

Bargaining/Advocacy Talking Points: Why You Need Licensed School Librarians

1. Licensed school librarians are experts in children's and young adult literature

School librarians use their knowledge and expertise in this area to help students develop a love of reading and support literacy skills. School librarians also use their expertise to purchase materials for the school library that reflect the students' academic needs and reading preferences, and support the school's and district's curriculums.

2. School librarians are licensed teachers and information specialists who develop students' information and digital library skills.

School librarians teach students how to do research and how to evaluate and appropriately use a wide variety of information resources that prepare them for college and lifelong learning (D'Orio, 2019). School librarians are responsible for teaching students how to use a variety of technology tools to meet their educational needs. School librarians are cross-curricular experts who collaborate with classroom and subject-area teachers to teach research skills, design and assess assignments, and advise on curriculum development.

3. School librarians provide professional development to other educators.

School librarians are at the forefront of adopting new technologies and resources to support student learning, and teach other educators how to integrate these tools into their classrooms.

4. School librarians create a safe and welcoming space where the students can freely explore their interests and make their own connections to the wider world.

In addition to creating a welcoming, attractive space with a variety of print and digital resources appealing to personal and academic interests, librarians curate programs such as poetry slams, writing workshops with authors, and community events to provide students with creative opportunities to explore other interests.

5. In Massachusetts, NEASC evaluates the library program and staff as part of its accreditation process.

High schools without licensed librarians are at risk of losing their accreditation ("Public Elementary," 2019).

6. Employing a licensed librarian gives a school access to valuable state-wide resources.

Massachusetts schools with licensed school librarians are entitled to access databases worth tens of thousands of dollars, a cost-sharing eBook and audiobook program, and professional development through the Massachusetts Library System ("Certification of School," n.d.). Massachusetts schools with licensed school

librarians are also eligible to apply for [grants](#) from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) worth up to \$30,000 ("LSTA Grants," n.d.).

7. Schools with licensed librarians have higher achievement levels

Numerous studies have demonstrated that students with access to licensed librarians have higher achievement levels in reading, writing, and math. This benefit is especially pronounced in districts that serve low-income or minority populations (*School Libraries*, 2016; Lance & Schwarz, 2012).

Bargaining/Advocacy Talking Points: Why You Need Library Educational Support Professionals (ESP's) to Support School Librarians

1. Under the librarian's supervision, ESPs perform clerical duties including circulating, repairing, and shelving books; answering the phone; and creating displays.
2. ESPs allow increased flexibility in librarian's schedule, keeping the library staffed and open to students when the librarian collaborates with teachers or attends other professional activities.
3. The library can be open for longer hours, including before and after school, allowing greater access for the students and staff.
4. ESPs often provide tech support for both teachers and students, especially in buildings where there is no on staff tech support.
5. ESPs help provide a continuity in services.
6. ESPs provide extra supervision and support for students allowing for more students to benefit from using the library during the school day.

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