

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

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

September 9, 2016
MINUTES

The meeting of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Governing Board was held on September 9, 2016, in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Board Room of the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. Dr. James Fielder, Chair of the Governing Board, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

The following Governing Board members were in attendance:

Dr. James Fielder, Secretary of Higher Education
Ms. Kelly Schulz, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
Dr. Ben Passmore, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Policy Research and Analysis, University System of Maryland (Designee for Chancellor Robert Caret)
Dr. Carol A. Williamson, Chief Academic Officer, Maryland State Department of Education (Designee for State Superintendent of Schools Karen B. Salmon)
Ms. Tina Bjarekull, President, Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association
Mr. Brad Phillips, Research Director, Maryland Association of Community Colleges (Designee for Executive Director Bernie Sadusky)
Dr. Clayton Wilcox, Superintendent of Washington County Public Schools
Mr. Steven Rizzi, Vice President, PAR Government
Ms. A.J. Brooks, Privacy Analyst, United States Department of Health and Human Services
Dr. Scot Tingle, Assistant Principal, Snow Hills High School
Mr. Christopher J. Biggs, Information Assurance Manager, Raytheon Company

The following MLDS Center staff members were in attendance:

Mr. Ross Goldstein, Executive Director, MLDS Center
Ms. Tejal Cherry, Director of System Management Branch, MLDS Center
Ms. Laia Tideman, Data Management Coordinator, MLDS Center
Dr. Angela Henneberger, Director of Research, MLDS Center
Dr. Laura Stapleton, Associate Director of Research, MLDS Center
Dr. Terry Shaw, Associate Director of Research, MLDS Center
Ms. Dawn O’Croinin, Assistant Attorney General for the Governing Board and MLDS Center
Ms. James Dixon-Bobbitt, Executive Associate, MLDS Center

Approval of June 10, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Dr. Fielder asked for a motion to approve the minutes from June 10, 2016 meeting. Dr. Passmore made a motion to approve the minutes that was seconded by Ms. Schulz. The motion was unanimously approved.

Promise Heights Grant Project

Dr. Fielder moved the presentation for agenda item five to be the first item of business in order to accommodate Dr. Richard Barth, Dean of the School of Social Work (SSW). Dr. Barth thanked the Board for allowing him to speak about an opportunity involving a recent funding announcement by the US Department of Education (USDOE) for a Promise Neighborhoods implementation grant.

Dr. Barth introduced himself and noted SSW's 25 year history of working with Maryland records in support of state agencies, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), child welfare and juvenile services. Dr. Barth also noted his involvement in the proposal for the current structure of the MLDS Center.

Dr. Barth began by providing background on Promise Heights, including the program's mission to, "create a comprehensive child, family, and community-building model in West Baltimore that provides children ages 0-23 with educational, social, health, and economic opportunities which allow them to thrive and succeed in work and family life." Work with Promise Heights (located in Upton and Druid Heights Neighborhoods in West Baltimore) began in 2006 and received federal funding through a U.S Department of Education planning grant in 2009. Dr. Barth gave a brief overview of the various solutions undertaken in Promise Heights neighborhoods. The neighborhood includes five community schools: Eutaw-Mashburn Elementary School, Furman L. Templeton Preparatory Academy, Coleridge-Taylor Elementary School, Booker T. Washington Middle School for the Arts, and the Renaissance Academy High School.

The current opportunity is for \$30 million over five years to provide a continuum of solutions which currently include the B'more Healthy Babies initiative, Parent University, Early Head Start, Judy Centers, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, career programs and connections with the UMB BioPark.

Applicants for the grant have to show the ability to rigorously evaluate the programs. The evaluation of the programs will be done in partnership with the Urban Institute. Two evaluation plans have been developed. One plan would simply match Baltimore City Public Schools to Promise Heights Schools and look at outcomes available from public use school level data to try to detect overall school level change. The other plan, which is preferable, would be to use the MLDS to match students within schools to see if students served by Promise Heights initiatives are obtaining better outcomes than comparable students in comparable schools that are not a part of the Promise Heights initiatives. Dr. Barth also noted that the required data elements are already in the MLDS so UMB would not have to collect it by survey which is expensive and less reliable. Dr. Barth also clarified that the data for this evaluation will reside in MLDS, it will not be shared outside of the system. The Urban Institute will only provide technical expertise.

