MLDS CENTER
Maryland Longitudinal Data System

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Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center Governing Board
Meeting Minutes for September 13, 2024

The meeting of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Governing Board was held on September 13, 2024, via teleconference. Ms. Portia Wu, Chairman of the Governing Board called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

The following Governing Board members were in attendance:
Ms. Portia Wu, Secretary, Maryland Department of Labor
Dr. Sanjay Rai, Secretary, Maryland Higher Education Commission
Dr. Jennifer Lynch, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Education & Engagement, University System of
    Maryland (Designee for Dr. Jay Perman, Chancellor)
Dr. John Irvine, Director, Office of Research and Evaluation, Maryland Department of Juvenile Service
    (Designee for Secretary Schiraldi)
Mr. Matt Power, President, Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association
Dr. Monica Randall, Deputy Executive Director,Maryland Association of Community Colleges (Designee
    for Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director)
Dr. Cheryl Rollins, Director of Institutional Research, Morgan State University (Designee for President
    Wilson)
Mr. Jason Dykstra, Chief Accountability Officer, Instructional Data Division, Anne Arundel County
    Public Schools
Ms. Laurie Kendall-Ellis, Executive Director, State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners
Ms. Hussainatu Blake, Education and Workforce Strategist, Patrick J. McGovern Foundation

The following MLDS Center staff were in attendance:
Mr. Ross Goldstein, Executive Director, MLDS Center
Dr. Angela Henneberger, Director of Research, MLDS Center and Research Assistant Professor,
    University of Maryland, School of Social Work
Dr. Ann Kellogg, Director of Reporting Services, MLDS Center, and MHEC Liaison
Ms. Molly Abend, Data Management Coordinator, MLDS Center, and MSDE Liaison
Mr. Roy Enehiroana, Data Analyst, MLDS Center, and Labor Liaison
Ms. Tejal Cherry, Chief Information Officer, MLDS Center
Ms. Jeaneen Johnson, Assistant Attorney General

Approval of the Meeting Minutes
Ms. Wu asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 14, 2024 meeting. Dr. Rai made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Dykstra. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Wu noted the Governor's keen interest in data driven decisions, which highlights the important work of the MLDS Center and the need to ensure that the data sharing partner agencies on the Board are using the Center's information and promoting the work to a broader audience.

Census Bureau Data Sharing
Dr. Rai began by noting that data sharing with the U.S. Census Bureau (Census) for the purpose of participating in the Post Secondary Outcomes Explorer (PSEO) program has been discussed in prior meetings. Dr. Rai stated that MHEC will provide the necessary college graduate data to Census for integration into PSEO. Dr. Kellogg further explained that data would include college enrollment, degree information, and student characteristics. Dr. Kellogg explained that preparing the data for Census will be a large undertaking. For example, determining which students count as enrolled requires analyzing two million records. So, while MHEC is excited about the project, there are capacity constraints. MHEC will explore opportunities to fund the work. Dr. Kellogg explained that, as the higher education authority in the state, MHEC is the right agency to lead this effort, including participation with the PSEO coalition, which seeks to shape higher education policy nationally (and also noting that MLDSC does not set policy).   Dr. Kellogg stated that she has developed project parameters and timelines and the assistant Attorney General for MHEC is reviewing the Census data sharing agreement.

Mr. Power noted that last year, legislation was passed to allow the MLDS Center to participate with PSEO. This legislation was sought in part because capacity was an issue for MHEC. The memo from MHEC that the Governing Board received, indicates that nothing will happen until additional staffing and/or funding are received by MHEC. That will result in significantly delaying Maryland's participation with PSEO. In response, Secretary Rai assured Mr. Power that MHEC has already started working on plans to provide data to PSEO. Dr. Kellogg elaborated that MHEC is looking for opportunities for grant funding (which some other states received) to support the work needed to structure the data for PSEO. Dr. Kellogg also noted that the state may be able to provide recent cohorts (AY 2022 to present) to PSEO relatively quickly. It is the older cohorts (AY 2014 through AY 2021) that will require significant time and resources to accurately convert HEGIS codes to CIP codes.   Dr. Kellogg stated that she will provide updates to the Governing Board at the next meeting.

