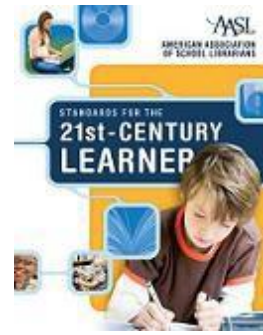


AASL Standards for the 21st-Century Learner Jean H. Tuzinski

“AASL Standards for the 21st-Century Learner” were released at the end of the Opening General Session of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center, October 27th, 2007. These learning standards replace the information literacy standards which have been the basis of our work since their publication in the 1998 Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning.



The “Standards for the 21st - Century Learner,” referred to by AASL as *learning standards*, “offer vision for teaching and learning to both guide and beckon our profession as education leaders. They will both shape the library program and serve as a tool for library media specialists to use to shape the learning of students in the school” (ALA). “The learning standards begin by defining nine foundational common beliefs:

1. Reading is a window to the world.
2. Inquiry provides a framework for learning.
3. Ethical behavior in the use of information must be taught.
4. Technology skills are crucial for future employment needs.
5. Equitable access is a key component for education.
6. The definition of information literacy has become more complex as resources and technologies have changed.
7. The continuing expansion of information demands that all individuals acquire the thinking skills that will enable them to learn on their own.
8. Learning has a social context.
9. School libraries are essential to the development of learning skills” (ALA).

There are four learning standards as well as Skills, Dispositions in Action, Responsibilities and Self-Assessment Strategies for each. The standards, from the [ALA/AASL website](#), are simple and concise. “Learners use skills, resources, & tools to:

- Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge;
- Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge;

- Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members in our democratic society;
- Pursue personal and aesthetic growth.”

To find a general overview of the standards and a PDF printable file of Standards for the 21st-Century Learner, go to:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslproftools/learningstandards/standards.cfm>

A new book similar to *Information Power* will be published in about a year to present these standards with supporting materials to the profession. Watch for it! In the meantime, I hope you take the time to obtain these standards and start digesting them. Since they take effect immediately, your Mansfield SL&IT courses will be revised to reflect these new learning standards.

Already, I can see many exciting changes for LSC5535, Information Literacy and Academic Standards. Our work goes on, and I know that everyone in our Mansfield program is dedicated to keeping current and preparing you to be the best possible school library media specialist.

Works Cited

American Library Association. American Association of School Librarians. “AASL Standards for the 21st-Century Learner” 30 Oct 2007 9 Nov 2007
<<http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslproftools/learningstandards/standards.cfm>>.