



Longitudinal Data System Governing Board
Meeting Minutes
June 8, 2018

The meeting of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Governing Board was held on June 8, 2018, in the Maryland State Department of Education Board Room, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. Dr. James Fielder, Chairman of the Governing Board, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

The following Governing Board members were in attendance:

- Dr. James Fielder, Secretary of Higher Education Commission
- Dr. Karen Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools
- Ms. Kelly Schulz, Secretary of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
- Dr. Nancy Shapiro, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs & Special Assistant to Chancellor (Designee for Chancellor Robert Caret)
- Ms. Tina Bjarekull, President of the Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association
- Mr. Christopher J. Biggs, Information Assurance Manager, Raytheon Company
- Mr. Steven Rizzi, Vice President, PAR Government
- Dr. Farzad Moazzami, Acting Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Associate Professor of Engineer, Morgan State University (Designee for Dr. David Wilson, President)
- Ms. A.J. Brooks, Congressional Relations Officer, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, Department of Veterans Affairs
- Dr. Janet Wilson, Associate Superintendent, Office of Shared Accountability, Montgomery County Public Schools (Attending for Superintendent Jack Smith)

The following MLDS Center staff were in attendance:

- Mr. Ross Goldstein, Executive Director, MLDS Center
- Ms. Tejal Cherry, Director of System Management Branch, MLDS Center
- Ms. Laia Tiderman, Data Management Coordinator, MLDS Center
- Dr. Angela Henneberger, Director of Research, MLDS Center and Research Assistant Professor, University of Maryland, School of Social Work
- Ms. Ann Kellogg, Director of Reporting Services, MLDS Center
- Ms. Dawn O’Croinin, Assistant Attorney General
- Ms. Jamese Dixon-Bobbitt, Executive Associate, MLDS Center

Approval of the December 8, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Dr. Fielder asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2018 meeting. Mr. Rizzi made a motion to approve the minutes that was seconded by Mr. Biggs. The motion was unanimously approved.

Summary of Center Output

Ms. Kellogg began the presentation on Center output by discussing data requests. Through June of 2018, the Center received 20 data requests, compared to 16 at the same time in 2017. Data requests are also becoming more complex and detailed. In several instances, the data requests are laying the groundwork for new Center output. The overarching theme of the data requests is employment and wages earned by high school and postsecondary graduates. The data requests are primarily from partner agencies and various higher education institutions. There were also several requests from the Department of Legislative Services during the recently completed legislative session.

Dr. Fielder asked whether there were also increases in website traffic. Ms. Cherry responded that there were increases from last year. Mr. Goldstein noted that the Center was making more use of GovDelivery, an email service that allows the Center to send blast emails to all of its subscribers and contacts. The Center uses this service to announce new content to the website with the goal increasing website visits. Ms. Schulz noted that DLLR forwards the MLDS Center emails out to their stakeholders as well.

Next, Ms. Kellogg discussed the Center's collaborative engagements, including work with College Compact, a regional group working to establish outcome measures on their P20 Connects program (a civic engagement program for high school and college students). Dr. Henneberger discussed the work for Senator Ferguson on the impact of student and school level concentrated poverty on student outcomes. The research was presented to Senator Ferguson and will be presented to the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education later in June or early July. In response to a question from Dr. Fielder, Dr. Henneberger responded that the MLDS data does not support research on unemployment.

Finally, Ms. Kellogg highlighted the activities of the Center to increase output in a variety of areas. In addition to new dashboards, the Center has created new types of output including *Information Briefs* which highlight interesting data points from dashboards and *Research Spotlights*, which provide a summarized version of complex research reports. Dr. Henneberger noted that in addition to the research output, the Research Branch has greatly improved its ability to work with the MLDS data to support analyses for causal inferences.

Next, Mr. Goldstein presented the Center's *Research and Output Plan*. The Plan was developed to inform the Board of the Center plans during the upcoming (fiscal) year. This is the first time the Center has produced this type of plan. Now that the Center is fully staffed and more experienced with the data system and creating output, this type of planning is possible. It is also becoming more of a necessity as demands on the Center's time and resources increase. The Center staff developed the plan by reviewing various state policy and planning documents, past requests and topics of interest, and by receiving input and a final review by the Research and Policy Advisory Board. The Plan identifies required output, such as the Annual Report and the Dual Enrollment Report and it identifies other priority areas where the Center will focus its efforts. Dr. Henneberger noted that there are three research priorities: (1) completing

in progress works, (2) complete in-depth statistical analyses to support causal inferences where appropriate on various topics including different pathways from high school into college and the workforce, different studies examining the role of student and school-level poverty on postsecondary and workforce outcomes, and studies examining the relationship between characteristics of teacher preparation programs; and (3) technical documentation to guide staff on the use of the system, data, appropriate methods, and best practices. In response to a question from Mr. Rizzi, Dr. Henneberger clarified that the analysis of teacher preparation programs would not analyze individual teachers, but teachers in the aggregate.

