

Privacy is our concern

8 LAYERS OF PROTECTION *within* SLEDS

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) and its state partners, the Department of Education (MDE) and the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), have taken every precaution to ensure that the Statewide Longitudinal Educational Data System (SLEDS) is safe and secured with multilayered levels of protection to ensure that personal information is protected throughout the process. SLEDS contains the following eight levels of protection within its operating principles and processes:

- 1. The State of Minnesota is legally bound to protect data.** The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act is the state's comprehensive set of laws that protects individual-level data.
- 2. No federal government access.** The federal government does not have access to the data shared through SLEDS.
- 3. Limited access to data.** A limited number of staff members are allowed to access, view and/or use SLEDS data for the purpose of maintaining the accuracy of the data and security of the system. Approval of access is only granted upon signing the appropriate data-sharing agreements.
- 4. No commercial use.** The data shared through SLEDS cannot be sold, used for marketing purposes, or toward the development of commercial products.
- 5. Data use is restricted and subject to approval.** All requests for data must be approved by the SLEDS Governance Committee, made up of participating K12, higher education and workforce representatives to ensure that data access and use is limited to relevant requests.
- 6. Data protection beyond what is required by law.** SLEDS complies with all state and federal data protection and privacy laws to ensure individuals' data is protected. OHE and its partners undergo continual technical reviews to ensure data protection and individual privacy follow the core principles of SLEDS and best practices.
- 7. Access only to existing educational and employment data.** SLEDS neither collects any new data on individuals, nor collects information on political affiliations or beliefs, disciplinary records, religious practices, or biometric data.
- 8. De-identifiable data only.** No personally identifiable information is made public at any point. Data can only be reported publicly in aggregate form.



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SAFEGUARDING DATA IN SLEDS



THE BASICS

Data are pieces of information collected about the systems and services individuals access and their related outcomes.

SLEDS links together data from schools, colleges and work in order to understand the transitions people make between high school education, college and work.

This information is used to evaluate Minnesota's many education and training programs to better understand the characteristics of successful transitions between systems and programs.



IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW

Data included in SLEDS are authorized by federal and state law.

MINNESOTA GOVERNMENT DATA PRACTICES ACT
MGDPA
MN STATUTES, CHAPTER 13

THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT
FERPA

Education and employer data are private. The Act addresses three principles:

- Government's need for data to fulfill its role
- Accountability and transparency in government
- Protection of individual privacy rights

The federal law on student privacy: It restricts with whom and under which circumstances states and educational organizations may share students' personally identifiable information.



COMMITTED TO PROTECTING PRIVACY AND SECURITY

While personal information is used to link records, personally identifiable information is removed before the data are placed into SLEDS.



RESTRICTED DATA ACCESS

Accessing SLEDS data requires approval by the SLEDS Governance Committee for the following purposes:

LINKING RECORDS
between
state agencies

RESEARCH
by
state agencies

RESEARCH
by
schools & colleges

RESEARCH
by
approved researchers