



**State of North Carolina
Office of Information Technology Services**

**Pat McCrory
Governor**

**Chris Estes
State Chief Information Officer**

January 26, 2015

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 held its Q2 FY 14-15 meeting on October 8, 2014, in the State Board of Education Conference Room. After handling procedural matters, the agenda included presentations on: Common Follow-Up Team; P-20W System Demo; and discussion on next steps for the board. Attached is a copy of the approved minutes.

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, October 8, 2014

The meeting of the North Carolina Longitudinal Data System Board was held in the 7th floor State Board of Education Conference Room at the NC Department of Public Instruction, on October 8, 2014 at 2:30 p.m.

Members Present

Chris Estes, Dan Kempton, Dr. Terry Stoops, Dr. A. Hope Williams, Dr. Louis Fabrizio, Rob Kindsvatter, Dr. Jenna Robinson, Dale Folwell and attending via conference call: Dr. Sandra Williams and Del Arrendale

Members Absent

Dr. Dan Cohen-Vogel, Phil Emer, David Ulmer, Karen DeLeon and Jennifer Haigwood

Welcome from the Chair

Chris Estes, State CIO and Board Chairman, called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Mr. Estes welcomed board members, guest presenters, and staff. He then read the ethics statement into the minutes. Mr. Estes stated that Dr. Dan Cohen-Vogel was scheduled to provide a demonstration of the existing project structure, but was unable to attend, so the demonstration has been rescheduled for the next board meeting. Mr. Estes announced that he had appointed John Correllus as the new director of the NC Government Data Analytics Center (GDAC) and that Mr. Correllus will be present at the next board meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the July 16, 2014 meeting was made by Dr. A. Hope Williams and seconded by Dr. Louis Fabrizio. Motion carried unanimously.

Common Follow-Up Team

(Attachment #1 PowerPoint Presentation & Attachment #2 NCTOWER)

Dr. Betty McGrath, Director of Workforce, Research & Evaluation, Labor & Economic Analysis Division, for the NC Department of Commerce, provided handouts and gave a presentation on the history and development of the Common Follow-Up System (CFS).

The purpose of the CFS is to provide information on the educational and employment outcomes of participants in publicly supported educational, employment and training programs for use in planning, policymaking, program evaluation, resource allocation, and career planning. Participating agencies include: the NC Department of Commerce, NC Department of Health and Human Services, NC Department of Public Instruction, NC Department of Public Safety, NC Community College System and the University of North Carolina General Administration.

All of these agencies provide data files containing information on program participants, including: social security number (when available), demographics, service location, program participation and completion, entry and exit dates, and degree attainment. The data contains extensive longitudinal information on over 8.8 million people across a span of twenty years.

The data are stored in a centralized longitudinal data repository and are currently managed by the Department of Commerce. Session Law 2014-100 requires the Department of Commerce to develop a plan for the transfer of the CFS data repository to the Government Data Analytics Center, within the Office of Information Technology Services.

Dr. McGrath also spoke briefly about NCTOWER, which is a new program developed this year in collaboration with the Department of Commerce's Labor and Economic Analysis Division (LEAD), the NC Community College System, the University of North Carolina General Administration, and the NC Office of Information Technology Services.

NCTOWER is a product of the Common Follow-Up System and it provides up to ten years of post-graduation employment, wage, and continuing enrollment outcomes for graduates of the NC Community College System and the University of North Carolina System.

Board Discussion about the CFS

- Unemployment data are only captured for individuals who have applied for and are receiving benefits. There are many people who are unemployed and for various reasons have not applied for benefits. Some of them aren't looking for jobs so they are out of the labor force.
- It is important for all agencies to understand data confidentiality for each agency. We must protect information about individuals and employers.

P-20W System Demo

(Attachment #3 PowerPoint Presentation)

Karl Pond, Enterprise Data Manager for the NC Department of Public Instruction, provided a demonstration of the P-20W system, along with a team of developers from the SAS Institute.

The P-20W system is comprised of integrated data from preschool through grade 20 with workforce data to aid in the analysis of and planning for educational programs in North Carolina. Participating state agencies have agreed to use a unique identifier for student data which makes data integration easier. The data integration and analysis will be facilitated through a broker system, which means that each agency will maintain its own separate data warehouse but only the requested data from an agency will be sent to the broker system for the analyses.

The participating agencies have agreed to align their data elements with the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) requirements in order to facilitate data matching from the various data warehouses. Prior to release of data from the P-20W system, the request must be approved by all agencies supplying the requested data.

The system demonstration began with the public website landing page, which describes the P-20W system, and provides documentation on how to use the system, a link to the data dictionary and an optional view that lists every data element and its definition. Board members were then shown the steps which will occur when a request is made for data.

The requester:

- Must have an NCID or UNC General Administration ID in order to log on to the system
- Will be assigned an ID which can be tracked throughout the process
- Will be required to answer questions about the nature and purpose of the data request
- Can choose to specify the date by which the data are needed
- Must select the desired data elements

The next portion of the demonstration was presented from the view of the system administrators and data owners. They must:

- Ensure the submitted query was attached to the requester's case
- Review the query
- Each data owner must log in and approve use of the data elements
- Each data owner must decide if the query is correct and will produce the desired results
- Data owners can reject part of a query and make alternate suggestions
- If all data owners approve the query then it automatically runs; if all of the data owners do not approve the query, then a meeting or conference call may occur among the data owners to determine the next steps.

After review by the system administrators and data owners, the requester is notified of approval or rejection of the request by email.

Once each part of the query has been computed it is returned to the system where it can be viewed by the requester, the system administrator and all of the data owners. The requester can then perform various functions with the data. The query is stored in the system so the requester can return and modify it for later use.

Board Discussion about the P-20W Demonstration

- Agencies must electronically sign a Memorandum of Understanding for each request from an independent researcher.
- The automated system of request approval will be more efficient and require less staff time than the current manual system.
- Anyone who has a NCID or UNCGA-ID may make a request, but that doesn't mean the request will be approved.
- The requester must sign a confidentiality agreement and agree to destroy the data within a specified time frame. If the requester fails to return the data destruction agreement he/she will not be approved for further data requests.
- The Board needs to consult with legal staff to determine if information about the requester and nature of the data request fall under the public records law. The assumption is that it would be public information.
- The P-20W Council will continue to function once the grant funding period ends.
- Concerns were raised about the confidential data elements and whether permission is needed from people in the database to use their information in research. Several of the Board members said it would not be necessary to get that permission under the current FERPA law.
- There has been no attempt to merge CFS data with P-20W data due to the data warehouses being located in different locations and the confidentiality requirements for the different agency warehouses.
- The grant funds are to cover the cost of building the system and do not include annual maintenance costs of approximately \$100,000 after the contract ends in July of 2016 (assuming NCDPI is able to get the no cost extension of the grant from the US Department of Education).

Next Steps

At the next meeting:

- Dr. Dan Cohen-Vogel will provide a demonstration of the existing project structure.
- John Correllus will speak about GDAC's role.
- The Senate has three board positions to fill.

Adjourn

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