2021

# School Librarian Preparation and Practice: An Exploration of the AASL National School Library Standards and ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards

Elizabeth A. Burns
*Old Dominion University*, eburns@odu.edu

April M. Dawkins

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# School Librarian Preparation and Practice: An Exploration of the AASL National School Library Standards and ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards

**Elizabeth A. Burns,** Assistant Professor, Department of STEM Education and Professional Studies, Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Old Dominion University

**April M. Dawkins,** Assistant Professor, Department of Library and Information Science, School of Education, University of North Carolina Greensboro

## Abstract

*The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) recently released standards to guide the practice of school librarians. The* National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries *(2018) were put forward as a single text with integrated frameworks. One year later, the* ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards *(2019) were adopted to inform the preparation of school librarians. Using a one-way crosswalk analysis, this study explores the alignment of the* AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians *from the AASL Standards with the* ALA/AASL/CAEP Preparation Standards *to determine consistencies in expectations as well as identify noted gaps. Findings will assist educators of school librarians to develop meaningful coursework and pre-service experiences.*

## Introduction

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), has recently released two sets of guiding standards for school library professionals. The *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* (2018) guide practice and instruction within K–12 schools as well as the behaviors of school librarians as they engage and implement effective school libraries. The *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* "prepare candidates for service and leadership as school librarians serving P–12 students" (2019, 4). This is accomplished by addressing the philosophy, principles, and ethics of school librarians presented in the Components of the five standards. The developers of the School Librarian Preparation Standards intended to use the philosophy and beliefs outlined by the AASL Standards and Common Beliefs

as a guide to situate best practice. This study explores the alignment of these two documents to identify the overlap between expectations school librarians are presented with during their preparation for practice and the Competencies they are asked to demonstrate in practice.

A note about terminology: The term Competencies is used in the *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* to refer to the concepts and skills needed by practicing school librarians. The term Components is used in the *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* and refers to the sub-level aspects of an overall standard. The overall standard and its components make up the concepts and skills that should be demonstrated by school librarians at the completion of their licensure program of study. The two sets of standards have differing audiences. The AASL Standards are intended to guide school librarians within their schools as they grow and mature as practicing school librarians. The School Librarian Preparation Standards are used by preparation programs to guide their curriculum development and to assist in gaining national recognition through the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and the American Association of School Librarians.

## BACKGROUND ON DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT

In 2015 AASL began the process of reviewing multiple standard and guideline documents. The previous set of learner standards, *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* (AASL 2007), as well as program guidelines, *Empowering Learners* (AASL 2009), were evaluated through a rigorous field research process. Through surveys and focus groups, school librarians and other stakeholders and educators provided input on the current standards and guidelines and their use, as well as items that were perceived as requiring updates and improvement. It was determined that the profession found the existing documents useful but in need of revision. Additionally, separating professional guidelines from learner competencies implied the perception that library program elements were less significant. This realization resulted in the revised documents published in one text: learner, school librarian, and school library frameworks aligned and integrated together (AASL 2018, 10).

Each of these integrated frameworks (AASL 2018) are organized around six Shared Foundations: Inquire, Include, Collaborate, Curate, Explore, Engage. For this study, we focus exclusively on the Competencies within the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians* for each Shared Foundation. The School Librarian Competencies "intentionally parallel those of the learner and emphasize the integrated nature of a comprehensive learning environment" (AASL 2018, 44). The *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians* was developed to direct the professional activities and behaviors of the information professional in the school setting. The school librarian's behaviors and practices are identified to function within an effective school library. The *AASL Standards Framework for School Libraries* aligns with the Competencies for learners and school librarians while also meeting the guiding principles and policies of policymakers at the school, district, and state levels (AASL 2018, 56). The decision to exclude the *AASL Standards Framework for School Libraries* from this study was not made lightly or without much discussion. The Alignments[1] for school libraries often reflect decision-making about budgets, policies, and technology implementation that occurs at the district or state level (AASL 2018, 56). While practicing school librarians have opportunities to impact these decisions or their implementation through advocacy, pre-service school librarians often cannot

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[1] *The term Alignment (when capitalized) is part of the AASL* National School Library Standards *terminology that parallels the Competencies in the frameworks for learners and school librarians.*

have meaningful impact on school library programs prior to their employment in a school. Therefore, we chose to exclude the school library Alignments in the AASL Standards from this study.

The *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* were developed to replace the 2010 *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians*. In early 2017 AASL distributed a survey to faculty of school librarian preparation programs soliciting feedback on the 2010 standards and asking respondents to identify areas that these educators of pre-service school librarians might consider most important to clarify, strengthen, or change (ALA/AASL/CAEP 2019, 34).

A task force was formed in the late stages of the development of the AASL Standards and early stages of the creation of the new School Librarian Preparation Standards to articulate alignment between the two documents. Members of the AASL Standards and Guidelines Editorial Board worked with members of the AASL-CAEP Coordinating Committee for the development of the School Librarian Preparation Standards to form an executive committee. This executive committee drafted an executive summary that highlighted high-level items that might align and guide the drafting of the School Librarian Preparation Standards prior to the release of the *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* (ALA/AASL/CAEP 2019, 34).

Over a two-year period the AASL-CAEP Coordinating Committee drafted the new *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* seeking feedback at multiple points from stakeholders, including practicing school librarians, faculty members, and district school library supervisors. After receiving initial feedback from the CAEP SPA (Specialized Professional Associations) Standards Committee in September 2018, the AASL-CAEP Coordinating Committee continued to refine the standards, their rubrics, and the accompanying materials. Additionally, AASL sought input from other CAEP SPAs (ALA/AASL/CAEP 2019, 33–35).

