VLDS E-Newsletter - November/December 2013

@VLDSinsights

#VLDS

VLDS Wins the 2013 Governor's Technology Award

L to R. Wendy Kang (VCCS), Jeremy Deyo (VEC), former Secretary of Education Laura Fornash and her Director of Education and Workforce Development Elizabeth Creamer, Tod Massa (SCHEV) and Bethann Canada(VDOE) Photo: Misty Kiser, VDOE

Welcome to the November/December Issue of the VLDS Insights E-newsletter. In this issue we explore the early days of VLDS and how four large state agencies came together to create a unified vision. Also in this issue, we've highlighted the inaugural batch of VLDS research and where each of the projects stand. Thanks for reading.

IN THIS ISSUE

VLDS IN THE NEWS

Government Technology's Adam Stone reveals how "by collecting and collating disparate data, government agencies are creating information repositories to assist decision-making." **Read** how Virginia and other localities are using data to transform the way agencies track progress and create intervention strategies.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

VLDS Data Governance Project

What happens when four large agencies collaborate on a project? Of course, each agency brings a unique perspective and a talented team, but how are decisions made?   Who has the final say?   The development of VLDS not only launched a system that would build long-term benefits for Virginia citizens, but it also created a culture of cooperation among the four original founding agencies and with other organizations.

Once the ARRA funds were received and prior to the actual development of the system, the founding agencies realized that a number of issues would need to be addressed before the system could be built.   Many of these issues were related to data governance.   As a result, a data governance committee was formed with representatives from the four founding agencies and other organizations (Center for Innovative Technology, Virginia Information Technologies Agency, Virginia Tech).   The Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) was asked to facilitate the meetings to help the committee to identify important issues, develop a blueprint for the system architecture and help them reach a

consensus on a number of critical questions. Louis McDonald, former CIT Chief Technology Officer and currently the Director of Technology Services for Fauquier County Public Schools, and Henry Paik, CIT Manager, Consulting Services, facilitated these governance meetings. We asked Mr. McDonald about the early days of the Data Governance Project.

VLDS Data Governance

VLDS: What was the purpose of the Data Governance Project?
McDonald: One of the main purposes of the project, in addition to those you listed, was to help the agencies that were providing data to the system decide how to merge their assets in a way that benefitted all of them.

VLDS: What was CIT's role in this process?
McDonald: We had several roles. We influenced how things evolved. In the beginning, CIT investigated best practices in several areas to help the committee to understand a number of issues. We talked to experts about data security issues and designing secure systems, encryption, database architectures, and on governance. We helped the committee to establish a charter that determined what the body would do; set up rules for things like the decision process, working out contingencies, and voting; and we helped them through the process of designing the architecture. Overall, we helped the committee come to a collective agreement.

VLDS: That brings up another question. What did you think is a facilitator's most important role?
McDonald: Successful facilitators must be able to listen to what is said and to summarize the conversation into action points. They need to identify key issues, make recommendations, and then help negotiate through the differences to reach agreement.

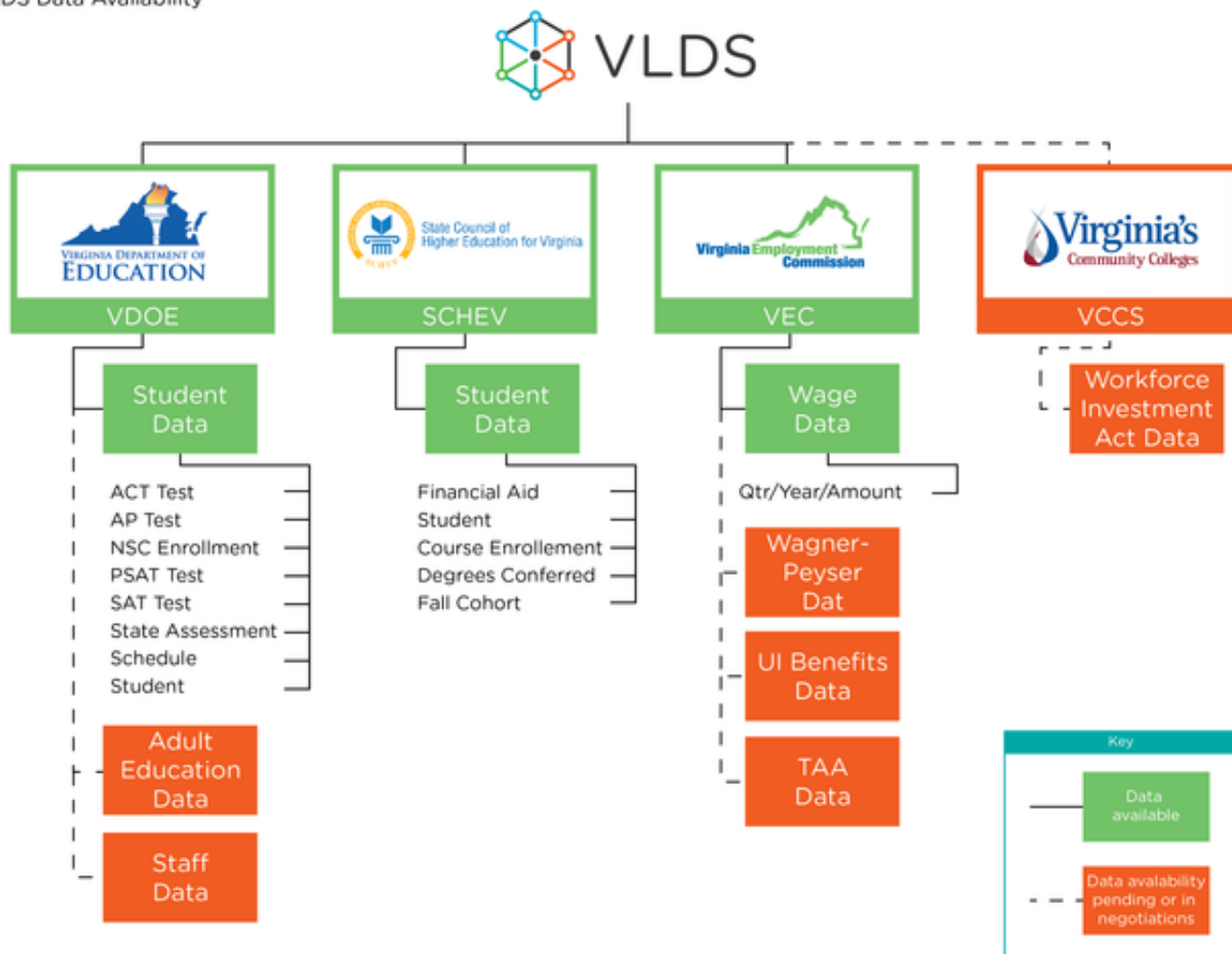**VLDS**: What were some of the challenges that arose during the project?
McDonald: When you have disparate groups that all bring with them a different way of doing things, there will be issues. This project was a new frontier for all of the agencies. They had not collaborated