Ms. Kellogg provided an overview of the four reporting priorities: (1) investigating different school to work pipelines for critical workforce areas in teaching, allied health, and STEM; (2) defining and standardizing key metrics to measure earnings for high school and college graduates; (3) continued work on the SOAR report; and exploring the workforce outcomes of students who exit Maryland public schools without graduating and earn a GED. In response to a question from Ms. Schulz, Ms. Tideman explained that even though a GED is equivalent to a Maryland high school diploma, since they are from different data sources, the Center can analyze the outcomes for just the GED students.

Legislative Session Updates

Mr. Goldstein began noting that there were three bills that had an impact on the MLDS Center.

1. Senate Bill 978, *Career Preparation Act*. This bill, which passed, requires various entities to provide MHEC with data on who receives business licenses, industry certificates, and vocational certificates. In turn, MHEC is required to provide that data to the Center. The bill also requires the Center to submit an annual report on wages earned, hours worked per week, and industry of employment for high school graduates during the first five years after graduation. In response to a question from Mr. Rizzi, Mr. Goldstein clarified that the Center cannot report the hours worked only the quarterly wages. Ms. Schulz also noted that student work permits are issued through DLLR and, while not part of the required report, it might be a topic to include in the report as it is an interest among many legislators.
2. House Bill 378, *State Department of Education - Social Security Number of Students*. This bill, which did not pass, would have prohibited MSDE from collecting, holding, or storing Social Security Numbers (SSN). Dr. Salmon clarified that MSDE does not collect SSN. MSDE only uses its own assigned student identification numbers. Mr. Goldstein noted that having an SSN is needed to link a K-12 record to a workforce record because workforce records only have the first three letters of the last name, the first letter of the first name, and the SSN. Accordingly, without an SSN, matching is not possible. If the student has gone on to postsecondary, an SSN is generally available from the postsecondary institutions.

Mr. Goldstein, next briefed the Board about an issue concerning data received from the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA). Since 2015, the Center has received data from the MVA, including name, date of birth, address, race, gender, and SSN. This data helps the Center fill in missing data from student records - most significantly, missing SSN. Recently, MVA was audited by the Social Security Administration (SSA). SSA maintains that whenever a SSN is

verified (which is all of the SSNs that MVA receives) the SSN becomes SSA's property and SSA's rules dictate when that information can be re-disclosed. Generally, re-disclosure is not permitted, unless it meets one of the enumerated exceptions. MVA has already removed SSN from the data it sends to the Center.

Mr. Goldstein and Ms. O'Croinin spoke with the Regional Data Exchange Coordinator and will appeal this decision to her supervisor. In addition, Ms. O'Croinin noted that she plans to work on this issue with other attorneys in the Attorney General's Office for further legal review. Other agencies rely on this data and Maryland law mandates that MVA share it with other state and local agencies for purposes of carrying out their statutory duties. Ms. O'Croinin stated that she disagrees with SSA's logic that the SSN is their property just because it has been verified, noting that a Maryland citizens voluntarily provide the SSN to MVA and that the number resides in MVA's system. In response to a question from Dr. Shapiro, Ms. O'Croinin stated that other states also use data from their driver's license offices and that she and Mr. Goldstein have made inquiries to determine if other states are similarly affected. In response to a question from Ms. Schulz, Mr. Goldstein noted that the Unemployment Insurance data is not verified by SSA and therefore it is not subject to this issue. However, UI Claims data is verified and therefore may face the same issue. Finally, in response to a question from Dr. Felder, Ms. O'Croinin noted that SSA's position is not based on data security, it is an issue of ownership of the SSN and who controls its use and disclosure.

