

**MLDS Governing Board Meeting  
Miller Senate Building  
President's Conference Center, West 1  
Annapolis, MD**

**September 6, 2012  
Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Chancellor Brit Kirwan, State Superintendent of Schools Lillian Lowry, Secretary Danette Howard, Interim Secretary Scott Jensen, Dr. Bernie Sadusky, Elizabeth Kameen, Brian Roberts, Dr. Michael Martirano, Dr. David Wilson, Jason Perkins-Cohen.

**Staff Present:** Dr. Jon Enriquez, Dr. Ben Passmore, Rob London, John Ratliff, Chandra Haislet, Shreya Pillai, John Bruns.

**Other Presenters and Guests:** Parris Jackson, Suresh Balakrishnan, Jim Foran, Lisa Bishop.

**Welcome**

Chancellor Kirwan called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He welcomed the Board and staff members, as well as visitors. He invited Ben Passmore to give the overview of preparation for the roll-out of the MLDS and MLDS center.

**Overview of Preparation for Roll-out of the MLDS and MLDS Center**

Ben Passmore directed the Board, staff, and guests to the MLDS Development Status Update section containing the "Go Live" Memo. He noted that the Governor will be in attendance at the September 24<sup>th</sup> MLDS Governing Board Meeting and that development of the MLDS has been accelerated since the March 26<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Governor.

Ben Passmore discussed the number of tasks involved with going live, including technical requirements, data flows, and legal requirements. He acknowledged that Senate Bill 275 necessitates that a Data and Security Plan as well as a Data Inventory be in place and approved by the Board prior to enabling the production system to go live. He noted that the Data and Security Plan and version one of the Data Inventory are complete and ready to be submitted to the General Assembly. Passmore acknowledged that the MOUs are in place to load test data.

Chancellor Kirwan clarified that the agencies submitting data include: MSDE, MHEC, and DLLR.

Ben Passmore concurred and asked the Board to consider the organizational, technical, and legal framework required to "Go Live."

John Ratliff asked about the current size and substantiality of the alpha system.

Rob London explained that dashboard development for policy questions two, three, and eleven is currently underway, in addition to dashboards for DLLR, MHEC, and the two-year colleges. According to London, the system is at an experimentation standpoint and considering how to best present the data.

Chancellor Kirwan inquired as to whether the Board will have a sense of what the dashboards will show prior to the September 24<sup>th</sup> MLDS Governing Board Meeting.

Rob London confirmed that there will be a pre-briefing book distributed to the board featuring slides for the Power Point presentation on September 24, 2012.

Chancellor Kirwan reminded the Board and staff that Governor O'Malley is highly invested in the MLDS and questioned whether the presentation will feature data of interest and relevance.

Rob London responded that a system will be available to manage and innovative policies and generate additional interest.

John Ratliff expressed gratitude and appreciation on behalf of the Governor's Office for responding to the Governor's request to accelerate the development of the longitudinal data system. Chancellor Kirwan echoed Ratliff's sentiments and expressed additional appreciation on behalf of the Board to all the people meeting the accelerated schedule and add-on to the responsibilities of each individuals regular job requirements. He emphasized that the entire MLDS could not be accomplished without the great team approach and noted that everyone involved has worked extremely well together and between agencies.

Michael Martirano commented to raise a challenge and concern, while reviewing proposals within the subcommittees for the MLDS Center placement and recommendations for the MLDS Interim Director. He expressed great concern to maintain the positive trajectory for the MLDS development with pending transitions in government leadership.

Ben Passmore added one more point in regards to MLDS roll-out. He explained the Board's task to hire a director for the MLDS Center, and explained that the MSDE Race to the Top grant has provided funds to hire an interim director, which will be discussed in an Executive Session following today's meeting.

### **Board Changes and Approval of the Minutes**

Chancellor Kirwan welcomed State Superintendent of Schools, Lillian Lowry, to the Board and to the state of Maryland. Lillian responded with gratitude. Kirwan also said that Dr/ Bernie Sadusky will remain on the Board while changing his professional role from Interim State Superintendent to Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Community Colleges.

Chancellor Kirwan moved to approve the minutes from the June 28 meeting. The motion was seconded with no updates. The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

Chancellor Kirwan introduced Rob London for MLDS development updates.

### **MLDS Development Updates**

Rob London returned to the roll-out discussion to clarify three issues in order to "Go-Live." First, he explained the need for all documents required by Senate Bill 275 to be completed and approved, including the Data Glossary and governing policies related to data security and safeguarding. Second, London noted the need for an actual system with real data that must be reviewed and obtain agency sign-off prior to public release. Third, Rob London discussed the need for a permanent interagency data MOU.

Ben Passmore added that interagency data sharing MOUs have been temporary so far and have provided a skeleton of the content that will go into the permanent MOU. He stated that this MOU must be in-place prior to the system transfer from its current production environment to the MLDS Center.