Center Output
Reporting
Dr. Kellogg provided the following updates on the progress made to address the FY 25 priorities, which include: analysis of the non-credit/workforce training data and earnings pre and post completion; a refresh of the *Brain Gain Report*; a refresh of the *Working While in College Report*; work on the *Career Preparation Expansion Act Report* (workforce outcomes of high school graduates five years after graduation); early completion and release of the *Dual Enrollment Report*; completion of a new interactive dashboard on higher education participation by youth experiencing homelessness in high school; working on data tables requested DJS to support their annual report; completed data tables to support a DHS reporting need on postsecondary enrollment for youth that experienced foster care; completed data tables for Labor on LACES outcomes to meet federal reporting requirements; working with the Governor's Workforce Development Board to support the work of the CTE Committee; providing data tables to behavioral health investment fund to support their analyses; and working to complete a report on post-release workforce outcomes for inmates who completed a correctional education program.

Next Dr. Kellogg highlighted the major initiative that the Center undertook in support of the Governor's ENOUGH Act grant program. The Center was asked to provide a series of tables looking at nine student measures, with 12 disaggregations in 13 jurisdictions in the first set of requests and then a separate table for all 120 grant applicants for a specific set of census blocks. This resulted in approximately 150 data requests. This was a massive effort. Dr. Kellogg noted the hard work of Alex Handler, who developed tools in Power BI to complete the task, and the data team, who supported the effort by reprioritizing their work to make sure all needed data elements had been loaded.

Finally, Dr. Kellogg showed the Governing Board the MLDS Center's website, including the new homepage design, the *Brain Gain Report*, the *Associate's Degree Report* with an interactive map, and the homeless youth/college enrollment dashboard.

Ms. Wu noted her appreciation for the new content and asked whether the Center provides briefings to stakeholders. Dr. Kellogg noted that pre-COVID the Center provided webinars and briefings to stakeholders and would be happy to resume that type of outreach.

Research Branch
Dr. Henneberger presented the Research Branch's work during the first quarter of the fiscal year. Dr. Henneberger noted that there are currently 22 in progress research projects, including the following: a project led by Dr. Frim Ampaw[1] on opportunity gaps in taking and passing advanced coursework in Maryland and examining how those opportunity gaps relate to post-secondary outcomes, with a particular focus on equity; a project led by Dr. Henneberger, in collaboration with Dr. Wade Jacobsen[2], examining the workforce outcomes for justice involved students that builds off of prior MLDS Center research and explores the hypothesis that educational outcomes may be the mechanism through which DJS involvement relates to workforce outcomes; and projects focused on producing high quality and diverse teachers. One of the teacher projects is being led by Dr. Jane Lincove,[3] who was awarded an SLDS state policy making grant from the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. The project will examine the teaching pipeline and policies to help improve that pipeline over time. In addition, Dr. David Blazer[4] continues to work on projects related to the teacher pipeline and has advanced several publications. Finally, Dr. Terry Shaw[5] is working on a project examining the education and labor outcomes for students who experienced out-of-home placement and the overlap between out-of-home placement and DJS involvement.

On the topic of stakeholder engagement Dr. Henneberber noted that the Research Branch has been working to repackage research output. Instead of having a 30 to 50 page report, the Research Branch is adopting a research brief template which is a three-page report that is geared to policymakers. The brief will provide easy to understand key takeaways and implications of the research.

Finally, Dr. Hennebeger highlighted the work being conducted on the methodological research priorities, including research by Dr. Tracy Sweet[6] applying data science or machine learning algorithms to study

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[1] MLDS Center Research Branch Associate Director and Professor at Morgan State University
[2] Professor, University of Maryland, College Park, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
[3] Professor, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, School of Public Policy
[4] Professor, University of Maryland, College Park, College of Education
[5] Professor, University of Maryland, Baltimore, School of Social Work
[6] Professor, University of Maryland, College Park, College of Education

applied, education topics of interest to the state. Dr. Sweet is focusing on whether machine learning algorithms predict outcomes equally, across different student groups. Finally, Dr. Henneberger noted that the synthetic data project, another methodological research project, continues to be of interest to a national audience. The project was part of the 2015 SLDS Grant awarded to MSDE.   IES published an SLDS Issue Brief in 2017 (*Maryland's Synthetic Data Project*) and asked for an updated brief this year, which was published on the IES website as a four-page spotlight that highlights the outcomes of the project.

Data Inventory

Ms. Molly Abend stated that she is requesting Board approval for the addition of several new data elements to the Data Inventory.

Proposed Additions
The first set of proposed data elements are additions to existing data collections.

Attendance Data from MSDE - MSDE collects enrollments and attendance data as part of their September 30th Attendance collection. The following two data elements were previously approved and collected as part of the standalone Census collection, but now must be approved for inclusion in the September Attendance collection. The data elements for inclusion in the Data Inventory are below.

