

## **It's simple!**

### **School libraries belong in Chapter 70**

The Massachusetts Department of Education does not provide any specific funding, leadership or statewide standards for its school libraries because they are not included in Chapter 70.

- Massachusetts does not require schools to provide library programs for students. This compromises the success of Education Reform

### **House Bill #564 simply adds the word “libraries” to Chapter 70.**

**This simple change will help school library teachers work with the DOE to ensure that Massachusetts schools provide the information, literacy, and technology centers students need to move forward and build on the achievements made under Education Reform**

#### ***Key reasons for including school library programs in Chapter 70:***

- Well-designed studies from 16 states, including a study conducted at Simmons College in Boston, show **a positive relationship between good school libraries and student achievement**, including positive impacts on:<sup>1</sup>
  - reading scores
  - literacy
  - achievement on standardized testing (including the MCAS in the Simmons study)
  - technology skills
- The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) evaluates library/media services and staffing as part of its accreditation process for secondary schools<sup>2</sup>
- Chapter 15 of the Massachusetts General Laws supports the establishment of school library/media centers, including the acquisition of materials and professional staffing
- Department of Education specifications for new school construction include school library/media centers in all new buildings<sup>3</sup>
- Only schools with credentialed library teachers are eligible to participate in regional library systems and receive government grants, databases, and other support worth thousands of dollars per district<sup>4</sup>

**With adequate facilities and the presence of a professional library teacher a school library/media center evolves from a "reading room" to a dynamic learning center. A strong library program is a cost-effective way to boost student achievement.**

For more information, contact Kathy Lowe, Executive Director, Massachusetts School Library Association at [klowe@maschoollibraries.org](mailto:klowe@maschoollibraries.org)

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<sup>1</sup> For specific study results consult the Massachusetts School Library Association website ([www.maschoollibraries.org](http://www.maschoollibraries.org))

<sup>2</sup> New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Public Secondary Schools, Standards for Accreditation for Year 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Massachusetts Education Laws and Regulations 603 CMR 38.00: School Construction

<sup>4</sup> Consult the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for specific requirements at <http://mbc.state.ma.us/>.