Rob London explained that the system can go live now only if released internally to policy analysts within the State agencies, but that many more steps will be required if and when the system is released to the public. London recommended an "Alpha Test" that would verify the data and allow for testing within the agencies.

John Ratliffe shared that the Governor's ultimate goal is to allow parent access to the Maryland Longitudinal Data System.

Rob London asked for clarification on the portion of the policy questions that were relevant to parent and students. He explained that his discussions with the agencies did not reveal what dashboards should be turned on and made public.

London recommended an action item to create a production and review framework and governance policy regarding the data and dashboards that go public, noting that reports released to the public need executive approval and review.

Ben Passmore added that the framework is built, but that rules for public access would need to be created.

Secretary Jensen assured the Board that DLLR is contributing five data sets to the MLDS.

Ben Passmore continued that temporary MOUs are in place describing the data that will roll-out while acknowledging the problem of determining to which layers of data parents would have access.

John Ratliff noted that all of the data is already public and explained that the MLDS is creating the link between the K12 and Higher Education data, a link which did not exist prior to the MLDS.

Rob London recommended that agency policy analysts review and approve all dashboards and have the ultimate say in whether a dashboard will be viewable to the public. London also suggested the drafting of a two-page policy document describing the vetting and approval process for MLDS dashboards.

Superintendent Lowry agreed with London, reaffirming the need for a process.

Rob London gave insight into how the current data can be manipulated and prepared in different ways, and temporary safeguards should be put in place to make sure data is not picked from the wrong source.

Dr. Bernie Sadusky asked London about what he has seen in the data that might be questionable.

Rob London replied that nothing is questionable at this point, but an approval process is needed.

Secretary Jensen said that DLLR is legally set-up to make sure that his agency's data is available and that they are ready to allow data to be used.

Dr. David Wilson inquired as to the purpose of the alpha roll-out, and whether or not it was to test the system or to go public.

Rob London responded that the alpha roll-out will allow testing, AG review, and governing board sign-off.

Dr. David Wilson asked if the MLDS system and center is ready for public viewing and scrutiny.

Rob London replied that a process is needed for board approval in the initial stages.

Superintendent Lowry confirmed that the short answer to Dr. Wilson is yes, and London conferred.

Chancellor Kirwan noted the evolution of the MLDS and the desire for access from multiple stakeholders, but he recalled that the LDS was created for policy analysis.

Rob London confirmed Chancellor Kirwan's observation. London stated that releasing the alpha system is not a technical issue, but an administrative one.

Chancellor Kirwan asked who should take responsibility for creating a governance policy.

Ben Passmore suggested the Interagency Work Group create a governance policy. Kirwan agreed. Rob London stated that a two to three page governance policy will be distributed to the Board on Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>.

Chancellor Kirwan recommended the Board take action on this issue on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

Rob London reviewed key data points, stating that software development is set up for testing with the production environment on-line. Due to hardware procurement delays, London noted that development is 60 days behind schedule. London shared that the MLDS will now feature geo-spatial mapping abilities as well as mapping that will be completed by Towson University.

John Ratliff recommended the mapping capabilities be displayed on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

Rob London updated the Board in regards to the interim MOUs, noting that the interagency MLDS MOU is coming soon to load data into the system. London announced that the Data Inventory, in accordance with Senate Bill 275 requirement, has now been achieved and the data glossary system is live. Regarding security issues, London noted that USDE's P-Tech team as well as Maryland's Department of Information Technology both reviewed and gave their approval of the MLDS security plan. By using external validation, London assured the Board that the security plan meets state and national standards.

Rob London reported that the CIOs from DLLR and MHEC recently visited the DPSCS and approved the location for data storage.

Rob London continued and noted that the batch assignment of unique IDs will be used for various data reports. London stated that aggregate data would be blended and modified in some cases for value-added reports that do not have an ID, but in other cases, roll-ups for individual data and a linking mechanism will be needed. London noted that the method for batch conversion will be created using an individual crosswalk table. As a test, London stated that USM provided data that was matched to MSDE data at an 85% match rate.

Secretary Howard asked if this matching process will apply to cohorts going forward, or back to 2008.

Rob London confirmed that the batch process would include cohorts back to 2008.

Ben Passmore reminded the Board that there would be a more thorough update on batch process shortly.

Chancellor Kirwan asked if an 85% match rate using USM and MSDE data was sufficient.

London confirmed that this match rate was very high, stating that typically a 70% match rate can be expected using name, address, and date of birth. Using additional data, London expects the match rate to rise from 85% to 90-95%. London said the batch process will create good linkage in a timely way.

London continued and gave an update on e-transcripts. 22 of the 24 LEAs are scheduled to have systems installed in the fall. By November, 22 of the 24 LEAs will be on the USM e-transcript system.

