

Digital Literacy Quality Standards

Structure and Content

The Digital Literacy Program Quality Standards and Framework are designed to serve as a guide and a continuous quality improvement tool by defining standards and identifying strategies to improve the quality of digital literacy programs. This document is intended for programs that are City-sponsored, specifically programs that promote digital skills for students and community members. By focusing on the "3 A's": Access, Affordability, and Adoption, the City of San José will ensure that all residents have the opportunity to be aware of, to develop skills using digital tools for all stages of learning, and to have easy access to appropriate devices and broadband service.

A systemic approach to develop, assess, and continually improve quality digital literacy programming is essential to achieving effective outcomes in San José. The Digital Literacy Quality Standards are organized into three Quality Continuum areas to measure progressive levels of quality: (1) *Beginning*; (2) *Emerging*; and (3) *Advanced or Optimal*. While *Advanced and Optimal* represents the level of quality to which the City hopes programs will aspire, there is an expectation that programs will meet, at a minimum, strategies contained within the *Beginning Standard*. *Emergent* and *Advanced* strategies reflect a pathway for progressive continuous quality improvement that programs may adapt depending on their level of readiness and internal and external allocated resources.

The Digital Literacy Quality Standards are comprised of 8 program quality standard areas:

Program Quality Standards

- 1. Technology and Access:** Program provides access to relevant and functioning technology that is suitable to the conditions of the program. Program will make an effort to provide Internet access that is secure, safe and stable.
- 2. Privacy and Security:** Program complies with the City of San José's City-Wide Privacy Principles¹. Program will provide a minimum experience that allows participants privacy and security according to individual choice.
- 3. Safe and Supportive Learning Environments:** Program will provide a safe and well-maintained environment that supports the needs of all participants.

¹ "Digital Privacy Principles," City of San Jose, September 17, 2019, <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/city-manager/civic-innovation-digital-strategy/digital-privacy>

4. **Skill Building and Learning:** Program maintains high-expectations for instructors, facilitators and participants. Learning experiences are purposely aligned to current digital literacy competencies, digital literacy standards, and community needs with the intent of promoting lifelong learning.
5. **Curriculum and Teaching Practices:** Program provides an appropriate, evidence-based curriculum that is adaptive, outcome-based, and consistent with their goals for digital literacy.
6. **Staffing:** Program has appropriate standards for instructors, staff, and volunteers that meet the needs of the program and participants. Qualifications, education, and expertise of staff or volunteers are in line with program outcomes and goals. Training and professional development are considered when making improvements based on program assessments.
7. **Program Leadership and Management:** Program implements policies, procedures, and systems that support program outcomes, goals, and/or grant requirements. Program utilizes an assessment and evaluation model for the purposes of enhancing program quality.
8. **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:** Program is committed to an inclusive and supportive space that honors and embraces the diversity of the community regardless of ability, race, religion, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status/income level, housing status, immigration status/national origin, gender identity and/or expression.

Quality Continuum

The Digital Literacy Quality Standards are organized into three Quality Continuum areas to measure progressive levels of quality: (1) *Beginning*; (2) *Emerging*; and (3) *Advanced or Optimal*. The following guide is provided as an overview for users to understand how to use the rating system and to assess the degree to which each quality indicator is evident in the program.

- (1) *Beginning*: Program is just beginning to work in this area and will continue to work towards a higher level of proficiency.
- (2) *Emerging*: Program has achieved a level of proficiency in this area and needs additional work to excel at this practice.
- (3) *Advanced or Optimal*: This is an area of exemplary practice where the program can serve as an example for others.

Quality Standards with Focus Areas, Continuum, and Indicators

Program Quality Standard 1: Technology and Access			
Program provides access to relevant and functioning technology that is suitable to the conditions of the program. Program will make an effort to provide Internet access that is secure, safe and stable.			
Focus	Beginning	Emerging	Advanced
Access to Technology	<p>Program provides working technology tools and makes them available to participants.</p> <p>Program offers free access to computers, broadband Internet, and wireless Internet.</p>	<p>Program offers expertise to support participants with varying abilities in the use of the technology and Internet that is available to them.</p>	<p>Program provides access to a variety of adaptive and relevant technology.</p> <p>Program manages technology to ensure access by participants with disabilities, or varying abilities, and that participants are equipped with skills and assistive devices necessary to access technology tools and create content.</p>
Maintained Devices	<p>Devices have operating security systems.</p>	<p>Devices are regularly and proactively reviewed on a routine schedule to update security systems as needed.</p>	
Internet Connection	<p>Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) Internet is available for use.</p>	<p>DSL Internet and wireless connection is available for use.</p>	<p>DSL Internet, hot spots/cellular, and wireless connections are available for use or check-out.</p>

Program Quality Standard 2: Privacy and Security

Program complies with the City of San José’s City-Wide Privacy Principles². Program will provide a minimum experience that allows participants privacy and security according to individual choice.