      1. Geolocation ID
      2. Maryland Neighborhood Tier (MNT)

P*ostsecondary Data from MHEC* - MHEC has added a new element, Institution-Assigned Student Identifier, to their established student-level data collections.[7] The Institution-Assigned Student Identifier replaces Local Campus Student ID. For 2024-2025 the new element is optional, but will be required in 2025-2026.

      1. Institution-Assigned Student Identifier

MHEC is also adding a data element to the Degree Information System (DIS) collection. The data element, Advanced Standing, indicates a student has advanced standing through coursework or received a degree prior to graduating from high school. This data element is specifically about transcripted college credits such as dual enrollment and early middle college, but not AP course credit or college credit earned in the summer after high school graduation. For 2024-2025 the new element is optional, but will be required in 2025-2026.

      1. Advanced Standing

Board Action: Mr. Powers made a motion to approve the MSDE and MHEC data elements, which was seconded by Mr. Dykstra. The Board unanimously approved the addition of the data elements.

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[7] Degree Information System (DIS), Enrollment Information System (EIS), End of Term System (EOTS), External Credit System (ECS), Financial Aid Information System (FAIS), Maryland Approved Program Completer System (MAPCS), Student Course Registration System (SCRS), Workforce Training Completers System (WTCS), and Workforce Training Registration System (WTRS)

The next set of proposed additions to the data inventory are Criminal Records Data from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS).

The Division of Correction (DoC) within DPSCS collects data on inmates who have been sentenced to a term of 18 months or longer. The data elements proposed for inclusion are limited to identity of the inmate (for data matching purposes), the inmate's release date, and reason for release.

1. State Identification Number
2. Control Number
3. First Name
4. Middle Name
5. Last Name
6. Generational Suffix
7. Social Security Number
8. Date of Birth
9. Release Date
10. Release Reason

Board Action: Mr. Dykstra made a motion to approve the proposed criminal records data, which was seconded by Dr. Rollins. The Board unanimously approved the new additions to the Data Inventory.

The final set of data are temporary additions to the data inventory.

An Evaluation of Intensive High School Mentorship for Youth at Risk of Dropping Out - Researchers from the University of Notre Dame have requested the inclusion of temporary external data in the MLDS. The data will facilitate their evaluation of Thread of Baltimore, Maryland's high school mentorship program, which is an intervention designed to assist underperforming students at risk of dropping out of school. At the last meeting, the Governing Board approved this project. The data elements proposed for temporary addition are below.

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Student ID
4. Date of Birth
5. Gender
6. School
7. Year
8. Enrolled
9. Ineligible
10. Lowest Quartile (GPA)
11. Cutoff (On Recruitment List)
12. Interview
13. Rankf
14. Rankm
15. Selected
16. Recruit Through
17. Contacted
18. Unable to be Contacted
19. Rank
20. Block
21. Block ID
22. Sample

Board Action: Mr. Power made a motion to approve the temporary data elements, which was seconded by Ms. Kendall-Ellis. The Board unanimously approved the new temporary additions to the Data Inventory.

Data Gap Analysis
Ms Abend began by noting that the Data Gap Analysis is updated by staff and reviewed by the Governing Board each year. The analysis provides a comprehensive summary of the known data gaps in the MLDS. The document is designed to explain and analyze the impact of the gaps.

First, Ms. Abend noted that one gap has been resolved. The gap was that workforce records were removed from the MLDS if there was no student record. The requirement was established in the Data Sharing Agreement between Labor and the Center. The agreement was recently updated and the requirement was removed, which will allow the Center to keep the workforce data.

Next, Ms. Abend discussed three new gaps added to the analysis. First, dual enrollment was added as a new gap. Despite having some information on dual enrollment, the information is not complete and does not provide sufficient information on courses and credits earned for both high school and college. Center staff plan to work with MSDE and MHEC to receive more detailed information. Second, juvenile services education data was added as a new gap. The Center does not have educational data for students while they are receiving services from DJS. Staff is working with the Juvenile Services Education Program to determine what data are available and how they can be incorporated into the MLDS. The third new gap is student disability codes. The law was changed to allow the Center to include student disability information in the MLDS. Staff is working with MSDE to collect the disability data.

Finally, Ms. Abend discussed gap status updates, noting that occupational and professional licensure data from the Department of Labor and the health care commissions are in process. In addition, the Center is working with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to add information on certain criminal history and incarceration data. Lasty, the child welfare data gap was updated. While the Center has data on students experiencing out-of-home placement, data on child protective services and family preservation have still not been added.