Michael Martirano commented on the need for a practical voice that would educate stakeholders, especially the superintendents for the individual LEAs. Martirano noted that the LEAs are under stress to implement many of the Race to the Top requirements, evaluation pieces, and standards. Martirano warned that the idea of a birth to death data system scares parents.

John Ratliff acknowledged Martirano's concern and reminded the Board that, as a concession, the General Assembly placed a five year limit on data that can be held in the system.

Rob London said that the new interim director will make it a priority to execute on communication policies regarding parent stakeholders.

Martirano commended the MSDE team for doing a good job so far at making the abstract real. He recommended continued attempts at transparency prior to parent watch dog groups getting involved.

Ben Passmore stated that the rollout of the MLDS system will be staged and ensure all policies are in place. Passmore assured the Board that a parent would not all the sudden see their child's identity or data online.

John Ratliff agreed that clarify on what the system will provide and what it will not provide would be beneficial to the public.

Rob London continued his update and announced Chandra Haislet will be taking on a new role within MSDE as the FY12 SLDS Grant Director after receiving a \$3.9MM grant from USDE. London also noted that the MHEC system continues to be rebuilt and Phase I is coming to a close with data quality analysis.

Chandra Haislet updated the Board on the new SLDS grant, noting a section in the briefing book that overviews the grant's five objectives. Haislet said that the foundations of the project are actively being setup in quarter one, including the project plan, team leads, and accomplishable tasks. Two kick-off meetings were held and an area on the portal has been developed for interagency project transparency. Haislet said that MLDS members should have log-in IDs and passwords. Haislet also noted that staff is currently being hired and a new project manager and business analyst will soon be starting at MSDE.

Jason Perkins-Cohen asked if the private career schools will be providing data as part of the requirements of the new SLDS grant.

Rob London confirmed that the requirements of the grant will ensure that private career schools will give data to improve the data collection.

### **Privacy and Security Protocols**

Chancellor Kirwan introduced Suresh Balakrishman for presentation.

Suresh Balakrishman distributed the latest version of the Data Security and Safeguarding Plan. Balakrishman thanked Liz Kameen for her thorough review of the plan. He acknowledged that the plan has been approved by each agency's AGs and CIOs. Both the Maryland State CIO and USDE Privacy Technical Assistance Center also approved the plan. The Office of Legislative Audits has tentatively scheduled an audit to review the plan and controls in June 2013. The plan was submitted to the State Information Security Officer whose only concern regarded acquiring the resources to fully implement the controls. The Data Security and Safeguarding Plan includes all Senate Bill 275 requirements in addition to state and legal guidelines. Balakrishman submitted the plan as ready for consideration and approval by the Board.

Secretary Jensen agreed that the plan was approved by DLLR's CIO.

Balakrishman acknowledged that the plan was distributed weekly to the Interagency Technical Work Group.

John Ratliff stated that the security and privacy protocols were required in Senate Bill 275 and this plan was a major concession. No data connection can take place until the security document is in place.

Chancellor Kirwan recommended the collection of written responses to the Security Plan be kept on record. Superintendent Lowery, Secretary Jensen, and Secretary Howard all agreed. He commended the extraordinary vetting of the security document and moved to approve the document. The motion was seconded. The Board voted unanimously to approve the Data Security and Safeguarding Plan.

### **Data Inventory**

Ben Passmore submitted the Data Inventory and suggested a motion be made to submit the data inventory to the Maryland General Assembly per SB 275 requirements.

Dr. David Wilson asked if a university admissions officer would have access to the data, and Rob London replied that he or she would not have access.

Secretary Howard moved to approve version one of the Data Inventory. Superintendent Lowry seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the submission of the Data Inventory to the Maryland General Assembly.

### **Electronic Transcripts and Batch Process**

Chancellor Kirwan invited a presentation and update on the e-transcripts and batch process.

Ben Passmore, representing Don Spicer, noted that the public universities are making great progress. The batch process will allow the MLDS to capture students who reverse transfer. All public universities will be sending and receiving before the end of the year. Passmore stated that amongst MICUA and the independent institutions, there is skepticism concerning any participation in the batch process, which will back-fill directory information on students back to 2008. Batch Process will also allow for the association of higher education data with MSDE data.

Secretary Jensen asked how the MLDS would capture students who acquire a high school diploma and transition directly to the workforce.

Ben Passmore replied that this situation would be difficult to capture in the MLDS. Secretary Howard agreed, noting that this was not a Maryland predicament, but a national problem in data linking and collection.

Jason Perkins-Cohen stated that this problem would be hard to overcome with 25% of Baltimore City students who do not graduate from high school.

Ben Passmore continued, saying that data collections will be expanded to include career schools, cosmetology schools, and other data streams. He acknowledged that high school drop-outs will be difficult to track.

