

1320 Western Road
Warren, Maine 04964
April 24, 2023

Testimony on LD 1458, An Act to Increase Funding to the Maine School of Science and Mathematics

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee of Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Barbara Brusila and I'm the parent of two alumnae of the Maine School of Science and Mathematics (MSSM). My daughters graduated in 2014 and 2016. I was quite involved in the school during their six calendar years when one or both of them were enrolled; during three of those years, I was the chair of the Parents' Association. I had the good fortune to get to know many of the students, staff, faculty and administrators who create the vibrant academic and social community which is MSSM. I strongly urge you to vote **YES on LD 1458**.

MSSM provided an exceptional education for my daughters as well as a safe high school environment to explore independence. Every qualified Maine student should have the opportunity to experience this education. The cost of room and board should NOT be a deterrent to applying and enrolling, as it now is. The \$990,903 requested in this bill would give many Maine families the opportunity to send their students to MSSM, one of the very best public high schools in the country.

The flat funding which MSSM has received since FY 2017 has hurt the school's ability to provide this exceptional education to its students. Since my younger daughter graduated in 2016, the Dean of Faculty and Dean of Students positions, and multiple adjunct instructor contracts have been eliminated, and real wages for faculty and staff have diminished due to not keeping up with inflation. I can only imagine the hardships these unfortunate budget cuts have made to the school's hardworking faculty, staff, and students. The funding increase of \$910,875 provided by LD 1458 would support increased wages for staff, operational expenses, and reinstatement of some of the eliminated positions. These are all critical to the continued success of MSSM.

Please vote **YES on LD 1458** to support Maine's stellar but underfunded public high school, the MSSM. Thank you.


Barbara Brusila