

MSLA Talking Points for Legislative Breakfasts (2009)

Thank you very much for attending a Legislative Breakfast! You may be a bit outnumbered by our colleagues from public libraries, but your presence does have an impact.

If you are able to speak on behalf of the MSLA and certified school library teachers, here are some tips for speaking and important points to bring up:

- Introduce yourself (and your position in MSLA, if applicable) and thank the Legislative Breakfast Committee for the opportunity to speak about school libraries in the Commonwealth.
- Thank the MBLC and Regional Library systems for their continued support of school libraries through their sharing of electronic resources and continuing education programs.
- Mention the numerous studies prove that students in schools with school libraries with certified school library teachers have better achievement scores than schools without certified school library teachers. (for specifics, go to <http://www.ala.org/ala/newspresscenter/news/pressreleases2009/january2009/olaadditup.cfm> (remember to mention the Simmons study as well!))
- Mass school library teachers are already in place helping with student achievement, but there is no equitable access to school libraries in the Commonwealth – add your own observations here...
- Mass school library teachers are ready and eager to take part in the new school reforms (ex. Partnership for 21st Century and the Governor's Readiness Project), but we have no voice within the Department of Education who will speak for us. (Literally, there is no one in the Department of Education whose job includes working with or on behalf of school librarians!)
- The MSLA is not asking for funding at this time, we are asking that those legislators present ask the Mass DOE to provide leadership and guidance for school librarians so that we can improve on what we're already doing – fostering the love of reading, teaching research skills, teaching critical thinking skills

If you are able to talk directly with a representative or a senator – or with one of their aides, please let Pat or Judi know so we can follow up with a note or a visit on Legislative Day on April 2.

If you need additional tips or talking points, contact either Pat Fontes (pfontes@maschoolibraries.org) or Judi Paradis ([judiparadis@maschoolibraries.org](mailto:judi paradis@maschoolibraries.org))