The *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* are organized around the four CAEP principles: The Learner and Learning, Content, Instructional Practice, and Professional Responsibility. Additionally, CAEP allows SPAs to include additional standards that encompass areas of the field that might be appropriate to supplement the CAEP principles. Because of the specialized knowledge and skills school librarians are required to have, the School Librarian Preparation Standards also include a fifth area: Organization and Access. For this study, we focus on the five preparation standards, their Components, and the examples of Candidate Actions. Together, these provide guidance in developing curriculum and assessments for students in school librarian preparation programs and "represent competence expected of candidates who have completed a school librarian licensure program and are prepared to begin professional practice as school librarians" (ALA/AASL/CAEP 2019, 5).

We, the researchers in this study and authors of this paper, were part of the work groups that developed the documents being analyzed. One of us served on the competitively selected AASL Standards and Guidelines Editorial Board. The other co-chaired the CAEP Coordinating Committee that drafted the School Librarian Preparation Standards. We both served on the executive committee that worked in the early phases of development to share information across groups. These positions provided in-depth knowledge about both sets of standards and their development process.

## RELATED LITERATURE

Understanding the extent to which the *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standard*s and *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians* align or have common purpose is a first step to examining a common goal within the school library profession to prepare and support school library professionals. One Common Belief central to the profession is "Qualified school librarians lead effective school libraries" (AASL 2018, 12).

Earlier studies have shown that coursework and preparation across programs is not always consistent and can emphasize different roles and dispositions (Harada 1996; Shannon 2004; Moreillon, Kimmel, and Gavigan 2014). Programs that prepare school librarians may vary according to delivery model, required activities, and coursework expectations such as practical assignments and internships (Shannon 2004). Additionally, the amount of emphasis on teaching and integrated or collaborative instruction versus more-traditional library tasks varies (Moreillon, Kimmel, and Gavigan 2014). Many of these factors are influenced by whether the program is accredited and aligned with the standards established by ALA/AASL/CAEP.

Previous research conducted on the use and implementation of standards in school librarianship can be divided into two categories: standards that guide practicing school librarians and standards that guide the education and preparation of school librarians. Prior to the 2018 publication of the *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*, practicing school librarians were guided by various sets of standards that were revised over time. With the adoption of each new set of standards, studies have been conducted to explore the roles or perceptions of school librarians. In 1989 Selvin W. Royal examined the then newly released *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Programs* (1988) for the implications that those standards might have for the curriculum of school librarian preparation programs. Royal indicated that the guidelines provided evidence on the changing roles of school librarians—changes that would require preparation programs to change their curricula. In 2001 Delia Neuman used the newest standards of the time, *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (AASL and AECT 1998), to conduct focus-group interviews about implications that those standards had for changes needed in the preparation of school librarians.

Roles and perceptions of school librarians have also been studied through job advertisements and job descriptions, and compared to the prevailing standards for school librarians. In 2018 Aaron J. Elkins conducted a comparative analysis between school librarian job descriptions and the performance responsibilities identified in *Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Programs* (2009). Cody A. Whitton (2019) conducted a similar analysis of job advertisements for school librarians, comparing them to the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians* from the 2018 *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*.

Standards for the education and preparation of school librarians are a fairly recent development. Marilyn L. Miller's 1989 article examined the need for a separate set of preparation standards for school library media specialists separate from program standards for practicing school librarians developed by the American Library Association. Many in the field felt the separate standards were needed to emphasize the special instructional role that school librarians played. This first set of preparation standards, *Competencies for the Initial Preparation of School Library Media Specialists*, were adopted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Specialty Areas Board in September 1988. Since the 1988 preparation standards, four revisions of those standards have taken place. In October 2010 NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) and the TEAC (Teacher Education Accreditation Council)

agreed to merge into a new accrediting body: CAEP (Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation).

Studies related to the preparation standards have explored how these standards have been used to guide the education of future school librarians but are rarely about the standards themselves or a comparison of the preparation standards to the practicing standards. The preparation standards have been used as a framework to provide guidance to preparation programs in developing and revising courses, assignments, and learning outcomes (Baker 2016; Schultz-Jones et al. 2018). Violet Harada's 1996 study examined ALA-accredited programs that provided preparation for school librarianship to determine the extent to which their curricula covered the competency areas from the 1988 ALA/AASL/NCATE *Competencies for the Initial Preparation of School Library Media Specialists.* Additionally, a dissertation study has used the preparation standards as a framework to explore how principals and practicing school librarians perceived the roles of school librarians (Novotny 2017).

Two publications have examined both the standards for practicing school librarians and the standards for the education and preparation of school librarians. While Donna Shannon's literature review on the education and competencies of school library media specialists examined standards for both practicing school librarians and the preparation of school librarians, it did not provide a comparison between those sets of standards. Shannon noted that much of the research in both areas has been descriptive studies that explored perceptions and attitudes of school librarians (2004). The only previous study that compared standards for practicing school librarians and standards for the preparation of school librarians was published in 2012. In that paper, three sets of standards that impact school librarians are compared: the 2009 *Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Programs* (the guidelines for school libraries), the 2010 AASL *Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians*, and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards *Library Media Standards* (2001). In 2012 Audrey P. Church et al. noted that each of those sets of standards were intended for different audiences: The ALA/AASL/NCATE Standards were written for preparation program educators who teach future school librarians, *Empowering Learners* was for practicing librarians at the building level, and the NBPTS teaching standards were for accomplished and experienced school librarians. The research by Church et al. outlined common themes between the sets of standards, including access, advocacy, collaboration, inquiry, leadership, ethics, and management. This current study addresses the gap in school library literature exploring school library preparation standards aligned to standards of school librarians in practice.

## Purpose and Research Questions

Understanding the relationship between expectations for school librarians as expressed in preparation programs and as competencies displayed in practice will help inform preparation goals and strengthen instructional practice. This study seeks to determine to what extent the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians* and the *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* align. To explore the extent of this alignment, the project was guided by the following questions:

> 1. Do the AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians and the ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards reflect similar content?

