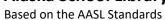# The Alaska School Library Framework for Learners

excerpted from the *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* developed by the American Association of School Librarians.

June 2020

Contents

Introduction

The writing committee for the Alaska State Library Standards proposes the adoption of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Standards Framework for Learners. These standards would replace the significantly out of date Alaska Library and Information Literacy Content Standards of 1999.

A review of our FAQ document will address the most common questions we have fielded from teachers, administrators and from our statewide review committee. We feel this framework provides the strongest and most comprehensive set of library standards for Alaska's students.

Alaska's school librarians have been participants in the process that brought these standards to publication. Following the adoption of these standards at the national level many of us have participated in training and professional development in order to implement the standards in our work with students and teachers. Some librarians have developed Grade Level Expectations to fit the needs of schools in their districts. Others have shared with teachers in their professional learning communities how these standards have many intersections (crosswalks) with the content area standards which opens the way for collaborative teaching.

These standards are flexible and can be addressed by any educator in a variety of learning settings. This is important in a state where school library staffing can range from full time certified teacher librarians to paraprofessionals to part time teachers, secretaries and community volunteers or to no school library at all.
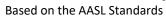
Finally, it is important for school library professionals to have standards that are relevant, up to date, flexible and collaboration friendly. Standards call for action! Let's move beyond thinking that it's about the books in the room to school librarians as connectors and collaborators working with teachers and students to think, create, share and grow.

Alaska School Library Framework for Learners
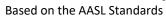
	A. Think	B. Create	C. Share	D. Grow
I. Inquire Build new knowledge by inquiring, thinking critically, identifying problems, and developing strategies for solving problems.	**Learners display curiosity and initiative by:** 1. Formulating questions about a personal interest or a curricular topic. 2. Recalling prior and background knowledge as context for new meaning.	**Learners engage with new knowledge by following a process that includes:** 1. Using evidence to investigate questions. 2. Devising and implementing a plan to fill knowledge gaps. 3. Generating products that illustrate learning.	**Learners adapt, communicate, and exchange learning products with others in a cycle that includes:** 1. Interacting with content presented by others. 2. Providing constructive feedback. 3. Acting on feedback to improve. 4. Sharing products with an authentic audience.	**Learners participate in an ongoing inquiry-based process by:** 1. Continually seeking knowledge. 2. Engaging in sustained inquiry. 3. Enacting new understanding through real-world connections. 4. Using reflection to guide informed decisions.
II. Include Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to inclusiveness and respect for diversity in the learning community.	**Learners contribute a balanced perspective when participating in a learning community by:** 1. Articulating an awareness of the contributions of a range of learners. 2. Adopting a discerning stance toward points of view and opinions expressed in information resources and learning products. 3. Describing their understanding of cultural relevancy and placement within the global learning community.	**Learners adjust their awareness of the global learning community by:** 1. Interacting with learners who reflect a range of perspectives. 2. Evaluating a variety of perspectives during learning activities. 3. Representing diverse perspectives during learning activities.	**Learners exhibit empathy with and tolerance for diverse ideas by:** 1. Engaging in informed conversation and active debate. 2. Contributing to discussions in which multiple viewpoints on a topic are expressed.	**Learners demonstrate empathy and equity in knowledge building within the global learning community by:** 1. Seeking interactions with a range of learners. 2. Demonstrating interest in other perspectives during learning activities. 3. Reflecting on their own place within the global learning community.

	A. Think	B. Create	C. Share	D. Grow
III. Collaborate Work effectively with others to broaden perspectives and work toward common goals.	**Learners identify collaborative opportunities by:** 1. Demonstrating their desire to broaden and deepen understandings. 2. Developing new understandings through engagement in a learning group. 3. Deciding to solve problems informed by group interaction.	**Learners participate in personal, social, and intellectual networks by:** 1. Using a variety of communication tools and resources. 2. Establishing connections with other learners to build on their own prior knowledge and create new knowledge.	**Learners work productively with others to solve problems by:** 1. Soliciting and responding to feedback from others. 2. Involving diverse perspectives in their own inquiry processes.	**Learners actively participate with others in learning situations by:** 1. Actively contributing to group discussions. 2. Recognizing learning as a social responsibility.
IV. Curate Make meaning for oneself and others by collecting, organizing, and sharing resources of personal relevance.	**Learners act on an information need by:** 1. Determining the need to gather information. 2. Identifying possible sources of information. 3. Making critical choices about information sources to use.	**Learners gather information appropriate to the task by:** 1. Seeking a variety of sources. 2. Collecting information representing diverse perspectives. 3. Systematically questioning and assessing the validity and accuracy of information. 4. Organizing information by priority, topic, or other systematic scheme.	**Learners exchange information resources within and beyond their learning community by:** 1. Accessing and evaluating collaboratively constructed information sites. 2. Contributing to collaboratively constructed information sites by ethically using and reproducing others' work. 3. Joining with others to compare and contrast information derived from collaboratively constructed information sites.	**Learners select and organize information for a variety of audiences by:** 1. Performing ongoing analysis of and reflection on the quality, usefulness, and accuracy of curated resources. 2. Integrating and depicting in a conceptual knowledge network their understanding gained from resources. 3. Openly communicating curation processes for others to use, interpret, and validate.

