



Monthly Report - August 2013

Staffing

Each of the three branches of the MLDS Center will be led by an associate director who is a loaned employee from MSDE, MHEC, and UMB. A representative of each of those agencies met with Ben Passmore, Jared Billings and me to discuss the agency's proposed associate director candidate and make sure that the individual was a good fit in meeting the needs of both the MLDS Center and the agency. Following those meetings I met with the candidates and then provided notice to the agencies to move forward with the appointments.

I think you will all agree that each agency conscientiously proposed a candidate who is uniquely qualified to serve as the associate director of his or her respective branch and each will be an asset to the MLDS Center.

1. *IT and Data Management Branch - MSDE - Chandra Haislet* - As MSDE's federal grant director for the State Longitudinal Data System, Ms. Haislet already has in depth knowledge of the technical infrastructure and data requirements for the MLDS. That experience along with her understanding of the Center's research and policy objectives make her well suited to serve as the Associate Director of the IT and Data Management Branch.
2. *Reporting and Portal Services Branch - MHEC - Jon Enriquez* - Dr. Enriquez is currently the Associate Director of the Office of Research and Policy Analysis at MHEC. He has worked on various research and data analysis projects and has been MHEC's primary liaison to the MLDS. This knowledge and experience makes Dr. Enriquez well suited to lead the Reporting and Portal Service Branch.
3. *Research and Policy Services Branch - UMB SSW - Professor Michael Woolley* - Dr. Woolley is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work and has done extensive work and research on a variety of education related topics. This research experience combined with his practical and organized approach to addressing the policy questions proposed by the Board make Dr. Woolley the ideal person to lead the Research and Policy Services Branch.

The next step is to begin hiring the rest of the positions under each of the branches. After a meeting with the Associate Directors, we have prioritized the next round of hirings as follows:

- Application and Security Manager and Senior Database Engineer (The position descriptions have been drafted and approved and advertising will begin during the first week of September.)
- ETL Developer and Database Engineer
- OBIEE Developer

Grant Support

The MLDS Center has been asked to provide letters of support for two different grant proposals being submitted to the Institute of Education Sciences, the primary research arm of the U.S. Department of Education.

1. *Continuous Improvement in Education Research* - The proposal is being submitted by the University System of Maryland and is a partnership between them and MHEC and MSDE. This grant will help the Maryland partnership assess what transition courses are currently being used, what still needs to be developed to ensure college readiness, and how these courses are aligned with the Common Core State Standards.



2. Research Training Programs in Education Sciences - The proposal is being submitted by the University of Maryland, College Park Department of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology. The purpose of the training program is to train the next generation of education researchers in developmental and cognitive science research methods as they apply to educational issues and outcomes.

Research and Policy Services Branch

The RPSB Team, Michael Woolley, Laura Stapleton, and Terry Shaw, have been working on plans to respond to the initial 18 research questions (15 questions established by the Governing Board and 3 questions required under the 2012 SLDS Grant) . As was presented to the Governing Board on August 9th, the research team first organized the research questions into four overarching areas: 1) Preparation for postsecondary education, 2) Access to postsecondary education and retention, 3) Transition to the work force and retention. The research team then took the priorities set by the current and previous board (the P-20 Leadership Council) in light of these broad research areas and set priorities for year one for our research efforts. The team also identified how some of the questions are nested within other questions, and overall the questions have a developmental structure. The research team has reached out to some Maryland scholars who have expertise in the areas these questions address and asked those scholars, who include Robert Croninger, Marvin Titus, and Gail Sundeman, to join us in developing rigorous answers to those questions that will inform policy and practice across Maryland. Finally, the research team has started a conversation about what data will be available in the near term with an eye to have a report or two ready for the legislative session.

IT and Data Management Branch

The IT and Data Services Branch has two primary objectives as hiring of positions at the MLDS Center progresses. The first is to initiate agency work groups that will be working towards identifying flows of data into the MLDS Center. Data owners and stewards at each agency will be meeting to develop the strategy and timeline for data collection. The emphasis will be initially on identifying data from organizations and individuals from each agency in order for the MLDS Center to build an automated master data management system. Transactional data for dashboards and information to be used for the research deliverables will also be part of the 'Data Collection Work Group' meetings.

The second objective is to ensure the handover of the MLDS to the MLDS Center. There will need to be a review of documents provided by MSDE as well as a gap analysis of requirements, forms, policies and procedures.