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VLDS E-Newsletter - February 2014

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INSIGHTS Explained

In the October issue, we explained how Virginia's College and Career Readiness Initiative (CCRI), and VLDS have grown together over the past seven years (see "[CCRI and VLDS, a Data Love Story](#)"). While

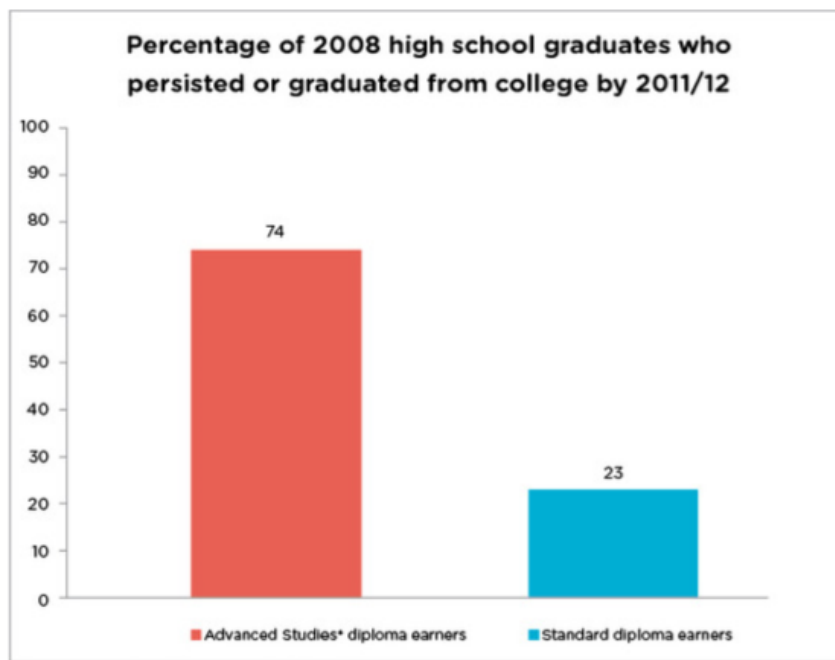
it is nearly impossible to summarize all the valuable insights gained through this initiative, we thought you would be interested in a few results.

CCRI research revealed that students who meet the following Virginia-specific indicators have a relatively high chance of enrolling in college and earning a grade of C or better in first-year credit-bearing courses, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income:

- Earning an Advanced Studies Diploma
- Earning Advanced Proficient scores on SOL tests administered prior to 2009
- Participating in high school Chemistry and Algebra II

Further, the graph below shows that after four years, Virginia students in the 2008 high school graduating cohort who earned Advanced Studies Diplomas were more likely than those who earned Standard Diplomas to enroll in, persist or graduate from college.

VLDS research is organized around today's "burning questions" that play such a pivotal role in shaping the decisions of Virginia's citizens and policy makers. CCRI research insights, powered by VLDS, already have revealed information that can drive more insightful educational and workforce policies. To find out more, visit the [VLDS website](#).



*Includes International Baccalaureate diplomas

INSIGHTS for Researchers

New Guide Released

The new Researchers Guide to Using VLDS has just been released and is available on the [VLDS website](#). The report is intended to explain important facets of the VLDS system and essential details to consider when proposing and conducting research using VLDS data.

View [full report](#).

2014 VLDS INSIGHTS Conference

The second annual Insights Conference will be held on June 24 in at the Hilton Richmond Hotel & Conference Center (Short Pump). This year's conference will focus on the theme Bridging the Data Divide. This year's keynote speakers will be former U.S. Chief Technology Officer, Aneesh Chopra, and Karen Jackson, Virginia's Secretary of Technology. Registration is open; [reserve your seat today!](#)



VLDS Leaders Share Their Experience

Over the past few months, many of the VLDS leaders have given presentations in various events.

Tod Massa – SCHEV Director of Policy Research and Data Warehousing

Massa presented *Thoughts on a Postsecondary Institution Rating System* at the National Center for Education Statistics Symposium in February. The symposium aimed to seek input from a variety of stakeholders in higher education on how the Obama administration should move forward with the Postsecondary Institution Rating Systems. Massa touched on a number of topics, including the need for better data and increased transparency through new user-friendly metrics such as the College Scorecard.

See his presentation [here](#), or read about the symposium in [The Washington Post](#); or in the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#).

Bethann Canada – VDOE Director of Information Management

Canada was one of four panelists for a webinar hosted by the State Support Team for the National Center for Education Statistics. The webinar focused on researcher access to State Longitudinal Data

Systems. Canada explained Virginia's federated model and discussed the process for gaining researcher access to VLDS data. View her presentation [here](#).

Will Goldschmidt – VLDS Manager

Goldschmidt was one of the presenters for a Social Policy Research Associates webinar on the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI). WDQI supports longitudinal databases that integrate workforce data and help to create the link to education data. Goldschmidt gave an overview of VLDS, explained the primary business process and governance for requesting and releasing data, reviewed agency and research roles, and explained the security built into VLDS. View his presentation [here](#).

VLDS Leadership Sought by Other States

We're honored to be recognized as a leader among states in the design and implementation of educational and work force longitudinal data systems. We have had the privilege of providing guidance to a number of states on best practices, what challenges to anticipate and how to overcome them, and the opportunity to highlight our successes. According to Andy Mehl, the Idaho SLDS project coordinator, "The VLDS crew has been a tremendous resource; this is truly a great group of very knowledgeable people who are willing to share. I have asked numerous questions about how the system was designed, developed, and implemented. The VLDS team took the time to meet with me and described, in detail, how the whole system was built. Virginia has built what I consider to be the best solution. The team has done a fantastic job on design and documentation, and I'm using their approach to build my solution."

In Connecticut, Jan Kiehne, program manager for P20 Win, the state's cross-agency data sharing system, said she consulted with the VLDS team, in large part because Connecticut uses a similar federated model (each partner's data remains their own rather than being put into a central database). She said the VLDS team always has been "forthright and helpful" and willing to brainstorm and share ideas. "I have found the ability to converse with my peers in other states to be invaluable," Kiehne said. "If I've needed assistance with an idea, having this as a connection is incredibly important."

Added Mehl: "Being able to talk to other states saves me from potentially having the same issues they had in developing their solutions. This reduces my costs, time and rework and also provides additional perspective on ways to approach an issue. Most importantly, it is helpful in convincing leadership of the value of the implementation."

It's not just the highly technical or organizational expertise that is in demand. Recently, the Alaska Department of Education & Early Childhood approached the VLDS team to assist in the creation of its own version of the ["What is VLDS?" video](#).

Whether consulting on technical requirements, system architecture, governance issues or outreach efforts, the VLDS team is committed to keeping Virginia at the forefront of finding new and innovative ways to use data to improve education.



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For more information on VLDS, visit

<http://vlds.virginia.gov>

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