Suppression Policy
Mr. Goldstein began by noting that State law says that the MLDS may only use aggregate data in reports and in response to data requests and that data that may be identifiable based on the size or uniqueness of the population under consideration may not be reported by the Center. The Center implemented that requirement by following the guidance of the National Center for Education Statistics. That guidance states that values less than 10 (whether directly disclosed or that can be derived) should be suppressed. This approach created a bright line standard which is straightforward and provides strong assurance against inadvertent disclosure of personal information. However, the approach does not allow for exceptions when disclosure risk is minimal. It also does not provide a process for weighing disclosure risk against the needs of policy makers to have comprehensive and meaningful information to guide decision making. As a result, over time the Center established exceptions to the strict approach established in the NCES guidance document. Staff created exceptions in cases where risk of disclosure was minimal. So at this point, staff determined that it was time to take a step back-develop a comprehensive policy that starts with the NCES standard, documents exceptions the Center has been using, and establishes an ongoing and transparent process for addressing suppression moving forward.

Ms. Abend noted that the new draft policy begins with a broad policy statement that focuses the work and includes procedures that staff determined are necessary. The policy was comprehensively reviewed by the Data Governance Advisory Board (Data GAB), SLDS State Support Team (SST) members, Data Integration Support Center (DISC) team from WestEd, and U.S. Department of Education's Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC). Data GAB members reviewed the first iteration of the suppression policy on May 23, 2024 and then a revised version was sent to the SLDS SST. After internal revisions staff met with DISC on July 10, 2024 and received feedback on what the policy statement should include and a recommendation to create a disclosure review board. DISC also provided various examples of current disclosure review boards. On July 26, 2024 the MLDS Center sent a revised draft to the SLDS SST who reviewed it and forwarded it to PTAC for a review focused on federal privacy laws. Finally, Data GAB was presented with the final version on August 15, 2024.

Ms. Abend went on to note that the policy seeks to balance the mission of providing useful information to stakeholders while reducing the risk of inadvertent disclosures. The policy does not indicate how to implement the disclosure review advisory board. Decisions need to be made about membership, scope and meetings. Staff hopes to assemble a group to discuss the implementation of the advisory board and help draft a charter. Staff will bring back to the Governing Board the implementation details and the charter at the next meeting in December. Ms. Wu commented that the suppression policy is just one piece in the larger scheme of data protection.

Board Action: Mr. Power made a motion to approve the Data Suppression Policy, which was seconded by Dr. Rollins. The Board unanimously approved the new Data Suppression Policy.

Regulations for Final Adoption
Mr. Goldstein stated that at the March 2024 meeting, the Governing Board adopted proposed changes to COMAR 14.36.01-.06., which was part of a regulatory review. The proposed regulations also included one substantive change, which was the creation of a definition of "medical and health record." The definition clarifies that a medical or health record is a record created by a health care provider for the purpose of providing care and treatment to an individual. The definition also states that a medical and health record does not include a record from a data partner that is used to determine eligibility for or to administer educational services and programs to students. State law prohibits the Center from including medical and health records, but there are instances where the Center has received data that is health related. This definition provides clear guidance on what is and is not permissible.

The proposed regulations were reviewed by the AELR Committee[8] and were then published in the June 28th Maryland Register. There was a public comment period which ran from the publication date through August 30, 2024. No public comments were received. Mr. Goldstein requested that the Board approve these regulations as final.

In response to a question from Ms. Wu regarding whether the medical and health record definition could be in conflict with definitions by other state agencies, Mr. Goldstein responded that the regulation is only applicable to the Center and would not have an impact on other agency requirements.

Board Action: Mr. Power made a motion to approve for final adoption the changes to COMAR 14.36.01 - .06, which was seconded by Ms. Kendall-Ellis. The Board unanimously approved the regulations.

Annual Report Recommendations
Mr. Goldstein stated that the MLDS Center is statutorily required to do the *Annual Report on the Maryland Longitudinal Data System and Center*. One of the required sections of the report is to provide the Governor and General Assembly with, "any other recommendation made by the Governing Board." While the report is not due until December, the purpose of this agenda item is to allow the Board time to consider and discuss possible recommendations. In the past, the recommendations have fallen into two categories: recommendations by the Governing Board to Center staff and recommendations by the Governing Board to the General Assembly and Governor. Recommendations to Center staff show the

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[8] Maryland General Assembly Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review.

interest of the Board and its stakeholders in a particular topic. It is beneficial to staff to understand the Board's interest before spending time on an issue.