3. House Bill 823, *Education - Public School Teachers - Preparation*. This bill, which also did not pass, would have required the Center to produce a dashboard on the outcomes of teachers who receive a degree from a Maryland teacher preparation programs. Mr. Goldstein noted that staff will work to develop dashboards that meet most of the requirements in the bill. Dr. Salmon noted that MSDE is also interested in investigating teacher certification programs and outcomes and suggested the Center work collaboratively with MHEC and MSDE on the dashboards.

Next, Mr. Goldstein addressed the upcoming 2019 legislative session. Agency legislative proposals are due to the Governor's office in early September. Given that the Board meets in mid-September, proposals need to be considered at the June meeting. Mr. Goldstein noted that staff considered various topics and issues but ultimately had no recommendations for agency legislation for the 2019 legislative session.

Fiscal Year 2019 Budget

Mr. Goldstein referred to the memorandum in the folder and then provided an overview of the budget development process. The Department of Budget and Management sets the agency's target. The agency then budgets to the target. The budget is then presented to the General Assembly, who can only make cuts to the budget. The General Assembly did not make any cuts to the Center's budget, but the target started with a reduction of \$83,000 or 4% overall. The reason for and the mitigation of the reduction involves the U.S. Department of Education's State Longitudinal Data System Grant, for the Synthetic Data Project (SDP). The fact that there is an additional funding source caused DBM to reduce the Center's general fund appropriation. The Center does plan to offset some of the information technology

costs with federal grant funds, which is a legitimate use of those funds since the SDP project utilizes the Center's technology infrastructure.

Now that the Center is fully staffed, 72% of the funds go to salaries and the remaining 28% is divided between the Research Branch (18%) and IT and general expenses (10%). Mr. Goldstein also noted that the memorandum includes an object and subobject breakdown of the proposed spending. In response to a question from Dr. Fielder, Mr. Goldstein responded that the reduction in funding available for equipment would not be an issue since the Center was able, with Governing Board approval, to fully replace all Center computers during the 2018 fiscal year.

Ms. Schulz pointed out that the Center's budget is not reduced - only general funds were reduced. In fact, the Center's budget increased by \$2 million dollars. As a general matter, when federal funds are received, state agencies are expected to try and spend that money in place of general funds. Mr. Goldstein agreed with Ms. Schulz, but noted that there are limitations on the use of federal funds.

Mr. Goldstein noted that the federal grant is only for one more year. Accordingly, Mr. Goldstein has explored the possibility of submitting an over-the-target request for FY 2020. The Center's salaries consume a disproportionate share of the agency's funds and in future years when grant funds are not available there will not be sufficient resources to manage the office or the system infrastructure. Further, uncertainty on the future of the Center's Oracle licenses, has a major impact on future budgets. The Center currently shares an Oracle license with MSDE's RTTT program. However, RTTT is being phased out, leaving the Center in need of its own Oracle license, which would be very expensive. Ms. Cherry is exploring numerous options with Oracle, MSDE, and the Department of Information Technology.

Ms. Schulz suggested the Center look into receiving reimbursement from the agencies that receive research and reports from the Center (similar to the model used to fund the Governor's Workforce Development Board). Dr. Shapiro suggested that staff consult with the managers of the Maryland Education Enterprise Consortium, which has negotiated very good rates for a variety of software and services for its member organizations. Mr. Rizzi suggested that the Center include an Oracle license cost reimbursement as a line item in future grant budgets; noting that this is not a way to sustain the agency, but may be an effective way to offset some costs.

Ms. Schulz made a motion to approve the budget plan as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bjarekull and unanimously approved

2018 MLDS Data Inventory

Ms. Tideman began by noting that the Data Inventory is reviewed by and, if additions or deletions are made, approved by the Governing Board each year. This year there are not a lot of changes. The one addition is the inclusion of guidelines for the use of publicly available aggregate data sources. Often Center reports and analyses need context to help the users interpret and understand the information being presented. That context is often available in the form of an publicly available aggregate data sources. For example, the Center used MIT's Living Wage Calculator when developing its analysis for the More Jobs for Maryland Act Report.

After consulting with the Research and Policy Advisory Board staff made the determination to define criteria for using publicly available aggregate data sources instead of listing each source in the data inventory. Further, the IPEDS data, which was part of the data inventory is proposed for removal. That data is complex and frequently changing and therefore it is not a good use of Center resources to load the data in the system. Instead, a researcher can easily obtain the data as needed directly from the U.S. Department of Education.

Ms. Bjarekull noted that currently staff and researchers can use publicly available aggregate data sources, run comparisons, and document that fact in the report. Ms. Tiderman agreed, adding that the inclusion of the statement in the Data Inventory is intended to set a standard and create transparency. Ms. Bjarekull also asked who would make the determination of the sufficiency and accuracy of an external data source? Ms. Tiderman said that it would ultimately be the decision of the researcher, with input from the Research and Policy Advisory Board.

Mr. Rizzi and Ms. Bjarekull questioned whether the data inventory was the appropriate place for a statement on the proper use of publicly available aggregate data, noting that an inventory should be limited to a list of the data that the Center actually has and manages. Instead they proposed adding the policy to the Data Reporting Standards and a research policy document.

Mr. Rizzi made a motion to approve the proposed Data Inventory, but removing the section on inclusion and use of publicly available aggregate data. Mr. Biggs seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Old Business

None.

New Business - Grants

External Researcher

Mr. Goldstein reported that the Center received an application from an external researcher under the new *Policies and Procedures for External Researchers and Grant Funded Projects*. The applicant is Dr. Rachel Durham who is affiliated with the Baltimore Education Research Consortium and is an Associate Professor at Johns Hopkins University. The proposed topic is how do postsecondary workforce indicators relate to college readiness indicators? This project starts with the premise that state-level college and career readiness has focused primarily on academic readiness for college, with less research on career readiness. However, there are a significant number of high school graduates working full time after high school without enrolling in college. This is especially true in Baltimore City, which is the focus of the study. Dr. Durham hopes to develop indicators of readiness for the workforce and/or college.

Mr. Goldstein also noted that Dr. Durham applied for a grant to support the project from the Spencer Foundation. She did not seek Center support for the grant. If the grant is not received, Dr. Durham will hold off on the research until she finds funding to support her work.

Mr. Goldstein noted that the proposed project meets the key requirements established in the procedures of asking a cross-sector question and being responsive to the Governing Board's Research Agenda. The review process laid out in the procedures was also completed. Staff reviewed the application and a presentation was made by Dr. Durham to the Research and Policy Advisory Board. While there were comments and suggestion throughout the review process, at each stage of the review the recommendation was to approve the application. Mr. Goldstein also noted that Dr. Durham has the requisite expertise and capabilities and is a proven researcher who has successfully used Center data (as a temporary researcher on a project for Baltimore's Promise). Finally, Mr. Goldstein recommended the Board's approval of the application, noting that it met all of the requirements and would be informative for policy makers statewide.

In response to a question from Dr. Fielder, Mr. Goldstein stated that the project timeline (pending funding) is one year and that the project does not propose using any outside data sources.

Dr. Shapiro made a motion to approve the External Researcher and Grant Funded Project Application submitted by Dr. Durham. Mr. Rizzi seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. Ms. Schulz asked Mr. Goldstein to update the Governing Board on whether the project gets funded.

IES Grant

Dr. Henneberger notified the Board of a Request for Applications from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). The grant is for the establishment of researcher-practitioner partnership in education research affecting a high priority issue. Submissions are due on August 23rd and Dr. Henneberger plans to pursue this opportunity. In response to a question from Dr. Shapiro, Dr. Henneberger noted that she has plans to meet with staff at USM, MHEC, and MSDE to collaborate on this grant opportunity.

Grant Award

Dr. Henneberger reported that Dr. Kenneth Elpus, Professor in the College of Music at the University of Maryland was awarded a grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). The research will focus on IB program students who took arts classes and compare their long-term education and workforce outcomes to IB students who did not take arts classes. Mr. Goldstein noted that this grant was submitted to the Center through the grant application process. In response to a question from Ms. Bjarekull, Dr. Henneberger stated that music education would be the primary focus.

Mr. Rizzi asked how the Center identifies and pursues grants? In response, Dr. Henneberger stated that it is part of her job to find grant opportunities and Ms. Tideman said that all of the staff is on the lookout for various partnerships and opportunities to fund the work of the Center.

Finally, Dr. Fielder congratulated for the staff on maturing the Center to a point where it can effectively and successfully pursue grant opportunities and different research initiatives, noting that it makes the job of the Governing board much easier.

Closing

Dr. Fielder wished everyone a pleasant summer and reminded them that the next meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2018. The meeting concluded at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ross Goldstein
Executive Director

Approved: September 21, 2018