

HOUSE No. 688

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

David M. Rogers

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to media literacy in public schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>David M. Rogers</i>	<i>24th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/19/2021</i>
<i>Sarah K. Peake</i>	<i>4th Barnstable</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Tricia Farley-Bouvier</i>	<i>3rd Berkshire</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Malia</i>	<i>11th Suffolk</i>	<i>3/15/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 688

By Mr. Rogers of Cambridge, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 688) of David M. Rogers and others relative to media literacy in public schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act relative to media literacy in public schools.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting the
2 following new section:-

3 Section 98. (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following
4 meanings:

5 “board”, shall mean the board of elementary and secondary education.

6 “commissioner”, shall mean the commissioner of the department of elementary and
7 secondary education.

8 “council”, shall mean the Media Literacy Advisory Council.

9 "media literacy", shall be considered a term that encompasses consumption and
10 production of media, digital products and communication technology of all kinds, and an
11 understanding of the systems in which media messages are produced and consumed. Media

12 literacy refers to a person’s ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create and take action with all
13 forms of media including news in print, TV, and radio, movies, music, video games, websites,
14 advertisements, and content (images, text and video) posted on social media platforms, AI,
15 algorithms, virtual reality, and surveillance systems, and encompasses the foundational skills of
16 digital citizenship and internet safety including the norms of appropriate, responsible, ethical,
17 healthy behavior, and cyberbullying prevention, and the ability to recognize bias, stereotypes,
18 representation, and the lack of inclusion in media messages.

19 (b) The department of education shall integrate media literacy skills in all health and core
20 curricular content for grades K-12. The board shall direct the commissioner to implement
21 instruction in media literacy based upon the recommendations provided by the Media Literacy
22 Advisory Council established in subsection (c).

23 (c) The department shall establish a Media Literacy Advisory Council to conduct a
24 survey on methods and create recommendations for statutes, regulations, curriculum and
25 framework to teach media literacy in schools. The board shall appoint fourteen members to the
26 Media Literacy Advisory Council; provided further, that the Media Literacy Advisory Council
27 shall include, but not be limited to: one expert from a non-profit organization working in media
28 literacy and civics, one expert from a non-profit organization working in media literacy and
29 health education, one academic expert who teaches media literacy within the state university
30 system, two K-12 teachers and two K-12 librarians, with at least two educators from gateway
31 cities across the commonwealth, two parents of public school students from different geographic
32 regions of the state, two school administrators from different municipalities, one administrator
33 from a city’s school district and one administrator from a town’s school district, and two public
34 school students, at least one of which represents a lower resource school. The board shall make

35 every effort to include on the council people of diverse perspectives and backgrounds. The
36 board, through a majority vote, shall determine when the Media Literacy Advisory Council
37 expires, provided that the Media Literacy Advisory Council shall be established for no less than
38 two years after the effective date of this act.

39 (d) The Media Literacy Advisory Council shall survey teachers, librarians, faculty,
40 principals, and technology directors across Massachusetts to understand school districts'
41 curriculum regarding digital citizenship and media literacy education. The results of the initial
42 survey shall be made public and recommendations shall be made by the council to the
43 department on ways in which teachers, librarians, faculty, principals, and technology directors
44 can lead, teach, and support digital citizenship and media literacy across all grades and content
45 areas; and provided further, that the initial survey shall ask questions in order to determine
46 baseline integration across all grades. The initial survey's results shall be published on the
47 department's website no later than 90 days after the effective date of this act. Analysis on the
48 initial survey's results and the council's suggested recommendations shall be included in the
49 Media Literacy Advisory Council's final report established in subsection (e) of this section.

50 (e) The Media Literacy Advisory Council shall make a final report of its findings,
51 including any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action as it may deem necessary or
52 appropriate. The final report shall include best practices for instruction that provides guidance
53 regarding thoughtful, safe, and strategic uses of online and other media resources and education
54 on methods to apply critical thinking skills when students consume or produce media in any
55 form. The final report's recommendations shall include, but shall not be limited to: (1) revisions
56 to state education curriculum and the state instructional technology plan; (2) school district's
57 processes necessary to develop customized school district policies and procedures on electronic

58 resources and internet safety that can be used within a school district's technology plan; (3)
59 revisions to policies and procedures, best practices, resources, and models for instruction in
60 media literacy; (4) revisions to policies and procedures, best practices, resources, and models for
61 instruction of digital citizenship, including media literacy, that are compliant with the federal
62 universal service e-rate program administered by the schools and libraries division of the
63 universal service administrative company and federal mandates established in the federal
64 children's internet protection act; and (5) programming and framework that provides students
65 with the critical skills to analyze the impacts on individuals and society from our media, and
66 ways to continually improve and incorporate advanced media literacy strategies as new
67 technology and other such issues arise.

68 (f) The Media Literacy Advisory Council shall consult the department of public health,
69 technology researchers and technology ethicists to create curriculum that addresses the rapidly
70 changing social media culture and, as a part of the final report established in subsection (e), make
71 recommendations to the department regarding ways to teach students about social media and
72 how the platforms and online advertising affect student's short and long-term physical,
73 physiological, emotional and cognitive development and ways the department of education and
74 local school districts can promote the physical, physiological, emotional and cognitive well-
75 being of students.

76 (g) The Media Literacy Advisory Council shall submit the council's final report to the
77 commissioner of education, the governor, the president of the senate and the speaker of the house
78 by no later than one year after the effective date of this act.

79 (h) The board shall review and revise its model policies and procedures on electronic
80 resources and internet safety to better support digital citizenship, media literacy, and internet
81 safety in schools no later than one year after the effective date of this act. The model policies and
82 procedures shall contain provisions requiring that media literacy resources consist of a balanced
83 range of sources and perspectives; and provided further, that the department shall develop
84 guidance documents for school districts to consider when updating their policies and procedures
85 under this section. The board may require school districts to submit an internet safety plan for the
86 department to review; provided further, that in creating the policies, the school districts shall
87 involve students, parents or guardians, teachers, teacher-librarians, other school employees,
88 administrators, and community representatives with experience or expertise in digital citizenship,
89 media literacy, and internet safety issues.

90 (i) The board shall provide support for professional development for teachers and other
91 faculty focused on integrating media literacy in all health and core subjects; and shall create
92 guidelines for a comprehensive professional development program with learning outcomes
93 aligned with standards and scope and sequence linked to educator demonstration of
94 understanding of those outcomes. The department of education shall require that at least one
95 mandatory teacher training course be conducted annually in regards to media literacy, provided
96 that the training will focus on embedding media literacy education into the curriculum aligned to
97 existing learning standards; and provided further, that an impact assessment shall be conducted
98 through a long-term evaluation of progress.

99 (j) The department of education shall create a web-based location with recommended
100 successful media literacy practices and resources and shall work with the K–12 community and

101 other stakeholders to identify and develop additional Open Educational Resources to support
102 media literacy education in schools.

103 (k) The board of education may promulgate regulations in furtherance of this act or as the
104 board deems necessary or convenient to promote media literacy across all grades and public
105 schools in the commonwealth.

106 (l) Pursuant to section 1E of chapter 69, the board of elementary and secondary education
107 shall direct the commissioner to update the educational framework for health and core
108 curriculum courses to include provisions relative to media literacy and digital citizenship,
109 consistent with this section, upon the effective date of this act and periodically thereafter.