



# MLDS CENTER

Maryland Longitudinal Data System

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Governing Board Members  
**FROM:** Ross Goldstein, Executive Director  
**DATE:** March 7, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Old Business

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There are four old business items that staff will provide updates on at the meeting.

### **U.S. Census Bureau [Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes \(PSEO\)](#) Update**

Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes (PSEO) are experimental tabulations developed by researchers at the U.S. Census Bureau. PSEO data provide 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.

The following steps toward sharing data with PSEO have been completed since the September Governing Board meeting:

1. Kimberly Smith Ward, MHEC's Assistant Attorney General and Principal Counsel, has reviewed and approved the MOU provided to MHEC by the Census. The MOU is being finalized by Census.
2. MHEC and MLDS have been added to the Postsecondary Employment Outcomes Coalition (PSEO Coalition) as ex-officio members (Dr. Ann Kellogg, MHEC/MLDS and Dr. Barbara Schmertz, MHEC). The PSEO Coalition is an independent advocacy organization of state agencies and higher education institutions who share data with PSEO. Drs. Kellogg and Schmertz have been attending monthly PSEO Coalition meetings and will be attending the national convening in April.
3. Participation in PSEO requires that all enrollment and degree records include CIP Codes (a national coding scheme for college major codes). MHEC has collected CIP Codes in enrollment and degree files since 2022; however, prior year collections only include program taxonomy code (or HEGIS code). Drs. Ann Kellogg and Barbara Schmertz met with PSEO Coalition staff to discuss funding opportunities to secure resources to extract CIP Codes from MHEC's Academic Program Inventory (API) and impute CIP Codes from program taxonomy codes. PSEO Coalition staff agree that funds are available to support this work. This project will be funded in two stages (API extraction and CIP Code imputation). A proposal for the first stage is being finalized with the intent to have funding secured and staff in place May 1, 2025 and the first stage of work completed by the end of June 2025.

### **Research Agenda Annual Review Process**

The [Research Agenda](#), which was updated and approved last year, requires the Center to annually review and, if needed, update the Agenda, “to ensure that it reflects the needs of stakeholders and includes any new data sectors” (see section 2.4). Since the Research Agenda was just updated, this year the Center is focusing on developing review procedures that can be used each year to comprehensively review the Research Agenda. The review procedures will include a series of questions and considerations that will help identify the need for revisions to the Agenda. For example, determining whether there were legislative changes, new areas of focus, or new data that should be reflected in the Agenda. The Center will work on a draft policy with the goal of presenting it to the Research and Policy Advisory Board in late April and then to the Governing Board at the June meeting.

### **AIB Agreement for System Access to Analyze Outcome Measures**

The Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) and the MLDS Center finalized and executed an MOU to allow the AIB research staff to access the MLDS for the purpose of conducting outcome measures analyses. The MOU, which was discussed at the December meeting, specifies that the Center will provide system access, develop data sets and update them annually, and provide subject matter expertise and input. AIB staff will conduct the outcome measures analysis, support the Center in working to collect needed data not currently in the system, communicate with and receive feedback from the Research and Policy Advisory Board and assume responsibility for dissemination of their analyses. The MOU takes the place of a project application process. The MOU also permits AIB to conduct single sector analyses as needed.

### **Data Security and Safeguarding Plan (DSSP) Revisions**

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 authentication for authorized access; privacy compliance standards; privacy and security audits; breach notification and procedures; and 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.

At the December meeting a request was made and approved to allow an unplanned expenditure for the purpose of hiring a technical writer/information technology security consultant to review and revise the MLDS Center’s *Data Security and Safeguarding Plan (DSSP)*. The Center issued a request for resumes and selected a vendor with strong experience in IT Systems Security and technical writing. The vendor will:

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of:
  - a. The DSSP and related documents;
  - b. The role of DoIT’s enterprise system management;
  - c. The Center’s current system security procedures and operations; and
  - d. The *State of Maryland Information Technology Security Manual*.

2. Revise the DSSP to be up-to-date, include current best practices, and be in full alignment with DoIT requirements and the IT Security Manual.

**Action**

Approve the proposed changes.