Dr. Fielder asked whether five years was a sufficient amount of time to evaluate program outcomes. Dr. Barth responded that for some interventions, five years is sufficient time to determine whether the intervention is improving outcomes. Additionally, it is hoped that the work will generate interest and funding for continued outcome evaluation.

In conclusion, Dr. Barth stated that there were only five grants available nationwide. He feels that the SSW application has a strong chance and that one of the things that will set it apart will be the ability to compare outcomes that include the wide range of important indicators that have already compiled in the MLDS - especially transition to higher education and careers. Accordingly, Dr. Barth requested that the Governing Board approve the use of the MLDS data for evaluation of Promise Heights program outcomes. All costs of the project will be covered by the Promise Neighborhood award.

Dr. Henneberger, in her capacity as the Research Director, provided the Governing Board with her evaluation of the proposed project. The project supports the Center's core mission in a variety of ways:

- Evaluates a federally funded education programs;
- Provides funds to further develop the IT systems infrastructure to receive and incorporate program indicators into the MLDS;
- Provides funds to develop and test analytic models that can be used as the framework for future program evaluations;
- Enables the development of policies and procedures surrounding the use of MLDS data for program evaluation;
- Evaluates student groups "at risk" for poor educational and workforce outcomes;
- Examines non-academic indicators (e.g., school climate) of college and career readiness; and
- Will serve as a proof of concept for future education and workforce program evaluations.

The proposed project is also consistent with the Research Agenda. Specifically,

- Research Question 2 - What percentage of Maryland high school exiters go on to enroll in Maryland postsecondary education?
- Research Question 18 - What are the workforce outcomes for Maryland students who earn a high school diploma (via high school graduation or GED) but do not transition to postsecondary education or training?
- Research Question 20 - What are the workforce outcomes of Maryland high school non-completers?

Finally, there will be several research reports and Center dashboards that will detail the findings of this evaluation study. These research reports and dashboards will provide critical information about the education and workforce outcomes achieved by specific programs and implementation strategies. The reports and dashboards will also provide valuable information for school districts and policy makers working to improve the educational and workforce outcomes of at-risk students across the State.

Mr. Rizzi stated that there is a lot of things he likes about this project and the fact that it will analyze the specific impact of a program. However, his concern is timing - is five years long enough to raise longitudinal questions - or are these questions better suited for MSDE? Dr. Henneberger and Dr. Barth responded that for students in high school there will be opportunities for longitudinal analysis. Further, part of the grant requires the grant recipient to match funding. That additional funding will allow for the ongoing longitudinal analysis of the program outcomes.

In response to a question, Dr. Barth clarified that the researchers from the Urban Institute will not have access to the MLDS system or data. Instead they will provide technical consultation on statistical modeling and other research issues.

Ms. Bjarekull asked whether the data on Promise Heights program participation is already collected by the state. Dr. Barth responded that Promise Heights has a case management system that collects data on program participation. Specific data elements from that system will have to be collected by the Center and incorporated into the system. Ms. Tideman pointed out that any data element for this project would have to be added to the Data Inventory following Governing Board review and approval. In response to a question, Ms. O'Croinin stated that there were no legal issues that would prevent the inclusion of this additional data.

Ms. Schulz inquired about the specific labor data that will be utilized for the project. Dr. Barth responded that he anticipates that critical data elements will include information on career trajectory, including licenses, certification, and quarterly wages.

