

To Whom it May Concern:

As President of the Oregon Library Association I am writing in support of the proposed Oregon School Library Standards. The Oregon Library Association supports strong school libraries and the ability of those schools and libraries to effectively teach and support students in all grade levels. In addition, I am a community college librarian and work closely with students both in and freshly graduated from the K-12 school system. The four strands of the Library Standards – Information Literacy, Reading Engagement, Social Responsibility, and Technology Integration – are the essential abilities for students to be career ready and/or pursue their education beyond high school.

The Library Standards compliment many of the standards embedded in the Common Core Standards, especially those dealing with research and reading complex texts. They pair nicely to research requirements in science, social studies, history and technical subjects. The collaborative effort between the discipline specific instructor and the teacher librarian increases the likelihood that students will be able to create a polished product that is well constructed and well organized.

Furthermore, Oregon students are now being evaluated using Smarter Balance. Those that have been taught the School Library Standards should have greater margins of success because the Library Standards focus on locating and using information. The Standards also cover reading nonfiction texts and making connections between the self and the world in which one lives. These important skills become lifelong when used across disciplines and across grade levels.

Students benefit from learning and using the critical thinking and social responsibility skills that make up the Library Standards. The responsible use of technology and accessing digital content is now basic and expected of students not only upon graduation from high school but once enter work force and/or college. The Library Standards address these skill sets.

Across Oregon, library programs lack cohesion and uniformity. The Library Standards provide a model that could be used as a framework to set up equitable library programs across the state. 21st century library programs offer much more than book check out and return. Many of Oregon's school libraries have made adjustments to their programs to reflect the needs of 21st century learners, but others have not.

The governor has set a landmark 40/20/20 goal for higher education. If we are going to get our students to the level of performance needed to meet these goals, we need to have pathways in place to support them. Endorsing the Oregon School Library Standards is one of the things we can do and it is an action I support.

Sincerely,



Candice Watkins
Oregon Library Association, 2014-2015
Library Director
Clatsop Community College