

# **ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010)**

**Approved by Specialty Areas Studies Board (SASB) of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), October 24, 2010**

The *ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians* apply to all master's programs that prepare candidates to develop and manage library and information services in a PreK-12 setting, regardless of degree name or professional title. "School librarian" is the official professional title adopted by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the American Library Association. Other titles include, but are not limited to, "school library media specialist," "teacher librarian," "library information specialist," and "media coordinator."

## **Standard 1: Teaching for Learning**

Candidates are effective teachers who demonstrate knowledge of learners and learning and who model and promote collaborative planning, instruction in multiple literacies, and inquiry-based learning, enabling members of the learning community to become effective users and creators of ideas and information. Candidates design and implement instruction that engages students' interests and develops their ability to inquire, think critically, gain and share knowledge.

### **Elements**

#### **1.1 Knowledge of learners and learning**

Candidates are knowledgeable of learning styles, stages of human growth and development, and cultural influences on learning. Candidates assess learner needs and design instruction that reflects educational best practice. Candidates support the learning of all students and other members of the learning community, including those with diverse learning styles, physical and intellectual abilities and needs. Candidates base twenty-first century skills instruction on student interests and learning needs and link it to the assessment of student achievement.

#### **1.2 Effective and knowledgeable teacher**

Candidates implement the principles of effective teaching and learning that contribute to an active, inquiry-based approach to learning. Candidates make use of a variety of instructional strategies and assessment tools to design and develop digital-age learning experiences and assessments in partnership with classroom teachers and other educators. Candidates can document and communicate the impact of collaborative instruction on student achievement.

#### **1.3 Instructional partner**

Candidates model, share, and promote effective principles of teaching and learning as collaborative partners with other educators. Candidates acknowledge the importance of participating in curriculum development, of engaging in school

improvement processes, and of offering professional development to other educators as it relates to library and information use.

#### 1.4 Integration of twenty-first century skills and learning standards

Candidates advocate for twenty-first century literacy skills to support the learning needs of the school community. Candidates demonstrate how to collaborate with other teachers to plan and implement instruction of the AASL *Standards for the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Learner* and state student curriculum standards. Candidates employ strategies to integrate multiple literacies with content curriculum. Candidates integrate the use of emerging technologies as a means for effective and creative teaching and to support P-12 students' conceptual understanding, critical thinking and creative processes.

## Standard 1 Rubric

### Unacceptable

Assessments provide little or no evidence that candidates are able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of learners and learning or of instructional strategies and resources that support the AASL Standards for the 21st-Century Learner;
- Collaborate with other professionals in support of curriculum and/or professional development.

### Acceptable

At least one assessment provides evidence that candidates are able to:

- Demonstrate a knowledge of learners and learning by collaborating with other educators to design instruction that supports the learning styles, needs, interests and abilities of all students;
- Deliver instruction and develop assessments that make use of a variety of instructional strategies and information resources to develop and enhance the multiple literacies of P-12 students;
- Gain an awareness of and participate in professional learning activities related to library and information use to ensure all members of the learning community become effective users of ideas and information;
- Integrate emerging technologies into instruction that reinforce the skills, dispositions, responsibilities, and self assessments in AASL Standards for the 21st-Century Learner and state standards that support student achievement.

### Target

Multiple assessments provide evidence that candidates are able to:

- Model and promote a knowledge of learners and learning by designing and delivering inquiry-based information literacy instruction that enhances the information, media, visual and technical literacies of P-12 students;
- Integrate emerging technologies into a variety of instructional strategies to support the diverse learning styles, interests, and ability of all students to inquire, think critically, and gain and create knowledge;
- Collaborate with educators and other stakeholders in professional development activities involving curriculum development and school improvement processes in support of student achievement.

## Research in support of Standard 1

Standard 1 focuses on the school librarian candidate's ability to promote inquiry-based learning, instruction in multiple literacies, and to model effective, differentiated teaching that meets the needs of a diverse learning community. Differentiating instruction is a challenge and therefore important for school librarians, since they interact with all students, often for more than one year. Kachka (2009) commented that school librarians face the unique challenge of differentiating instruction for all students in the school no matter the culture or ability. Mestre (2009) concurred when stating that school librarians are charged with meeting the literacy needs of students with a wide variety of cultures and abilities.

