

Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of LD 2052. I am a parent of children in Scarborough, and I am concerned about how educational technology is being used in our schools.

Maine has invested heavily in educational technology through the Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI), a statewide 1:1 program that was the first of its kind in the nation and remains the largest. From 2002 to 2025, this initiative has cost an estimated \$220–245 million, not including software or ongoing support costs. Despite this significant investment, student performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has not improved in recent years. Scores were strong in the 1990s and early 2000s, leveled off in the 2010s, and have declined sharply since 2019. In 2024, Maine students performed below the national average.

Given these trends, it is important that we understand how technology is actually being used in classrooms and whether it is supporting meaningful learning. In Scarborough, we have requested information about actual screen time, but the district has only provided rough estimates. Without detailed, accurate data, parents and policymakers cannot evaluate whether these tools are effective or developmentally appropriate.

One major concern is the widespread use of gamified learning apps. These platforms often prioritize engagement over comprehension, using rewards, badges, avatars, and leveling systems to keep students clicking. While these features can make learning feel fun, research shows they can undermine attention, intrinsic motivation, and the ability to focus deeply. Children may race through lessons to earn points or badges without truly mastering the material. These apps are used regularly in Scarborough classrooms, yet there is little transparency about how much time students spend on them, how they are integrated into instruction, or their educational impact.

LD 2052 offers a crucial opportunity to gather this data and evaluate educational technology in a meaningful, evidence-based way. Families and educators need transparency, oversight, and reliable information so that investments in technology genuinely enhance learning, rather than simply serving as flashy or addictive digital tools.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Maggie Jones, Parent, Scarborough**