

A Report to the Maryland General Assembly and Governor Martin O'Malley

Regarding

**The Development of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System &
Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center**

December 2010

Introduction

Under the terms of Chapter 190 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2010, the Governing Board of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System is required to submit an annual report to the Maryland General Assembly containing the following:

1. An update on the implementation of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System and the activities of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (hereafter, Center);
2. A list of all studies performed by the Center during the reporting period;
3. A list of currently warehoused data that are determined to be no longer necessary to carry out the mission of the Center;
4. Any proposed or planned expansion of data maintained in the database; and
5. Any other recommendations made by the Governing Board.

The following sections provide an overview of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (LDS), an update on the activities of the Governing Board, and progress towards the implementation of Maryland's Longitudinal Data System and Center. Requirements two through four listed above are not included in this report as the System and Center are not yet operational.

Overview of Planned System

The State of Maryland is in the process of developing a plan to construct a statewide data warehouse (the Center) that contains longitudinal data in a P-20 spectrum (P-20 refers to Pre-Kindergarten through graduate school and/or the workforce). The LDS will incorporate data collected by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), and the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR).

The primary purpose of the LDS is to address the critical policy questions that will inform education stakeholders at all levels in order to improve the quality of education in the state. In addition, the implementation of a P-20 LDS will be a key factor in achieving the requirements identified by United States Department of Education in the America Competes Act, the assurances for State Fiscal Stabilizations Funds, and the Data Quality Campaign's 10 State Actions. Included below are an initial list of questions the system will be designed to address, areas for which policy questions will be developed and a list of federal assurances.

Critical Education Policy questions:

1. Are students academically prepared to enter college and complete their programs in a timely manner?
2. What percentage of Maryland high school graduates go on to enroll at a Maryland college or university?
3. How does the above percentage differ by race, ethnicity, and preparation?
4. What percentage of Maryland high school graduates entering college are required to take developmental courses and in what content areas?
5. How does placement in developmental coursework vary among students of different backgrounds (i.e., race, ethnicity, and preparation)?
6. How likely are students placed in developmental courses to persist in college and transfer and/or graduate?
7. How does performance in developmental course work (i.e., persistence and transfer/graduation) vary among students of different backgrounds?
8. Are community college students able to transfer within state to 4-year institutions successfully and without loss of credit?
9. Which students are being lost in the transition between community colleges and 4-year institutions?
10. What are the differences in performance, retention and graduation, including time to degree, of students who initially matriculate at a Maryland community college and transfer to a Maryland 4-year institution versus those who initially matriculate at a Maryland 4-year?
11. What are the differences in performance, retention and graduation, including time to degree, of students beginning in dual enrollment programs, at 2-year institutions and at 4-year institutions?
12. Which financial aid programs are most effective in improving access and success (i.e., retention and graduation) for Maryland students?
13. Which 2-year institutions are allowing students to persist most effectively and either graduate or transfer?
14. Which 4-year institutions are graduating students most effectively and in the timeliest fashion?
15. To what extent do those who do not complete high school but who earn a GED go on to obtain a post-secondary credential?
16. What are the educational and labor market outcomes for unemployed workers who use federal and state resources to obtain training at community colleges?
17. What economic value do noncredit community college credentials have in the workplace?
18. Are graduates of Maryland colleges successful in the workforce?

Areas requiring additional data and policy question formulation

The Board asked the LDS Inter-agency workgroup to identify specific areas which required additional data and which were areas of significant policy interest. Specifically, the Board noted the importance of expanding the initial list of policy questions to more explicitly address the training and progress of those moving directly from K-12 to the workforce. In addition, there was considerable interest in students who move from all levels of education into the military. Finally the Board expressed interest in developing policy questions and data around the for-profit higher education institutions operating in Maryland.

Federal Assurances and Other Requirements

1. Incorporation into SLDS of student level exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out or complete P-16 program information.
2. Creation of capacity in K-12 data systems to communicate with higher education data systems.
3. An audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability in SLDS.
4. Information on successful transition from secondary to postsecondary school, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework.
5. Other information as deemed necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.
6. Provide, for the State, for each LEA in the State, for each high school in the State and, at each of these levels, by student subgroup, the number and percent that enroll in an IHE within 16 months of receiving a regular high school diploma.
7. Provide, for the State, for each LEA in the State, for each high school in the State and, at each of these levels, by student subgroup, the number and percent who enroll in a public IHE within 16 months of receiving a regular high school diploma, the number and percent who complete at least one year's worth of college credit (applicable to a degree) within two years of enrollment in the IHE
8. The Number of High School Graduates with Postsecondary Enrollment

System Structure

The Statewide P-20 LDS will create a new culture that empowers educators, administrators, parents, students, researchers, and policy makers by providing data to make informed decisions that maximize student learning and achievement, teacher development and enrichment, and workforce preparation. The P-20 LDS will have many stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents, students, higher education institutions, local school districts, the Maryland State Department of Education, the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and State policy leaders. The Center will also be designed to and responsible for meeting federal reporting

requirements for all segments of the system. To accomplish these objectives, the P-20 LDS will integrate data from the K-12 (MSDE) and State Workforce (DLLR) segments with information at the Institutions of Higher Education (IHE).