Focus	Expected	Optimal
City of San José Privacy Principles	Program adheres to the City of San José Privacy Principles, including in its work with third-party partners and vendors and partnership agreements.	Program makes an effort to educate participants on privacy guidelines.
Online Security	<p>Program is knowledgeable of the terms and conditions of all online or downloaded applications and websites used by participants.</p> <p>Program follows the City of San José’s Privacy Principles on the handling of personal information.</p>	Program discloses to participants any exposure their personal information may have as a result of using the technology and/or applications.
Opt-in Opt-out Password Management Actions of the Individual	<p>Program is familiar with the intricacies of opt in/opt out provisions and accurately defines the terms.</p> <p>Program informs participants of password requirements for applications and provides guidelines on how to create a safe password.</p> <p>Program trains participants on how to properly log out of applications and equipment at the end of each session.</p>	<p>Program instructs participants on how to avoid potential privacy issues when accepting terms and conditions.</p> <p>Program provides information on how to avoid being caught by scams, including clickbait and phishing programs.</p> <p>Program educates and encourages participants to apply these same skills outside of program.</p>
Cleaning/wiping devices after each use	Program verbally instructs participants to properly log off from devices/applications to ensure work completed during sessions has been stored properly and confirms that nothing is left on device or application.	Program establishes written/visual instructions and protocols for participants to follow.
Data Privacy	<p>Program is familiar with and adheres to city, state, and federal policies regarding data privacy for adults and children.</p> <p>Privacy policies are easily available and</p>	<p>Program provides participants with information regarding potential data exposure as a result of using required/suggested applications.</p> <p>Program partners and third-party vendors do not advance private interest; they adhere to the same privacy policy as City-funded,</p>

	understandable to users.	sponsored programs. Program establishes a proactive process to notify ongoing users of any changes to the program’s privacy policies.
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Program Quality Standard 3: Learning Environments			
Program will provide a safe and well-maintained environment that supports the needs of all participants.			
Focus	Beginning	Emerging	Advanced
Onsite Environment	<p>Program has a safety plan in place and clearly communicates health, safety, and behavior procedures with participants.</p> <p>Program operates within a safe environment with accessible fire exits, written emergency plans, and basic first aid supplies on hand.</p> <p>All equipment is clean, sanitized, and free of hazardous conditions.</p>	<p>Program staff are trained in health and safety related issues</p> <p>Program fosters an emotional climate that is positive, supportive and mutually respectful among all participants and staff.</p> <p>Program provides enough space, equipment, and supplies to carry out the activities set forth in the program.</p>	<p>Program staff are trained and certified in CPR and First Aid (AED).</p> <p>Program regularly conducts appropriate safety practice drills with staff and participants.</p>
Online environments	<p>Program presents a self-directed learning environment that encourages safety and privacy.</p> <p>Program instructs participants on behavioral norms and etiquette while using digital technology and interacting in a digital environment.</p>	<p>Program informs participants about possible scenarios that could make participants vulnerable online.</p> <p>Program educates participants in behavioral norms when using digital technologies and how to interact with others in a digital environment.</p>	<p>Program makes an effort to provide information about the risks of searching online, how to search safely, and how to resolve or report illegal, offensive materials.</p> <p>Program supports participants in addressing any issues encountered in digital environment.</p>

Program Quality Standard 4: Skill Building and Learning

Program maintains high-expectations for instructors, facilitators and participants. Learning experiences are purposely aligned to current digital literacy competencies, digital literacy standards, and community needs with the intent of promoting lifelong learning.

Focus	Beginning	Emerging	Advanced
<p align="center">International Society for Technology in Education Student Standards (ISTE)</p>	<p>Program makes ISTE Student Standards available to staff and volunteers to review.</p> <p>Program focuses on, at minimum, two of the seven ISTE standards when teaching digital literacy.</p>	<p>Program provides staff and volunteers with ISTE Student Standard related resources, training, and or professional development.</p> <p>Program focuses on, at minimum, four of the seven standards when teaching digital literacy during programming.</p>	<p>Program prioritizes the application of ISTE Student Standards.</p> <p>Program incorporates all seven ISTE Student Standards.</p> <p>Program evaluates and measures how ISTE Student Standards are being utilized. Program uses learning assessments and/or rubrics associated with ISTE Student Standards to track learning outcomes.</p>
<p align="center">Information Evaluation</p>	<p>Program instructs participants on how to use a search engine to find, look for, and use that information.</p> <p>Program teaches participants to identify the credibility and relevancy of information presented online by evaluating the information.</p>	<p>Program instructs participants on effective techniques for evaluating the quality and credibility of information pulled from a website.</p> <p>Program teaches how to apply different search strategies to increase the accuracy and relevance of online search results.</p>	<p>Program educates participants on how to ‘recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information’².</p> <p>Program teaches participants to think critically about the intentions of commercial websites and advertising.</p>