Governing Board Bylaws

Ross Goldstein began by noting that the Governing Board approved changes to the bylaws at the last meeting. Additional proposed changes have been proposed by individuals at the Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation (DLLR). Mr. Goldstein provided an overview of the DLLR proposed changes:

- Section 1.1 adds a definition of “quorum” to mean the presence of a majority of the members of the Board and indicated the need for a definition of “supermajority” (and proposed two-thirds of the members present).
- Section 2.1 adds new language establishing the requirements for membership to the Board, which are the requirements established under current law.
- Section 2.2 adds a provision clarifying that the Chair has the duty to enter into contracts and agreements that have been approved by the Board, including grants and interagency agreements.
- Section 5.2 adds language to clarify that the Center is responsible for ongoing compliance with Unemployment Insurance privacy and confidentiality laws, data sharing MOUs with partner agencies, and other relevant confidentiality and privacy laws. Also in that same section the bylaws specify that the Center may only conduct research that is pursuant to the Board-approved research agenda.
- Section 5.6 adds language to require approval of a State Education Authority prior to the Center’s participation with the grant.

Ms. Schulz clarified that the changes to Section 5.6 were intended to ensure that the Center provides notification to the agencies whose data would be used in a proposed grant funded project. The section could potentially be removed with the understanding that the MOUs must be taken under consideration when considering a grant funded project. However, Ms. Schulz stated that her preference was to have a section that directly addresses grants.

Mr. Rizzi asked whether the data sharing MOUs with the agencies have provisions for selective use of data. Ms. O’Croinin responded that there were no such provisions. The MOUs have provisions for data confidentiality and use consistent with state and federal laws. Mr. Rizzi then noted that research is generally governed by the Research Agenda which is established by the Board. However, the proposed bylaws change would give the agencies an opportunity to opt out of proposed research. Ms. O’Croinin agreed that the provision could be interpreted that way and also noted that whether the Board can delegate its statutory authority in this manner needs to be reviewed.

Ms. Schulz clarified that the intention of the provision was to provide the agencies time to review grant proposals to allow them sufficient time to ensure proper use of their data.

Ms. Bjarekull proposed adjusting the language to ensure that the agencies have time to verify that the project is consistent with the agency data use agreements and are able to inform the Governing Board accordingly.

Ms. Schulz noted that the State agencies have a fiduciary responsibility over the data that continues even after the data is shared with the Center. DLLR is not proposing executive veto power. Instead the goal is to create an opportunity to address how the data is used in the future and making sure a process is in place

moving forward. In response, Ms. O’Croinin proposed creating a timeline or process for how grant opportunities are presented to the Governing Board to ensure sufficient review.

Ms. O’Croinin also noted concerns about the proposed change to Section 5.2B4 which adds the requirement that all Center research be conducted pursuant to the Board approved Research Agenda. Specifically, this requirement would suggest that the Center could not respond to a research request from the General Assembly or Governor unless that question was already a part of the Research Agenda. Ms. Bjarekull responded that the requirement for a Research Agenda approved by the Governing Board was specifically for that reason - to ensure the Center was not running off in every direction based on numerous questions from legislators.

Dr. Passmore stated that since there did not appear to be consensus on the provision involving approval of grants, the legal team should craft the provision so that it provides a review process, but not veto power for the agencies. Dr. Passmore also noted the need for clarification on how the Governing Board should proceed in instances where there is a dispute between the various Assistants Attorney General over the legal sufficiency of a grant project. Finally, Dr. Passmore noted his disagreement with the proposed change to Section 5.2B3a adding “student and wage” to the general requirement to use of de-identified data in research and reporting. Dr. Passmore stated that adding “student and wage” is limiting and may not address a future unanticipated issue.

Dr. Fielder requested Ms. O’Croinin to provide appropriate edits to the bylaws to create an appropriate process for approving grant projects that would allow for agency review while not being too burdensome for the Center.

Dr. Williamson stated that MSDE can live with most of the proposed bylaws changes but agreed that Section 5.6 needed modification.

Ms. Bjarekull made a motion to approve all of the proposed bylaws changes except Section 5.6. In response, there was a discussion about the definition of supermajority and how that should be constituted. Ms. Bjarekull amended her motion to approve the proposed bylaws changes except:

1. The proposed insertion of “student and wage” in section 5.2B3a;
2. The proposed changes to Section 5.6; and
3. Define supermajority to mean two-thirds of the quorum present.