The first functionality to be obtained by the LDS is the successful integration of three existing data systems given their existing architecture. The key capabilities of this system include tools to:

- extract data from a wide range of source systems of varying levels of technological sophistication;
- transform data, as needed, for validity and compatibility;
- load data into a common data repository;
- generate and modify easily a large number of standard reports;
- enable the creation and saving of customizable queries of any data field in the system; and
- produce graphical representations of data.

Reports (including graphical representations) must be available in easy-to-understand formats accessible via a web browser.

In addition, the Board notes that the wide level of disparity in technological infrastructure and staffing throughout the state will pose a significant barrier to the successful implementation of the system and this disparity will need to be addressed.

Update on Implementation of P-20 MLDS Center

The Board is in the early/organizational stages of implementing the Maryland LDS Center. To date, the Governing Board and Interagency Working Group have focused on organizing the Governing Board, arranging the mechanisms to appropriately access existing funding sources, and preparing a Request for Information to begin the process of determining a site for the P-20 Maryland LDS Center. The following sections address each of these sets of activities.

The Governing Board

Pursuant to Chapter 190 of the 2010 Acts of the Maryland General Assembly, Governor O'Malley, appointed eleven (11) members to serve on the Maryland LDS Governing Board and from them selected Dr. William Kirwan, Chancellor of the University System of Maryland, as the Chair of the Governing Board.¹ Governor O'Malley charged the Board with creating the P-20

¹ Full membership roster is included as **Appendix A**.

Maryland LDS Center per Chapter 190. The Board was specifically charged with carrying out the following tasks:

- **Creation of the Center.**
 - The Board shall determine the placement and location of the Center after seeking and evaluating proposals from interested entities.
 - The Board shall develop an implementation plan to phase in the establishment and operation of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System and the Center including:
 - The development of detailed privacy and security plans and policies, and
 - in consultation with data experts, the development of plans for data systems and warehousing.
 - The Board shall seek funding from Federal and other sources to fund the implementation plan.
 - In accordance with the implementation plan, the Board shall determine staffing needs, and subject to the availability of funding, approve positions, and hire a Center director and additional staff to oversee and carry out daily operations of the Center.

- **Management of the Center.**
 - The Board shall provide general oversight of and direction to the Center, including establishing appropriate relationships with State and Federal agencies.
 - The Board shall review and approve data governance plans.
 - The Board shall develop a plan to prioritize and act on data requests.
 - The Board shall develop advanced data distribution strategies including each of the following:
 - Development of a data portal through which stakeholders can easily access and create data reports.
 - Development of a website to provide on-line training on the effective use of data to potential users.
 - The Board shall approve the annual budget for the Center, seek additional funding, and conduct an annual review of costs and revenues for each of the Center's activities.
 - The Board shall establish a policy and research agenda for the Center that seeks to improve Maryland's P-20 education system. To advance this agenda, the Board shall:
 - Provide guidance to the Center as it links Center studies to policy changes and initiatives and track the results of the changes to ensure effectiveness.
 - Develop a process for stakeholders to present proposed studies to the Board, and
 - Oversee the development of a public relations plan.

- The Board shall, within the legal and privacy framework, establish a system for routine reporting and data requests.
- The Board shall evaluate the Center's Executive Director (appointed by the Board under the enabling statute) at least once per year.

The Board voted to accept the charge in their first meeting.

Assignment of Assistant Attorney General

Following appointment, the Governing Board met twice during 2010 (October 15 and December 7). These meetings were largely organizational and preparatory. At the request of the Board, the Office of the Attorney General assigned an Assistant Attorney General to advise the Board on issues surrounding the creation of this system and center.

LDS Interagency Workgroup

The Board authorized the establishment of the LDS Interagency Workgroup to coordinate staff-level work on issues. This Workgroup includes representatives from all the participating agencies and will focus on technical and policy issues until the Center is established and fully staffed.

Project Manager

The Board authorized the hiring of a Project Manager to complete the technical and data architecture of the P-20 MLDS project. This position will be funded through the Maryland Race to the Top (RTTT) grant and is temporary pending the hiring of a Center Executive Director and other staff.

Funding Sources and Mechanisms

The State of Maryland received two federal grants in 2010 that will be used directly in the creation and operation of the P-20 MLDS Center or in support of the three participating agencies.

