

Good Afternoon and thank you to MN Legislators of the Committee. My name is Carrie Stephens. I live in Richfield, MN with my husband and two children. My children attend school in 2nd and 5th grades this year. I give this testimony as my support for HF 341, the Student Data Privacy Act.

Over the last few years, I have become more and more concerned about technology companies and the data they collect on users. But never really had a true grasp of what was being collected nor how the information is used. I happened upon a post on a Facebook group I am part of looking for families to take part in the Student Data Privacy Project study. Out of pure curiosity, I responded to the post. The Student Data Privacy Project contacted me with instructions on how to make a formal request to our school to obtain student data information on the various technology programs my kids had been using during distance learning and beyond. My request was forwarded to the district's Technology Director. On the very last day the school was legally required to respond to my request, they sent me a rather large number of files on both of my children. The school also stated the information was incomplete as they weren't able to obtain the student data from some of the vendors.

After browsing through the files, one concern with my daughter, the older child, was the lack of discretion. It is really not her fault as she was 9 years old at the time. During distance learning, I was the sole parent monitoring my children's education. My son was in Kindergarten, and needed much more supervision. My daughter was in 3rd grade and had to be a bit more independent. Had I been able to sit with her a bit more, I don't think I would have allowed her to share a few of the files online. Of course, these files were uploaded and retained by the technology vendor. Another concern I had was the sheer amount of data retained by these companies, even after the school year was over. Finally, with my request being incomplete, It really makes me wonder what else is lingering out there without my knowledge.

The Student Data Privacy Project has educated me a great deal on an issue all parents should be aware of. Parents should feel confident their child's information is protected and not released without consent. Current law is sufficiently outdated as it was created before there were computers or the internet. Please support stricter laws on student data with HF 341. Thank you.