



Douglas Casey
Executive Director
55 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
(860) 622-2224
Doug.Casey@ct.gov
www.ct.gov/ctedtech

Testimony
In support of

Raised H.B. No. 5469
AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENT DATA PRIVACY

Education Committee
March 2, 2016

Dear Representative Fleischmann, Representative Slossberg, and distinguished members of the Education Committee,

I am testifying in favor of H.B. 5469 and encourage you to support this important legislation. I currently serve as executive director of the state Commission for Educational Technology, the state's principal educational technology policy advisor. Prior to joining the Commission, I served for more than nine years as the director of technology and the security officer for the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), which educates nearly 10,000 students across more than 20 magnet and specialty schools.

As you know, advancements in educational technology, including the collection and storage of student data, have led to huge gains in delivering personalized and engaging learning experiences to students. Adaptive assessments, which rely on real-time data collection, can provide great insights into specific areas of mastery and learning needs, which in turn inform targeted and effective instruction.

Insisting on student data privacy, as well as appropriate levels of transparency for families, remains a critical part of learning, a complement rather than an impediment to making full use of educational technology. House Bill 5469 takes positive steps to formalize these standards on behalf of all stakeholders, from state and local boards of education and their educational technology providers to students and parents, without introducing undue hardships. Educational technology providers can also continue to innovate without compromising the security of student data.



Douglas Casey
Executive Director
55 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
(860) 622-2224
Doug.Casey@ct.gov
www.ct.gov/ctedtech

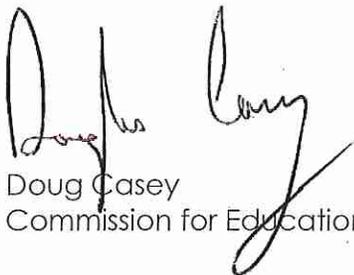
Most Connecticut schools leverage a large number of instructional and operational data systems on a daily basis, and the security and transparency terms articulated in H.B. 5469 will assist districts in protecting student information. In my role with CREC, I worked with dozens of school technology leaders across the state, and each shared concerns about the security of student data in hosted ("cloud") applications. As each of us can appreciate through the simple process of downloading an app to our smart phones, the acquisition of software has become faster than ever before. The "click-wrap" nature of procurement (online acceptance of terms with no upfront — if any — costs) combined with easy access to student rosters has allowed teachers and administrators to create and load student data into free applications hosted off-site in a matter of minutes.

Every day, districts use hundreds of different applications — each with its own Terms of Service and Privacy Policy — on thousands of student and teacher devices. I, personally, have reviewed dozens of contractual agreements with educational technology providers, a process that often requires external legal counsel. These Terms usually do not address the types of data privacy and storage provisions that H.B. 5469 articulates. For example, recently the vice president of a company that develops reading intervention software could not tell me where his firm hosted student data, what fields they collected, or even which subcontractors might have access to that information. Multiply that interaction by hundreds of apps and software systems in each district, and you can understand how schools are struggling to procure educational technology software in a responsible manner.

Connecticut districts are refining their processes for procuring and managing educational technology, and House Bill 5469 will help. It articulates the terms of ownership, protection, and transparency of sensitive student data. The bill also provides a strong legal foundation on which Connecticut schools can negotiate terms to facilitate the rapid but responsible adoption of software systems that support 21st Century teaching and learning.

I appreciate your consideration and encourage you to support H.B. 5469.

Sincerely,



Doug Casey
Commission for Educational Technology