

TESTIMONY ON SB 2308
Senate State and Local Government Committee
February 06, 2025
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Chair Roers and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kirsten Baesler, and I am the North Dakota State Superintendent.

I am here to speak in favor of SB 2308 as amended.

The Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) was designed to bring together data from multiple state agencies in a way that ensures privacy, security, and meaningful analysis. From its inception, North Dakota Information Technology (NDIT) was designated as the appropriate host for SLDS, serving as a neutral third party responsible for managing and curating the data.

As agencies contribute their respective data sets to the SLDS, NDIT's role is not to own the data, but to facilitate its secure use in generating insights that inform decision-making. For example, NDDPI provides data on K-12 graduates, which can then be matched with North Dakota University System (NDUS) data to analyze how our students are performing at the post-secondary level. This process allows K-12 stakeholders to access results without exposing the underlying NDUS data, ensuring both privacy and integrity.

The amendments to SB 2308 do not change existing requirements for interagency agreements or data governance. Instead, they strengthen NDIT's role as the neutral entity overseeing SLDS operations, ensuring consistency, reliability, and accountability in how data is managed and used across agencies.

The original language of the bill designated the State Superintendent as the entity responsible for SLDS. While I take great pride in my role overseeing North Dakota's K-12 education system, the SLDS is designed to serve multiple agencies, not just K-12. It is essential that the responsibility for SLDS governance is placed with the entity best positioned to manage and integrate cross-agency data—NDIT. The amendments to SB 2308 ensure that responsibility is correctly aligned with the agency best equipped to fulfill this role.

I have included with my testimony a graph outlining the K-12 data flow into the SLDS system beginning in July 2026, which further illustrates the structured process for securely integrating and utilizing education data within the system.

Chair Roers and Members of the Committee, thank you for your time and attention. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this bill, and I welcome any questions you may have.

Kirsten Baesler

State Superintendent

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction