

## 4. Responsibilities

### Defining Responsibilities in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning

Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires active participation by the learner. A learned person is not one who has simply memorized theorems or passively accepted conclusions drawn by others. A learned person must take **responsibility** for actively pursuing information and ideas both in print and digitally, understanding those ideas and how they apply, drawing conclusions and developing new applications, and sharing their new understandings with others. Responsibilities, then, can be defined as the common behaviors that must be exhibited during researching, investigating, and problem solving to develop new understanding successfully, ethically, and thoughtfully. Responsibilities are key to successful learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century context has led to an interesting blend between independent and social learning and, therefore, between individual and social responsibilities. The digital environment makes greater amounts of information available at the learner's fingertips and at the time of need. As a result, learners experience pressure to be independent in their information searching because they often are using information tools when personal support from their teacher or librarian is not available. At the same time, the tools of learning and the increasingly globalized context of society provide opportunities and obligations to collaborate, seek divergent perspectives, work effectively in groups and share learning products and processes.

Learners, therefore, have responsibilities during the learning process to themselves and to others. For themselves, learners must follow ethical and legal guidelines, respect the principles of intellectual freedom, pursue multiple perspectives and a balance of viewpoints before making decisions or drawing conclusions, practice safe behaviors in the use of social tools, seek opportunities for pursuing personal and aesthetic growth, and connect their learning to real-world issues and ideas. For others, learners have a responsibility to contribute to the exchange of ideas in a learning community, both electronically and in person, respect the ideas and experiences of others, and use information and knowledge in service of democratic values.

### Responsibilities and the Learning Process

Responsibilities, like dispositions, can be displayed at any point in the learning process and are neither standard-specific, nor grade-level specific. The same responsibilities may be necessary whether the learner is investigating, drawing conclusions, sharing knowledge, or reading for enjoyment. For example, learners have a responsibility to their community of learners to contribute to the exchange of ideas. They might share book reviews on a wiki or participate in a book discussion group (Standard 4) or they might bring their individually researched evidence and conclusions to a group discussion to help a group reach a valid and ethical decision (Standard 2).

### Teaching for Responsibilities

Responsibilities are developed when learning experiences are structured for active engagement and sharing. This requires a shift from pure didactic instruction (with the librarian in control) to a more constructivist approach that combines direct instruction with opportunities for guided and independent practice (with empowered learners in control of their own learning). Responsibilities must be developed over time, with strong support initially and gradual reduction of guidance until students have assumed the responsibilities for themselves.

The following pages offer sample behaviors that indicate student performance of responsibility and the stages through which the responsibility might develop. The stages demonstrate the shift from teacher-in-

control to student-in-control that is necessary for students to develop ownership over the responsibilities necessary for successful learning at any age.

## **Standard 1: Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge.**

### ***Indicator 1.3.1: Respect copyright/intellectual property rights of creators and producers.***

#### **Sample behaviors**

- Cite the source for all information that is not commonly known or in numerous sources.
- Use quotation marks for all material taken directly from a source.
- Put information into own words rather than simply changing a word or two.

#### **Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Acknowledge work of others by citing source(s).

**Stage 2** - Provide reference citations for all direct quotations as well as cite sources.

**Stage 3** - Put information into own words and provide credit, citations and bibliography for all quoted and referenced information.

### ***Indicator 1.3.2: Seek divergent perspectives during information gathering and assessment.***

#### **Sample behaviors**

- Recognize when different perspectives exist about an issue.
- Seek credible sources that present different viewpoints.
- Evaluate every source to determine whether point of view has skewed the accuracy of the information presented.

#### **Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Find information to support one point of view, but acknowledge that another point of view exists.

**Stage 2** - Find information to represent two points of view about a research topic.

**Stage 3** - Find information that credibly represents all relevant perspectives on a research topic.

### ***Indicator 1.3.3: Follow ethical and legal guidelines in gathering and using information.***

#### **Sample behaviors**

- Follow copyright guidelines for text, visuals, and music in generating products and presentations.
- Present information accurately.
- Differentiate clearly between information gathered from sources and original thinking and conclusions.

#### **Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Follow legal guidelines in using information using only excerpts and crediting the author/creator.

**Stage 2** - Follow copyright guidelines by using only excerpts and crediting the source of all text, visuals, and music and follow ethical guidelines by presenting only accurate and valid information.

**Stage 3** - Gather and present information ethically by communicating an accurate, full, and unbiased picture of the topic and clearly distinguishing between cited and original thinking.