> 2. If there are gaps between the documents, what are they?

## Methodology

To address the research questions, this study employed a one-way crosswalk analysis. According to Lois Mai Chan and Marcia Lei Zeng, a crosswalk is "a mapping of the elements, semantics, and syntax from one metadata scheme to those of another," and further that crosswalks are "the most commonly used method to enable interoperability between and among metadata schemas" (2006, Crosswalks para. 1). Crosswalks are a familiar method for comparing one set of standards to another. Several crosswalks have already been developed for the new AASL Standards, providing maps to the *Future Ready Librarians Framework* and the *International Society for Technology in Education Standards for Students and Educators.*

A one-way crosswalk analysis (*A→B*) was conducted to demonstrate the relationship between the *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* and the Competencies within the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians*. This analysis was done for the purpose of understanding how the two documents align in content and intent. We each individually attempted to find equivalency between the two documents to the extent that this was possible. Each of the five ALA/AASL/CAEP Standards were mapped to each Shared Foundation within the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians* (see appendix). As will be discussed in the findings, some Competencies matched to multiple preparation standards. Also, some Competencies could not be mapped to any of the Components of the preparation standards.

After independently mapping, we then met to discuss the mapping of the ALA/AASL/CAEP standards' Components to the AASL Competencies. If differences in mapping were revealed, we worked to reach a consensus before progressing to the next standard. An example of this process is how consensus was reached in mapping the ALA/AASL/CAEP Component 1.4 Learning Environments. After separately mapping the AASL Competencies to this Component, one of us had aligned six of the AASL Competencies to the Component, while the other had aligned only four. During a meeting to discuss the alignments, reasons for our choices were discussed. For example, one of us highlighted and explained the terminology in the Competency, I.D.3, "Enabling learners to seek knowledge, create new knowledge, and make real-world connections for lifelong learning" (AASL 2018, 47). The other then argued that although the alignment was appropriate based on the second half of the Component's language, "The learning environments encourage positive social interaction and the curation and creation of knowledge" (ALA/AASL/CAEP 2019, 6), the full intent of the passage was not aligned. This same person encouraged a close examination of the action required in the component "Candidates create both physical and virtual learner-centered environments…" (ALA/AASL/CAEP 2019, 6). After this consultation, agreement was reached that Competency I.D.3 was not aligned with Component 1.4. This process was used for each instance of researcher disagreement about alignment. The end result was that all Competencies within the Shared Foundations were ultimately analyzed for equivalency to each of Components within the five Standards.

## Findings

### OVERVIEW

Analysis of the crosswalk results (see appendix) are discussed here. Findings identify where the content of the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians* and the *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* strongly aligned as well as gaps in the alignment of the

two documents. Findings also discuss attempted mapping of the Best Practices from the AASL Standards and Candidate Action examples from the School Librarian Preparation Standards.

## ALIGNMENT OF CONTENT

A high rate of alignment was found across the documents with 86 percent (n=57) of the AASL School Librarian Competencies mapped to at least one Component of the School Librarian Preparation Standards. This alignment occurred across all Shared Foundations and within each learning Domain. Competencies aligned most frequently within the Think Domain of all the Shared Foundations (N= 34) and least frequently within the Share Domain (n=19). However, this level of frequency was not consistently represented as a trend across all Shared Foundations.

The analysis showed the greatest frequency of alignment to occur in the Shared Foundation of Engage (N=31). Each Competency of the Engage Shared Foundation was aligned at least once to a Component in the School Librarian Preparation Standards and this Shared Foundation displayed the greatest number of multiple uses of a single Competency (see table 1). While sixteen Competencies (24 percent) across all Shared Foundations within the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians* aligned three or more times to Components of the ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards, only four Competencies aligned four or more times, and all of these were found within the Shared Foundation Engage, as documented in table 1.

Table 1. AASL Standards Competencies with four or more occurrences of alignment with preparation Components.

| Number of Occurrences | Competency | |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | VI.A.1 | Directing learners to responsibly use information, technology, and media for learning, and modeling this responsible use |
| 4 | VI.A.2 | Modeling the understanding of ethical use of information, technology, and media |
| 4 | VI.B.1 | Showing a variety of strategies to ethically use and reproduce others' work and modeling this ethical use. |
| 4 | VI.D.3 | Championing and modeling safe, responsible ethical, and legal information behaviors |

Another set of Competencies that aligned to Components with high frequency was for the Shared Foundation of Collaborate. Collaborate aligned to the School Librarian Preparation Standards at least once at each Competency in the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians*. The Shared Foundation that showed the lowest frequency of alignment was Inquire. Only six of the ten Competencies (60 percent) in this Shared Foundation aligned with at least one Component of the School Librarian Preparation Standards.

## CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

The School Librarian Preparation Standards document identifies "cross-cutting themes" within those standards. The CAEP guidelines for creating the School Librarian Preparation Standards required the inclusion of two specific cross-cutting themes focused on diversity and digital learning. Our research revealed alignment along the cross-cutting theme of diversity. The School Librarian Preparation Standards front matter identifies cultural competence as a grounding theory in the context of diversity (ALA/AASL/CAEP 2019, 40). This emphasis is evident in language and scope. Two Components of the School Librarian Preparation Standards, Learner Development and Learner Diversity, aligned at the broader Shared Foundation level of Include rather than at the AASL Standards Competency level for this cross-cutting theme.

School Librarian Preparation Standard 1.2 Learner Diversity aligned to several AASL Standards Competencies for school librarians, but we saw this standard as also being aligned to the broad Shared Foundation of Include.

