



MLDS CENTER

Maryland Longitudinal Data System

Address 550 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
Phone 410-706-2085
Email mlds.center@maryland.gov
Website mldscenter.maryland.gov

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board Members
FROM: Ross Goldstein, Executive Director
DATE: March 9, 2025
SUBJECT: 2026 Legislative Session

Departmental Legislation

[SB 56](#) / [HB 293](#), *Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center - External Data Sharing With Third-Party Data Centers for Multistate Reporting - Authorization*. The bills allow the Governing Board to authorize the Center to share data with a third-party data center to facilitate multi-state reporting projects. As a result of numerous questions about the bills, I created and circulated the attached FAQs.

Status of SB 56

The Senate Bill was voted out of committee with an amendment. The amendment required the State Chief Data Officer and the State Chief Privacy Officer to approve the data sharing agreement with the third-party data center. During discussions I was told that the amendment would require "consultation" not "approval." In my opinion, approval grants the Officers veto power over the Board's decision to authorize data sharing, and it does so without any standards for their decisions.

Once the bill was before the full Senate, it was postponed (special ordered) due to questions and concerns raised by various Senators. Senator Hester brought the bill back to committee to review and address the concerns raised. I was invited to that meeting to answer questions.

At the time of writing this memorandum, the bill was amended by the committee and sent back to the Senate, where it passed on Second Reader as amended. The amended version of the bill states that:

1. The Governing Board may only authorize the sharing of data with one third-party data center at a time.
2. Within 30 days of entering into a written data sharing agreement with a third-party data center, the MLDS Center must submit a report to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment and the House Ways and Means Committee that includes the name of the third-party data center, a summary of the data to be shared, and the purpose of and value to the state for entering into the data sharing agreement.
3. Within one year of entering into a data sharing agreement, and each year thereafter, the Center shall report to the committees on the status of the data sharing agreement and how the data are being used to further the purposes and stated value of the data sharing agreement; and
4. Any violations of the data sharing agreement and steps taken to remedy the violations.

Notably, there is no requirement for approval or consultation from the Chief State Data and Privacy Officers.

Status of HB 293

HB 293 has not made it out of committee. I met with the subcommittee on Friday, February 27th and answered questions raised by the delegates. I am not aware of any further action on the bill since that meeting.

Other Legislation

During the current legislative session, the following bills have an impact on or are of interest to the MLDS Center. The status of each bill as of March 6, 2026 is noted.

1. [HB 264 - Maryland Data Privacy and Protection Act of 2026](#)
 - a. The bill limits the personal information that may be collected, maintained, processed, and retained by units of State government.
 - b. Requires certain personal information to be deleted or de-identified.
 - c. Each unit of State government must post a privacy notice on its website, as specified, and designate a Privacy Officer.
 - d. The Department of Information Technology (DoIT) is required to establish additional security requirements in applicable contracts.
 - e. The bill also expands the definition of “personal information” as it relates to the protection of information by government agencies.

Status - committee hearing on 1/28/2026 - no further action

2. [HB 538 - Institutions of Higher Education - Mandatory Disclosures for New and Prospective Students](#)

Last year, the bill (HB 611, 2025) included a requirement that, in the event that the U.S. Department of Education discontinues the operation of the College Scorecard, the Higher Education Commission was required to make certain information from the scorecard available to institutions of higher education. That requirement included the use of data from the MLDS (data which is provided by MD-CLaWE). That provision is not in this year’s version of the bill.

Status - voted out of committee with amendments

3. [HB 1305 - State Child Welfare System - Reporting](#)
 - a. This bill requires reporting on the number of foster youth who enroll in college and graduate within six years, including a comparison with students not in the child welfare system.
 - b. While the bill does not assign the reporting duties to the MLDS Center, the report requires linked longitudinal data that the Center maintains.
 - c. The Center currently reports on the college going rate of foster youth pursuant to Education Article, §24-703.1(c), Annotated Code of Maryland, and can provide data to support this reporting requirement using existing resources.

Status - committee hearing on 2/16/2026 - no further action

FY 2027 Budget

The Governor's budget allocated \$3,591,418 for the MLDS Center for FY 27. The budget analysis by the Department of Legislative Services contained no proposed cuts and did not raise any questions or issues for response by the Center. The allocation represents a small increase of approximately \$87,000 from the FY 26 allocation. The Governor's allocation is sufficient for the Center to fund the Research Branch close to the level it was at in the prior fiscal year.

Action

Informational.