

FEATURE

SCHOOL LIBRARY LEVEE

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OOOL RIANS LUP!

**TRANSFORM YOUR TEACHING BY
UNPACKING THE AASL STANDARDS
INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK AND
IMPLEMENTING SHARED
FOUNDATION V: EXPLORE**

The 2018 *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* enable school librarians to continuously tailor school libraries and activities to meet students' needs and interests while meeting state curriculum requirements. The AASL Standards recognize learning as an ongoing endeavor that should not be confined to the four walls of the school building or library. To adapt the popular expression, "think global, buy local," one can say the standards subscribe to the philosophy of "teach local, learn national, and achieve global." Designed to empower school librarians to transform teaching and learning, the AASL Standards have enabled personalization for every learner and school librarian.

In late May 2018, Sara Kardasz, program administrator of Western Suffolk BOCES (Boards of Cooperative Educational Services) School Library System, asked for volunteers to dissect the AASL Shared Foundations and discuss how school librarians can implement them. Sara gave each participant a copy of the recently published AASL Standards book. On September 27, 2018, six teams consisting of three to four members met after school at BOCES to strategize. Each team had selected one of the six Shared Foundations. The two of us teamed up with another school librarian (who, unfortunately, had to bow out of participating because of other commitments) to work on the Explore Shared Foundation.

At our next liaison meeting (an event where school librarian representatives (liaisons) of schools within our BOCES learn about new resources and state requirements, plan professional development opportunities, and share information) the two of us presented "Unpacking the *National School Library Standards*,

Shared Foundation V: Explore." The audience of approximately twenty-five school librarians representing sixteen school districts (both public districts and groups of religious schools, most under the governance of the local Roman Catholic archdiocese) were very receptive to learning more about the new standards and ways this Shared Foundation could be incorporated into their practices. Below, we describe the strategies and lesson ideas from our own practice we shared at that presentation.

Shared Foundation V: Explore

Key Commitment: "Discover and innovate in a growth mindset developed through experience and reflection" (AASL 2018, 38).

Explore is the fifth of six Shared Foundations that support the *AASL Standards Integrated Framework*. Within each Shared Foundation in the AASL Standards—including Explore—are four Domains: Think, Create, Share, and Grow. All four Domains are germane to the implementation of each of the Shared Foundations. The Competencies within the Domains are the measurable actions that show mastery. Whatever the subject matter, school librarians should always introduce the topic and elicit students' prior knowledge.

Domain A: Think School librarians foster learners' personal curiosity by:

1. *Encouraging learners to read widely and deeply in multiple formats and write and create for a variety of purposes. (School Librarian V.A.1)*

For this competency, both of us created a diverse display of fiction and nonfiction books for students to browse. After brainstorming about which genres they enjoy and why, students selected their favorites for independent reading and sharing.

Alice had a follow-up lesson in which her students selected a postcard about a person or a place, and then researched that topic. Students wrote a report, brochure, or letter to a friend or relative, describing the place and the top sites a visitor should see in that place. Those who selected a person wrote facts about the person and the impact the person had on society. Students listed their sources and shared their reports with the class.

2. *Challenging learners to reflect and question assumptions and possible misconceptions. (School Librarian V.A.2)*

The Spanish foreign language teacher and Jennifer co-taught a lesson in which students created a campaign to have the Day of the Dead recognized as a local holiday. Students researched the subject and spoke with experts via video conference and Twitter chat. Learners wrote letters explaining why the Day of the Dead should be recognized as a holiday and sent them to local legislators. Bringing a real-world application to the task increased students' motivation to learn.

3. *Enabling learners by helping them develop inquiry-based processes for personal growth. (School Librarian V.A.3)*

Working with a middle school English language arts (ELA) classroom teacher, Jennifer used a flipped classroom model to teach students about plagiarism, its implications, and how to avoid it. Students viewed videos at home using YouTube and Edpuzzle. The next day in class, students created a paper slide video (learn more at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qf6LrPTG3p4) that was used to teach other students about plagiarism.

Alice's students practiced documenting sources, including books, websites, and encyclopedias, using EasyBib or NoodleTools. Also, a robust discussion grew out of reading Joe Bubar's 2018 article "Does Facebook Know Too Much?" [Editor's note: For additional information about Bubar's article and other resources related to activities described in this feature, please see the list at the end.] Junior high school students were not happy about the fact that other people may have access to their accounts and often used their information (for advertisement) without their consent. After learning how to evaluate research sources based on authority/author, relevancy, date/currency, bias, and ease of navigation, students were divided into three groups. They were given three news sources (articles, videos, and memes) to determine which of the three was most reliable and why.

