



To the members of the Macon-Bibb County Board of Commission:

As state educational leaders, we were deeply distressed by the news of your decision to eliminate funding for public libraries. The results of this decision – the closure of public libraries, and immediate lack of access to summer learning resources – will be devastating for the students of Macon-Bibb County.

Literacy and the ability to read on grade level impact a child's learning and potential for a lifetime, and access to reading material and learning opportunities is essential to literacy development. Without public libraries, access to these resources and opportunities would be severely curtailed for many families. It is very likely this decision would have a disproportionate impact on low-income and at-risk students.

It is even more serious that this decision is being made during the summer months. Research has found that when students don't read during the summer, they lose up to three months of reading ability. This "summer slide" lowers achievement potential for years: for students in low-income areas, elementary school summer learning loss accounts for two-thirds of the achievement gap in high school. Lack of access to public library services would surely exacerbate this summer learning loss.

We urge you to reverse this decision – its harmful effects could have a generational impact on the students of Macon-Bibb County. Please remember these children are the future of your community – and, indeed, the future of our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Richard Woods'.

Richard Woods  
State School Superintendent

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Julie Walker'.

Julie Walker  
State Librarian