

FAVORABLE

Senate Bill 897

Primary and Secondary Education – Student Technology and Student Resource Guide

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

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The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 897, which would require the National Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to develop and publish a student technology and social media resource guide.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

As students grow up surrounded by a rapidly changing technological landscape, many are struggling with the educational and mental health consequences of extensive social media and device use.¹ Considerable research suggests that cell phone use affects focus, and the contents of adolescents' social media feeds impact their self-esteem and mental health.^{2 3} It would benefit students, families, and educators to have access to research-backed guidance on the risks of social media use and best practices for the safe and healthy use of technology, especially when provided through the lens of mental health and child development. We strongly support developing and distributing resources on this timely issue. **We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 897.**

¹ NEA's letter to social media companies. National Education Association (2021). [NEA's letter to social media companies | NEA](#)

² Youth Risk Behavior Survey: 2011-2021. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2023). https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf

³ How can we minimize Instagram's harmful effects? American Psychological Association (2021). <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/03/feature-minimize-instagram-effects>