Education Technology Standards Act

BACKGROUND

School districts access an average of 2,982 distinct Education Technology (EdTech) tools in a single year. The explosion of EdTech tools puts considerable pressure on school districts, especially those from rural and under-resourced communities, to be able to evaluate which products will keep their student's data safe and provide strong educational benefits.

The Canvas data breach, impacting 9,000 schools and 275 million users worldwide, highlights the growing cybersecurity and data privacy risks that come with the rise of EdTech. This is not a new issue, as the PowerSchool data breach in 2024 left 62 million students and nearly 10 million teachers vulnerable.

SUMMARY

To help school districts protect student data and make informed decisions about the educational benefits of specific EdTech companies, this bill would:

- Direct the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Department of Education to develop guidelines and model procurement contracts for EdTech companies that contract with K-12 schools, addressing factors including data privacy, collecting storing and selling of user data, evidence of benefits, and factual accuracy.
- Impose a duty of reasonable care on EdTech companies with respect to the protection of student data.
- Provide $3 million in grant funding to increase independent evaluations of the educational benefits of specific EdTech products, to be included in the What Works Clearinghouse.