The other significant "cross-cutting theme" discussed in the *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* is digital learning (2019, 40). While technology is addressed throughout the preparation standards, digital learning is primarily located in Components 3.2 and 3.3, which discuss technology-enabled learning, digital literacy, and digital citizenship. These Components align with the use of communication tools in Competencies found in the AASL Standards Shared Foundations of Collaborate, Curate, and Engage. We found that although the Curate Competencies do not specifically mention digital tools, the usage of vocabulary such as "tools" and "sites" implies the usage of technology by learners. The Shared Foundation of Engage is more clearly aligned through its inclusion of technology and Competencies related to ethical use of information. Although additional cross-cutting themes such as ethics are present, the researchers chose to focus on those prescribed by CAEP that are explained in more detail in the School Librarian Preparation Standards commentary (ALA/AASL/CAEP, 2019, 40).

## NOTED GAPS IN ALIGNMENT

Nine AASL School Librarian Competencies were identified for which no alignment could be found between the documents (see table 2). These were spread through all learning Domains and all Shared Foundations with the exceptions of Collaborate and Engage. An example of one gap is Competency IV.D.3 "Making opportunities for learners to openly communicate curation processes for others to use, interpret, and validate" (AASL 2018, 50). Initial examination of this Competency led us to consider aligning this Competency with preparation Component 4.2 Information Resources because that Component is about curation, "Candidates use evaluation criteria and selection tools to develop, curate, and manage a collection designed to meet the diverse curricular and personal needs of the learning community" (ALA/AASL/CAEP 2019, 12). However, close examination reveals that this Component is about the curation of a collection for learner use and not learners' curation and use of resources.

Table 2. AASL Competencies with no aligned preparation Component.

| I.A.2. | Activating learners' prior and background knowledge as context for constructing new meaning |
|---|---|
| I.B.2 | Devising and implementing a plan to fill knowledge gaps |
| I.B.3 | Facilitating the development of products that illustrate learning |
| I.D.3 | Enabling learners to seek knowledge, create new knowledge, and make real-world connections for life-long learning |
| II.C.2 | Guiding learners to contribute to discussions in which multiple viewpoints on a topic are expressed |
| II.D.3 | Showcasing learners' reflections on their place within the global learning community |
| IV.A.3 | Guiding learners to make critical choices about information sources to use |
| IV.D.3 | Making opportunities for learners to openly communicate curation processes for others to use, interpret, and validate |
| V.A.3 | Enabling learners by helping them develop inquiry-based processes for personal growth |

## Evidence and Preparation for Leadership

As identified in table 2, several AASL Competencies did not find alignment to the preparation Components. Also, no Competency alignment could be found for one preparation Component. Component 4.3 *Evidence-Based Decision Making* did not have any equivalent alignment in the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians*.

Additionally, within Preparation Standard 5, Leadership, Advocacy, and Professional Responsibility several Components did not have much alignment with AASL Competencies for school librarians. Preparation Standards 5.1 through 5.3 were aligned to a total of only four AASL Standard Competencies (see table 3).

Table 3. Alignment of Leadership, Advocacy, and Professional Responsibility preparation standard with AASL Standards Competencies.

| ALA/AASL/CAEP Standard and Component | AASL Standards Shared Foundation, Domain, and Competency |
|---|---|
| **5.1** Professional Learning. | **I.D.1** Leading learners and staff through the research process<br>III.B.2 Cultivating networks that allow learners to build on their own prior knowledge and create new knowledge |
| **5.2** Leadership and Collaboration. | **VI.D.3** Championing and modeling safe, responsible, ethical, and legal information behaviors |
| **5.3** Advocacy. | **III.B.2** Cultivating networks that allow learners to build on their own prior knowledge and create new knowledge |

### Mapping Practice

An attempt was made to apply the same one-way content crosswalk analysis to align the AASL Standards Best Practices and School Librarian Preparation Standards Candidate Actions. However, close examination of the two areas determined that the intent of the Best Practices and Candidate Actions were not similar because the documents themselves had differing purposes. The Best Practices are included as part of the discussion of individual Shared Foundations in the context of the work of in-service school librarians, not as part of the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians*. The Candidate Actions of the *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* are intended to guide educators of pre-service school librarians in the design of assessment within preparation programs. While we did find some alignment between these two elements of the documents, particularly when aligning actions of instruction from ALA/AASL/CAEP Standards 1 and 2, the intent of the activities was different enough that this alignment did not prove relevant to the overall discussion of this research. Best Practices and Candidate Actions were excluded from this analysis as they had differing purposes in the two standards documents.

## Discussion

Revised sets of standards guiding preparation and practice provide opportunities for educators of pre-service school librarians and practitioners in the field to assess and evaluate how well school librarians are prepared to carry out the job they are tasked to do. When exploring the 2019 *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* and the 2018 *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarians,* our findings were similar to the 2012 study by Church et al. As in that earlier study, this study found areas of alignment as well as gaps between standards written for preparation of school librarians and standards intended for practice. Comparing the two sets of standards can benefit educators of pre-service school librarians in improving their preparation of future practitioners.

Creators of crosswalks inevitably find areas of strong and weak alignment and even omissions. With the differing purposes of the two documents examined here, full alignment would be unrealistic. Several areas in the two sets of standards documents *did* show strong alignment. As educators familiar with the 2010 standards for preparation of school librarians, we noticed a shift in the 2019 preparation standards, with Standard 1 and Standard 2 centered almost entirely on a school library candidate's ability to develop and engage in the instructional roles of a school librarian (AASL 2019). Judi Moreillon, Sue Kimmel, and Karen Gavigan (2014) and Donna Shannon, an entire decade earlier (2004), noted that school library preparation programs varied significantly in their emphasis on coursework and assignments focused on the instructional partner role for school librarians. With explicit attention and emphasis on planning, teaching, and instructional design and development that should be addressed through preparation coursework per the Components of two standards, school librarians completing programs developed to meet the preparation standards will have exposure to experiences that align to the many instructional expectations they will demonstrate in practice. The strong alignment of the 2019 School Librarian Preparation Standards to the Shared Foundation of Collaborate in the 2018 AASL Standards is evidence that collaborative instruction is a noted priority in both documents. This is a value that should be emphasized in preparation of school librarians and then nurtured in practice.

