MARYLAND LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM (MLDS)
550 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
June 13, 2014
MINUTES

The meeting of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Governing Board was held on June 13, 2014, in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Board Room of the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. Vice Chair Catherine Shultz called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

The following Governing Board members were in attendance:
Mr. Brian Roberts, Change Management Specialist, Montgomery County Government
Mr. Leonard Howie, Secretary of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
Dr. Ben Passmore, University System of Maryland *(designee for Chairman Kirwan)*
Ms. Catherine Shultz, Acting Secretary of Higher Education
Ms. Tina Bjarekull, President of the Maryland Independent Colleges and University Association
Dr. Renee Foose, Superintendent of Howard County Public Schools
Mr. Steven D. Rizzi, Vice President, PAR Government

The following staff members were in attendance:
Mr. Ross Goldstein, Executive Director, MLDS Center
Dr. Michael Woolley, Director of Research and Policy Services Branch, MLDS Center
Ms. Chandra Haislet, Director of IT and Data Management Branch, MLDS Center
Dr. Jon Enriquez, Director of Reporting and Portal Services Branch, MLDS Center
Ms. Dawn O'Croinin, Assistant Attorney General for the Governing Board and MLDS Center
Ms. Jamese Dixon-Bobbitt, Executive Associate, MLDS Center
Mr. Jared Billings, Director of Education Policy, Office of the Governor

Executive Director's Report
Staffing
Mr. Goldstein introduced two new-full time MLDS staff members. First, Ms. Tejal Cherry will be serving as the Applications Manager. The Applications Manager is a senior level information technology director position that will coordinate project management planning, oversee the implementation of the *Data Security and Safeguarding Plan*, and bridge the divide between the data system and the website. Second, Ms. Marshciene Moor will be serving as the Network Engineer. The Network Engineer is responsible for server installation and maintenance, storage devices and peripherals as well as installing and maintaining operating systems and software.

In addition, contracts for a senior system architect and a web developer were finalized and the contracted individuals have begun working. Chuck Shelton is the Senior System Architect who has been actively leading the technical development of the system under the federal SLDS grant. Veda Nanapaneni is the web developer who is working on the MLDS Center website redesign.

Over the next few months staff will focus on hiring a database engineer, an OBIEE Developer, and an ETL analyst.

Advisory Boards
Mr. Goldstein briefed the Board on the charters developed and approved for the two advisory boards that meet periodically to provide input and collaboration from partner agencies and other stakeholders.

Data Governance Advisory Board
The Data Governance Advisory Board (Data GAB) is required by the *Data Security and Safeguarding Plan*. The Data GAB takes the place of the *iTech Group* that had been meeting throughout the development of the Center and the system. The Data GAB meets monthly and has the following roles and responsibilities:
1. Reviewing the data inventory and collection schedule;
2. Monitoring data quality, including:
    a. Informing MLDS staff on limitations of data;
    b. Identifying potential differences between the uses of data; and
    c. Reviewing new portals;
3. Identifying data gaps and analyzing whether additional data collections are needed;
4. Identifying stakeholders and establishing decision rights and accountability;
5. Security oversight, including:
    a. Reviewing plans to implement the *Data Security and Safeguarding Plan;* and
    b. Providing input on meeting compliance with requirements;
6. Helping align initiatives by ensuring data collected is sufficient to meet research needs;
7. Ensuring data is used and maintained consistent with state and federal laws, regulations, and the Public Information Act; and
8. Identifying measures of success.

The membership of the Data GAB includes a data steward from each agency and the MLDS executive director and branch directors.

Research and Policy Advisory Board
The Research and Policy Advisory Board is a continuation of the *Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG)* that has also been meeting throughout the development of the Center and the System. To formalize the entity and clarify its roles and responsibilities, a more descriptive name and charter were established. The charter specifies that Research and Policy Advisory Board meets monthly and has the following roles and responsibilities:
1. Advising the MLDS staff on the Research Agenda, research plans, and prioritization;
2. Hearing from outside entities proposing additions to the agenda;
3. Commenting on research output, web portals, and other reports created by the MLDS Center;
4. Providing input on public communications and governance issues (i.e. regulations); and
5. Advising the Center on grant opportunities and possible partnerships.

The membership of the Research and Policy Advisory Board includes representatives of the Governing Board members, MLDS staff, and other key stakeholders appointed by the executive director.

Procurements
Mr. Goldstein explained that the MLDS Center had to fund an unexpected procurement for an Oracle Universal License Agreement. The expectation had been that the Oracle Universal License maintained by MSDE would be available to MLDS Center. However, that license expired creating the need to procure a new license that will be shared with MSDE.

