
TO: House Ways and Means Committee

BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 0056– Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center - External Data Sharing With Third-Party Data Centers for Multistate Reporting - Authorization

DATE: March 25, 2026

POSITION: Support

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) extend this letter of support for *SB 56 - Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center – External Data Sharing With Third-Party Data Centers for Multistate Reporting – Authorization*, which seeks to better understand educational and workforce pathways across the Capital Region (Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia).

Under current law, the MLDS Center cannot share individual-level student or workforce data outside the state. As a result, the Center is limited in its ability to track and analyze educational and workforce pathways that cross state lines, which restricts both research and reporting. Nationally, leaders of state longitudinal data systems have recognized that there are limits to what a state can learn by examining only its own data. This is particularly true for Maryland, which borders multiple states and has an interconnected regional economy.

To address these limitations, states have been developing multistate partnerships that allow them to conduct research and analysis capturing movement across state lines. SB 56 would amend existing statute to allow the MLDS Center Governing Board to permit sharing of student and workforce data with third-party data centers, under specific conditions, for multistate research and reporting. These changes would enable MLDS to match Maryland data with data from other jurisdictions, specifically the District of Columbia and Virginia, providing a more complete picture of Maryland students’ educational and workforce outcomes.

SB 56 is intended to support comprehensive, multistate research that allows Maryland’s student outcomes to be compared and understood in a broader regional context, while maintaining strong privacy and security protections. It permits limited data sharing only under clearly defined conditions and requires oversight and approval by the MLDS Center Governing Board before any data is shared. The legislation requires that any third-party data center meet rigorous data security standards, including maintaining Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP) certification, and limits data use to approved research and reporting purposes. Personally identifiable information may be used only as necessary to securely match records across jurisdictions, after which data must be de-identified, with only aggregate results permitted for public reporting. Together, these safeguards enable meaningful cross-state analysis while protecting the privacy of Maryland students and workers.

The State Board and MSDE respectfully request that the committee consider this information as it deliberates on SB 56. Please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at laurel.cratsley@maryland.gov, if you would like any additional information.