Another documented area of emphasis in priority evident through this crosswalk exercise was in the area of information literacy. Selection, evaluation, and analysis of materials used for and with instruction is evident by the noted multiple coding of Competencies within the Engage Shared Foundation of the AASL Standards. With the greatest number of documented alignments and the highest number of multiple alignments from this frequency, the skills and Competencies of the Engage Shared Foundation were shown to have high priority in both documents for both pre-service and in-service professionals.

Additionally, both documents reflect the intentional incorporation of language that documents the growth disposition and inclusive perspectives as evidenced by the multiple alignments of the Shared Foundation of Include and the Domain Grow. Infusion of the cross-cutting theme of diversity between and among both sets of standards was also evident in the robust alignment documented for the Shared Foundation of Include and the Grow Domain.

At times, the structure of the documents added to the challenge of the mapping process. For example, as shown in table 2, during the mapping process Competencies II.B.2 and II.B.3 were recorded as gaps because they lacked one-to-one alignment to specific preparation Components. However, we did map preparation Components to the broader Key Commitment of the Include Shared Foundation, under which these Competencies fall.

Finally, the crosswalk analysis did identify areas in which there were noted gaps between the two sets of standards. The analysis of the Competencies for practicing school librarians showed little agreement with ALA/AASL/CAEP preparation Standard 5: Leadership, Advocacy, and Professional Responsibility. The preparation standards focus on school librarianship broadly to include areas of programmatic tasks and management activities. While there is a reduction in emphasis on management from the previous *Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians* (AASL 2010), management remains one area of focus in the 2019 preparation standards with an emphasis on equity of access. AASL's *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* do not ignore these critical tasks, but rather integrate them within the *AASL Standards Framework for School Libraries*, not the framework for school librarians. The lack of multiple alignments to Standard 5 within the crosswalk reflects this fact. Thus, this crosswalk analysis failed to demonstrate a strong alignment in tasks that

would be considered to be within the school librarian roles of program manager or information specialist. The lack of alignment here is also a result of the differing purposes of these documents. The School Librarian Preparation Standards and their Components are intended to measure what pre-service librarians should know and be able to do, although they might not have opportunities to demonstrate that mastery prior to obtaining employment as school librarians. The AASL Competencies are intended to measure what practicing librarians demonstrate in their day-to-day working environment.

Additionally, most assessment and evidence-gathering expected of a school librarian is also documented in the *AASL Standards Framework for School Libraries* instead of within the framework of Competencies for school librarians. The AASL Standards book *does* explicitly state that the frameworks are integrated elements and no "standards set…can be effectively executed independent of the other two sets" (AASL 2018, 17). However, because the Competencies that guide the activities of evidence-gathering reside within the school library framework, an alignment gap was documented in this crosswalk research.

### STUDY LIMITATIONS

Limitations are inherent when developing a crosswalk. Full equivalence of content is difficult to obtain when comparing two data schemes, even when they address similar concepts (Chan and Zeng 2006). Problems arise when the data must be analyzed in parts to evaluate or achieve equivalency. The preparation Components often contained more than one action. For example, Component 2.2 states "Candidates use a variety of instructional strategies and technologies to ensure that learners have multiple opportunities to inquire, include, collaborate, curate, explore, and engage in their learning" (ALA/AASL/CAEP 2019, 9). This Component addresses instruction and contains ideas about strategies and technology, and addresses each of the AASL Shared Foundations within the language. The researchers considered the early part of the Component for strong alignment. Breaking this statement into parts would allow the alignment to Competencies addressing strategies, as well as those addressing technologies, even when considering only some of the Shared Foundations. Therefore, breaking the statement into parts would have been useful to facilitate congruence or disagreement in the mapping process. However, the decision was made not to break the Components or Competencies down into smaller parts, but rather to consider the statements as the primary unit for mapping.

Another consideration during the mapping process was the need to repeat Competencies to fully map the two documents. This need for repetition often results from "different degrees of equivalency" (Chan and Zeng 2006). Examples of this are one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-one, and one-to-none relationships between the elements in two different data schemes. As was discussed in the study findings, instances were found in which Competencies matched to multiple Components. In addition some Competencies could not be mapped to any areas of the preparation standards. Finally, it is important to note that the results of this study reflect the interpretations of the researchers and that the replicability of this crosswalk has not been established.

## Conclusion

Going forward, school librarian preparation programs should consider the alignment of AASL's *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* and the *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards* to authentically prepare the next

generation of school librarians. While the two documents are closely aligned, gaps do exist. The exercise of creating a crosswalk encouraged discussion and close examination of the intent of the standards beyond a superficial comparison of content or terminology. School library educators must be aware of the preparation needs of school librarians as well as the practical expectations to be faced when candidates are working in the field. The findings of this study show that future school librarians should be introduced to and prepared using both sets of standards. By using both sets of standards, educators in preparation programs will more fully prepare future school librarians to succeed in their work with other educators and with learners of all ages in their school communities. Coursework provides an opportunity for experiential practice.

Consideration for implementation should include development of ALA/AASL/CAEP Candidate Actions that align to school library expectations in practice. Establishing assignments and assessments that align closely to the expectations of practice provides pre-service librarians with a realistic understanding of the expectations for their future practice, as well as with the knowledge and skills that will be required for success. Further, we suggest that school library educators introduce the school library Alignments in the *AASL Standards Framework for School Libraries* in addition to the framework for school librarians. Particularly when focusing on tasks associated with program management and ALA/AASL/CAEP Standard 5, educators of pre-service school librarians may want to extend their consideration beyond the Competencies for school librarians and incorporate content from the *AASL Standards Framework for School Libraries*. Certainly the *AASL Standards Integrated Framework* is intended to be just that: a framework of competencies and alignments designed to work as an integrated set.