on a project like this before. There were different agencies that had different policies and procedures, and there were diverse personalities with diverse views. The challenges were to find the middle road and a way to negotiate with outliers.

VLDS: How were issues resolved?

McDonald: Compromise - by finding the middle road. The mantra for the committee became, "Can you live with it?" Quite honestly though, it wasn't as difficult a process as you would think because all the committee members were so committed to the project and to making it work, that they were able to find that middle ground.

VLDS Data Availability

INSIGHTS FOR RESEARCHERS

VLDS Research: The Inaugural Batch

Last month we announced that VLDS has "gone live" and that, at this stage, we must focus our limited resources on partner-agency sposored research. These initial projects will help test the system and improve it for future research. To give you an idea of the types of research currently underway, we've compiled the table below. Remember, VLDS is driven by the following burning questions:

- What are the participant outcomes of student and workforce opportunities and programs?
- How do education and workforce programs align to known and projected employer needs?
- What is the return on investment from specific types of eduction and workforce opportunities and programs?
- What factors or conditions lead to high quality education and workforce outcomes?

Contact Will Goldschmidt at **Will.Goldschmidt@doe.virginia.gov** with any questions about VLDS research projects.

INSIGHTS EXPLAINED

The Current State of VLDS Research

Seven agency-sponsored projects are using VLDS data to reveal factors that significantly affect educational and workforce outcomes. These projects range from analyses of high school outcomes that affect post-secondary performance to return on investment of workforce programs and improving the partnerships among state agencies, universities and researchers. Analyses for all seven projects will be completed by June 2014.

RESEARCH PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COMPLETION	% COMPLETE	NOTES:
Career and College Readiness	To understand the association between high school outcomes and enrollment and persistence in postsecondary education and training programs	No later than June 2014	61%	Will create annual VDOE reporting capability - more about the CCRI visit http://1.usa.gov/1jCTztC
C(12)	A federal requirement to report annually on postsecondary achievement	No later than June 2014	86%	
Bridging the Data Divide	Research of other state LDS on best (and worst) practices as part of a project to improve state agency-university researcher partnerships	Draft report just delivered - no later than March 2014	60%	VCU / UVA study
Teacher Prep	Understanding the data needed to give teacher preparation programs information on the classroom outcomes of recent graduates.	April 2014	57%	
Workforce ROI	Looks at the returns on investment for Wagner-Peyser/Trade Act/WIA.	No later than June 2014	64%	
CTE	The CTE office is interested in using VLDS technology to learn about high school postsecondary enrollment and workforce outcomes four or more years after high school graduation. To assist the CTE office in their efforts, we propose a project that will address two interrelated questions: · What are the pathways of Virginia CTE completers after high school into and through college? · What are CTE completers' pathways into the labor force?	No later than June 2014	14%	
Adult Ed	Evaluation of PluggedInVA, http://www.pluggedinva.com/	No later than June 2014	14%	The goal of PluggedInVA is to provide low-skilled adults with a career pathways program that incorporates 21st Century Skills into a traditional GED® curriculum to help them quickly develop the technology and workplace skills they need to succeed in a fast-paced, global economy.

ABOUT VLDS

Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS) is a pioneering collaboration for Virginia's future, giving the Commonwealth an unprecedented and cost-effective mechanism for extracting, shaping and analyzing educational and workforce development data and more in an environment that ensures the highest levels of privacy.

Funded by the 2009 Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program of the United States Department of Education, VLDS is comprised of several component technologies that support secure, authorized research addressing today's key educational and workforce training questions. VLDS is the result of a shared effort by several Virginia government agencies.

Visit the VLDS **website** for more information.

Brought to you by:

Virginia Department of Education

State Council of Higher Education in Virginia

Virginia Community College System

Virginia Employment Commission

Virginia Information Technologies Agency

Virginia Tech

Center for Innovative Technology

For more information on VLDS, visit

http://vlds.virginia.gov

VLDS complies with or exceeds state and federal privacy laws and guidelines.