Candidates need to implement an inquiry-based approach to learning. Chu's (2009) study documented that the use of inquiry project-based learning involving collaboration between the classroom teachers in general studies, language and information technology resulted in higher grades on projects and improved learning. Hoover (2006) discussed the fact that school librarians have four primary responsibilities: teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator. Through a meta-analysis that identified effective instructional strategies, classroom management strategies and school leadership responsibilities, researchers at the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) found that school librarians need to be as familiar with effective instructional strategies (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001) as classroom teachers.

Collaboration has long been the mantra of school librarian education and continues to be a challenge for candidates. Bell and Kuon (2009) discussed teaching collaboration when instructing students online. They discovered the importance of collaboration even when alone with a computer terminal. Kuhlthau, Maniotes and Caspari (2007) presented the argument for recasting Guided Inquiry as a dynamic innovative way of developing information literacy. The authors discussed the collaborative responsibilities of the members of the instructional team. Stripling (2008) emphasized that even though inquiry-based instruction consumes more time, school librarians need to take a leadership role in fostering inquiry through effective communication with the learning community.

In short, information retrieval, information communication, and information design are constantly changing (Warlick, 2009). School librarian candidates must embrace twenty-first century standards and tools. As the Internet continues to evolve to a more dynamic, social environment, the school librarian must use social networking tools not only to discuss issues and form partnerships with administrators and classroom teachers (Lamb & Johnson, 2008) but also to impact teaching and learning (Naslund & Giustini, 2008). Using blogs, wikis and social networking in instruction engages students while teaching them to inquire and think critically while sharing information.

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## **Standard 2: Literacy and Reading**

Candidates promote reading for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment. Candidates are aware of major trends in children's and young adult literature and select reading materials in multiple formats to support reading for information, reading for pleasure, and reading for lifelong learning. Candidates use a variety of strategies to reinforce classroom reading instruction to address the diverse needs and interests of all readers.

### **Elements**

#### **2.1 Literature**

Candidates are familiar with a wide range of children's, young adult, and professional literature in multiple formats and languages to support reading for information, reading for pleasure, and reading for lifelong learning.

#### **2.2 Reading promotion**

Candidates use a variety of strategies to promote leisure reading and model personal enjoyment of reading in order to promote habits of creative expression and lifelong reading.

#### **2.3 Respect for diversity**

Candidates demonstrate the ability to develop a collection of reading and information materials in print and digital formats that support the diverse developmental, cultural, social, and linguistic needs of P-12 students and their communities.

#### **2.4 Literacy strategies**

Candidates collaborate with classroom teachers to reinforce a wide variety of reading instructional strategies to ensure P-12 students are able to create meaning from text.

## Standard 2 Rubric

<b>Unacceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Target</b>
Assessments provide little or no evidence that candidates are able to:	At least one assessment provides evidence that candidates are able to:	Multiple assessments provide evidence that candidates are able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote or support reading through the use of literature;</li><li>• Direct reading instruction or collection development that meets the needs of all readers.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote reading through a wide range of reading materials in multiple formats for both children and young adults that encourage reading for information, pleasure and life-long learning;</li><li>• Collaborate with other educators to reinforce classroom reading instruction through the use of a variety of reading strategies that enhance P-12 students' ability to create meaning from text;</li><li>• Develop a collection of reading resources that promotes reading for enjoyment and meets the diverse information needs and interests of all readers.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote reading for children, young adults and other education professionals through the use of high-quality and high-interest literature in print and digital formats that reflect the diverse developmental, cultural, social and linguistic needs of their P-12 students and communities;</li><li>• Use authentic and engaging instructional strategies that reinforce classroom reading instruction in support of lifelong learning and to build an appreciation for literature in support of personal and creative pursuits of P-12 students and other members of the school community.</li></ul>

