



## Monthly Report for January 2014

Submitted January 31, 2014

### Outreach

a. *General Assembly* - Meetings have taken place with several legislators, including Senators Conway, Madaleno, and Young and Delegate Kaiser. The meetings have been a good opportunity to discuss the Center's progress, answer questions about future expectations, and address concerns about privacy and security.

The MLDS Center budget will be presented and considered as part of the MSDE HQ budget once again this year. The MSDE budget hearing is on February 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Education & Economic Development and the Senate Budget and Taxation Subcommittee on Education and Business and Administration, respectively.

b. *Frederick County Board of Education* - A briefing for the Frederick County Board of Education is planned for February 12<sup>th</sup>. The Board is interested in getting a better understanding of the MLDS system, its capabilities, and how the system and the work of the Center can be beneficial to the Board of Education. The Board is also particularly interested in understanding the privacy and security safeguards that will protect their students' data.

c. *Governor's Leadership Council Task Force on Arts Education in Maryland Schools* - A briefing for the members of the Arts Task Force is scheduled for February 21<sup>st</sup>. The task force wants to understand the kinds of data that will be captured. They also asked for a description of the system and the opportunity to ask questions.

### Staffing

a. *Executive Associate* - James Dixon-Bobbitt has been hired as the new Executive Associate for the MLDS Center. Ms. Dixon-Bobbitt has over 20 years of administrative experience at MSDE. Her background, skill set, and knowledge of State government will make her a tremendous asset to the MLDS Center and staff. Ms. Bobbitt starts on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

b. *Position announcements* - After the initial lack of success in recruiting for the two senior information technology positions, a determination was made to reconsider the strategy for filling those positions and not wait to hire the subordinate IT positions. To that end, staff created the position descriptions and completed the other required documentation necessary to initiate the hiring process for the following positions: Network Engineer, Database Administrator, Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition Developer and Analyst, and Webmaster. The paperwork is now with MSDE who will begin the advertising next week. For the two senior IT positions, staff is reviewing the possibility of combining the funding for those positions and hiring a single high level IT resource via a contract.

### StudentStat

Staff met with Debra Lichter who coordinates MSDE's StudentStat responses. The purpose of the meeting was to coordinate reporting responsibilities and have MLDS Center take over reporting on data points related to the establishment and functioning of the MLDS and the Center.

### Inter-Agency Agreements

Work on finalizing the inter-agency agreements with DLLR, MHEC and MSDE is ongoing. There were a few



administrative details regarding the shared staffing positions that had to be addressed. In addition, Dawn O'Croinin, the Assistant Attorney General for MLDS Center, has restructured the agreements so that there are now two agreements for each agency - one to address administrative issues and the other to address data sharing. Dawn has also added additional detail and FERPA compliant language to the data sharing agreements. These new data sharing agreements are intended to take the place of the data sharing agreement entered into in 2012. Once a final review is completed by each agency and their respective Assistant Attorney General, the agreements will be ready for the Secretaries to sign.

The agreement with the University of Maryland, Baltimore is also still in the negotiation phase. The outstanding issue involves copyright and publishing rights of the University and the researchers. Staff is working to establish a meeting with the appropriate representative at the University to address the issues so the agreement can be completed.

### Reporting and Portal Services Branch

The College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013 (SB 740) requires the Center to provide to the Governor and General Assembly an annual report on dual enrollment. The 2013 edition of this report was completed and transmitted as required.

Originally, plans called for using new permanent staff to revise and update the Center website. Because hiring staff is taking longer than originally anticipated, the Center is now exploring other short-term alternatives for making upgrades. Options under exploration include securing assistance from the Department of Information Technology and hiring contractors to carry out an upgrade project. Work on this project will accelerate in February.

### IT and Data Management Branch

The Master Data Management (MDM) system is completed and the past month activities included testing of organization and person data provided by MSDE, MHEC and DLLR. End-to-End Organization data loads for MSDE, DLLR and IPEDS have been successfully completed. The focus is on completing the testing for the person data over the next several weeks. The MDM system is currently in the development environment and we have been working with the Race to the Top Team at MSDE and DPSCS staff to develop a deployment schedule for migration to test and production. In order to meet the needs of the developing system additional servers and backup capabilities will be part of the deployment plan which will be funded by the State Longitudinal Grant Funds.

The MDM system is phase I of the data collection process. Phase II involves data to answer specific policy questions and agencies and Center staff will be meeting frequently over the next several months to align the data requests of the Center with the data from the agencies. By the end of the month a Data Governance Advisory Board meeting will meet to support the data collection activities (as described in the *Data Security and Safeguarding Plan*).

### Research and Policy Branch

The central activity this month was completing our ongoing efforts using the CEDS (Common Education Data Standards) rubric for the collection and organization of K-12, Postsecondary, and Workforce data to create a comprehensive set of files for the data elements that will be requested from MSDE, MHEC, and DLLR. The CEDS includes over 2,900 variables and has evolved with input from multiple states who are developing longitudinal data systems. A standard format is desirable so state systems will match up with other states in terms of the variable names and categories used to organize their data. The idea is that in



the future states can work together on research. All variables in the sections in CEDS about K-12, Postsecondary and Workforce have now been coded by the research team to indicate which variables will be applicable to which research policy questions as well as how that variable will be useful in terms of analyses.