Mr. Goldstein noted that the Research and Policy Advisory Board discussed the annual report recommendation at the last meeting. One recommendation that was discussed focused on the following requirements to unlink and dispose of data: (1) State law requires the Center to unlink workforce records 20 years after an individuals last education record; and (2) the data sharing agreements the Center has with state agencies requires the Center to dispose of personally identifiable data 20 years after receipt of that data from the agency. The proposed recommendation is to conduct a careful review of these requirements to determine how to prepare to implement them and determine whether this is the right direction for the agency and the data system. Mr. Goldstein noted that a lot of time and resources have gone into establishing and maintaining the longitudinal data system and therefore the Center and its stakeholders have to clearly understand what issues are raised by de-linking and disposing data at 20 years and is this the direction the Board supports. Ms. Wu stated that the proposal was a useful topic to point out and noted that work and education are ongoing issues in peoples' lives.

Ms. Wu suggested that exploring ways for the MLDS Center to provide data and information to meet people where they are could form the basis of another recommendation to be considered. Finally, Ms. Wu encouraged the members to provide other ideas to staff or their representatives on the Research and Policy Advisory Board.

Project Applications and Updates
Dr. Henneberger stated that there are two approved project applications. The first project is *Skills that Pay: Unpacking Subject-Specific Competencies to Predict Economic Wellbeing (ERA #97),* by Dr. Nolan Pope.[9] Dr. Pope's research asks: what tested competencies across math, reading, science, and social studies hold the most predictive power for determining future economic outcomes; and how does the predictive power of these competencies vary based on different contexts (including individual and household characteristics, school/district resources, geography, labor market conditions, field of postsecondary degree or certificate) Dr. Henneberger noted that the Research and Policy Advisory Board agreed that the project informs state policy and is responsive to the Research Agenda. There was specific discussion that the research has specific relevance for the work of the Governor's Workforce Development Board.

The second project, entitled *A Longitudinal Examination of Workforce Outcomes for Justice-Involved Youth in Maryland (ERA 99),* is being conducted by Dr. Henneberger and Dr. Wade Jacobsen. The research asks: What is the relation between juvenile justice system contact and workforce outcomes (i.e., workforce visibility and quarterly wages); is the relation between juvenile justice system contact and workforce outcomes explained by educational outcomes in high school and college (e.g., high school dropout; high school graduation; GED attainment; college enrollment; college degree attainment); does the relation between juvenile justice system contact and workforce outcomes differ by the timing (e.g., early versus late; mid-year versus end of academic year) and length of juvenile justice system involvement or the youth's level of exposure to the juvenile justice system (e.g., arrest with DJS referral, adjudication without residential placement, and residential placement); and does the relation between

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[9] Professor, University of Maryland, College Park, Department of Economics

juvenile justice system contact and workforce outcomes differ by race/ethnicity, gender, free/reduced price meals, special education status, and/or region? Dr. Henneberger noted that the project was favorably reviewed by the Research and Policy Advisory Board, which determined that it informs state policy.

Old Business

Mr. Goldstein stated that currently, per the Bylaws, the Governing Board meets at 9:00 a.m. on the second Friday in March, June, September, and December. For members who are agency secretaries, the schedule often conflicts with the Governor's Cabinet meetings. As such, there was a request to find a new recurring meeting schedule that is not in conflict with the Governor's Cabinet meetings. Mr. Goldstein sent a survey to the Governing Board members with 20 possible meeting times. The survey was completed by 13 of the 15 Board members. The results of the survey were inconclusive. There was no meeting schedule that was chosen by more than seven respondents. Ms. Wu noted the conflicts and will try to work around them. Mr. Power stated that participation by the cabinet members is important and it would be helpful to find a day that they are more likely to attend.

New Business

Ms. Wu noted that she brought up the topic of expanding the use and exposure of the MLDS Center throughout the meeting. She suggested that it may be worthwhile having continued discussions with smaller groups or the Research and Policy Advisory Board. Ms. Wu also thought it would be helpful for the Board to understand the website traffic and whether users are finding their way to new dashboards. She also questioned whether there are successful practices in other states establishing direct links between other places (i.e. K-12 schools and colleges) and longitudinal data websites. Finally, Ms. Wu suggested that participating agencies should use social media to uplift new content and dashboards that the Center puts out. Mr. Goldstein noted his appreciation for the input and offers of assistance.

Closing

Mr. Goldstein noted that the next meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2024 at 9am and will be held virtually.

Board Action: Mr. Power made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Ms. Wu. The motion was unanimously approved.

> Respectfully submitted,
> Ross Goldstein
> Executive Director

Approved: December 13, 2024