### Research in support of Standard 2

As foundational skills for twenty-first century learning, literacy and reading are focal points for school librarians. Krashen (2004) presented a body of research to support the act of reading itself as the primary means of developing reading skills and literacy. Free voluntary reading, the most effective means for developing literacy, requires access to a wide variety of reading materials in multiple formats (Krashen, 2004). As part of the school librarian's role in reading, the AASL (2009) specified that school librarians must have a "deep knowledge" of high-quality reading materials for children and young adults in multiple formats. Furthermore, the school librarian must provide learners with a variety of high-interest materials for information, pleasure, and personal development as well as professional materials for teachers and staff (AASL, 2009).

In motivating young people to read, Trelease (2006) emphasized the importance of reading as a pleasurable experience and having materials of interest to readers. This supports the need for having diverse and varied collections to meet the wide variety of interests as well as developmental, cultural, social, and linguistic needs of readers. Lance et al. (2005) found that the currency of reading materials was as important as the size and variety of library collections. Those libraries with more current materials were associated with increased reading levels in students.

The presence of a trained school library professional is a powerful influence in promoting, guiding, and inspiring young readers toward a love of reading and a quest for lifelong learning (Klinger, 2006). AASL (2009) directed school librarians to read aloud to students and provide booktalks as methods of reading promotion as part of their role in reading. The Commission on Reading from the U.S. Department of Education identified “the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children,” a practice to be continued throughout all grades (Anderson et al. 1985). Furthermore, research suggests that direct encouragement to read may have an impact on the amount of reading done. Morrow (1982) and Shin (2004) found that encouraging children to read was a positive factor in promoting reading if available reading material is interesting and comprehensible.

As important as direct encouragement, modeling reading both formally and informally sends positive messages to readers. Trelease (2006) identified one factor in motivating readers is having significant others who model reading. Several studies indicated that children read more when they see other people reading (Krashen, 2004). Overall, many students view the school library as helping them with their reading interests, finding stories, improving reading, and helping them enjoy reading more (Todd, 2005).

The school librarian also plays a significant role in developing reading skills and comprehension in students. School libraries are most appropriate for reading and reinforcing the reading process when the school librarian collaborates with classroom teachers and other specialists. Several studies found that students’ reading skills improve when school librarians collaborate with classroom teachers for reading instruction (Lance et al., 1993; Lance et al., 2000; Roscello and Webster, 2002).

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## **Standard 3: Information and Knowledge**

Candidates model and promote ethical, equitable access to and use of physical, digital, and virtual collections of resources. Candidates demonstrate knowledge of a variety of information sources and services that support the needs of the diverse learning community. Candidates demonstrate the use of a variety of research strategies to generate knowledge to improve practice.

### **Elements**

#### **3.1 Efficient and ethical information-seeking behavior**

Candidates identify and provide support for diverse student information needs. Candidates model multiple strategies for students, other teachers, and administrators to locate, evaluate, and ethically use information for specific purposes. Candidates collaborate with students, other teachers, and administrators to efficiently access, interpret, and communicate information.

#### **3.2 Access to information**

Candidates support flexible, open access for library services. Candidates demonstrate their ability to develop solutions for addressing physical, social and intellectual barriers to equitable access to resources and services. Candidates facilitate access to information in print, non-print, and digital formats. Candidates model and communicate the legal and ethical codes of the profession.

#### **3.3 Information technology**

Candidates demonstrate their ability to design and adapt relevant learning experiences that engage students in authentic learning through the use of digital tools and resources. Candidates model and facilitate the effective use of current and emerging digital tools to locate, analyze, evaluate, and use information resources to support research, learning, creating, and communicating in a digital society.

#### **3.4 Research and knowledge creation**

Candidates use evidence-based, action research to collect data. Candidates interpret and use data to create and share new knowledge to improve practice in school libraries.

### Standard 3 Rubric

#### Unacceptable

Assessments provide little or no evidence that candidates are able to:

- Design services or instruction that supports equitable access to information in an efficient and ethical manner by P-12 students and other members of their school and community.

