



**Larry Hogan**  
Governor

**Boyd K. Rutherford**  
Lt. Governor

**Ian D. MacFarlane**  
Chair

**James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph. D.**  
Secretary

October 6, 2020

Dear Community College President,

As you may know, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (the Commission) has several statewide data collections regarding student enrollment, degree completion, faculty, and financial aid. These collections serve as an essential source of information to inform education policy and evaluate institutional performance. Additionally, the Commission shares much of this data with the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (MLDSC) to better understand the educational impact on workforce outcomes in Maryland.

For the past several years, the Commission has been working with representatives of Maryland's community colleges to lay the foundation to collect unit record data on students completing non-credit continuing education courses, programs, and sequences that lead to a workforce outcome. The group spearheading this effort, the Standardization for Workforce Reporting Workgroup, arose out of a commitment from you and your fellow community college presidents.

The efforts of this workgroup have resulted in a new non-credit completer collection. This collection will serve as a valuable collection that helps reflect the important contributions the community colleges are making to the education of Maryland's citizens and the state's workforce.

The workgroup consists of community college representatives from the areas of institutional research (IR), non-credit/continuing education, and information technology (IT). In addition, representatives from the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), staff the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), and MLDSC have participated in many of the meetings held over the past year. The group sought regular feedback from the community colleges' affinity groups, including Maryland Community College Association for Continuing Education and Training (MCCACET) and the Maryland Community College Research Group (MCCRG). It has truly been a collaborative effort.

I write to share with you the accomplishments of this workgroup and review the plans for the coming two years regarding this collection. First, the initial pilot year of this collection is about to launch, with participating colleges submitting unit record data on December 1 of this year (see attachment for the pilot year participants). FY2022 will serve as second pilot year before being fully implemented in FY2023. The two years of piloting will allow members of the workgroup to reassess the collection's strengths and challenges and make necessary improvements.

Second, these data (see attachment for data elements) will be used for statewide reporting from MHEC and for analysis by the MLDSC. This second item is of particular import, as

MLDSC will be able to begin answering workforce outcome questions for completers of these non-credit programs. This analysis can help answer pressing institutional and policy questions tied to these programs.

We could not have gotten this far so quickly if it were not for the commitment of the members of the workgroup and the leadership support from you. Workgroup members have shown what hard work, good communication, strong leadership and teamwork can create. With this collection, the institutions and the state will be poised to learn more about the significant contributions non-credit programs make to Maryland. If you have any questions regarding this work, please contact Dr. Barbara Schmertz, Director of Research and Policy Analysis ([barbara.schmertz@maryland.gov](mailto:barbara.schmertz@maryland.gov)). Thank you for your commitment.

Sincerely,



Dr. James D. Fielder  
Secretary

cc: Brad Phillips, Director of Policy Analysis & Research, MACC  
Heidi Barth, Director of Institutional Research, CCBC, Co-Chair of Standardization for Workforce Reporting Workgroup  
Patricia Meyer, Associate Vice President, FCC, Co-Chair of Standardization for Workforce Reporting Workgroup

Attachments: Pilot Participation Schedule  
Noncredit Workforce Completers System Collection File Layout