

Aligned Talking Points State Longitudinal Data System

Summary

This bill modernizes Kansas's approach to education and workforce data, ensuring that policymakers, educators, and businesses have the tools needed to make informed, impactful decisions. By securely linking data across sectors, Kansas will join 42 other states in leveraging SLDS to support students, strengthen the workforce, and drive long-term economic success.

Explanation of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS)

- **A Unified Data System** – Securely connects education, workforce, and other state agency data, providing a long-term view of student progress, workforce outcomes, and system-wide trends.
- **Tracks Progress Over Time** – Links data across years and agencies to track student progress from early childhood through K-12, postsecondary education, and into the workforce.
- **Breaks Down Data Silos** – Integrates currently scattered data to enable comprehensive analysis and better-informed policy decisions.
- **Supports Evidence-Based Decision-Making** – Provides insights for policymakers, educators, and businesses to evaluate programs and align education with workforce needs.
- **Empowers Stakeholders** – Offers tools to students, workers, educators, and businesses to navigate career pathways and training programs.
- **Protects Privacy** – Implements strict security protocols, including data deidentification and compliance with state and federal privacy laws.
- **Drives Economic Growth** – Aligns education and workforce programs to address talent gaps, retain skilled workers, and attract businesses to Kansas.

Explanation of the Bill

1. Governance Structure

Kansas Legislative Research Department – Division of Longitudinal Data

- Establishes the **Division of Longitudinal Data** within the **Kansas Legislative Research Department (KLRD)** to manage and oversee the SLDS.
- The **Legislative Coordinating Council (LCC)** provides oversight, including approving research priorities, managing reporting requirements, and ensuring compliance with privacy and security standards.
- The **Division Director**, appointed by the LCC, leads operations, research facilitation, and data governance.

2. Core Functions of the System

Data Integration

- Securely links education, workforce, and other agency data to provide a **comprehensive, real-time** view of Kansas's education-to-employment pipeline.
- Participating agencies retain ownership of their data while benefiting from aggregated insights to **improve policy decisions**.

Research and Analysis

- Supports **targeted, cost-effective research requests** from legislators, state agencies, and education boards.
- The **Legislative Coordinating Council (LCC)** approves an **annual research agenda** to ensure alignment with key workforce and education priorities.

Kansas Credential and Skills Registry

- Establishes a **publicly accessible database** detailing **educational and occupational credentials** (e.g., degrees, licenses, apprenticeships).
- Provides data on **credential costs, required skills, career outcomes, and industry alignment**, helping students and workers make informed career decisions.

3. Data-Driven Policy

- **Aligns education programs with workforce demands** to prepare students for high-demand careers.
- **Evaluates program effectiveness** and adapts policies based on measurable student and workforce outcomes.
- **Identifies gaps in Kansas's workforce pipeline**, strengthening talent retention and business attraction efforts.

4. Privacy and Security

- **Strict Safeguards** – Data is deidentified, ensuring no personally identifiable information (PII) is exposed or misused.
- **Compliance with Kansas Law** – The SLDS follows **state and federal privacy laws**, including **K.S.A. 2023 Supp. 75-7244**, to prevent and address data breaches.
- **Transparency and Public Trust** – Public reporting requirements ensure **accountability in data use and security**.

5. Cost and Funding

- **Annual Investment** – The bill allocates **\$3 million per year** to fund initial costs and ongoing operations, consistent with national benchmarks.
- **Personnel-Focused Costs** – **80-85% of funding** supports expert staff to manage data integration, research, and security.
- **Sustainability** – Uses **existing infrastructure** and explores **cost-recovery mechanisms for external research** to maintain long-term operations.
- **Sunset Provision** – The SLDS sunsets on **January 1, 2033**, requiring legislative review and reauthorization to ensure it remains effective and beneficial.

6. Long-Term Impact

- **Workforce Retention** – Aligns education outcomes with workforce needs, reducing brain drain and preparing students for local job opportunities.
- **Economic Growth** – Positions Kansas as a hub for **skilled talent**, attracting investment and expanding job opportunities.
- **Smarter Decision-Making** – Enables **real-time tracking** of education and workforce trends, allowing Kansas to proactively adapt policies to remain competitive.