Dr. Passmore seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Approval of Promise Heights Grant Project

Dr. Passmore made a motion to approve the Center’s participation in the Promise Heights grant project, which was seconded by Mr. Rizzi. Ms. Schulz requested receipt of a list of the outcome measures the project will be considering. The motion was passed unanimously.

Dr. Fielder noted that several speakers had commented on prior contentious discussions. Dr. Fielder stated that he thought this “contentiousness” was also a good thing. The dynamic tensions brought out appropriate intellectual and emotional engagement in the work of the Board that will make it a stronger Board going forward.

Legal Update

Ms. O’Croinin reported that she, Assistant Attorney General for DLLR Kimberly Carney, and Laia Tiderman on behalf of MSDE, attended a regional meeting that explored the latest guidance from the U.S.

Department of Education and U.S. Department of Labor on linkages that are allowable under both U.S. ED laws and U.S. DOL laws with a focus on minimizing risk to confidential data while meeting the reporting requirements under the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Ms. O’Croinin addressed the issue of whether the MLDS Center is a state education authority (an issue also discussed during the current Governing Board meeting). The issue has been reviewed by Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) under U.S. ED. After reviewing state law, their opinion was that the Center does meet the definition of education authority as outlined in FERPA. However, they also concluded that it is a state law interpretation and as such, the issue is now before Adam Snyder, Chief of Opinions and Advice for a final ruling on the issue.

Ms. Schulz noted that DLLR data is also regulated by other statutes not just FERPA. Therefore, there needs to be ongoing clarification on use of workforce data. Ms. O’Croinin agreed and noted, for example, that FERPA has robust guidance on the issue of cell size suppression compared to Unemployment Compensation (UC) statute law which is less clear. In this case, the Center’s decision to apply suppression where cell sizes are 10 or less is actually much more conservative than the UC data standard of applying suppression where cell sizes are three or less.

In response to a question from Mr. Rizzi, Ms. O’Croinin responded that the consequence of being a state education authority would be more flexibility for sharing and use of data. However, this is limited by state statute which is more restrictive than FERPA in requiring all Center output to be aggregate de-identified information.

Dr. Passmore noted that DLLR stewardship of the labor data (as opposed to education data) is an important component that should also be acknowledged in the bylaws Section 5.6. Dr. Fielder agreed and asked Ms. O’Croinin to include such an acknowledgement in the bylaws.

Proposed Additions to the MLDS Research Agenda

Mr. Goldstein began by noting that the Research Agenda changes are proposed by staff. There were several questions on the agenda that were required research deliverables under the 2012 SLDS Grant. Those have been completed and staff is proposing to remove the questions. Staff is also proposing several new questions which Dr. Henneberger will address. Mr. Goldstein noted that one of the proposed questions is on early childhood. The preamble to the Research Agenda requires all work to focus on what happens to students before and after critical transitions and not on topics that could otherwise be researched by one partner agency using its own data. The proposed early childhood question explores a critical transition - but all the data comes from MSDE. In this case having the Center research this topic is advantageous for MSDE since the early childhood data is in a separate data system apart from their K-12 data system. MSDE is agreement with this additional question. Accordingly a footnote in the bylaws to allow this single agency question has been added.

Dr. Henneberger presented each of the proposed changes.

- Proposal #1 - the addition of an early childhood question: What is the impact of early childhood education experiences and programs on children’s school readiness and K-12 outcomes?
- Proposal #2 - the addition of a program evaluation question: Which educational programs help to academically prepare students to enter higher education and/or workforce? Dr. Henneberger noted that some of the changes, like this one, are being added to be consistent with the requirements of the Center established in state law (see Ed. Art. § 24-703(f)(5), Annotated Code of Maryland).

- Proposal #3 - remove question 5 regarding the inclusion of online education since that question has already been addressed through a research report completed by the Center.
- Proposal #4 - The Center's report on the inclusion of workforce data concluded that online education is taking on greater significance and should be studied by the Center. Therefore the proposed addition of question 13 asks: What are the postsecondary and workforce outcomes for students who take online courses and/or complete degrees online?
- Proposal #5 - remove question 5 regarding the training and retention of the early childhood workforce, since it has been directly addressed by a Center research report.
- Proposal #6 - the addition of question 22 on teaching outcomes of teachers prepared in Maryland institutions of higher education. This is another question that is being added to be consistent with the requirements of the Center established in state law (see Ed. Art. § 24-703(f)(5), Annotated Code of Maryland).