Domain B: Create
School librarians stimulate learners to construct new knowledge by:

1. *Teaching problem solving through cycles of design, implementation, and reflection.*
(School Librarian V.B.1)

Tinkering and exploration not only foster creativity and academic success but provide many areas for collaboration and leadership. These activities also provide a respite from "chalk and talk." Students take ownership in selecting tasks and halting one task and moving to another, either individually or as members of a team.

Both of us have garnered a variety of makerspace resources over the years through a combination of district funds, grants, and donations from various sources. Alice's students enjoyed assembling Botley robots and Robotikits, and using Dash and Dot Robots, as well as Ozobot devices. Learners also interacted with Jenga,

Legos, Discovery Kids Space Lab and GeoSafari Talking Telescope, Multiplication Bingo, other math games, brain quests, chess, bilingual teach-and-talk tablets, Connect 4, and other learning games. Later, students reflected on the process, thinking about what worked and what did not, and then discussed in their groups how the resource could be improved.

Although the preparation can be time-consuming, students often "make" better when they are presented with a challenge. One such challenge was the Marshmallow Challenge. During Teen Tech Week, Jennifer began by explaining the Engineering Design Process (EDP) to students. EDP is a methodical approach to solving problems that involves a series of steps or algorithms to be followed when solving a problem or designing a solution. She provided students with items for the Marshmallow Challenge (spaghetti, marshmallows, string, and tape). Students competed to design and build the highest tower in fifteen minutes. She frequently reminded students about the process as they worked on the challenge. These reminders helped to keep them focused and engaged.

2. *Providing opportunities for tinkering and making.*
(School Librarian V.B.2)

Some activities in our makerspaces required students to read instruction manuals, install batteries, or repair calculators and watches. Students frequently stopped and reflected on what they did wrong and trusted each other to correctly assemble products. (Alice was thrilled when one girl brought a friend along with her after school to continue to fix a broken watch. The big smiles on their faces were priceless when they succeeded.)

Jennifer's students participated in the Global Cardboard Challenge,

which challenged students to be creative with cardboard boxes. Using *washi* (decorative paper tape) and electrical tape, Alice's students made colorful purses and pocketbooks. By rolling up recycled newspapers and using clear tape, students made standing structures, magazine holders, and sturdy stools.

3. *Modeling persistence through self-directed tinkering and making.*
(School Librarian V.B.3)

Students learn from each other and share their expertise. In a recent origami lesson, Alice observed one classmate showing another how to fold correctly to make a paper airplane. Soft skills like persistence and perseverance were better absorbed through observation and practice. Students' creations were limited only by their imaginations and skill levels.

Domain C. Share
School librarians prepare learners to engage with the learning community by:

1. *Providing strategies for acting on curiosity about a topic of personal interest or curricular relevance.*
(School Librarian V.C.1)

Alice's students explored various careers based on a career-interest inventory. Each student researched the career for which the inventory indicated the student was most suited and created a product explaining that career to others. Extension activities involved students connecting with experts around the world via Skype, Zoom, and Twitter.

Jennifer connected several Family and Consumer Science classes with the Pro Football Hall of Fame via a Web conference through which students learned about NFL careers other than players and coaches. School librarians can visit

CILC.org (Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration) and Microsoft's Skype in the Classroom website for lots of ideas on connecting with experts online.

Jennifer also discovered that authors and subject matter experts were willing to chat with students and were reachable via Twitter or e-mail. She also learned some museums offer free and inexpensive programs that educators can schedule for their classes.

2. Assisting learners to co-construct innovative means of investigation. (School Librarian V.C.2)

Some school librarians have implemented Genius Hour or have participated in National STEM Day or Global Maker Day, allowing students to choose their own projects from the supplies provided. During Jennifer's Genius Hour, students built prototypes to make their favorite sports better and designed apps to help combat bullying. Unfinished projects are stored or placed in the library office for students to complete during scheduled Genius Hour times, lunch, or after school.

A simple-to-run program in which both of us participated was the Hour of Code. This is a global initiative that happens each December. Students were involved in code.org and Google's CS First coding activities (such as Make a Flappy Game, Code with Anna and Elsa, and Minecraft Hour of Code). Advanced students created their own games, art, and digital stories and shared them with each other. A group of Alice's students tried unplugged activities such as making binary bracelets and exploring looping (a coding object or line that calls for repeat actions) through dance.

