

Operational Definition for Meaningful Exposure

The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, working with Alaska stakeholders, developed content standards in several areas for elementary and secondary school students. Content standards were adopted by the State Board of Education & Early Development in some content areas in 1995, and have been added to, revised, and adopted multiple times following the original adoption of the standards.

Content standards are broad statements of what students should know and be able to do as a result of their public school experience. In addition to providing meaningful opportunities for students in state assessed reading, writing, mathematics, and science standards, districts are expected to provide meaningful exposure to content standards not tested by the state so that students receive a balanced education. The concept of meaningful exposure comes from a ruling by Judge Gleason in *Moore v State of Alaska*. For areas where the state conducts a statewide assessment used for school and district accountability, the district must provide meaningful opportunity, which is provided for by districts having a curriculum aligned to state standards. For all other content areas districts must provide meaningful exposure.

The content standards not tested by the state include: Geography; Government and Citizenship; History; Skills for a Healthy Life; Arts; World Language; Technology; Employability; and Library/Information Literacy.

Some content standards, such as social studies Geography, Government and Citizenship, and History, and Skills for a Healthy Life, are considered core content areas that require courses of study to be intentionally designed and taught. To further illustrate the content areas where a course of study needs to be taught see 4 AAC 06.075 High school graduation requirements, which defines high school units of credit required to earn a diploma in Alaska. The units of credit required by 4 AAC 06.075 include: language arts (reading and writing); social studies; mathematics; science; health/physical education (skills for a healthy life). Each of these content areas require a course of study at the high school level, and in some cases it would be educationally sound to provide an age-appropriate introduction to the content standards at an earlier grade level in a stand alone course of study or integrated into another content or program.

The content standards for Technology, Employability, and Library / Information Management can provide context when integrated into course of study in social studies, language arts, science, as well as other content areas. The standards in art could be integrated into other content areas, but could also be a stand-alone course of study. Part of the World Language content standards could be integrated into elementary social studies courses of study, but also may require a stand-alone course at the high school level that takes place on-site or through distance education.

Some content standards not only lend themselves to being integrated into other content areas, but

by doing so give the content context and add meaning to learning. For example, Art Standards B: a student should be able to understand the historical and contemporary role of the arts in Alaska, the nation, and the world, could be integrated into topics when studying History Standard B: a student should understand historical themes through factual knowledge of time, places, ideas, institutions, cultures, people, and events.

While meaningful opportunity can be defined as intentional, relevant curriculum and instruction aligned to performance standards/grade level expectations, meaningful exposure is defined as an age appropriate introduction to a content area standard. Therefore, a district, along with its community, provides meaningful exposure for its students when it has established and implements:

1. a plan for introductory instructional units, age and grade appropriate, aligned to the standards; or
2. a plan for introductory instruction of the standards, when fitting, that demonstrates integration into other content area courses or discrete lessons taught at specific grades; and
3. discrete professional development for staff to understand the standards and instructional resources.

A district must have a system in place to provide meaningful exposure to the content standards not included in the statewide testing program for accountability. Districts have wide latitude and flexibility in their design of a system to provide meaningful exposure. Any district or school in which the state intervenes and implements a program to improve instructional practices must demonstrate it meets items 1 or 2, and 3 above for all content areas.

Questions to Ask Regarding Meaningful Exposure –

These are questions a district should ask of itself, and that the Department will ask the district to document for meaningful exposure.

A district may take a comprehensive approach when answering these questions in the context of their entire school program when completing the “Alaska Self-Study Instructional Audit Tool,” giving attention to the domains of curriculum, assessment, instruction and professional development.

Curriculum

- How are standards articulated across the grades, and at what grade levels are they introduced or taught?
- What resources has the district identified for the content?
- What is the curriculum review process for a content area in which a course of study related to that area already exists?
- Where does cross-curriculum integration exist so as to provide meaningful exposure?

Instruction and Assessment

- What materials and resources are teachers using? (core, supplemental, and technology)
- What plan has been articulated to staff for time spent in a content area?
- How is instruction monitored?
- What type(s) of assessment(s) is (are) used?
- How does assessment information travel with a transient student?