Ms. Bjarekull stated that the question on program evaluation in Proposal #2 is overly broad and would allow for any question or analysis. The role of the Board is to provide more specificity in order to establish priorities. Similarly, the question on teacher evaluation in Proposal #6 is also overly broad. There is a lot of merit in understanding teacher placement and retention. However, it could also be interpreted to mean that the Center should link student test scores, to teachers and then to the higher education institutions from which the teachers were graduated. Ms. Bjarekull noted that there is a Task Force on Next Generation of Teacher Evaluation that should be consulted on this question.

Mr. Rizzi initiated a discussion on the purpose of the Research Agenda and whether it was intended to be a scope of work for the Center or a to do list of specific projects. Mr. Goldstein and Ms. O'Croinin both noted that Research Agenda has thus far been a scope of work that establishes a broad framework for the Center to follow and organize around. Mr. Rizzi also stated that he views the Research Agenda as a scope of work and not a to do list. The questions should set a framework to ensure the Center is working on the right subjects. If the scope is too narrowly drawn it will result in less creativity for the researchers on how to answer the questions. Ms. Bjarekull reiterated that there is a need for more specificity in order to provide guidance, which is the purpose of the Governing Board. Dr. Passmore agreed with both points of view - the Research Agenda should be a scope of work, but one with enough specificity to appropriately guide the Center.

Next, there was a discussion on the types of output generated by the Center. Staff clarified that each question is operationalized by the staff and then reports, dashboards, presentations and data briefs are created in response.

Ms. Schulz discussed the P20 Council and its various workgroups. The P20 Council is required to submit a report to the General Assembly this December 15th which will contain the various recommendations of the workgroups. Those recommendations will include Research Agenda suggestions for the MLDS. Ms. Schulz proposed that the Board wait until that report is complete before changing the Research Agenda. She noted that the P20 Council has a broad range of subject matter experts who the Board should hear from when considering revising the Research Agenda.

Dr. Passmore stated that he agrees with deferring the research agenda, but asked to consider adding Proposal #1 regarding the impact of early childhood education. Ms. Schulz stated that it was important for the members to understand the addition of the early childhood question represents an important, and maybe precedent setting change. The Research Agenda specifically requires multi-agency data analysis. The is permitting single agency data analysis. Mr. Goldstein responded that while it is a change, the

fundamental principle of engaging in multi-agency analysis remains. This is a special exception that would not occur without the agreement of MSDE.

In response to questions from Mr. Rizzi and Ms. Brooks, staff stated that there is currently limited data for a question on the impact of early childhood education and a child's K-12 outcomes. However, as a matter of sound data governance, data collection should be based on a research need. Accordingly, establishing a question that has limited data is part of a process to help inform what the Center is building towards.

Dr. Williamson stated that the value of a strong early childhood program is a frequent issue before the General Assembly. The proposed research question would help evaluate the value of a strong early childhood program, which could inform the funding needs.

Dr. Passmore made a motion to approve the addition of the new Question 1 on the impact of early childhood education experiences and programs on children's school readiness and k-12 outcomes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Proposed Departmental Legislation

Mr. Goldstein stated that the proposed legislation would make changes to Education Article § 24-702(c), which states that, "the linkage of student and workforce data for the purpose of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System shall be limited to no longer than 5 years from the date of the latest attendance in any educational institution in the State." This provides limited time to understand a student's workforce outcomes.

Mr. Goldstein presented to options for amending the statute. First is to simply adjust the time period. The second option is to establish the time limitation within the interagency agreements for data sharing, as reviewed and approved by the Governing Board. Each agency data sharing agreement currently addresses the length of time data can be maintained by the Center. This would include the same approach for student and workforce data linkage.