	A. Think	B. Create	C. Share	D. Grow
V. Explore Discover and innovate in a growth mindset developed through experience and reflection.	**Learners develop and satisfy personal curiosity by:** 1. Reading widely and deeply in multiple formats and write and create for a variety of purposes. 2. Reflecting and questioning assumptions and possible misconceptions. 3. Engaging in inquiry-based processes for personal growth.	**Learners construct new knowledge by:** 1. Problem solving through cycles of design, implementation, and reflection. 2. Persisting through self-directed pursuits by tinkering and making.	**Learners engage with the learning community by:** 1. Expressing curiosity about a topic of personal interest or curricular relevance. 2. Co-constructing innovative means of investigation. 3. Collaboratively identifying innovative solutions to a challenge or problem.	**Learners develop through experience and reflection by:** 1. Iteratively responding to challenges. 2. Recognizing capabilities and skills that can be developed, improved, and expanded. 3. Open-mindedly accepting feedback for positive and constructive growth.
VI. Engage Demonstrate safe, legal, and ethical creating and sharing of knowledge products independently while engaging in a community of practice and an interconnected world.	**Learners follow ethical and legal guidelines for gathering and using information by:** 1. Responsibly applying information, technology, and media to learning. 2. Understanding the ethical use of information, technology, and media. 3. Evaluating information for accuracy, validity, social and cultural context, and appropriateness for need.	**Learners use valid information and reasoned conclusions to make ethical decisions in the creation of knowledge by:** 1. Ethically using and reproducing others' work. 2. Acknowledging authorship and demonstrating respect for the intellectual property of others. 3. Including elements in personal-knowledge products that allow others to credit content appropriately.	**Learners responsibly, ethically, and legally share new information with a global community by:** 1. Sharing information resources in accordance with modification, reuse, and remix policies. 2. Disseminating new knowledge through means appropriate for the intended audience.	**Learners engage with information to extend personal learning by:** 1. Personalizing their use of information and information technologies. 2. Reflecting on the process of ethical generation of knowledge. 3. Inspiring others to engage in safe, responsible, ethical, and legal information behaviors.

Frequently Asked Questions about the Alaska Library Standards

Q. Is Alaska writing its own library standards or adopting national standards?

It is important to note that the standards process is still ongoing and updating school library standards have not yet been adopted by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (AK DEED). See below for more information on the process. See the AK DEED website for information on how to provide public comment.

Rather than writing its own standards, Alaska is considering the adoption of the *AASL Standards Framework for Learners.* This document was developed over three years by a diverse team of librarians from around the country at every stage of the writing and development process including Alaskan school librarians. It reflects a competency-based model that is forward thinking, responsive, and flexible. Competencies in the *AASL Standards Framework for Learners* are applicable to all learners in all locations and designed to be adapted to the individual needs of each state, district, school, and classroom.

For example, competency V.B.1. states "Learners construct new knowledge by problem solving through cycles of design, implementation, and reflection." These high-level concepts can be applied to any subject are discipline at any grade level in any school. A Kindergarten class might address this competency by engaging in basic reflection and revision. At 6th grade, learners might be challenged to build a tool, test it, and then revise it as part of a science or mathematics unit. In high school, learners might practice this competency by sharing knowledge through the creation, presentation, and revision of a documentary-style video. The options are endless.

Q. What *are* library skills?

A: Library skills are designed to prepare learners to think, create, share, and grow as they prepare for college, career, and community throughout their entire educational experience. The *AASL Standards Framework for Learners* reflects six shared foundations that all learners must master: inquire, include, collaborate, curate, explore, and engage. School librarians support the entire educational community to help learners:
- **Inquire** by building new knowledge through inquiry and thinking critically;
- **Include** by being inclusive and have respect for diversity in learning;
- **Collaborate** by partnering with others to broaden perspectives and achieve common goals;
- **Curate** by collecting, organizing, and sharing resources;
- **Explore** by innovating through a grow mindset and reflection; and
- **Engage** with information by using and creating it ethically.

School librarians help learners master the competencies within the six shared foundations by guiding them to:
- **Think** about ideas and topics that spark curiosity, seek answers, gain knowledge, and ask questions;
- **Create** products with new knowledge, make educated decisions, and draw conclusions;
- **Share** knowledge with others and be an active member of our society; and
- **Grow** as a learner, increasing literacy skills, while using information ethically.

Q. Where are reading skills in the library standards?

A. In development of the *AASL Standards Framework for Learners*, six common beliefs were identified that are central to the school librarian profession. One of these is "reading is the core of personal and academic competency." In the school library, learners engage with information in a variety of modes and for a variety of purposes as part of a broader culture of reading. School librarians strive to foster a love of reading in their learners through the careful curation of digital and print materials that spark curiosity and engage learners; the development and facilitation of motivational reading initiatives; the use of story and narrative to motivate learners; spearheading efforts to ensure equal access to reading materials; helping learners find the right books and information for their needs and interests; and protecting students right to read.

