Maryland Longitudinal Data System Governing Board Meeting
9:00am-11:30am
February 28, 2013

Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Approval of Minutes (Chancellor Kirwin)
Chancellor Kirwin called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.
Motion to approve minutes: all in favor.

MLDS Demonstration
Dr. Passmore began the meeting by giving a demonstration of the MLDS system as a lot has happened since the last Governing Board meeting; on December 19th, only screenshots were available. There is now a live public-facing and analytical portal that has been shown to the General Assembly. The demonstrations in the General Assembly impressed delegates and senators; high expectation resulted with a great deal of interest in what will be produced.

Due to computer problems, the board moved to the next item on the agenda before the demonstration could be given.

Introduction of MSDE Development Team.
Chris Cantler (project manager): There are several different divisions of the MSDE Development Team: P-20 management team, the Business Analysts, DBA, ETL (Extraction Transfer Load), OBIEE, and Web Center. The latter three consist mostly of programmers that work with data.

There was some confusion about what this team was and how it interfaced with the respective agencies and the MLDS. Chris Cantler, Beth Perlman, and Chandra Haislet answered that MLDS will be the point of intersection between K-12, Higher Ed, and workforce data. The MSDE Development Team is funded under Race to the Top, which expires June 30, 2013. It is a shared resource pool dedicated to other projects as well, not just MLDS. All initiatives end in June or September. Once there is an MLDS center, people from this development team will be carved out to serve there.

Chancellor Kirwan expressed concern that systems need constant attention and asked if we have resources that can sustain MLDS or if future support is an issue.

Response (Chris Cantler or Beth Perlman): Covering server and software maintenance costs is covered in MLDS. Resources come from sustainability program at MSDE to be approved by DBM, and will be a future budget item. The $250,000 set aside for MLDS is really only a portion of the cost, and it will be necessary to go back for more money for MSDE sustainability as systems at MSDE and MHEC are upgraded. The new systems at MSDE and MHEC are capable of doing more, but are expensive. Thus, the $2.1 million cost for MLDS is not enough; $3.1 million for sustainability costs will be required for MSDE.

State Superintendent Lillian Lowry apologized for missing the step of going to the board.

Dr. Martirano said that this project is operating under certain sustainability assumptions. He requested that board members would be given a visual to explain the process.

Dr. Passmore explained that the system is federated and as such requires cooperation from all groups. Much of the cost which will go to support MLDS would have been incurred anyways for MSDE and MHEC's needs.

The team members were then introduced. This team developed a completely new portal in 3 weeks and was warmly congratulated.

At this point, the demonstration of MLDS was ready.

Dr. Passmore began by showing MLDS' public portal. The front page contains a series of featured dashboards highlighting different data sets visually for easy public consumption. The center, once it is up and running, will constantly add and update featured dashboards. The dashboards do not provide the depth of an analyst briefing but do show more than is currently available.

John Ratliff asked what the protocol will be for determining what will be showcased.

Dr. Passmore said that the protocol has not been developed yet. The center, once it is established, will develop this protocol. He imagines that it will require a constant back and forth between the center and the various agencies involved.

Continuing on, Dr. Passmore explained that the public site will be policy question driven, and it will be possible to drill down to more specific questions. Data from the National Student Clearinghouse is integrated. Ultimately, MLDS will aim to use MHEC data instead to have a clearer picture of student outcomes. Data limitations are clearly listed, and these will help policy analysts who want to make comparisons between states. Each policy question page also provides suggestions for use of data. This section needs further development. One of the requirements in SB 275 is to list every single data element that is included, so the public will have access to this as well. UMB will be able to take the data apart in a useful way.

Included in the public page are portals for parents and students, educators, and policy makers and analysts. There are 15 policy questions; currently, at this point only 4 have been built out. Every question starts with a state summary, with the option to look at more specific information as well. Behind a password protected page, greater detail is available. This analytic side is powered by Oracle Business Intelligence Data Center and allows for datamining in massive data sets. At this user-access level, it is possible to drill down by school level, geographic region, college type, high school, remedial coursework, credits to degree, professional occupation, and more. When the number of students meeting the criteria gets below 10, an asterisk replaces the number for security purposes.

Secretary Danette Howard wants to link this data to high schools. Dr. Passmore said that the next step would be to create this link.

Dr. Passmore then led the Governing board through Question 14 which examines whether Maryland is producing enough students for its high demand occupations. The data in this question is a compilation of DLLR's job listings and MDWFE and MHEC data. It uses UI wage records from DLLR from the second quarter after graduation to determine employment after graduation, in line with the Federal reporting standards. Throughout the entire system, 5 different data sets are linked together in one place. This is the first time anything on this scale was readily available.

Secretary Leonard Howie expressed concern that the dashboard on DLLR's website dealt with different data and that something must be done to make the discrepancy clearer.

Pat Mikos responded that MSDE and MHEC alignment with MLDS data is closer than DLLR alignment. A crosswalk and communication on how the two datasets can be aligned is needed. Maryland is on several national panels and is a leader in connecting data; other states are looking to Maryland to see how MLDS will give answers that DLLR, MHEC, and MSDE would give.

Chandra Haislet remarked that this is a national issue and that the SLDS grant has released a report to align workforce data across the nation. Federal level guidelines will be coming and DLLR should continue to participate.

Dr. Passmore pointed out that the structure in the center will ensure that everyone is on board.

Secretary Danette Howard reminded everyone that several years ago, Maryland was behind other states in terms of data. She congratulated everyone and asked how often the data would be refreshed.

