State of North Carolina
Office of Information Technology Services

Pat McCrory
Governor

Chris Estes
State Chief Information Officer

October 22, 2014

Members of the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations
Members of Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee
Members of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Information Technology

Dear Members of the General Assembly and Staff:

This letter serves as a quarterly update on activities of the North Carolina Longitudinal Data System Board as directed by Session Law 2013-80.

The board was unable to generate a quorum to hold a meeting during the fourth quarter (Q4) of FY 13/14.

The board held its Q1 FY 14/15 meeting on July 16, 2014, in the State Board of Education Conference Room. After handling procedural matters and reviewing the board's legislation and responsibilities, the agenda included an update on the ECIDS (Early Childhood Integrated Data System) Project, as well as an overview of the P-20W grant. The board had a wide-ranging discussion about the direction of these programs. A copy of the draft meeting minutes is attached.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve as chair of the Longitudinal Data System Board. Please feel free to contact me if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Chris Estes

Attachment

North Carolina Longitudinal Data System Board

Minutes

NC Department of Public Instruction
301 N. Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC

Wednesday, July 16, 2014

The meeting of the North Carolina Longitudinal Data System (LDS) Board was held in the 7th floor State Board of Education Conference Room at the NC Department of Public Instruction, on July 16, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

Members Present
Chris Estes, Senator Andrew Brock, Delbert Arrendale, Dr. Daniel Cohen-Vogel, Karen DeLeon, Dr. Louis Fabrizio, Dale Folwell, Jennifer Haigwood, Dan Kempton, Rob Kindsvatter, Dr. Jenna Robinson, Dr. Terry Stoops, David Ulmer, Dr. Saundra Williams, and Dr. A. Hope Williams

Members Absent
Senator Chad Barefoot, Senator Dan Soucek, and Phillip Emer

Welcome from the Chair
Chris Estes, State CIO and Board Chairman, called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Mr. Estes welcomed several new members to the Board and thanked them for their service to the State of North Carolina.

Approval of Minutes
Motion to approve the minutes from the January 15, 2014, meeting was made by Dr. Louis Fabrizio and seconded by Mr. Rob Kindsvatter. Motion carried unanimously.

Overview of the Longitudinal Data Board Legislation and Responsibilities
Richard Bradford, Special Deputy Attorney General, provided a summary of G.S. Chapter 116E, Education Longitudinal Data System (LDS), and outlined the following points:

- There are currently technical corrections bills in committees of the House and Senate for minor wording changes and clarifications of G.S. 116E.
- The LDS Board major responsibilities and authority includes:
  - Determine how agencies may share educational and workforce data with each other and independent researchers.
  - Establish contracts with other agencies.
  - Facilitate approved public information requests. Mr. Bradford expressed concern with this provision as the Board only meets quarterly, which may hinder a timely response to such requests.
  - Regulate data usage and assure security and privacy of the data.
  - Receive funds through appropriations.
  - Rulemaking authority.
  - Submit an annual report to the General Assembly and submit quarterly reports to three legislative subcommittees.

Mr. Bradford discussed the main purpose of the Board which is to develop an implementation plan to facilitate the exchange of data among state agencies and to provide general oversight of the plan. He stated this is a challenging mission because the Board has no staff to do the work, yet the wording of the statute implies daily or frequent oversight of the plan.

Mr. Bradford answered questions from Board members and clarified that State agencies are required to participate in data sharing and private agencies are encouraged, but not required, to participate. He also clarified that no agency may release any data that would be in violation of federal laws, such as FERPA, HIPAA, etc.

Mr. Estes stated that he requested $5,000 for travel expenses for Board members during the current short session and that during the next full session of the legislature he plans to ask for funding for an executive director position for the Board along with funding for some other staff positions.

ECIDS (Early Childhood Integrated Data System) Project

Dr. Dale Epstein, project director for NC ECIDS, provided an overview of the program. She stated that the ECIDS project is the result of the NC RttT (Race to the Top) Early Learning Challenge Grant, and is a data system designed to integrate early childhood (ages 0 – 5) education, health, and social service data from participating state agencies and is focused on children receiving state and federal services from North Carolina agencies.

The mission of ECIDS is to use the data to create policies and practices that support better outcomes for children and families.