The procurement for the servers, storage and VMware for the data center is currently in the vendor selection phase. The procurement, including delivery, should be completed within the next few weeks. Once the equipment arrives, services for installation and configuration will be required. Staff is completing a request for resumes to hire a resource to do the needed work.

Additional laptops are also being procured for the new staff. Laptops are necessary for staff mobility. MLDS had planned to use the decommissioned Race to the Top computers at MSDE, but it has been determined that these older computers would be less reliable.

Outreach
Frederick County Board of Education
Mr. Goldstein provided a presentation to the Frederick County Board of Education (FCBOE) on March 26th. The presentation included an overview of the MLDS Center, including the legal framework and governance of the Center, a description of the type and sources of the data being collected, an overview of the research agenda, and information on the security and privacy of the data. Generally the presentation was well received. The FCBOE members had a lot of questions, most related to security and privacy concerns. In general the FCBOE members seemed satisfied that there were protections in place to ensure the security and privacy of their students' data.

Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT)
Mr. Goldstein was asked to participate in a panel discussion at the MBRT as part of their development of a strategic plan for 2015-2017. During the panel discussion an update on the MLDS Center and the research agenda was provided – with a specific focus on workforce related agenda items of interest to the MBRT. Mr. Goldstein also offered to serve as a resource and partner on future projects.

ACLU-Maryland
Mr. Goldstein and Dawn O'Croinin met with the public policy director and education advocate for the ACLU-MD to provide them with an update on the MLDS Center. The ACLU-MD was involved in the passage of the bill establishing the System and Center. At the time the organization had expressed concerns about student privacy. The meeting was productive. The ACLU does not have any issues or concerns about the MLDS Center, its work, or its impact on student privacy. They appreciated the outreach and the update.

MLDS Official Announcement and Demonstration
MLDS staff has been discussing conducting some form of official launch of the MLDS Center that would include a public announcement and demonstration of the website. The major focus for this event is the re-launch of the website, including new portals and information. The goal is to be ready for the public announcement by the end of September.

Branch Updates
<u>Systems Management Branch</u>
System Development
Chandra Haislet, Director of the Systems Management Branch began by providing an update on system development and major milestones. Overall, the team is making good progress on system development, but the project has slipped by about six weeks due to procurement delays and issues surrounding aligning of resources with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), which hosts the data center.

Currently the system development project is three-quarters completed. The master data management system is complete, the operational data store was finished this month, and development of the data warehouse is ongoing. The data warehouse is the basis for the reporting and research and is where the Oracle Business Intelligence Tools will be applied. Staff is also developing workflows that will minimize the need for any human interaction with the data – from receipt through matching and into the data warehouse.

Ms. Haislet also noted that the development team has begun working with the researchers to introduce them to the data set, understand its organizational structure and layout and generally prepare them to work with the system to conduct research and build graphs. An onsite training class on the use of the Oracle Business Intelligence tools has been organized for the end of June to start to prepare the staff to use the tools for research and portal development.

Data Collection
Ms. Haislet reported that the Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation was the first agency to provide a set of data - specifically the wage records. Within the next week MSDE will provide enrollment data records for grades 8-12, graduation data, College Board assessment information (AP and SAT data), and course level information for grades 6-12. No post-secondary data has been received from the Higher Education Commission due delays caused by the Maryland Higher Education Commission's (MHEC) new data collection. Overall data collection is on target despite a few delays. Those delays were to be expected given the newness of the process and the size and scope of the data request that the agencies had to fulfill.

Ms. Tina Bjarekull asked how the Center will ensure that the researchers will not get a very small and therefore potentially identifiable data set when accessing the system. Chandra noted that only the research staff of the MLDS will have access to student level data and that it is a very limited number of individuals – all of whom will be subject to background checks and other security requirements.

In response to a question by Mr. Brian Murphy about the Center's ability to work with the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) data, Ms. Haislet responded that Center

has established a good working relationship with DLLR's data stewards, which has helped ensure a successful transfer and linking of data.

Mr. Steven Rizzi inquired about the Center's process for matching data from the different agencies. Ms. Haislet explained that for each agency different business rules are applied which specify the type and number of elements necessary to create a match.

Mr. Jared Billings asked whether dual enrollment data will include the classes the student is enrolled in or just the institution attended. Ms. Haslet responded that we are currently able to identify concurrent enrollment – i.e. the institutions attended. Some course information is available and MLDS staff has been engaged a series of discussions with MSDE to be able to understand which students are dual enrolled and receiving credits at both institutions and whether the dual enrollment is pursuant to the Early College Access Grant.

