Education Article, § 24-705, Annotated Code of Maryland. The report must include:

1. An update on the implementation of the MLDS and activities of the MLDS Center;
2. A list of all studies performed by the Center during the reporting period;
3. A list of all currently warehoused data that are determined to be no longer necessary to carry out the mission of the Center;

4. Any proposed or planned expansion of data maintained in the database; and
5. Any other recommendation made by the Governing Board.

Next, Mr. Goldstein provided a summary of the highlights in the report:

1. The MLDS Center provided data tables and analysis to support key priorities of the Governor, including: over 200 data tables needed to administer the ENOUGH Grant application process; and data tables and analysis on the impact of Correctional Education programs on the workforce outcomes of released inmates.
2. The Governing Board approved the addition of 67 new data elements to MLDS Data Inventory, including data elements from two new data sharing partners: The Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services.
3. The MLDS Center redesigned its website to utilize the state's updated format and style and to prominently display information about the Center to help visitors quickly understand the scope of the data maintained and how those data are organized, managed, kept secure, and used to inform state policy.
4. The Institute of Education Sciences (U.S. Department of Education) awarded a research team from Maryland one of five new grants under the *Using Longitudinal Data to Support State Education Policymaking* program. The team will receive \$966,892 for the 3-year project. The project is entitled *Using Maryland SLDS to Strengthen and Diversify the Teacher Workforce through High School to Career Pathways*.
5. A new Research Brief template was created to help researchers present their research findings in a succinct and user-friendly format that can be easily consumed by policymakers and practitioners.
6. The MLDS Center provided data to the Maryland Behavioral Health Administration to help inform their work on a behavioral health workforce needs assessment.
7. Staff of the Center and Research Branch members conducted more than 29 presentations on MLDS related research and the governance and design of the Center.
8. The MLDS Center Research Branch had 16 research studies published in national outlets this year.

Finally Mr. Goldstein presented two proposed recommendations for the Board to consider including in the report:

1. There are two future requirements that will have important impacts on MLDS data: (1) Education Article § 24-702(c) requires the Center to unlink an individual's workforce record 20 years after that individual's last education record; and (2) the Center's data agreements with data sharing partners requires the Center to dispose of personally identifiable data 20 years after receipt of that data from the data sharing partner. The Governing Board recommends that the MLDS Center undertake a comprehensive study on the consequences of these requirements on Center research and reporting and develop plans for the implementation of the requirements.
2. The Governing Board recommends that the MLDS Center develop strategies to identify and engage new audiences (such students and families) who can shape output and benefit from the analysis and reporting provided by the MLDS Center.

In response to a question from Dr. Phillips about whether the Center has staff resources to undertake the engagement project, Mr. Goldstein responded that the project would be helpful in understanding what resources are needed to improve engagement and understand what is required and what could be done. Ms. Wu agreed that the focus should be developing strategies, including partnering with other agencies and utilizing their resources. Mr. Dykstra noted that the way the second recommendation is written indicates a specific focus on students and families. While that is important, the focus should be on general expansion. Mr. Goldstein agreed and suggested removing the parenthetical. Ms. Wu suggested that in addition to engaging new audiences, there should also be a focus on deepening engagement with existing audiences. As such, the final version of Recommendation 2 was changed to, “The Governing Board recommends that the MLDS Center develop strategies to identify and engage new and existing audiences who can shape output and benefit from the analysis and reporting provided by the MLDS Center.”

Board Action: Mr. Powers made a motion to approve the Annual Report with the recommendations as amended, which was seconded by Dr. Lynch. The Board unanimously approved the Annual Report.

December Reporting Highlights

Dr. Kellogg provided highlights of the reporting completed by the Center to meet December deadlines.

1. *Homelessness and Higher Education Participation* - this is a required dashboard on college enrollment, degree attainment, and use of financial aid by students that experienced homelessness in high school. 16,000 youth experienced homelessness and approximately 50% enrolled in college, which is substantially less than non-homeless students. Dr. Kellogg also discussed financial aid usage, the fact that only 10% of the students utilized the homeless tuition waiver, and reasons for the low usage.
2. *Foster Care and Higher Education Participation* - this is also a required dashboard on college enrollment, degree attainment, and use of financial aid by students in foster care during high school. 5,000 youth experienced foster care and 56% enrolled in college. Dr. Kellogg noted that the majority of these students stay in Maryland and enroll in a community college. Dr. Kellogg discussed financial aid usage, including the fact that 33% are utilizing the tuition waiver. Dr. Kellogg noted that retention to a second year is low - only 48% (compared to 60% for homeless students). Dr. Kellogg also pointed out that students still in foster care at the time of college enrollment have a higher rate of enrollment. Finally, for both homeless and foster care students, degree attainment by age 25 is only 35% for homeless and 19% for foster care students.
3. *Dual Enrollment Dashboards* - two years ago the requirement changed from a report to a set of dashboards. Of all high school graduates, 26% have had some experience with dual enrollment. Of students who enroll in college, 58% had a dual enrollment experience.
4. *Career Preparation Expansion Act* - this report looks at the outcomes of high school graduates five years after graduation including wages earned and industry in which they are working. Generally, the number of students with wage visibility five years after graduation, which is 45%, is back to the pre-Covid numbers. Dr. Kellogg discussed the fact that the living wage calculator (produced by MIT) was adjusted to account for inflation and the impact of taxes. The new living wage amount is almost \$13,000 per quarter and results in all graduates, including bachelor degree recipients, having wages below the living wage threshold. But, Dr. Kellogg noted that the median income for graduates is \$8,000, which is approximately \$1,2000 higher than the first year of reporting. Next Dr. Kellogg discussed the living wage variance for high school graduates with no college versus those with a bachelor’s degree. The variance for the no college graduates increases over time while the variance for bachelor’s degree graduates is going down.

