

Matthew Haag
Standish
LD 1458

To The Esteemed Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

My name is Matthew Haag, and I am a member of the class of 2001 of the Maine School of Science and Mathematics. I am writing to ask for you to support LD1458 - An Act to Increase Funding for the Maine School of Science and Mathematics.

Today I am a Principal Software Engineer and, with my wife, class of 1999, operate a Real Estate business across New England. My life trajectory was dramatically impacted by the MSSM. In addition to meeting my life partner and many lifelong friends, the MSSM provided me a space to learn without boundaries and gave me a profound sense of home and connection. Without the social and educational skills I learned there, I would not have graduated with Distinction from the Worcester Polytechnic Institute, nor would I have received the funding I needed from WPI to attend.

As I am sure you are aware, the inflation of the past 3 years has been hard on working families and institutions to combat the constantly rising costs of necessities. This has been doubly hard on the MSSM as its funding has been flat since 2017. While the school and its leadership has been constantly dedicated to making do with the limited means, it has meant a reduction in services and education, and an increase in the cost of room and board born by the current students and their families. This pushes the costs of attendance of the MSSM to be out of reach of many of the youth of Maine who otherwise would greatly benefit from its educational and social opportunities.

With this in mind I ask again for your support of LD1458 which will both provide additional funding to further the MSSM's much needed education mission to the children of Maine as well as funding to reduce the burden on their families in the trying times.

Thank you,
Matthew Haag
Standish, ME