This exploratory crosswalk analyzes documents put forward by ALA and AASL. As these standards are widely implemented, future research should focus on the use of the standards by the profession. This crosswalk will assist in bridging preparation and practice. We suggest the following steps be considered as educators of school librarians implement the new preparation standards: first, thoroughly compare the 2010 to the 2019 preparation standards. This should be done to analyze how current course learning outcomes and assignments meet the 2019 standards and to determine if courses and coursework are still relevant or need adjustment. Educators should determine if assessments within their university's program are assessing mastery of the 2019 preparation standards. Courses and assessments should be changed as needed to meet the new standards. Simultaneously, educators must explore and introduce students to the *AASL Standards Framework for School Librarian*s so that pre-service school librarians can engage with the Competencies expected in practice. This preparation ensures that school librarians, once hired, will be ready to engage in their school librarian roles and be guided by professional standards. As educators of school librarians update and refresh courses and assessments to meet the requirements of the 2019 *ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards*, a working knowledge of both sets of standards will be essential and help ensure new school librarians are ready to put their preparation into practice.

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# Appendix: One-Way Crosswalk of ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards and AASL National School Library Standards

| Preparation Standards | AASL National School Library Framework for School Librarians |
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| **AASL Preparation Standard Component** | **AASL Shared Foundations, Domains, and Competencies** |
| **STANDARD ONE** | |
| **1.1 Learner Development.** Candidates demonstrate the ways learners grow within and across cognitive, psychomotor, affective, and developmental domains. Candidates engage learners' interests to think, create, share, and grow as they design and implement instruction that integrates the *National School Library Standards.* | **I.A** School librarians teach learners to display curiosity and initiative when seeking information<br><br>**I.B** School librarians promote new knowledge generation<br><br>**V.A.1** Encouraging learners to read widely and deeply in multiple formats and write and create for a variety of purposes.<br><br>**V.B.2** Providing opportunities for tinkering and making<br><br>**V.C.1** Providing strategies for acting on curiosity about a topic of personal interest or curricular relevance.<br><br>**V.C.2** Assisting learners to co-construct innovative means of investigation |
| **1.2 Learner Diversity.** Candidates articulate and model cultural competence and respect for inclusiveness, supporting individual and group perspectives. | **II.C** School librarians facilitate experiences in which learners exhibit empathy and tolerance for diverse ideas<br><br>**II.D** School librarians explicitly lead learners to demonstrate empathy and equity in knowledge building within the global learning community<br><br>**II.A.1** Engaging learners to articulate an awareness of the contributions of a range of learners<br><br>**II.A.2** Guiding learners as they adopt a discerning stance toward points of view and opinions expressed in information resources and learning products<br><br>**II.A.3** Differentiated instruction to support learners' understanding of cultural relevancy and placement within the global learning community<br><br>**II.C.2** Guiding learners to contribute to discussions in which multiple viewpoints on a topic are expressed<br><br>**III.C.2** Advocating and modeling respect for diverse perspectives to guide the inquiry process |
| **1.3 Learning Differences.** Candidates cultivate educational and personal development of all members of the learning community, including those with diverse intellectual abilities, learning modalities, and physical variabilities. | **II.A.1** Engaging learners to articulate an awareness of the contributions of a range of learners<br><br>**II.D.1** Creating an atmosphere in which learners feel empowered and interactions are learner-initiated<br><br>**II.D.3** Showcasing learners' reflections on their place within the global learning community<br><br>**III.A.1** Challenging learners to work with others to broaden and deepen understandings<br><br>**III.A.2** Scaffolding of learning group roles to enable the development of new understandings within a group |

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| | **III.B.2** Cultivating networks that allow learners to build on their own prior knowledge and create new knowledge |
| | **V.D.2** Helping learners to recognize capabilities and skills that can be developed, improved, and expanded |
| **1.4 Learning Environments.** Candidates create both physical and virtual learner-centered environments that are engaging and equitable. The learning environments encourage positive social interaction and the curation and creation of knowledge. | **III.D.1** Stimulating learners to actively contribute to grouped discussions<br><br>**III.D.2** Creating a learning environment in which learners understand that learning is a social responsibility<br><br>**IV.C.1** Facilitating opportunities to access and evaluate collaboratively constructed information sites<br><br>**V.D.3** Fostering an atmosphere in which constructive feedback is openly accepted for positive growth<br><br>**VI.D.1** Structuring a learning environment for innovative use of information and information technologies |
| **STANDARD TWO** | |
| **2.1 Planning for Instruction.** Candidates collaborate with members of the learning community to design developmentally and culturally responsive resource-based learning experiences that integrate inquiry, innovation, and exploration and provide equitable, efficient, and ethical information access. | **I.D.1** Leading learners and staff through the research process<br>**II.A.3** Differentiating instruction to support learners' understanding of cultural relevancy and placement within the global learning community<br>**VI.D.3** Championing and modeling safe, responsible, ethical and legal information behaviors |
| **2.2 Instructional Strategies.** Candidates use a variety of instructional strategies and technologies to ensure that learners have multiple opportunities to inquire, include, collaborate, curate, explore, and engage in their learning. | **I.A.1** Activating learners prior and background knowledge as context for constructing meaning<br><br>**I.D.1** Leading learners and staff through the research process<br><br>**I.D.2** Constructing tasks focused on learners' individual areas of interest<br><br>**II.A.3** Differentiating instruction to support learners' understanding of cultural relevancy and placement within the global learning community<br><br>**II.B.2** Devising learning activities that require learners to evaluate a variety of perspectives<br><br>**II.C.2** Guiding learners to contribute to discussions in which multiple viewpoints on a topic are expressed<br><br>**III.A.3** Organizing learner groups for decision making and problem solving<br><br>**III.B.1** Modeling the use of a variety of communication tools and resources<br><br>**III.C.1** Demonstrating how to solicit and respond to feedback from others<br><br>**III.D.1** Stimulating learners to actively contribute to group discussions<br><br>**IV.A.1** Modeling the response to a need to gather and organize information |