Project Applications and Updates

Dr. Henneberger thanked the Board for their continued support of research and noted that she had one approved project and one update to provide to the Board. The project that was approved pursuant to the *Project Approval and Management Procedures* is by Dr. Jane Lincove, Professor of Public Policy at UMBC. The project, entitled *High School to College Pathways for College and Career Success*, will address the following research questions:

1. How are opportunities for enhanced instruction (e.g. magnet schools, magnet programs, career academies, CTE, AP/advanced coursework) distributed across schools, districts, and student subgroups in Maryland?
2. What are the obstacles to accessing, completing, and benefiting from these opportunities?
3. What are the high school, college, and workforce outcomes for students who participate in these opportunities coursework?

Next Dr. Henneberger updated the Board on an ongoing project by Dr. Jing Liu, entitled *Access, Impact, and the Computer Science Teacher Pipeline: A Systematic Study on the Expansion of Computer Science Courses in Maryland's High Schools*. Dr. Liu received an unrestricted grant for \$250,000 from Google LLC to support his continued work on the project. The grant does not change the project or the deliverable requirements. Dr. Henneberger noted that this is the first time Google LLC is funding a Center related project.

Mid-Year Budget Report

Mr. Goldstein noted that the purpose of this agenda item is to provide the Board a mid-fiscal year update on the MLDS Center's FY 2025 budget. The Governing Board reviewed and approved the Center's FY 25 annual budget during the June 2024 meeting. There have been no changes to the budget and the Center is on target with its spending plans. However, Mr. Goldstein noted that there is one change - a request for authorization for one unplanned expenditure. The expenditure would be to authorize up to \$50,000 to hire a technical writer/information technology security consultant to review and revise the MLDS Center's *Data Security and Safeguarding Plan (DSSP)*. Under Education Article § 24-704(g), the Governing Board was required to establish a DSSP prior to the incorporation of any data into the system. The plan must address the following:

1. Authorized access and authentication for authorized access;
2. Privacy compliance standards;
3. Privacy and security audits;
4. Breach notification and procedures; and
5. Data retention and disposition policies;

The original DSSP developed by the Board has been in place since the initial implementation and development of the MLDS. Since that time there have been a lot of changes to the system and its operations and management. One important change is the role the Department of Information Technology plays in managing the system's security profile. In addition, Center staff have implemented security operations that are not reflected in the DSSP. Accordingly, the goal of the contract is to engage a technical writer/security consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the DSSP and related documents; review the role of DoIT's enterprise system management; review the Center's current system security procedures and operations; and review the *State of Maryland Information Technology Security Manual* and then revise DSSP to be up-to-date, include current best practices, and be in full alignment with DoIT requirements and the IT Security Manual. In response to a question from Dr. Phillips, Ms.

Tejal Cherry noted that she expects to have the consultant in 4-6 weeks and that the Center is in compliance with security requirements, but the documentation does not reflect that fact.

Board Action: Mr. Dykstra made a motion to approve the expenditure for a consultant to revise the Data Security and Safeguarding Policy, which was seconded by Dr. Phillips. The Board unanimously approved the expenditure.

Old Business - Census Bureau Data Sharing - PSEO

Dr. Kellogg began by reviewing the PSEO program provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. PSEO data provides earnings and employment outcomes for college and university graduates by degree level, degree major, and post-secondary institution. These statistics are generated by matching university transcript data with a national database of jobs, using state-of-the-art confidentiality protection mechanisms to protect the underlying data.