Within the *AASL Standards Framework for Learners*, various competencies reflect these ideals, such as (this is not an inclusive list):
- V.A.1. Learners develop and satisfy personal curiosity by reading widely and deeply in multiple formats and write and create for a variety of purposes.
- IV.A.1. Learners act on an information need by determining the need to gather information.
- IV.B.1. Learners gather information appropriate to the task by seeking a variety of sources.
- I.B.2. Learners engage with new knowledge by following a process that includes devising and implementing a plan to fill knowledge gaps.

Q. Are technology skills part of the library standards?

A. Information technology is woven into almost every aspect of learning and life. The *AASL Standards Framework for Learners* is not designed to explicitly address technology skills. However, school librarians acknowledge that technology skills and experience are necessary for information gathering, creating, and sharing. School librarians assist educators and learners in locating and utilizing a variety of educational and information technologies in pursuit of their educational goals.

Similar to reading skills, technology skills are implicitly embedded throughout the competencies of the AASL Standards Framework for Learners. For example, technology skills might be addressed in some of the following ways (not an exhaustive list):
- III.B.1. Learners participate in personal social, and intellectual networks by using a variety of communication tools and resources:

- o Learners might use Google Docs to collaborate, websites to share information, video productive tools to communicate new ideas, etc.
  - IV.B.2: Learners gather information appropriate to the task by collecting information representing diverse perspectives:
    - o Learners might use library tools such as local and statewide databases to find information reflecting diverse perspectives.
  - VI.B.1. Learners use valid information and reasoned conclusions to make ethical decisions in the creation of knowledge by ethically using and reproducing others work:
    - o Learners might use images in the creative commons in their school projects, providing proper attribution for all sources.

Q. Why new library standards? Why now?

A: The current Alaska Library / Information Literacy standards were adopted in 1999. Twenty years later, much has changed within our schools and our society. The way we interact with, consume, and share information has radically changed. Updated standards are needed to reflect this shift in society, as well as the evolving role of the school librarian as a content expert and information literacy teacher in collaboration with other educators in the entire school community.

Q. How were these standards developed?

The AASL Framework for Learners was developed over three years in a process that moved from planning, to survey, to focus groups, to standards drafting. First, the seven-member AASL Standards and Guidelines Editorial Board (which included an Alaskan school librarian) reviewed existing standards and guidelines documents, noted what concepts were outdated or missing, alignment between other major sets of standards, discussed delivery modes, and attempted to determine the needs of the professional and educational community in the next 10 years based on prevailing societal, technological, and educational trends. Next, the AASL Standards and Guidelines Editorial Board worked with KRC Research to develop and deploy an online survey to capture school librarians use of existing standards, and priorities for future documents. After reviewing survey results, the AASL Standards and Guidelines Editorial Board and KRC Research engaged with focus groups of school librarians and school library stakeholders around the country at local, district, state, and national events, including events in Alaska. Analysis and review of focus groups was shared with the AASL membership and professional community. In the final phase, the AASL Standards and Guidelines Editorial Board drafted the learner, school librarian, and school library standards. These three sets of standards are part of one integrated framework. Alaska is seeking only to adopt the framework for learners.

In 2019, Alaska initiated the standards review and revision process for the Alaska Library / Information Literacy Standards. The decision to adopt the *AASL Standards Framework for Learners* was an iterative process involving multiple review and improvement cycles. The writing committee initially reviewed the existing standards, standards adopted in other states, and the national standards. After extensive review and discussion, they decided to request adoption of the *AASL Standards Framework for Learners* without modifications. Discussion included applicability to Alaska, cultural diversity and inclusion, and flexibility for the variety of approaches and resources available across Alaska.

A review committee consisting of volunteer educational stakeholders from around the state provided comments and feedback on the writing committees proposal, and ultimately agreed on the writing committee's recommendation. Next, a second review committee comprised of individuals selected by AK DEED reviewed the writing committee's recommendation and agreed with their assessment.

Finally, a public comment period was made available prior to finalization of the standards. Public testimony (which is currently ongoing) consists of surveys, direct emails, and testimony at State Board of Education meetings.

Q. Not all schools have a school library or librarian. Will those schools implement these standards? How?

Library standards and library skills, although more robust and effective with the presence of a school library and librarian, do not require the presence of those resources in order to be addressed. Learners can inquire, include, collaborate, curate, explore, and engage in all subject areas. Similar to cultural and technology standards, the presence of a specialized educator is helpful but not required for these standards to be taught in a classroom or a school.

Where school librarians are present, they can ensure that there is a robust collection of diverse materials that meet curricular needs and collaborate with other educators and educational stakeholders to build instructional, support, and enrichment opportunities for all learners.

Additional Resources
What school library standards mean to educators?
How does the school library support your child?
Standards Crosswalks: Future Ready Framework, ISTE Standards for Learners and Educators, Next Generation Science Standards, Code with Google's CS First Curriculum.