Pat Mikos responded that different data collections come in at different times and that there will be a schedule by which the reports come in to allow changes in data collections on the MLDS site.

Dr. Martirano pointed out a problem in his high schools where students and alumni were hard to track several years after graduation.

Dr. Passmore said that MLDS will make Dr. Martirano's survey unnecessary as the data it collects will be able to track the students more definitively.

Dr. Passmore said that EUCLID creates identity that links them across. Math 2 collection with MHEC is a critical development piece. This is going on right now.

Update on MLDS Briefings/Hearings in the Maryland General Assembly (Dr. Passmore)

MLDS was very well received. Reviews were overwhelmingly positive, especially in the Senate. Communication was so successful that it might be a good idea to take the show on the road several more times. There was some confusion about inter vs. intra segmental. The General Assembly conflated MSDE, MHEC, and MLDS systems and didn't see them separately, despite being presented with MLDS as a federated system. The ability to move between systems is likely to be an issue.

John Ratliff said that as we improve connections and linkages between the systems, this problem will disappear.

Dr. Passmore pointed out that there will be an MSDE person in the center to answer these kinds of questions. The solution will be a communications strategy as well.

Continuing on, Dr. Passmore said that at the presentation of MLDS, Delegate Bohanan raised many concerns about self-sustainability and cost of MLDS. Most of his questioning concentrated on fees the agencies would have to pay to MLDS to have access to the data. He was told that agencies are already contributing and at this point, MLDS doesn't have anything to sell.

John Ratliff remarked that the Governor views MLDS as a function of state government that should be funded by the legislature. It was a major new line item in the Governor's budget that was not cut by DLS.

Dr. Passmore said that UMD, Baltimore has generously offered a communications team that made 1-pagers. At this point, only legislators and the board have seen MLDS. When MLDS has moved forward more, it would be a good idea to do a roll-out to a wider audience, perhaps including a ribbon-cutting.

Center Executive Director Hire – Jared Billings

The board approved the creation of an Executive Director hire committee consisting of 7 members representing the various agencies and stakeholders at the suggestion of Jared Billings.

Chancellor Kirwin nominated Dr. Michael Martirano to be the chair of this committee. He will communicate further with Jared Billings with regards to the other committee members.

Jared Billings said that the overarching goal will be to have the center open on July 1st if approved by the General Assembly. It is not possible to advertise the Executive Director position until the budget is approved, likely in mid-April. MS-22 job descriptions are in the works so that when the budget is approved, the hire process can begin right away. There will be two Associate Directors of the MLDS center who will work half-time at the agencies. He suggested that the Executive Director would work with the agency heads and that that the Associate Director positions should require the confirmation of both heads. The power structure is still being worked out. The Executive Director will have the power to send people back to the agency if they don't work well at the center. To ease the tension at the agencies from the loss of full-time staff to part-time staff, there will be a replacement full-time position at the

agencies, which will strengthen the agencies in the long run. The center would also advise that the work the Associate Directors would do in the agencies would be data related and connected to their work at the center.

The timeline goal would be to have all the necessary paperwork prepared before April, go through the hiring process in April and May, and have an Executive Director by May or June who will then work with the agencies so that the Center can get right to work on July 1st.

John Ratliff said that this aggressive schedule is doable but will require a lot of work.

Chancellor Kirwin pointed out that the search committee would need a staff person, and Jared Billings said he would coordinate this with the search committee.

Board Review and Approval of User Access to MLDS

Chris Cantler said that the Access Request Procedures, Access Request form, and Non-disclosure form have been drafted, along with the Data Security and Safeguarding Plan, though they will need to be approved by the center once it is up and running.

There will be three main account types: admin, research analyst, and temporary or read-only. Admin accounts will be exclusive to MLDS Center staff who will go through a background check at the time of hire. These center employees will be able to see all the data that comes to them through encryption from the agencies and will be responsible for developing and publishing reports. The research analysts will be center, agency, or institutional analysts who will be granted access to de-identified data only. They will have access to predefined data only and will not have access to publish. Read-only accounts can only access the general reports and have limited usage: 3 days normally or 90 day temp access for developers. Account Managers at each agency will recommend to the board whether individuals should obtain access.

Dr. Martirano asked what the procedure for denying access would be, given the Freedom of Information Act.

Chris Cantler and Dr. Passmore explained that the request would come to the center and the center would respond as appropriate. The half-time employees at these centers would assist in dealing with these kind of questions. Those denied user access would still have access to the public portal which would contain a great deal of information. The analytical staff who need to get in to build the system are the only people from the public who should have access. At this point, there has been no discussion of how wide access should be with institutional researchers and LEAs.

Pat Mikos said that there is also only capacity for about 300 named users in the system, as security requires a massive overhead.

Dr. Martirano emphasized that it will be important to think about internal guidelines to deal with privacy issues.

Chris Cantler said he wrote an extremely strict non-disclosure form and in in the process of clearing it with Assistant Attorney General Elizabeth Cameen. If there is a breach of security, access will be revoked and a complaint will be made to the head of the agency. In any event, that individual would have only looked at data which could have been released publically and suppression protects it even more.

It was suggested that access to the temporary workers who were building the system be extended until July 1, instead of the 90 days initially agreed upon. Dr. Martirano made a motion to this effect, and Secretary Howard seconded. The motion was carried.

A motion was made to approve the list of Account Managers. The motion was carried.

END OF MEETING

Board members Present: Chancellor Brit Kirwan, Secretary Danette Howard, Secretary Leonard Howie, State Superintendent Lillian Lowery, Dr. Michael Martirano, Dr. Bernard Sadusky, John Ratliff, Ayana English-Brown.