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| | **IV.A.3** Guiding learners to make critical choices about information sources |
| | **IV.B.2** Encouraging the use of information representing diverse perspectives |
| | **IV.B.4** Providing tools and strategies to organize information by priority, topics, or other systematic scheme |
| | **IV.C.2** Devising pathways for learners to contribute to collaboratively constructed information sites by ethically using and reproducing others' work |
| | **IV.D.2** Formulating tasks that help learners to integrate an depict in a conceptual knowledge network learners' understanding gained from resources |
| | **V.A.1** Encouraging learners to read widely and deeply in multiple formats and write and create for a variety of purposes |
| | **V.A.2** Challenge learners to reflect and question assumptions and possible misconception |
| | **V.B.1** Teaching problem solving through cycles of design, implementation, and reflection |
| | **V.C.1** Providing strategies for acting on curiosity about a topic of personal interest or curricular relevance |
| | **V.C.3** Structuring activities for learners to collaboratively identify innovative solutions to a challenge or problem |
| | **V.D.1** Scaffolding iterative challenge-response processes |
| | **V.D.3** Foster an atmosphere in which constructive feedback is openly accepted for positive growth |
| | **VI.A.1** Directing learners to responsibly use information, technology, and media for learning and modeling this responsible use |
| | **VI.A.3** Teaching learners how and why to evaluate information for accuracy, validity, social and cultural context, and appropriateness for need. |
| | **VI.B.1** Showing a variety of strategies to ethically use and reproduce others' work, and modeling this ethical use |
| | **VI.B.2** Requiring complete attribution to acknowledge authorship and demonstrate respect for intellectual property of others. |
| | **VI.C.1** Imparting strategies for sharing information resources in accordance with modification, reuse, and remix policies |
| **2.3 Integrating Ethical Use of Information into Instructional Practice.** Candidates teach learners to evaluate information for accuracy, bias, validity, relevance, and cultural context. Learners demonstrate ethical use of information and technology in the creation of new knowledge. | **II.A.2** Guiding learners as they adopt a discerning stance toward points of view and opinions expressed in information resources and learning products |
| | **II.B.2** Devising learning activities that learners to evaluate a variety of perspectives |
| | **IV.A.3** Guiding learners to make critical choices about information sources to use |
| | **IV.B.3** Fostering the questioning and assessing of validity and accuracy of information |
| | **IV.D.1** Engaging learners in ongoing analysis of and reflection on the quality, usefulness, and accuracy of curated resources |

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| | **V.A.2** Challenging learners to reflect and question assumptions and possible misconceptions |
| | **VI.A.1** Directing learners to responsibly use information, technology, and media for learning, and modeling this responsible use |
| | **VI.A.2** Modeling the understanding of ethical use of information, technology, and media |
| | **VI.A.3** Teaching learners how and why to evaluate information for accuracy, validity, social and cultural context, and appropriateness for need |
| | **VI.B.1** Showing a variety of strategies to ethically use and reproduce others' work, and modeling this use |
| | **VI.B.2** Requiring complete attribution to acknowledge authorship and demonstrate respect for the intellectual property of others |
| | **VI.B.3** Promoting the inclusion of elements in personal-knowledge products that allow others to credit content appropriately |
| | **VI.C.1** Imparting strategies for sharing information resources in accordance with modification, reuse, and remix policies |
| | **VI.D.1** Structuring a learning environment for innovative use of information and information technologies |
| | **VI.D.2** Designing experiences that help learners communicate the value of the ethical creation of new knowledge and reflect on the process |
| | **VI.D.3** Championing and modeling safe, responsible, ethical, and legal information behaviors |
| **Standard 2.4 Assessment.** Candidates use multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth. Candidates, in collaboration with instructional partners, revise their instruction to address areas in which learners need to develop understanding. | **I.C.1** Assisting in assessing the inquiry-based research process |
| | **I.C.2** Providing opportunities for learners to share learning products and reflect on the learning process with others |
| | **IV.B.3** Fostering the questioning and assessing of validity and accuracy of information |
| | **IV.D.1** Engaging learners in the ongoing analysis of and reflection on the quality, usefulness, and accuracy of curated resources |
| | **V.B.3** Modeling persistence through self-directed tinkering and making |
| | **V.D.2** Helping learners to recognize capabilities and skills that can be developed, improved, and expanded |
| | **V.D.3** Fostering an atmosphere in which constructive feedback is openly accepted for positive growth |
| **STANDARD THREE** | |
| **3.1 Reading Engagement.** Candidates demonstrate a knowledge of children's and young adult literature that addresses the diverse developmental, cultural, social, and linguistic needs of all learners. Candidates use strategies to foster learner motivation to read | **V.A.1** Encouraging learners to read widely and deeply in multiple formats and write and create for a variety of purposes |
| | **V.C.1** Providing strategies for acting on curiosity about a topic of personal interest or curricular relevance |