#### Acceptable

At least one assessment provides evidence that candidates are able to:

- Implement flexible and equitable access to print and digital information resources by diverse members of the school community by reducing barriers to resources and services;
- Collaborate with other educators to design and deliver instruction that enhances P-12 students' ability to ethically and efficiently access, evaluate and use information;
- Integrate current and emerging technologies into instruction in support of inquiry, learning, creating and communicating information in a digital society;
- Use evidence-based practice methods to collect, interpret and use data from research to improve practice in school libraries.

#### Target

Multiple assessments provide evidence that candidates are able to:

- Ensure open and equitable access to information by collaborating with all members of the school community to develop solutions to physical, social and intellectual barriers to resources and services in school libraries;
- Model and promote efficient and ethical information seeking behaviors through the design and delivery of authentic and relevant learning experiences for P-12 students, teachers and administrators in professional learning communities;
- Enhance access to information for P-12 students and other members of their schools and communities through the use of current and emerging technologies that support the access, interpretation and communication of information;
- Use a variety of research strategies to create new knowledge and improve practice in school libraries.

### **Research in support of Standard 3**

Standard 3 focuses on the school librarian candidate's ability to promote ethical, equitable access to and use of physical, digital, and virtual collections of resources. Boelens (2007) believed that the school librarian must be able to "...manage a place in the school with facilities (traditional, virtual and digital) that provide teachers and pupils with access to new kinds of information..." (p. 67). Thus, for school librarians, the importance of meeting the challenge of promoting traditional resources as well as modeling and promoting new methods of information delivery is paramount.

Although school librarians have always been faced with the challenge of providing equitable access for diverse student needs, today's challenge is daunting (Simpson, 2003). Lack of access to new information tools creates not only a digital divide (Haycock & Sheldon, 2008) but also an information divide. School librarians must work hard to remove any and all intellectual, physical and economic barriers to information for all students, teachers and other stakeholders in their learning environments. Through evidence-based action research, school librarians can promote and share the knowledge of the importance of equal access (Martin & Tallman, 2001; Howard & Eckhardt, 2006).

School librarians also need to identify and provide support for diverse student information needs. It is impossible to meet this need in isolation. The school librarian must be capable of collaborating with teachers in order to provide for the needs of all students. Hoover (2006) described strategies to engage students in cooperative learning while collaborating with classroom teachers. Kuhlthau, Maniotes, and Caspari (2007) described Guided Inquiry as an "integrated unity of inquiry, planned and guided by and instructional team of a school librarian and teachers" (p. 1). Without the integration and collaboration, the needs of diverse students are not met.

Social networking, blogs, wikis, instant messaging, texting as well as the Internet provide immense amounts of information quickly. Research shows that students are not experienced researchers (Scott & O'Sullivan, 2005). Kuhlthau, Maniotes, and Caspari (2007) described a process that integrates curriculum and information literacy concepts, which creates relevant learning. Information literacy skills are imperative if we expect students to be able to evaluate the immense amounts of information with which they are being bombarded through these various media. Hamilton (2007) stated, "We are at a critical moment in our profession, and we need to seize this moment to collaborate with our learning communities as leaders in interpreting and teaching information literacy" (p. 52).

With any research assignment, ethical research and documentation must be included. Many students not only lack research skills, they see nothing wrong with plagiarism (Johnson, 2003). Butler (2007) also emphasized the importance of teaching the ethical uses of copyright. However, Johnson (2003) made the point that in order to teach ethical research methods, school librarians need to prod teachers to move beyond the basic research paper. School librarians need to emphasize solving a problem using the

information gained. Armed with these skills, our students will have the information literacy skills to compete in the twenty-first century.

Additionally, school librarians must work to gather evidence in order to improve practice and increase the effectiveness of their programs. According to Todd (2003), school librarians must document how their programs and services impact student learning. Todd asserts that "...gathered evidence highlights how the librarian plays a crucial role in boosting student achievement, in shaping important attitudes and values, in contributing to the development of self-esteem, and in creating a more effective learning environment" (p. 54). Geitgey and Tepe (2007) emphasize the importance of collecting and presenting data, noting that, by developing evidence-based practice, school librarians can work toward "continuous improvement in library services" (p. 10).