3. Structuring activities for learners to collaboratively identify solutions to a challenge or problem. (School Librarian V.C.3)

Lessons on how to minimize litter at school and steps to start recycling at home and at school are some examples of collaboratively identifying solutions to problems. Some of Alice's students designed an anti-litter poster for the school, while others entered the Babylon Covantage EcoTech Scholarship Contest sponsored by the town of Babylon, New York, and Covanta Energy. Another "green" contest is the Town of Hempstead (NY) Sustainability Projects initiative.

Having students identify problems in their schools or communities provided them with a sense of ownership and motivation. After brainstorming and researching possible solutions, students used the available resources to solve these problems. Solutions were presented to community representatives, school administrators, and the school board for implementation. Outstanding student projects were displayed in school libraries and sometimes at public libraries. In addition, some students shared their findings with younger students, impacting even more people.

Domain D. Grow School librarians help learners develop through experience and reflection by:

1. Scaffolding iterative challenge-response processes. (School Librarian V.D.1)

Students responded to various information challenges, both print and on the Web. School librarians help students understand social media and their responsibilities. A variety of Common Sense Media digital citizenship lessons were

facilitated by Alice using the website <www.common sense.org/education/lesson/my-creative-work-k-2>. Her students were also introduced to the concepts of Growth Mindsets and Mindfulness in the Classroom and discussed how these impacted their current and future learning. In free time some students explored ScratchJr and Scratch. They had to complete a series of tasks (iterations) before progressing.

2. Helping learners to recognize capabilities and skills that can be developed, improved, and expanded. (School Librarian V.D.2)

Next school year, Jennifer's students will be using Bookopolis to share books and opinions in a safe, friendly environment. Other ideas are to have students design their own Kahoot, Quizlet, and Breakout EDU games based on library lessons and books they have read. An ELA class in Jennifer's school partnered eighth-graders with fifth-graders to digitally—and remotely—collaborate on a story. At the end of the project, the fifth-graders were transported to the middle school to meet face to face with their eighth-grader counterparts to share their stories. Flipgrid was also used to record 30- to 60-second book reviews.

In an after-school library club at Alice's school, students wrote and edited book reviews for the school library blog. Jennifer incorporated a student-contributed library book review blog into ELA classrooms.

3. Fostering an atmosphere in which constructive feedback is openly accepted for positive growth. (School Librarian V.D.3)

Getting and giving feedback—as well as reflecting on what worked and what did not—are very important to the learning process.

Both of us set a tone of respect and acceptance at the beginning of the year, and success with learners' maintaining these attributes reviewed periodically. Alice's students have completed self-evaluations after each semester. Her students also participate in peer evaluations and feel valued when they read and review each other's work. Alice recognized that the feedback was generally positive. Students reacted well to suggestions and made changes in their reports and, thus, received higher scores. Alice's students reported "feeling very empowered" when asked how they felt about peer and self-evaluations.

Conclusion

School librarians can deconstruct the Explore Shared Foundation in myriad ways and by doing so are transforming their school libraries. The six Shared Foundations (Inquire, Include, Collaborate, Curate, Explore, and Engage) along with their Key Commitments and Competencies, are powerful and energizing, and can revolutionize how school librarians practice their craft. Although each Shared Foundation is different, similarities are embedded in each one. By learning how our colleagues have curated the Shared Foundations, coupled with our own research, we have changed how we organize our libraries and structure our library activities. We are more cognizant of the amount of time we speak/lecture as we work to reduce it.



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BOCES as the School Library Media Specialist of the Year in 2017, having been nominated by peers, administrators, and students. Jennifer is a certified Education Technology and School Library Media Specialist. She is currently pursuing her School Leadership certification through the New York Institute of Technology and holds an MSLS degree from the University of North Texas.



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is a junior high and high school librarian in West Babylon (NY) School District. From 2013 to

2016 she was an Advisory Council Member for Western Suffolk BOCES School Library System. In May 2018 she received the Western Suffolk BOCES School Librarian of the Year Award. She has been an ALA/AASL and New York Library Association Section of School Librarians member for many years, and recently became vice-president of the Suffolk School Library Media Association. Alice received her Master of Library Science degree from Queens College, Graduate School of Library and Information Studies (CUNY). She also has a second Master's degree and is certified in School Administration and Supervision.

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