The goals of ECIDS are to:
- Provide state agencies, policymakers, and the public with unduplicated counts of where children are being served.
- Provide policymakers and researchers with information about current programs and services to better address areas of need and effective practice within systems.
- To integrate with the P-20W system, allowing for the examination of effects of early childhood programs and services over time.

Participating agencies in ECIDS include: NCDHHS (NC Department of Health and Human Services), NCDPI (NC Department of Public Instruction), NCPC (NC Partnership for Children), and NCOITS (NC Office of Information Technology Services) as the technology provider. ECIDS will have a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with each participating agency which will outline the data sharing agreement.

Types of reports available from ECIDS will include:
- Standard Reports produced on a specified timeline and available to the public on the ECIDS website;
- Query Reports, produced on demand from segmented standard report data, also available on the website; and
- Data Requests, approved requests for specific data elements to be used to conduct more detailed analyses.

ECIDS will be managed by a Governance Council with representatives from each of the participating agencies. The Governance Council will have two subcommittees:

- Policy Committee
    - Responsible for governance policies.
    - Recommendations for current and future data use and analyses.
    - Compliance with state and federal data governance policies and standards.
    - Conflict resolution.
- Data Management Committee
    - Responsible for data elements to be included in ECIDS.
    - Issues with data request process.
    - Approval of data requests.
    - Recommendations for current and future data use.
    - Review and recommendation of issues to be forwarded to the Policy Committee.

Overview of the P-20W Grant

Dr. Louis Fabrizio, Director of the Data, Research and Federal Policy Division at the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), provided an update on the P-20W grant. He stated that the United States Department of Education's State Support Team (SST) conducted a technical assistance meeting with NCDPI staff and others on April 23, 2014.

There were three objectives for the meeting:
- Provide feedback and discuss outstanding issues from the United States Department of Education site monitoring visit conducted in January 2014. Representatives of NCDPI explained the data governance structure and the relationship of the LDS Board to that structure.
- Meet with K-12 and Early Childhood representatives to discuss linking data across multiple agencies. Early Childhood has purchased licenses to use the eScholar product used in K-12 to assign unique IDs (UIDs). The intent is to assign a UID to each child at the entry point for receiving services. The entry point may be anywhere from birth to K-12.
- Meet with private post-secondary institutions to review their approach to sharing data. The NC Independent's Colleges and Universities (NCICU) provided the State Support Team (SST) with a list of data elements that would be allowed to be shared from their institutions. All shared data will comply with Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) requirements. Additionally, each private institution will sign an individual agreement to share their data with the NCICU as their contractor to link and analyze the data.

Progress on the grant objectives include:
- Current development of query capabilities for data.
- Updates made to mileposts on the grant timeline. Some goals will not be completed until the end of the grant period in 2015.
- The possibility of a no-cost grant extension has been discussed, meaning the period of the grant may be extended without further funding being awarded.
- Connectivity concerns with sector data warehouses are being resolved, using automated processes.
- Multiple levels of security have been built into the system workflow process.

Action Items for the P-20W Grant Project:
- Continue to work with the Department of Commerce to execute a MOU for data sharing across agencies.
- Design communications tools that can be used for transparency and sharing the work of the P-20W.
- Continue to engage stakeholders as the system is implemented.
- Maintain the current schedule for regular data governance meetings and distribute meeting minutes.
- Define and communicate roles and responsibilities for K-12, private post-secondary institutions and the NCICU for the P-20W data system.

General Discussion
Board members engaged in discussion after all of the presentations and the following items were covered:
- Dr. Cohen-Vogel will write the data sharing MOU for the education agencies to sign.
- Training on the Unique Identifier (UID) will be held at NCDPI for participating agencies.
- Mr. Karl Pond from NCDPI will provide a demonstration of the P-20W product at the next LDS Board meeting.
- NCDPI must post a data dictionary on its website as one the requirements of the recently passed S.L. 2014-50 (SB815) legislation regarding ensuring the privacy and security of student educational records.
- Suggestion was made that the Board consider forming several subcommittees.

Topics for Next Meeting
Topics for the next meeting are:
- P-20W System demonstration by Mr. Karl Pond
- Common Follow-Up Team presentation
- Existing Project Structures presentation by Dr. Dan Cohen-Vogel
- Sustainability Budget presentation by Randy Barnes from OITS
- Government Data Analytics Center (GDAC) presentation

Adjourn
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.