### ***Indicator 1.3.4: Contribute to the exchange of ideas within the learning community.***

#### **Sample behaviors**

- Share relevant information to contribute to learning of others (through discussions, presentations).
- Contribute opinions and supporting evidence to group deliberations.
- Listen to opinions and evidence of others.
- Ask and respond to questions in group exchange of ideas.

**Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Offer opinions and information to group discussions on occasion.

**Stage 2** - Offer opinions with supporting evidence to group discussions whenever appropriate.

**Stage 3** - Listen to opinions and evidence of others and respond to them in offering own opinion and evidence to group discussion.

***Indicator 1.3.5: Use information technology responsibly.***

**Sample behaviors**

- Purchase, rather than pirate, music and videos from the Internet.
- Access only appropriate Internet sites.
- Use digital social tools responsibly by protecting own personal information and posting only accurate and non-inflammatory information.

**Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Use only digital tools and Internet sites that have been pre-approved by teacher or librarian.

**Stage 2** - Select digital tools and Internet sites from choices presented by teacher or librarian and use appropriately.

**Stage 3** - Use appropriate digital tools and Internet sites independently in a safe and ethical manner (e.g., appropriate to age/grade level, related to topic under consideration, authoritative information).

## **Standard 2: Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge.**

### ***Indicator 2.3.1: Connect understanding to the real world.***

#### **Sample behaviors**

- Apply or adapt conclusions or decisions to new situations.
- Draw on understandings to make personal decisions.
- Make connections between information gathered through research and real life.

#### **Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - State what new understanding means in own language.

**Stage 2** - Apply what has been learned to new situation.

**Stage 3** - Use what has been learned to make a decision or deal with a situation in own personal life.

### ***Indicator 2.3.2: Consider diverse and global perspectives in drawing conclusions.***

#### **Sample behaviors**

- Actively seek valid alternative perspectives when seeking information.
- Evaluate the authors and viewpoints of all information sources, using questions like:
  - Does this person or group have the knowledge and authority to represent this perspective?
  - Does the point of view influence the accuracy and reliability of the information?
- Seek sources written by authors in other parts of the world when appropriate, rather than solely sources written by American authors about other parts of the world.

#### **Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Consider the point of view of the first source found in drawing a conclusion.

**Stage 2** - Seek alternative perspectives before attempting to make a decision or draw a conclusion.

**Stage 3** - Validate the authority and authenticity of diverse viewpoints before using the evidence to draw a conclusion.

### ***Indicator 2.3.3: Use valid information and reasoned conclusions to make ethical decisions.***

#### **Sample behaviors**

- Use criteria to evaluate information before making decisions.
- Consider all the evidence and the strength of support for conflicting views before reaching a decision, rather than making a decision and then looking for evidence to support it.

#### **Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Use information to make a decision.

**Stage 2** - Evaluate information before using it to make a decision.

**Stage 3** - Consider all relevant and accurate information in order to make a decision.

### **Standard 3: Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society.**

***Indicator 3.3.1: Solicit and respect diverse perspectives while searching for information, collaborating with others, and participating as a member of the community.***

**Sample behaviors**

- Solicit and listen respectfully to ideas and opinions of others.
- Build on the ideas of others in group conversations and discussions.
- State own opinions respectfully, with evidence to back them up.
- Actively seek common ground in discussions where different viewpoints are expressed.
- Create a safe zone where different viewpoints can be expressed without fear of disrespect or outright dismissal.

**Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - State own opinions respectfully with evidence to back them up.

**Stage 2** - Listen to the opinions of others and modify own opinions when appropriate.

**Stage 3** - Actively seek the opinions of others and create a group environment in which all participants' ideas are shared and valued.

***Indicator 3.3.2: Respect the differing interests and experiences of others, and seek a variety of viewpoints.***

**Sample behaviors**

- Recognize the benefits of differing viewpoints for expanding understanding.
- Ask leading questions that draw out the interests and experiences of others.

**Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Recognize when people in a group have different opinions.

**Stage 2** - Track the changes of opinion that result from exposure to different ideas of others in the group.

**Stage 3** - Draw out and respond to the different interests and perspectives of members of a group.

***Indicator 3.3.3: Use knowledge and information skills and dispositions to engage in public conversation and debate around issues of common concern.***

**Sample behaviors**

- Engage with others in discussions and debates around important issues.
- Seek valid and accurate information on current issues to be able to contribute to group discussions.

**Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Engage in conversations and debate by offering relevant information some of the time.

**Stage 2** - Engage in conversations and debate by offering relevant information often.

**Stage 3** - Engage in conversations and debate by offering relevant information most of the time.

***Indicator 3.3.4: Create products that apply to authentic, real-world contexts.***

**Sample behaviors**

- Produce ideas and projects that can be applied in real situations.
- Produce projects that connect with relevant issues in the local, national, and global

communities.

**Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Create products with real-world contexts that have been specified by the teacher or librarian.

**Stage 2** - Create products that show the application of knowledge to a real-world situation or issue.

**Stage 3** - Create products that have the quality and applicability to be used in the real world.

**Indicator 3.3.5: Contribute to the exchange of ideas within and beyond the learning community.**

**Sample behaviors**

- Participate actively as a member of the learning community by contributing appropriate information, asking thoughtful questions, challenging questionable statements, and listening carefully to others.
- Move group idea exchanges to logical and inclusive conclusions by summarizing main points, finding consensus among ideas presented by different group members, and making sure that everyone in the group has had the opportunity to contribute.
- Present ideas publicly beyond the school learning community when opportunities become available.

**Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Offer appropriate information to help group deliberate and reach a decision together.

**Stage 2** - Question own and others' ideas to ensure that shared ideas are investigated thoroughly from all sides.

**Stage 3** - Challenge the thinking of the group to move it to better decision-making.

**Indicator 3.3.6: Use information and knowledge in the service of democratic values.**

**Sample behaviors**

- Make sure that all voices are heard within the learning community by encouraging participation, eliciting responses to questions, and inviting the expression of divergent opinions.
- Make sure that underrepresented viewpoints are heard and not stifled by the will of the majority.
- Bring a group to a consensus of opinion.
- Seek justice and equity where research has shown they do not exist.

**Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Encourage participation in sharing of information and decision-making by all members of school community.

**Stage 2** - Bring a group to consensus of opinion after all voices are heard.

**Stage 3** - Apply group decision-making to situations of larger democratic values, like equity, freedom and responsibility.

**Indicator 3.3.7: Respect the principles of intellectual freedom.**

**Sample behaviors**

- Exercise the right to express ideas freely and responsibly.
- Resist censorship of ideas and resources.
- Pursue the right to read, view, and listen.
- Ensure that one person's rights do not infringe on another's.

**Stages of development**

**Stage 1** - Exercise the right to express ideas freely and responsibly.

**Stage 2** - Actively preserve the rights of others to express ideas freely.

**Stage 3** - Ensure that one person's rights to speak or write freely do not infringe on the rights of others.

## Standard 4: Pursue personal and aesthetic growth.

**Indicator 4.3.1: Participate in the social exchange of ideas, both electronically and in person.**

### Sample behaviors

- Use social tools to communicate with and respond to others.
- Act responsibly and respectfully in communicating with others.

### Stages of development

**Stage 1** - Use social tools occasionally to share information and communicate with others.

**Stage 2** - Use social tools often to share information and communicate with others.

**Stage 3** - Use social tools to share information and communicate with others as a regular part of daily academic and personal life.

**Indicator 4.3.2: Recognize that resources are created for a variety of purposes.**

### Sample behaviors

- Identify reasons that different genres are created and choose appropriate genres for specific situations or interests.
- Recognize that the purpose of a resource influences its presentation and message.

### Stages of development

**Stage 1** - Read or view 1-2 different genres on a regular basis for personal enjoyment.

**Stage 2** - Read or view several different genres on a regular basis for personal enjoyment.

**Stage 3** - Read or view different genres on a regular basis that are selected because they match the personal reason for reading or viewing with the creator's purpose.

**Indicator 4.3.3: Seek opportunities for pursuing personal and aesthetic growth.**

### Sample behaviors

- Choose to read books for enjoyment.
- Find information to satisfy personal interests and questions.
- Express ideas and emotions through a variety of venues (artistic, written, oral).

### Stages of development

**Stage 1** - Read for enjoyment and personal growth occasionally.

**Stage 2** - Read for enjoyment and personal growth regularly.

**Stage 3** - Read for enjoyment and personal growth on a daily basis.

**Indicator 4.3.4: Practice safe and ethical behaviors in personal electronic communication and interaction.**

### Sample behaviors

- Restrict Internet posting of personal information to remain within safety guidelines (no personally identifiable information).
- Maintain ethical standards in personal contributions to the Internet (no bullying, slander, inflammatory language, or biased or inaccurate information).
- Refrain from downloading proprietary music, videos, or information without permission or purchase.

### Stages of development

**Stage 1** - Maintain safe behavior when accessing Internet sites for personal reasons.

**Stage 2** - Maintain safe behavior when accessing Internet sites and refrain from downloading

copyrighted material if it has not been purchased.

**Stage 3** - Maintain safe and ethical behavior when accessing Internet sites by protecting personal safety, displaying ethical and respectful behavior toward others, and following legal guidelines in downloading and use of material.