Professional Development (PD)

- What is the systemic process for PD related to all staff regarding awareness of content standards and resources available for instruction?
- How does the PD differentiate between experienced, new, and returning teachers, support staff, administrators, and board (where appropriate)?
- In what ways is PD aligned with the mission and vision of the district?
- How does the district determine what PD to offer, and when to offer the PD?
- How often is the PD plan reviewed and revised?

Resources for content areas that are not tested by the state –

The resources in this section will be reviewed and updated each year by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development. The department does not endorse all of the programs offered within these sites, and urges each district to carefully review each site before endorsing a program or direction.

Social Studies (Geography, Government & Citizenship, History)

Alaska history and cultural studies:

<http://www.akhistorycourse.org/>

Social studies lesson plan and curriculum exchange:

<http://www.csun.edu/~hcedu013/plans.html>

Free lessons regarding civics and economics:

<http://www.crf-usa.org/>

ADEED Framework for Geography, Government & Citizenship, and History:

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/Frameworks2/home.shtml>

Alaska on-line museum exhibits:

http://www.museums.state.ak.us/asm/online_exhibits.html

Alaska State Historical Library on-line resources:

http://library.state.ak.us/hist/online_resources/online_resources.html

Skills for Healthy Life

Provides lessons on substance abuse prevention:

<http://www.projectalert.com/>

Arts

Art lesson for teachers, developed and tested by specialists at the Art Center in Fairbanks:

<http://www.projectarticulate.com/>

This site provides tools to increase student learning through Alaska art, teachers may use lessons or create lessons using images from the site:

<http://www.akart.org/>

ADEED Arts Framework

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/Frameworks2/home.shtml>

World Languages

ADEED World Languages Framework

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/Frameworks2/home.shtml>

Technology

ADEED Technology Framework

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/Frameworks2/home.shtml>

Employability

Employability Lesson Plans from the Anchorage School District. Based on Alaskan Employability Standards and Youth Employability Skills (YES) rubrics.

http://www.asdk12.org/depts/career_technology/employability/index.html

Employability Skills Lesson Plans: Preparing a Professional, SkillsUSA.

<http://www.skillsusa.org/educators/prepro.shtml>

Provides research synthesis for two issues: I. Expectations of Employers and the Workplace, and II. Effective Practices.

<http://www.nwrel.org/archive/sirs/8/c015.html>

Alabama Learning Exchange, Searching on employability pulls up three lesson plans

<http://alex.state.al.us/plans.php>

Alaska Permanent Fund Curriculum, See “For Teachers” about how this meets employability.

<http://www.apfc.org/home/Content/lessonplans/lessonIndex.cfm>

Keep That Job – a section in the AKCIS program (Alaska Career Information System, which is free to all schools in the state) including topics of good job habits, dealing with your supervisor, dealing with your coworkers, improving yourself, working with your employer, if you have problems.

WIN Instructional Software – Work Habits lessons covering topics such as interpersonal interaction, listening and speaking, cooperation and respect, self-management, resource management, time management, quality management, and problem solving.

Library/Information Literacy

Alaska State Library;

<http://library.state.ak.us/hist/hist.html>

Modesto City Schools K-6 Library Media Lessons. Focus on Primary Resources

<http://www.monet.k12.ca.us/curriculum/librarylessons/lessons.htm>

Springfield Township High School, Virtual Library, Links to Online Activities that Promote Information Literacy.

<http://www.sdst.org/shs/library/infotitles.html>

Free Information Literacy Assessment Tool by Trails-9.org

<http://www.trails-9.org/index>

Digital Pipeline - free resources for all Alaskans, from here you can find 1,000 of education articles on library/information literacy. Many of them in full text

<http://sled.alaska.edu/databases/home.html>.

General Resources

<http://www.lessonplanet.com/>

<http://www.eduref.org/>

<http://ankn.uaf.edu/>

Design principles, issues and programs to consider –

Curriculum integration

Thematic units

Interdisciplinary instruction

Discrete lessons (within a larger unit)

Stand alone courses

Distance education

Every teacher a literacy (technology, library/information) teacher

School-community partnerships

Alignment to standards

Alignment to cultural-community standards

Artists in the schools program