In response to a question from Ms. Schulz, Ms. O'Croinin explained that each of the data sharing agreements currently permit MLDS to maintain records for 20 years. The one exception is that the DLLR memorandum only permits MLDS to maintain workforce records that have been matched to a student record. Non-matched records are returned to DLLR. Selecting option 1 with a 20 year limitation would be consistent with the data sharing agreements.

Mr. Rizzi and Dr. Passmore both agreed that increasing the student and workforce data linkage allows for more robust and meaningful longitudinal analysis. Dr. Passmore noted that addressing the de-linking requirement through MOUs would add a measure of flexibility that may prove to be important.

Dr. Passmore made a motion to recommend option 2 as a legislative proposal to the Governor's Legislative Office, which was seconded by Dr. Tingle. The motion was unanimously approved.¹

MICUA Request for Exemption for Synthetic Data Project

¹ Following the meeting, several members expressed confusion over the vote taken on the proposed legislative amendment. The confusion appeared to stem from repeated discussion of the term of 20 years, and then a vote being taken solely on Option 2, which does not contain a term limit. At the direction of the Chair and in consultation with counsel, the members were polled via email to clarify their vote on which legislative option they prefer. The members unanimously selected Option 1.

Ms. Bjarekull stated that the MICUA institutions were requesting that their data be excluded from the Synthetic Data Project. The institutions are supportive of the MLDS and believe outcomes should be used to address public policy. However, with regard to the synthetic data project, they have concerns over certain issues. They are concerned that the synthetic data will not be accurate, will not be timely and that the state should rely on findings from the actual data system. Further, MICUA institutions remain liable for the data shared with MLDS. This leaves them vulnerable to having to defend against a lawsuit, which would be a considerable burden on a small college. For these reasons, MICUA respectfully requests that its data be exempt from the Synthetic Data Project.

Dr. Fielder asked whether this request will stop the research from going forward. Mr. Goldstein responded that it will not have an impact on the project. The Board has authority to determine what data will go into the synthetic data set - in fact all data will be proposed to the Board in a few months for their review and approval. Finally, Mr. Goldstein noted that while he did not agree with the reasons, he does support MICUA's request, noting that he views them as a good partner and wants to be responsive to their concerns.

Mr. Rizzi asked whether there were outstanding legal issues. Ms. O'Croinin stated that the question of whether the research is a permissible use of the data under FERPA had been resolved. Federal authorities from PTAC and the Family Policy Compliance Center of the U.S. Department of Education have informed Maryland that the work of the grant falls under the audit and evaluation exception under FERPA.

Ms. Bjarekull reiterated MICUA's legal concerns that under FERPA data may only be used to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests, administer student aid programs; or improve instruction. FERPA does not permit student unit record data to be utilized by any researcher for any purpose.

Ms. O'Croinin responded that the MICUA was citing the wrong FERPA exception. The Center is working under the audit and evaluation exception and that this type of work is permitted, as confirmed by PTAC. Further, if the project is successful, the synthetic data created would not be subject to FERPA at all since it is no longer actual data relating to students.

Dr. Passmore noted that because MICUA has concerns it is reasonable to accommodate those concerns since it doesn't hurt the research or funding.

Dr. Fielder noted that the request to withdraw data is a permissible request. Dr. Fielder did note the lingering legal issues and asked Ms. O'Croinin to obtain written documentation from the federal authorities on these issues.

Ms. Schulz made a motion to approve MICUA's request for exemption from the project. The motion was unanimously approved.

Data Gap Analysis

Mr. Goldstein noted that the Data Gap Analysis was done at the request of the P-20 Council Workgroup on the MLDS, for which Mr. Rizzi is the chair. This was a good exercise to catalog all the gaps in the data and analyze their cause and effect. The document is broken out into the three segments: Workforce, Higher Education, and K-12. Staff also established a priority list. The first item on that list is the 5-year delinking, which the proposed legislation will address. Other high priority issues are as follows:

- Lack of employment data for federal and military employees;
- Lack of part-time/full time employment indicator in the wage data (the MLDS only receives the wage earned, not the hours worked, so it is not possible to accurately determine if a wage is based on full time or part time employment);
- Lack of student discipline data, which is specifically prohibited under state law; and
- Lack of Standard Occupation Classification Codes (the MLDS only has industry codes and therefore only has information on the industry in which the person works - not what they do).