Rob London stated that this discussion is the beginning of a larger discussion on external data streams that can be tapped to create a bridge between K12 students and the workforce.

Ben Passmore returned to the update on batch process, stating that five USM institutions have taken a test run as requested by Don Spicer. To non USM institutions, a request to run the batch process is being drafted and will be made by MHEC.

John Ratliff asked how the batch process will affect the e-transcript process.

Rob London replied that e-transcripts will allow the transfer of the high school SASID ID to institutions of higher education.

Ben Passmore noted that institutions are moving ahead rapidly, and MICUA has agreed but will be doing their own e-transcripts with periodic data dumps.

Dr. Michael Martirano asked if the Board could see a walk through on a student's existence in the system, including whether or not they were in other institutions such as detention centers. He would like to see what transition points compromise the integrity of the MLDS operation.

Dr. David Wilson conferred, asking for a walk-through to look at the database and pick a sample set of students to experience the way information will be captured and utilized.

Rob London assured that this would be possible. He stated that the MLDS developers are currently laying the foundation for the future and that building the system and subsequent growth will occur over time. He recommended a discussion on September 24<sup>th</sup> for the foundational mission of the system to help inform trends and policy making. London also said that the development team is taking extreme caution to mask individual data.

Jason Perkins-Cohen said that it will become important to address the weaknesses of the system with 47% of the population taking no college courses at all.

Secretary Jensen noted that the system might capture students who do not attend college through UI wage records or certification programs. Ben Passmore agreed and noted additional data sources such as the GED test, adult correctional programs, and private career schools.

Superintendent Lowry referenced the school performance index within MSDE and asked Jim Foran to explain the process of state evaluations and how they track students.

Jim Foran explained that state evaluations will include the student performance index at the high school level, performance on the HSA, and a school's progress in closing the achievement gap. Superintendent Lowry noted that they will track students over 18 months.

Ben Passmore stated that data quality is a national problem with National Student Clearinghouse as one possible workaround, but not the end solution.

John Ratliff noted that building this system has necessitated the management of compromises. He cited specific amendments to the statute that would have destroyed the system, such as the ability for parents to opt out of their children providing directory data to the MLDS.

Ben Passmore said that the MLDS is on track to capture anyone in education and that the holes in the data collection will be highlighted in subsequent presentations.

Rob London noted that even if the system has 40% of Marylanders, it is still an interagency system that can be used by policy analysts. A number of Statewide LDS systems have never come to fruition around the country.

Chancellor Kirwan acknowledged the usefulness of the discussion, but being mindful of time, would like to introduce the presentation from MHEC.

### **MHEC and Advanced Data Collection**

Chancellor Kirwan introduced Parris Jackson and Dr. Jon Enriquez to present.

Parris Jackson said the database environment for MHEC has been migrated to DPSCS. She recently visited the DPSCS site for the second time along with the DLLR CIO and verified its security. Jackson expressed eagerness to gain full access to the data. Phase 1 preparation for the September 24 presentation is underway and Phase 2 continues to move forward with expanded and revised data collections. MHEC continues to work towards redesigning their system, originally run with Cobalt.

Jon Enriquez reviewed the accomplishments over the summer, including MHEC's work with IHEs to discuss data availability and collection schedules. MHEC's goal is to reduce the number of requests to IHEs for ad-hoc collections by adding a spring and summer collection in Phase 2. The finalized plan for expanding MHEC's data elements should be ready around September 24<sup>th</sup>.

Jon Ratliff agreed that fewer ad-hoc data requests would be beneficial. He said that asking for more data upfront will provide for a smoother overall process without a scramble to meet deadlines.

Secretary Howard said that the MHEC system has not been updated since 1977 and that they were ready for changes to be made.

Chancellor Kirwan recalled a recent meeting with Bernie Sadusky at the Maryland Association of Community Colleges. A concern was raised during this meeting by the 2-year institutions and the use of data in misrepresenting each community college. Dr. Kirwan recommended an advisory group from the institutions that would approve of the release of data.

John Ratliffe said there are good reasons for institutional review, but he shared the sentiment of the Governor in that institutions and individuals cannot be afraid of the data, especially when so much public funding is involved.

Chancellor Kirwan agreed with John Ratliffe, and clarified that he was more concerned about the data going to MHEC, not the data going to the MLDS. He noted that the community colleges want to ensure data usage protocols prior to submission. Secretary Howard stated that these protocols will be in place.

Chancellor Kirwan congratulated everyone on their progress so far, and he commended the talented staff and their efforts. He noted that the Board will be moving into an executive session to discuss personnel issues. As enabled by State Government Article 10-508a, the Board will discuss a personnel matter concerning the appointment and qualifications of the Interim Director/Project 61 Liaison. Dr. Kirwan moved to enter into executive session. The motion was seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**The meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.**