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## **Standard 4: Advocacy and Leadership**

Candidates advocate for dynamic school library programs and positive learning environments that focus on student learning and achievement by collaborating and connecting with teachers, administrators, librarians, and the community. Candidates are committed to continuous learning and professional growth and lead professional development activities for other educators. Candidates provide leadership by articulating ways in which school libraries contribute to student achievement.

### **Elements**

#### 4.1. Networking with the library community

Candidates demonstrate the ability to establish connections with other libraries and to strengthen cooperation among library colleagues for resource sharing, networking, and facilitating access to information. Candidates participate and collaborate as members of a social and intellectual network of learners.

#### 4.2 Professional development

Candidates model a strong commitment to the profession by participating in professional growth and leadership opportunities through membership in library associations, attendance at professional conferences, reading professional publications, and exploring Internet resources. Candidates plan for ongoing professional growth.

#### 4.3 Leadership

Candidates are able to articulate the role and relationship of the school library program's impact on student academic achievement within the context of current educational initiatives. Utilizing evidence-based practice and information from education and library research, candidates communicate ways in which the library program can enhance school improvement efforts.

#### 4.4 Advocacy

Candidates identify stakeholders within and outside the school community who impact the school library program. Candidates develop a plan to advocate for school library and information programs, resources, and services.

### **Standard 4 Rubric**

#### **Unacceptable**

Assessments provide little or no evidence that candidates are able to:

- Positively and productively direct or advocate for a school library program within their school and community.

#### **Acceptable**

At least one assessment provides evidence that candidates are able to:

- Advocate for dynamic school library programs and build positive learning environments by articulating the role of the school library program's impact on student achievement;
- Develop professional development activities that enhance the awareness of school library programs, resources and services for students, other educators and community stakeholders;
- Network with school librarians, other information professionals, and agencies to establish cooperative initiatives that encourage resource sharing and access to information;
- Articulate the value of professional organizations and develop plan for ongoing professional growth.

#### **Target**

Multiple assessments provide evidence that candidates are able to:

- Advocate for strong school library programs by designing and leading professional development opportunities that clearly articulate the impact of a school library program's resources, services and programming on student academic achievement;
- Become active contributors in education and information professional organizations and use publications, conferences, and virtual professional development experiences and opportunities to engage in social and intellectual networks that address best practice in school libraries;
- Use research and other evidence-based data and information to contribute to and lead school improvement and professional development initiatives.

## Research in support of Standard 4

Wrapping school library advocacy efforts around students and learning is a natural connection (Logan, 2008). According to Logan, study after study showed that school libraries are the means to achieving educational goals common to good schools. Using evidence-based practice, school library professionals have a solid foundation on which to build to encourage decision-makers to enhance and improve school libraries for the benefit of students.

Access to other professionals, new ideas, and tools to fulfill professional responsibilities is necessary to the school librarian's professional growth. Participation in these activities enhances opportunities for their students and fellow teachers. The school library personnel may have to educate prospective partners in a collaborative effort of improving the library program for the benefit of the students. Bush (2007) stated that we do "good work in all the right places and tend to keep it to ourselves" (p. 41). Part of advocacy is letting other members of the school community know how the library and librarians benefit the students, socially as well as academically. Collaboration and networking with others in the library's community strengthens all of the stakeholders. Hartzell (1999) said that "library advocacy is essential to library effectiveness--essential even to library survival in some places" (p. 8).

According to Hand (2008), "Constant advocacy for integration of library and information resources in classroom plans must remain a core focus for all of us school library professionals" (p. 27). Morris (2004) emphasized "the best way to reach teachers is to give them the personalized attention and professional concern that will aid them in preparing, organizing, and presenting instructional programs...providing the collaborative support that will help them to become better teachers" (p. 127). The *Library Advocate's Handbook* (American Library Association, 2006) gives invaluable support to library advocates and emphasizes tools of collaboration to be used in this effort.