Mr. Rizzi encouraged the Governing Board members to review the document and determine whether there are additional issues of interest that should be included.

IT Security Audit

Mr. Goldstein began by noting that at the last meeting the IT security firm that is conducting the audit indicated that the audit would be done by this meeting. However, the audit is not complete, but Ms. Cherry will provide an update. Mr. Goldstein also noted that staff had a special briefing for Mr. Rizzi and Mr. Biggs, both of whom are data security experts. It was a good opportunity to take advantage of their expertise by getting their feedback on the audit process and findings to date and receive input for moving forward.

Ms. Cherry began by noting that the Center is engaged in a voluntary, independent IT security audit that is being performed as part of a statewide initiative to assess the security of various departments. The goal is to create a secure network architecture and establish a new set of security processes and procedures. The contract for the audit is through the Department of Information Technology.

The audit objectives include:

1. Conduct a cybersecurity risk assessment targeted at specific assets and networks associated with the Center;
2. Identify recommendations for the remediation of risks found during the assessment; and
3. Report any identified risks and associated recommendations to stakeholders within the MLDS and DoIT.

The auditor has provided an interim report. Ms. Cherry provided an overview of the components of the review and highlighted findings from the report.

1. Physical security - physical security is robust, but noted that the Center needs to disable unused network connections;
2. Threat assessment - determined the value of the data in the system to be \$125 million, which would be an attractive target for threat actors;
3. Automated scans and assessments - determined the security posture is good but could be improved with a review of the controls in place, including updates and patches to systems and software;
4. Security risk assessment rating - the Center's rating is 62 out of 100, due to lack of web filtering and WiFi access in the building, which are both managed by MSDE; and
5. Secure code review - determined that there is no direct connection or accessibility from the html on static webpages and recommended constant monitoring of primary software for updates and patches.

The next step is to complete the penetration testing. Final report will be prepared by December 1, 2016. Mr. Rizzi asked about whether the Center staff is running antivirus software. Ms. Cherry responded that

staff has updated all antivirus software and is planning to incorporate administrative procedures to require monthly reporting to management on antivirus scans and findings.

Review of Center Output

Ms. Tiderman began by showing the *Dashboards and Reports* section of the MLDS Center website. Then Ms. Tiderman highlighted new dashboards that have not yet been published (they are in final review with the agency partners and will be published within the next week). The first dashboard shows Maryland public high school students who enroll in postsecondary institutions by the year in which they enroll. The chart shows the majority of students enrolling in the fall immediately after graduation. The next largest group is students enroll during the year after high school graduation other than the fall. The table demonstrates that students continue to enroll for the first time through year five and beyond.

The next series of seven dashboards address High School Transitions to Workforce. The dashboards focus on the workforce outcomes of Maryland non-completers, which include persisters and dropouts. The dashboards show median income and the industry in which the students are employed.

In response to a question from Dr. Fielder, Ms. Cherry responded that the Center does monitor web traffic using Google Analytics. The information has been reported in a monthly report and staff intends to continue reporting that information.

Mr. Phillips asked whether the dashboard showing enrollment by year allows the user to drill down to determine the segment of postsecondary institution attended by the students. Mr. Goldstein responded that there was a dashboard that breaks out postsecondary attendance by institution type, but the breakdown is not available by year.

Old and New Business

There was no old business or new business.

Final remarks

Dr. Fielder mentioned that MHEC has been heavily involved in the issues surrounding the closure of ITT Tech. They have been working on finding ways to accommodate the 653 students (which includes 100 veterans) - noting the work of Anne Arundel Community College and Baltimore City Community College. There is information on the MHEC website and Dr. Fielder encouraged everyone to look for opportunities to help these students.

Adjournment

Dr. Fielder reminded the members that the next meeting will be held on December 9th at 9 a.m. at the same location.

Respectfully submitted,
Ross Goldstein
Executive Director

Approved: December 9, 2016