

Lauren Nichols
MSSM
LD 1458

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee: my name is Lauren Nichols and I graduated from Maine School of Science and Mathematics(MSSM) in 1999. I am writing to ask for your support for LD1458 - An Act to Increase Funding for the Maine School of Science and Mathematics.

MSSM has received flat funding since 2017 and, as a result, has had to eliminate critical positions, slow wage growth, and drastically reduce student services. In 2019, MSSM was ranked as the #2 best high school in the country. This bill helps to restore funding to acceptable levels and helps to keep MSSM thriving. We should be proud of MSSM as a state and as a country. I know I am proud to be a graduate. Without MSSM, I'm not sure I would have gone to Smith College and graduated with a degree in Chemistry and Biochemistry. And more recently gone on to complete my MBA at Boston University, graduating with High Honors. Neither of these institutions of higher learning had the same impact that MSSM had on my education or my person-hood.

I am now a proud member of the MSSM foundation and Chair of the Grants committee. I will now and in the future donate money and time to this institution; something I cannot say I will do the same to the other institutions of which I am an alum. MSSM changed the trajectory of my life and continues to do so to this day. But in order to continue to produce some of Maine's brightest and best students we need to invest and make it possible for all to be able to attend.

Thank you and I hope I can count on your support for LD1458.

Lauren Nichols
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