In response to a question by Mr. Rizzi, Ms. Haislet explained that data collection will go back to 2008. That start date relates to when MSDE began issuing the unique SASID identification numbers.

Federal Grant – SLDS Development
MSDE is closing out year 2 of the SLDS Grant. The US Department of Education (USED) conducted a site visit to check on progress and ensure grant requirements are being fulfilled. The feedback during the de-briefing was very positive. The USED representatives were impressed with Maryland, its vision for the MLDS, and its follow through. They also stated that there were future grant opportunities coming up and that Maryland would be in a strong position to receive funding.

Portal and Information Services Branch
Website Development
Dr. Jon Enriquez, Director of the Portal and Information Services Branch, stated that he and the new staff members have begun meetings with the MSDE Race to the Top project team, which still has operational control of the MLDS website. The process for the handover of the site has begun – but cannot be completed until certain technical and security issues are resolved. In the meantime, staff has begun identifying software installations that will be needed, reviewing how much separation between different aspects of the system are required, and addressing other web design and user interface questions. Dr. Enriquez has also been reviewing other state LDS websites to get ideas for design and organization. There is a need for good organization and to provide the ability to help users easily find the information they need. There is also a list of priority features to incorporate into the website prior to its re-launch. These are a mix of both design and technical issues, which have to be completed hand in hand. Finally, Dr. Enriquez noted that dashboards and information for the website will be a mix of what can be easily accomplish, what the public is most interested, and what data is available.

In response to a question by Mr. Rizzi about whether a requirements document has been created, Dr. Enriquez responded that to a certain extent the Research Agenda serves as the requirements document. Mr. Goldstein added that while the Research Agenda provides the requirements for

the content, Ms. Cherry has been tasked with developing a system development plan that will include the technical requirements.

Mr. Billings noted that the design and development of the website raises large questions that the Board may want to review and consider. Dr. Enriquez responded that the Research and Policy Advisory Board will serve as a communications channel to help ensure the Board's priorities are being met.

Mr. Billings also questioned how much of the current content of the website will remain? Dr. Enriquez stated that the plan is to build around what currently exits. Some restructuring and organizational changes will be made, but the basic portal design will remain. Ms. Haislet concurred that the web development team will not gravitate too far from current format, which was well vetted by Board members and agency partners.

Dual Enrollment
Dr. Enriquez reiterated that that there have been several conversations with MSDE about dual enrollment. MSDE is eager to make sure they have the information to provide a full assessment of dual enrollment, especially in the context of early college access. This requires a lot of information – much of which is not currently collected. For example, there is data on whether students are getting credit for classes taken at a community college. But what isn't known is whether that student is also getting credit for the math course at high school. While it may be possible to infer this information, MSDE wants to ensure that there is direct information on what the student is doing. Mr. Billings asked whether MSDE will provide all of the information for dual enrollment. Dr. Enriquez responded that addressing dual enrollment requires linked higher education and K-12 data.

Research Services
Summer Research
Dr. Michael Woolley, Director of the Research Services Branch, began by noting that the Center is bringing in other researchers and scholars from within the University System to work with the Center and contribute to the research agenda. Currently, several scholars from University of Maryland, Baltimore and University of Maryland, College Park are conducting literature searches and research reviews based on Research Agenda topics throughout the month of June. They will continue to work with the Center as data is available and research on their topics is ready to proceed.

Staffing
Two doctoral level research assistants have been working with the Research Services branch. Dan McNiesh will be returning next year and a new student, Allison Preston, will be starting in the fall. Both students will be in College Park with Dr. Stapleton. In addition, a Social Work doctoral student, Susan Klumpner will also start in the fall and will work with Dr. Woolley on Center related research.

The hiring process has begun to advertise for the Research Analyst position. The position has been restructured and elevated to serve as a research coordinator and provide content expertise in the area of workforce. The idea is to increase the salary to find an individual with his or her own

research agenda related to workforce and significant statistical analysis expertise. Mr. Howie stated that DLLR can help direct the job advertisement to list serves that are used by workforce researchers.

Ms. Bjarekull asked whether partner researchers are exclusively limited to University System of Maryland (USM) faculty. Dr. Woolley responded that so far, yes, but not anchored to that limitation and noted that the some research may require specific expertise that is not within the system. Dr. Passmore noted that there are limitations that may exist regarding access to data. Dr. Woolley agreed and stated that a content expert could be consulted and provide assistance, even without access to the system.