Next Dr. Kellogg provided the following updates on MHEC's progress in joining PSEO and providing Maryland college graduate data. First, Kimberly Smith Ward, MHEC's Assistant Attorney General and Principal Counsel, has reviewed the MOU provided to MHEC by the Census and determined there are not any conditions in the MOU that would prevent MHEC from executing the agreement and sharing the data that are required to participate in PSEO. MHEC will be working on finalizing the MOU over the next two to three months. Second, MHEC and MLDSO have been added to the Postsecondary Employment Outcomes Coalition (PSEO Coalition) as ex-officio members. The PSEO Coalition is an independent advocacy organization of state agencies and higher education institutions who share data with PSEO. The PSEO Coalition engages with Census staff to influence future directions for data collection and data use, including the development of policy-relevant reports. Third, Drs. Kellogg and Schmertz met with PSEO staff to discuss the required data elements and required file layouts for participation in PSEO. MHEC has determined that, with one exception, it has the data required for PSEO and has determined it can re-code its data to comply with PSEO requirements. During the first fiscal quarter of 2025 MHEC will review the enrollment files and determine criteria for inclusion as an enrolled student and develop scripts to re-code all enrollment, degree and demographic data to align to PSEO file specifications.

As noted, the one exception to the data requirements, is that MHEC does not have CIP codes readily available for inclusion in PSEO. MHEC has collected CIP Codes in enrollment and degree files since 2022; however, prior year collections only include program taxonomy code (or HEGIS code). MHEC was informed by PSEO that they require all participants to have at least 5 years of data with CIP Code to be able to participate in PSEO. MHEC met with representatives from the PSEO Coalition to discuss funding opportunities for extracting and linking CIP Codes from MHEC's Academic Program Inventory for all data collections prior to 2022. This is a labor intensive process that requires linking by college, degree-level, program taxonomy code, and enrollment/degree dates. MHEC will be submitting a grant application through the PSEO Coalition in January 2025 to pursue funding for this work.

New Business - AIB MOU Overview

Mr. Goldstein began by noting that the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) was established by the *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* (Blueprint) to monitor progress on the implementation of the Blueprint. The AIB created a comprehensive implementation plan that includes a series of outcome measures to evaluate the effectiveness of Blueprint programs. Now that those measures have been

established, the AIB needs to analyze data on student performance and outcomes and assess whether goals established by the outcome measures are being met. To conduct these analyses, the AIB has requested access to the MLDS. The Blueprint legislation established a requirement that the MLDS Center provide access to the data in the MLDS at the direction of the AIB.

Accordingly, the MLDS and AIB are working on an interagency agreement to govern the use of the MLDS as a data resource to facilitate the AIB's outcome measures analyses. The agreement has not been finalized, but the following roles and responsibilities of each agency will be established, including:

1. The MLDS Center will provide system access to the AIB staff, develop comprehensive reporting tables and update them annually; and provide subject matter expertise and input.
2. The AIB staff will comply with the MLDS Center's requirements to gain system access; conduct the outcome measures analyses; support the Center in working to collect data not in the MLDS that are needed for outcome measures; communicate with and receive feedback from MLDS Center subject matter experts and the Research and Policy Advisory Board; and assume responsibility for dissemination of their analyses.

Mr. Goldstein also pointed out that the agreement will take the place of the Center's *Project Approval and Management Procedures* meaning that once the agreement is signed, the AIB staff can conduct their work and will not need to submit a project application, go through the review and approval process, or provide an MLDS product. The agreement will also indicate that the AIB may use the MLDS to conduct outcome measure analyses that are single sector. Finally, the agreement will specify that AIB staff will be subject to all of the Center's staff authorization and access requirements, security requirements, and data suppression policy. No action is requested at this time. When the agreement is finalized and reviewed by counsel, Mr. Goldstein will request Secretary Wu to sign the agreement in her capacity as Chair of the Board.

In response to Mr. Dykstra regarding MLDS Center oversight and input into the work of the AIB, Mr. Goldstein responded that the outcome measures are already well defined. However, the Center will have input in building the comprehensive reporting tables, including input by Center subject matter experts and data analysts. The expectation is also for AIB to bring their analytic plans to RPB for discussion and opportunity to comment. It is to AIB's advantage to utilize the Centers collaborative approach to the use of data. Mr. Goldstein also responded to the issue of staff resources; noting that AIB will be providing staff to conduct the analyses. The Center's role will be limited to the upfront work of establishing the comprehensive reporting tables and then refreshing them. In response to a question from Ms. Wu, Mr. Goldstein stated that AIB is responsible for developing its output and displaying it to the public. Dr. Kellogg pointed out that the close collaboration with AIB will help the Center inform its work to be consistent with policies established by the Blueprint.

Closing

Mr. Goldstein noted that the next meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2025 at 9am and will be held virtually. Mr. Goldstein also noted that this may be the last meeting for Mr. Dykstra and thanked him for being a great partner and Board member who always provided wise counsel and input. Mr. Dystra stated that it has been an honor to be on the Board, work with the other members, and learn about the impressive and truly important work of the Center. He also noted his appreciation for the staff of the Center and their hard work.

Board Action: Mr. Dykstra made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Power. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Ross Goldstein
Executive Director

Approved: March 14, 2025