Race to the Top

Maryland's receipt of a \$250 million Race to the Top grant will significantly propel the development of the LDS and Center. "Using data to improve instruction" was one of the four assurances of Race to the Top, and the State's application designated more funding for this section than any other single section. Of the \$125 million dollars of the grant that flows directly to the Maryland State Department of Education approximately \$47 million is allocated for improvements in data capabilities. Included in this \$47 million is \$5 million designated specifically for the creation of the LDS Center. Additional funding is also available through RTTT

which may be used to upgrade in MHEC and MSDE systems to meet RTTT assurances and improve longitudinal data capabilities.

US Department of Labor Workforce Initiative Grant

DLLR received a U.S. Department of Labor grant to expand longitudinal data collection of workforce and education data. This grant will provide \$1 million dollars over three years to improve the connections between K-12, adult education, post-secondary and workforce data. It will ensure that data from the workforce can be effectively linked with the existing and developing data sets from K-12 and postsecondary education.

Interagency Memoranda of Understanding

The Board is currently developing mechanisms and memoranda of understanding to ensure the availability of these grant funds and the coordination of agency projects to ensure the rapid development of the P-20 Maryland LDS Center.

Request for Information

At the request of the Governing Board, the LDS Interagency Workgroup prepared a Request for Information (RFI) to be issued before the end of calendar year 2010. Using the results of this RFI, the Governing Board will create a Request for Proposals (RFP) that communicates the requirement for the development and deployment of a P-20 LDS Center. The State of Maryland will not attempt to identify providers through the RFI process or nor procure any goods or services. The RFI process is a vehicle to gather information relative to the nature and quality of data-driven instructional support services that may be available nationally and locally. This is an effort to construct the best possible application process for this initiative. Following the analysis of the results of this RFI, a detailed application process will be designed to choose the site for the LDS Center.

Privacy and Governance Plans

Per Chapter 190 of the Acts of the Maryland General Assembly of 2010, the Board is required to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly the privacy and governance plans for the system and Center prior to the incorporation of data into the system. The Board has begun to gather best practice information on privacy and governance plans from other states and the Data Quality Campaign. While there is no single best practice model for privacy and governance plans, there is a great deal of activity occurring at the national level given the heightened focus on longitudinal data systems under the Obama Administration and the funding providing in Race to the Top and other competitive grants.

Data Quality Campaign

The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) has convened an advisory group to examine privacy practices with regards to state longitudinal data systems and to guide the development of best practices. DQC is also conducting an analysis of all state and federal privacy laws that relate to student records and will be releasing a summary analysis of these laws before the end of the calendar year 2010. In February 2011, DQC plans to release a handbook for states that will outline best practices in privacy and governance based upon their organization research.

US Department of Education Office of Education Initiatives

The US Department of Education has created the new Office of Education Initiatives devoted to protecting student data privacy in response to the concerns of states and advocates. Through this Office, the Department is expected to release revised and clarified regulations related to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the federal law that protects the privacy of student records. There has been a great deal of confusion regarding the flexibility and authority that states have to link data in their statewide systems under the current FERPA guidance. These revised guidelines are expected to be released early in 2011.

The Board understands the importance of developing governance and privacy plans but does not want to move ahead of the national best practice guidance and regulatory interpretation expected to be released in the coming months. In conclusion, while national best practices models for privacy and governance plans do not exist currently, there are multiple resources from which the Governing Board can draw in the coming months to inform the development of these plans.

Conclusion

This report has detailed the early stages of work on the Maryland P-20 Longitudinal Data System. It was prepared in accordance with the terms of Chapter 190 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2010. During the course of 2010, the State of Maryland reached several key milestones in implementing the requirements of that statute. A strong structure of governance, in the form of the Governing Board supported by an interagency workgroup, has been established and charged with the work of creating and maintaining the system. The Board is currently moving forward in the process to locate the Center. The most important element of that work has been the issuance of a Request for Information which will begin the process for selecting a site for the Maryland P-20 Longitudinal Data System Center.

Appendix A.
Maryland Longitudinal Data System Governing Board
2010 Membership Roster

Ex Officio Members:

Dr. William "Brit" Kirwan
Chancellor
University System of Maryland
Board Chairman

Dr. Nancy Grasmick
Superintendent
Maryland State Department of Education

Dr. Jim Lyons
Secretary
Maryland Higher Education Commission

Alexander M. Sanchez
Secretary
Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and
Regulation

Mr. H. Clay Whitlow
Executive Director
Maryland Association of Community Colleges

Dr. David Wilson
President
Morgan State University

Dr. Michael Martirano
Superintendent
St. Mary's Public Schools
**Representing Superintendents*

Public Members:

Ms. Nicole Murano
Stevenson University
**Representing Higher Education with
Expertise in Large Data Systems*

Ms. Ayana English-Brown
Prince George's County Public Schools
**Representing Teachers*

Mr. Jason Perkins-Cohen
Job Opportunities Task Force
**Representing Workforce*

Mr. Brian Roberts
Montgomery County
**Representing Parents*