Research Series
Currently the Research Series is on a summer hiatus. In September, Dr. Stapelton and Mr. McNiesh will present an analysis they conducted on STEM education data and preparation of Maryland students in STEM topics. In October there will be a panel discussion on online education.

Dr. Howie noted that Maryland and the MLDS is a national model and a lot of people are watching the State and its progress. NGA's next focus is to apply and participate in a state policy initiative to align education and workforce.

Approval of Data Inventory
Ms. Haislet presented the proposed Data Inventory to the Governing Board. She noted that the MLDS is required to annually submit an inventory of all data in the system to the Governor and General Assembly. The data inventory presented to the Governing Board at this meeting is a listing of new data elements being added (and not a list of all data elements previously approved).

Data proposed for addition includes:
1. Adult education data (including GED ®) from DLLR;
2. Early learning data from MSDE, which includes information about early childcare facilities, programs, and staff (but not child information since this is not currently a focus of the research agenda); and
3. A significant number of new post-secondary data elements from MHEC, including enrollment, degree, and financial aid information.

Mr. Billings commented on the fact that there is no early learning student data and that this will not allow the MLDS Center to research outcomes of students who take part in an early learning program. Ms. Haislet agreed, but noted that the Center could go back and obtain that information from MSDE, which collects early learning student data. At this time the Center is not collecting that information due to concerns about the completeness and quality of that information and the fact that it is not currently needed to address a policy question.

There was a discussion about the appropriate role of the Center with respect to research on early childhood education outcomes. Generally those outcomes can be addressed by MSDE, which has jurisdiction over early childhood education and K-12 education. However, it was noted that

if policy makers want to understand outcomes after K-12, the MLDS Center should plan to collect early learning student data. In light of this discussion and the general consensus of the Board that this information should be collected, Ms. Haislet stated that she would confer with the Data Governance Advisory Board to get a recommendation on the feasibility of collecting early learning student data for the next meeting.

Ms. Bjarekull commented that there were workgroup meetings attended by MHEC and institutional researchers from Maryland colleges and universities that resulted in a shared understanding of the type of data that would be collected and utilized by the MLDS. Ms. Bjarekull inquired of Dr. Enriquez, who attended those meetings, whether the higher education elements being presented to the Board are consistent with the discussions at the workgroup meetings. Dr. Enriquez stated that the data elements are substantially the same as what was discussed by the workgroup.

Dr. Foose asked whether data is being collected that would indicate whether and why a student has switched his or her major or intended course of study. Dr. Enriquez responded that MHEC does not collect that information and therefore the MLDS does not have that information. Dr. Passmore noted that data is available on whether students change majors, but there is very little information on why they make changes. He also noted that there are research efforts, including a USM project, to understand why students change their intended course of study. Dr. Foose explained that her interest is to know whether the changes are a result of students not being adequately prepared to pursue their original area of interest.

Mr. Howie noted that adult education results have undergone realignment. Pearson purchased GED and increased the rigor of the exam, resulting in a reduced passage rate of 64% – indicating that the test is a lot harder. This will require a re-examination of the preparation process. Currently, there are also lower test taking rates.

Ms. Shultz asked for a motion to approve the proposed additions to the data inventory. Dr. Foose moved approval, which was seconded by Dr. Passmore. The motion was unanimously approved.

Approval of Proposed Regulations
Mr. Goldstein presented proposed regulations for approval. The regulations contain four chapters. The first three chapters address requests made pursuant to the Maryland Public Information Act (PIA), compliance with the Open Meetings Act, and requests for correcting public records created and maintained by the MLDS Center. These three chapters follow the model regulations provided by the Office of the Attorney General. The fourth chapter addresses requests for longitudinal data from the MLDS Center. A separate chapter for data requests was created to clarify that these requests were distinct from a PIA request and to provide an administrative procedure for managing these requests.

Ms. O'Croinin began by noting that Chapter 04 reflects the request made by the partnering agencies to forward a data request to the appropriate agency in the event that a data request is for one agency's data. Ms. O'Croinin also discussed the decision not to have a bright-line test for when a sample size is too small and will therefore be suppressed to avoid releasing possibly

identifying information. Ms. O'Croinin said that there were too many variables to consider when suppressing sample sizes and it would therefore have to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

In response to a question, Ms. O'Croinin confirmed that the data request will require a written application, along with an affidavit that the data will not be used for commercial purposes.