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| for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment. | |
| **3.2 Information Literacy.** Candidates know when and why information is needed, where to find it, and how to evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner. Candidates model, promote, and teach critical-thinking and the inquiry process by using multiple literacies. | **III.C.2** Advocating and modeling response for diverse perspectives to guide the inquiry process <br><br> **IV.A.1** Modeling the response to a need to gather and organize information <br><br> **IV.A.3** Guiding learners to make critical choices about information sources to use <br><br> **IV.B.3** Fostering the questioning and assessing of validity and accuracy of information <br><br> **VI.A.1** Directing learners to responsibly use information, technology and media for learning, and modeling this responsible use <br><br> **VI.A.2** Modeling the understanding of ethical use of information, technology, and media <br><br> **VI.A.3** Teaching learners how and why to evaluate information for accuracy, validity, social and cultural context, and appropriateness for need <br><br> **VI.B.1** Showing a variety of strategies to ethically use and reproduce others' work and modeling this ethical use <br><br> **VI.D.3** Championing and modeling safe, responsible, ethical, and legal information behaviors |
| **Standard 3.3 Technology-Enabled Learning.** Candidates use digital tools, resources, and emerging technologies to design and adapt learning experiences. Candidates engage all learners in finding, evaluating, creating, and communicating data and information in a digital environment. Candidates articulate, communicate, model, and teach digital citizenship. | **III.B.1** Modeling the use of a variety of communication tools and resources <br><br> **IV.B.4** Providing tools and strategies to organize information by priority, topic, or other systematic scheme <br><br> **IV.C.2** Devising pathways for learners to contribute to collaboratively constructed information sites by ethically using and reproducing others' work <br><br> **IV.C.3** Directing learners to join others to compare and contrast information derived from collaboratively constructed information sites <br><br> **VI.A.1** Directing learners to responsibly use information, technology, and media for learning, and modeling this responsible use <br><br> **VI.A.2** Modeling the understanding of ethical use of information, technology, and media <br><br> **VI.B.1** Showing a variety of strategies to ethically use and reproduce others' work, modeling this ethical use <br><br> **VI.B.2** Requiring complete attribution to acknowledge authorship and demonstrate respect for the intellectual property of others <br><br> **VI.C.1** Imparting strategies for sharing information sources in accordance with modification, reuse, and remix policies <br><br> **VI.C.2** Guiding the dissemination of new knowledge through means appropriate for the intended audience <br><br> **VI.D.1** Structuring a learning environment for innovative use of information and information technologies <br><br> **VI.D.3** Championing and modeling safe, responsible, ethical, and legal information behaviors |

| STANDARD FOUR | |
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| **4.1 Access.** Candidates facilitate and advocate for flexible, open access to library resources and services according to the ethical codes of the profession. Candidates design and develop strategic solutions for addressing physical, social, virtual, economic, geographic, and intellectual barriers to equitable access to resources and services. | **II.B.1** Providing opportunities for learners to interact with others who reflect a range of perspectives<br><br>**II.D.1** Creating an atmosphere in which learners feel empowered and interactions are learner-initiated<br><br>**III.D.2** Creating a learning environment in which learners understand that learning is a social responsibility<br><br>**IV.A.1** Designing opportunities for learners to explore possible information sources<br><br>**IV.B.1** Sharing a variety of resources<br><br>**IV.B.2** Encouraging the use of information representing diverse perspectives<br><br>**IV.C.1** Facilitating opportunities to access and evaluate collaboratively constructed information sites<br><br>**IV.C.2** Devising pathways for learners to contribute to collaboratively constructed information sites by ethically using and reproducing others' work<br><br>**VI.A.2** Modeling the understanding of ethical use of information, technology and media<br><br>**VI.D.1** Structuring a learning environment for innovative use of information technologies |
| **4.2 Information Resources**. Candidates use evaluation criteria and selection tools to develop, curate, organize, and manage a collection designed to meet the diverse curricular and personal needs of the learning community. Candidates evaluate and select information resources in a variety of formats. | **IV. B** School librarians promote information gathering appropriate to the task<br><br>**IV.B.1** Sharing a variety of sources |
| **4.3 Evidence-Based Decision Making.** Candidates make effective use of data and information to assess how practice and policy impact groups and individuals in their diverse learning communities. | |
| STANDARD FIVE | |
| **5.1 Professional Learning.** Candidates engage in ongoing professional learning. Candidates deliver professional development designed to meet the diverse | **I.D.1** Leading learners and staff through the research process<br><br>**III.B.2** Cultivating networks that allow learners to build on their own prior knowledge and create new knowledge |

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| needs of all members of the learning community. | |
| **5.2 Leadership and Collaboration**. Candidates lead and collaborate with members of the learning community to effectively design and implement solutions that positively impact learner growth and strengthen the role of the school library. | **VI.D.3** Championing and modeling safe, responsible, ethical and legal information behaviors |
| **5.3 Advocacy.** Candidates advocate for all learners, resources, services, policies, procedures, and school libraries through networking and collaborating with the larger education and library community. | **III.B.2** Cultivating networks that allow learners to build on their own prior knowledge and create new knowledge |
| **5.4 Ethical Practice.** Candidates model and promote the ethical practices of librarianship, as expressed in the foundational documents of the library profession including the American Library Association Code of Ethics and the Library Bill of Rights. | **VI.A.1** Directing learners to responsible use information, technology, and media for learning, and modeling this responsible use<br><br>**VI.A.2** Modeling the understanding of ethical use of information, technology and media<br><br>**VI.A.3** Teaching learners how and why to evaluate information for accuracy, validity, social and cultural context and appropriateness for need.<br><br>**VI.B.1** Showing a variety of strategies to ethically use and reproduce others' work and modeling this ethical use<br><br>**VI.B. 2** Requiring complete attribution to acknowledge authorship and demonstrate respect for the intellectual property of others<br><br>**VI.B.3** Promoting the inclusion of elements in personal-knowledge products that allow others to credit content appropriately<br><br>**VI.D.3** Championing and modeling safe, responsible, ethical, and legal information behaviors |

# Cite This Article

Burns, Elizabeth, and April M. Dawkins. 2021. "School Librarian Preparation and Practice: An Exploration of the AASL National School Library Standards and ALA/AASL/CAEP School Librarian Preparation Standards." *School Library Research* 24. <www.ala.org/aasl/slr/volume24/burns-dawkins>.

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