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## **Standard 5: Program Management and Administration**

Candidates plan, develop, implement, and evaluate school library programs, resources, and services in support of the mission of the library program within the school according to the ethics and principles of library science, education, management, and administration.

### **Elements**

#### **5.1 Collections**

Candidates evaluate and select print, non-print, and digital resources using professional selection tools and evaluation criteria to develop and manage a quality collection designed to meet the diverse curricular, personal, and professional needs of students, teachers, and administrators. Candidates organize school library collections according to current library cataloging and classification principles and standards.

#### **5.2 Professional Ethics**

Candidates practice the ethical principles of their profession, advocate for intellectual freedom and privacy, and promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility. Candidates educate the school community on the ethical use of information and ideas.

#### **5.3 Personnel, Funding, and Facilities**

Candidates apply best practices related to planning, budgeting, and evaluating human, information, and physical resources. Candidates organize library facilities to enhance the use of information resources and services and to ensure equitable access to all resources for all users. Candidates develop, implement, and evaluate policies and procedures that support teaching and learning in school libraries.

#### **5.4 Strategic Planning and Assessment**

Candidates communicate and collaborate with students, teachers, administrators, and community members to develop a library program that aligns resources, services, and standards with the school's mission. Candidates make effective use of data and information to assess how the library program addresses the needs of their diverse communities.

## Standard 5 Rubric

### Unacceptable

Assessments provide little or no evidence that candidates are able to:

- Manage resources, services and programming in support of the diverse needs of P-12 students;
- Acknowledge and understand the ethical principles and standards of their profession.

### Acceptable

At least one assessment provides evidence that candidates are able to:

- Evaluate, manage and organize school library print, non-print and digital collections to support the school's mission of teaching and learning;
- Base professional and program decisions on current standards and the ethical codes and principles of education and information professions;
- Develop, manage and organize library collections, policies and procedures to ensure open access to school library resources and services;
- Use data and information to evaluate and communicate how the school library program meets the needs of diverse P-12 student communities.

### Target

Multiple assessments provide evidence that candidates are able to:

- Design, direct, and promote strong school library programs with resources, services, policies, procedures, and programming that are clearly aligned with the school's mission and that supports the ethical principles and current standards of their profession;
- Articulate and model the responsibilities of digital citizenship regarding intellectual freedom, intellectual property, and the right to privacy;
- Provide access to print, non-print and digital collections that support and enhance instruction and reflect the needs and interests of their diverse P-12 students, school and community;
- Manage, organize and evaluate school library physical resources (facilities), fiscal resources (budgets), and human resources (personnel) to ensure the school library program recognizes, celebrates and advocates for the curricular, personal and professional needs of all stakeholders.

## Research in support of Standard 5

In *Empowering learners: Guidelines for school library programs*, the American Association of School Librarians (2009) produced a set of guidelines based on the belief that the "school library media program must focus on building a flexible learning environment" as well as "empower students to be critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information" (p. 5). Standard 5 focuses on the candidate skills to build the learning environment while utilizing leadership and management skills in an organizational setting.

Teaching and modeling ethical behavior for students involves research and continuing interaction with faculty, as noted in Lincoln (2009). Electronic access to information has resulted in many concerns among the education community. School librarians lead the way in promoting intellectual property rights among information users.

In building the physical learning environment, the school librarian develops policies and procedures related to planning, budgeting, and evaluating human, information and physical resources. Rosenfeld and Loertscher (2007) suggested that "the school library exists beyond its four walls and provides real and virtual access to appropriate, high-quality resources on a 24 hours-per-day/7 days a week basis" (p. vii). Johnson (2003) noted that the library must be both "high-tech" and "high-touch" so that users find the information they need in an environment that is welcoming (p. 387). Woolls (2004) espoused the belief that school librarians need not be satisfied with just any space they are given, but they need to know that "assessing library media facilities in order to improve them" is an important part of the learning environment (p. 117).

This leads to strategic planning and assessment. Neelameghan (2007) looked at the impact of a quality library program and student achievement considering the management of the library resources. Through planning and assessment of the library program, student learning can be facilitated.

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