In response to a request for clarification on the application of Chapter 2, regarding correction of public records, Ms. O'Croinin noted that this is a standard provision for all agencies. The person seeking a correction would have to demonstrate that he or she is the person in interest. This provision does not authorize a person to look at their own record. MLDS Center cannot disclose any personally identifiable data. A request to correct such a record would be referred to one of the agencies as the original custodian of the record. While it is not likely to be a provision utilized by the MLDS Center, Ms. Shultz noted that an employee can use the provision to correct his or her employment record.

Ms. Shultz asked whether, when setting fees, the time that it takes the researcher to fulfill the request is being considered. Ms. O'Croinin responded that the fee collection was broadly drafted to allow the Center to consider a variety of factors (including staff time) when developing a fee. The goal was to provide flexibility to address changing circumstances without having to constantly amend the regulations.

Secretary Howie stated that he was not in a position to vote on the proposed regulations at this time. His agency does three levels of review (legal, program and technology) to ensure that what is set out in the regulations is consistent with program constraints and the new data sharing agreement. Secretary Howie proposed polling the members in a few weeks on the regulations. Ms. Shultz concurred with this proposal.

Dr. Passmore responded that he thinks staff from DLLR, MLDS Center, and the Governor's office need to meet and address issues surrounding the regulations and inter-agency agreements to ensure timely resolution of each. Ms. Shultz asked MLDS staff to be responsible for scheduling the meeting.

Research Agenda
Mr. Goldstein noted that at the last meeting there was discussion about the Research Agenda and the need to ensure that the MLDS Center was conducting longitudinal research and not research that could otherwise be done by the agencies. At that time, Chairman Kirwan asked that a working group be formed to review the agenda, and where necessary, propose revisions or clarification to ensure that the agenda reflected the mission of the Center to engage in longitudinal research.   What came out of the workgroup meetings was primarily the creation of a preamble that clarifies that the research of the Center is focused on transitions and must utilize data from at least two of the three agency sources.

Dr. Woolley explained that the research agenda was originally developed by the P20W Leadership Council. Those original 15 questions are still part of the agenda. Three additional questions, required by the federal SLDS Grant were also added. The workgroup re-numbered and re-ordered the questions under new developmental categories. Three new workforce

questions are proposed for addition to the agenda. The questions focus on students who do not finish high school or finish high school and go directly into the workforce.

Mr. Billings asked whether the agenda is being informed by the data that the Center has or whether the data is informed by the agenda. Mr. Goldstein responded that, to the extent possible, the goal has been to develop a system that is capable of answering questions – not just the research questions. He also acknowledged that as the scope of the research agenda changes and evolves the data that needs to be collected will also have to change and evolve. Mr. Billings wants to ensure that the Center is developing broadly enough to be able to respond to big policy questions that may not yet have been considered or asked – in other words, he does not want to miss an opportunity to respond to a future question because certain data was not collected because it didn't respond to a specific policy question.

Secretary Howie notes that he supports the three new questions, but doesn't know whether DLLR currently has the capacity to respond to them. This will stretch the agency, but is committed to working to provide data relevant to those questions.

Mr. Rizzi explained that he does not feel the he has enough information at this time to vote on the Research Agenda. He plans to meet with staff after the meeting to get up to speed.

The Governing Board discussed whether they were approving just the changes to the Research Agenda, or were also being asked to reaffirm the prior approval of the original questions. Dr. Passmore noted that at the last meeting Dr. Howard (former Secretary of Higher Education) asked for a review of the Research Agenda due to concerns that, as written, MLDS Center would be engaged in research that was not longitudinal and could otherwise be addressed by one of the agencies. Accordingly, the significance of this new Research Agenda is the preamble which clearly articulates the scope and purpose of the MLDS Center research. Nonetheless, it was clarified that the proposal before the Board was to approve the entire Research Agenda which includes the original questions, the new questions, the preamble and the revised organization.

Ms. Shultz recommended not postponing the vote and asked for a motion to approve the revised Research Agenda with the understanding that the Governing Board and the Center would continue to work to ensure that the system and the agenda are responsive to the important policy questions facing the State. Secretary Howie offered the motion, which was seconded by Dr. Passmore. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Rizzi abstaining.

Update on Inter-Agency Agreements
Ms. O'Croinin advised that the agreements with UMB, MHEC, and MSDE are complete. MHEC and MSDE have two agreements each: an administrative agreement that sets employment terms for shared employees and addresses other operational issues; and a data sharing agreement. The two remaining agreements are an administrative and data sharing agreement with DLLR.

Adjournment
Ms. Shultz asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Dr. Passmore and seconded by Dr. Foose. The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ross Goldstein
Executive Director

Approved: July 18, 2014