Bill Number: House Bill 132   **Position:** Letter of Information
Title: Education – Student Horizon Database and Scorecard (Students Right to Know Act of 2022)
Committee: Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee
Hearing Date: January 18, 2022

Bill Summary:
House Bill 132 would require the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to annually collect information for the purposes of establishing and maintaining a publicly accessible database called the "Student Horizon Scorecard." MSDE would be required to collect data on a number of topics, many of which the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) would be expected to provide to MSDE.

Information:
House Bill 132 would redundantly reproduce data that are already publicly accessible. The bill states that institutions can fulfill the requirements by obtaining and sharing data from existing databases and reports. This seems redundant and burdensome to institutions and the relevant agencies involved.

In order to fulfill the requirements of the bill, 3 full-time staff members and 1 part-time staff member would be needed. The additional staff would include:

- a full-time staff member in the Office of Information Technology (for the purposes of managing new collections, particularly with private career school data – which includes over 140 schools – that current collections does not accommodate)
- a full-time staff member in the Office of Research and Policy analysis (for the purposes of preparing and formatting data for MSDE, coordinating data collections outside of institutional data – e.g., working with other agencies or the federal government)
- a full-time staff member of the Office of Academic Affairs (for the purposes of coordinating data collections with private career schools)
- a part-time staff member in the Office of Research and Policy analysis (for the purposes of validating all new data)
- Outside vendor (for the purposes of building a new system to capture increased data)

To expand on the redundancy, many of the postsecondary variables listed in House Bill 132 are currently available on the federal College Scorecard (https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/), administered by the US Department of Education. The entire scorecard is intended to make

education, employment, and other data available for students to help them make informed decisions about postsecondary opportunities. Apprenticeship data has recently been added, as well as data queries at the field of study level (versus at the institutional level). The College Scorecard data are available for download in aggregate form (https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/data/).

The College Scorecard data already include many of the data elements that would be required of House Bill 132, such as: cost of attendance, monthly student loan payments, student loan default rates, graduation or completion rates, student demographics, and starting salary of graduates or completers. Additionally, the College Scorecard allows users to compare schools on these variables (as would be required of House Bill 132) and search for similar variables on specific majors/academic programs within a specific college (as would be required of House Bill 132). House Bill 132 would, in many ways, require MSDE to unnecessarily replicate the College Scorecard (with considerable dependence on MHEC and significant cost and operational impact to MHEC to produce the applicable data so that it can be searchable).

Second, the Maryland Department of Labor (through national data obtained through the federal government, the Bureau of Labor Statistics) publishes information on projected workforce demand (https://www.dllr.state.md.us/lmi/iandoproj/). The projections include information regarding the educational value, work experience, and on-the-job training for each occupational title; this information was added to present a more complete picture of the education and training needed for entry into a given occupation and to become competent at performing the occupation. Similar to the College Scorecard, these data are available for download (either as short-term projections, long-term projections, or regional projections; and, broken out by occupation and industry). These projections, and the accompanying data, would include data elements required of House Bill 132, such as identify the most in–demand jobs in the state and the education levels required for each job.
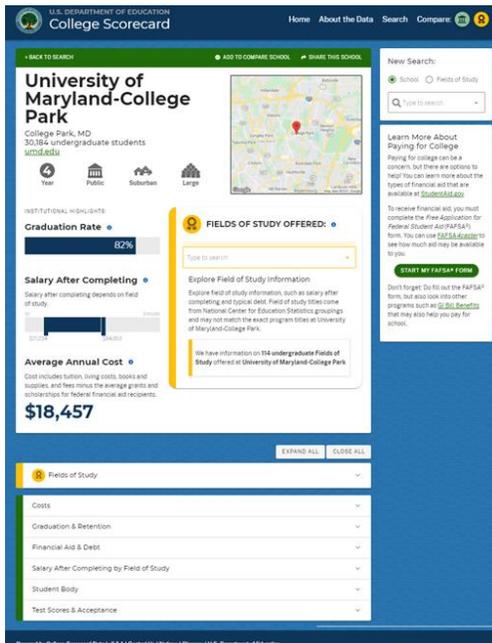
As noted earlier, should House Bill 132 pass, there would be constraints on access to the data. MHEC does not have access to some of the data listed in the bill nor are the data readily available to MHEC for much of the data required in House Bill 132 (even though the data are readily available through the College Scorecard). All this poses a challenge particularly if MSDE is expected to provide a platform that is searchable (meaning MHEC could not rely on aggregate data). For example, MHEC does not collect nor is there another known source for the following data:

- Cost of attendance for all students (MHEC only has visibility into those who receive financial aid, which constitutes about ½ to ⅔ of enrolled students in a given year)
- Loan default data
- Socioeconomic variables or family income data for all enrolled students as stated on the FAFSA (MHEC gets some data from those who obtain financial aid but that is only about ½ to ⅔ of the students enrolled in a given year and those data have use restrictions imposed by the federal Department of Education)
- Graduation rates and starting salaries for private career school graduates
- Data specified in the bill for students who enlist in the military after high school

Not only does MHEC not collect comprehensive data on family income, the data it does collect are derived from the FAFSA, which are the property of the Department of Education, and, as such, can only be used for research purposes that support improving the administration of financial aid. The Student Horizon Scorecard does not improve the administration of financial aid therefore MHEC would be precluded from using FAFSA derived elements.

Again, MHEC could not rely on aggregate data that is publicly available and there would need to be a cross-agency data sharing agreement that would leverage/utilize MHEC data. Data in this bucket include:

- Wage and education requirement for employment (Labor)
- Outcomes and salary data for those in apprenticeship programs while in high school (Labor, MSDE)
- Enrollment and employment outcomes (MLDS)

Last, the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center may be better suited to provide relevant dashboards for data that are not otherwise publicly accessible: "The mission of the MLDS Center is to develop and maintain a data system that contains student data from all levels of education and workforce data in order to provide analyses, produce relevant information, and inform choices to improve student and workforce outcomes, while ensuring the highest standards of system security and data privacy." Indeed, the MLDS Center already produces annual reports and dashboards on college-going, college completion and earnings for high school graduates, some of which are disaggregated by local school system and school.

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