

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 688**

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**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**

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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.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**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.