

SLDS Governing Board

Mississippi Manufacturer's Association
720 N. President Street,
Jackson, MS

MINUTES

June 17, 2021

In Attendance:

Mr. Patrick Sullivan, Chair, State Workforce Investment Board

Mr. Chris Howard, Executive Director, MS Department of Rehabilitation Services

Dr. Andrea Mayfield, Executive Director, MS Community College Board

Ms. Deborah Donovan, Director of Office of Data Analysis and Reporting, Mississippi Department of Education

Dr. Bill Ashley, Director, Business Research & Workforce Development, Mississippi Development Authority

Dr. Steve Bishop, President, Southwest Mississippi Community College

Mr. Robert G. "Bob" Anderson, Executive Director, MS Department of Human Services

Dr. Jim Hood, Assistant Commissioner for Strategic Research, Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

Ms. Avery Lee, SLDS Board Attorney

Dr. Steven Grice, Executive Director, NSPARC at Mississippi State University

Dr. Michael Taquino, Deputy Director, NSPARC at Mississippi State University

Call to Order: Chair Patrick Sullivan called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

Chair Sullivan opened the meeting and attendance was taken.

The Board reviewed minutes from the last meeting. No changes were suggested, and the Board approved the minutes.

Chair Sullivan referred Board members to the draft revisions of the SLDS Governing Board Rules and Regulations. Chair Sullivan stated that the revisions had been discussed at the previous Board meeting with no action taken. Chair Sullivan explained that the purpose of the revisions was to streamline the rules and harmonize them with the SLDS legislation, and then opened the floor for discussion.

Ms. Deborah Donovan commented on the suggested changes to rule 7.2 and stated that it was critical to keep language in the rules that specify the role of data contributors to review reports produced to fulfill SLDS requests. Dr. Andrea Mayfield echoed Ms. Donovan's comments, and Dr. Jim Hood commented that this was the standard operating process between data contributors and the State Data Clearinghouse, NSPARC. Dr. Steve Grice explained how SLDS requests were handled by the Clearinghouse, including the multiple opportunities data contributors have to review research methodology, preliminary results, and draft reports.

Dr. Hood further commented that he, as charged in the previous Board meeting, had looked into the functioning of the Research Review and Standards Committee (RRSC). Dr. Hood indicated that he had learned that the RRSC rarely had substantive feedback on requested reports. Dr. Grice provided

examples to illustrate that, in the experience of the Clearinghouse, substantive feedback on research methodology and draft reports typically came from the data contributors rather than the RRSC. Chair Sullivan voiced a concern that the RRSC review process significantly increased the time to complete requests requiring fast turnarounds.

Dr. Mayfield made a motion to add back language to Section 7.2(a) of the SLDS Rules and Regulations, specifying that data contributors have an opportunity to review and comment on SLDS reports. The motion was seconded by Dr. Bill Ashley. All Board members voted in favor.

Ms. Donovan requested clarification on changes to Rule 8.1, regarding the reports that would be available through the LifeTracks web portal. Dr. Grice clarified that Rule 8.1 referred to the posting of ad hoc reports to the web portal. Chair Sullivan commented that all reports produced using SLDS funds would be posted to the web portal, unless the report contained information protected under the Mississippi Public Records Act.

Ms. Donovan requested clarification on changes to Rule 7.2(a) regarding the number of reports that data contributors could request from the Clearinghouse. Ms. Donovan stressed that it was critical to ensure that federal reports were included as a priority. Dr. Mayfield stated that community colleges also rely heavily on SLDS support for federal reporting. Ms. Donovan made a motion to include in the SLDS Rules and Regulations Section 7.2(a) that Federally mandated reports would be included as a priority. Dr. Steven Bishop seconded the motion. All Board members voted in favor.

A motion was made by Dr. Mayfield to adopt the revisions to the SLDS Rules and Regulations with the approved changes. Dr. Ashley seconded the motion. All Board members voted in favor.

Chair Sullivan also instructed the Clearinghouse to establish a rate to produce reports for private entities and post this rate on the LifeTracks web portal.

Chair Sullivan raised the issue of the Bylaws of the SLDS Governing Board, commenting that they were duplicative with the Revised Rules and Regulations. Dr. Ashley made a motion to repeal the Bylaws. Dr. Mayfield seconded the motion. All Board members voted in favor.

Chair Sullivan turned Board members' attention to the Lifetracks website and stated that the website could be revised to include information that would satisfy typical requests made to the Clearinghouse and standard information that workforce stakeholders and policymakers would like to access. Chair Sullivan indicated that this would reduce duplicative requests to the Clearinghouse for information. Chair Sullivan requested that the Clearinghouse develop specifications for a new SLDS website and make recommendations to the Board at their next meeting.

Chair Sullivan raised the issue of the importance of "enhanced" wage records. Currently, information collected through the Mississippi Department of Employment Security's covered unemployment system does not include occupational information on employees. Collecting occupational information would enrich the data available in the SLDS, especially for evaluating the outcomes of educational and occupational training programs. Chair Sullivan indicated that he would follow up with Ms. Jackie Turner (Executive Director, Mississippi Department of Employment Security) regarding opportunities to collect this information.

Chair Sullivan then turned Board members' attention to a request from Mr. John Kramen (CIO, Mississippi Department of Education) to develop a pilot K-12 SLDS research agenda. Ms. Donovan explained that the goal of the pilot is to establish a set of topical areas aligned with the research needs of MDE and the research interests of Mississippi IHL faculty. Interested faculty could then apply to conduct "pre-approved" research studies that address specific elements of the research agenda. Dr. Grice commented that an initiative such as this could be self-supporting, if interested faculty would seek extramural funding to support their research, and therefore would not draw from the SLDS appropriation. Dr. Hood expressed interest in the idea from an IHL perspective. Chair Sullivan instructed MDE to work with the Clearinghouse to begin developing the pilot program.

The SLDS Governing Board meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.