² “Evaluating Information,” American Library Association, March 18, 2019, <https://libguides.ala.org/InformationEvaluation>

Program Quality Standard 5: Curriculum and Teaching Practices

Programs provide an appropriate, evidence-based curriculum that is adaptive, outcome-based, and consistent with their goals for digital literacy.

Focus	Beginning	Emerging	Advanced
Outcomes-based programs	<p>Program staff gather, plan, and determine goals and objectives aligned with program outcomes.</p> <p>Program staff and volunteers are aware of the outcomes, goals, and objectives.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers are encouraged to plan around outcomes.</p> <p>Program has a formal mechanism to review annually its goal and objectives and make necessary changes for continuous quality improvement.</p>	<p>Program staff develops and implements goals and objectives aligned with program outcomes.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers are educated on the outcomes, goals and objectives for their understanding.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers plan and organize specific content around outcomes and goals.</p> <p>Program assesses progress toward goal and objectives for continuous quality improvement and adults/educators meet quarterly to discuss results.</p>	<p>Program staff plan, implement, and evaluate strategies for program improvement based on outcomes from goals and objectives set for the program cycle.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers are involved in interpreting and making decisions based on program evaluation results and take necessary steps towards program improvements.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers meet to work together and organize specific content around outcomes and goals.</p> <p>Community and participants are involved in interpreting and making decisions regarding what steps should be taken to improve the program.</p>
Differentiated Instruction³ / Personalized Learning	<p>Program develops and uses plans based on digital literacy competencies.</p> <p>Program makes an effort individualize curriculum, focusing on instruction and assessment that is both flexible and challenging.</p> <p>Program instructions are based on the needs and preferences of each participant.</p>	<p>Program curriculum is developed and delivered based on the participants’ interests, the community they serve, and the participants’ digital literacy knowledge.</p> <p>Program differentiates instructions by tailoring content, the process, product, and learning environment.</p> <p>Program takes time to determine what</p>	<p>Program uses evaluation tools, like surveys, to know what the participant has learned and retained from the information provided to them.</p> <p>Program’s teaching processes involve providing all participants with different avenues for understanding new information in terms of acquiring content, processing, constructing, or making sense of ideas.</p>

³ Weselby, Cathy “What is Differentiated Instruction?” August 21, 2018 <https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/classroom-resources/examples-of-differentiated-instruction/>

		participants already know so as to increase effectiveness of program.	Program works towards participant learning objectives and how participants can demonstrate their learning.
Information Evaluation⁴	<p>Program applies different search strategies to increase the accuracy and relevance of online search results.</p> <p>Program tries to ensure that the information given/taught to participants is relevant to the program’s objective and not intended to sell to or persuade participants.</p> <p>Program ensures that the information is used to inform/teach digital literacy as well as how to cite such information.</p>	<p>Program uses effective techniques to evaluate the quality and credibility of websites.</p> <p>Program looks for information that is current, relevant and accurate to current digital literacy curriculum and is free of bias or advertisement.</p> <p>Program verifies that the information used is credible.</p>	<p>Program teaches participants how to recognize when a source is bias-free, reputable, and credible to use for their digital literacy needs.</p> <p>Program instructs participants on how to critically evaluate sources by using rubrics and other evaluation methods or tools.</p> <p>Program ensures that the information used is intended for the present audience and is at an appropriate level.</p>
Digital Literacy Resources	<p>Program understands the importance of resources to be used in the home/outside of the program and that they are an important piece of success.</p> <p>Program staff is equipped with skills and experience to comply with accessibility standards, and design technology-based services using Universal Design for Learning⁵.</p>	<p>Program identifies community needs and provides educational resources to share with participants.</p> <p>Program provides equitable digital literacy services that support participants’ navigation, understanding, evaluation, and creation of digital content.</p> <p>Program organizes content for participants to access at their convenience and enables collaboration amongst participants to engage and further their digital literacy skills.</p>	<p>Program connects and provides participants with ongoing one-on-one and/or self-directed learning that can accommodate a range of learning styles.</p> <p>Program supports participants in the use of digital resources outside of the program.</p> <p>Program offers a wide range of free technology instruction, including courses such workforce development and health resources.</p>

⁴ Blakeslee, Sarah “C.R.A.A.P. Source Evaluation Rubric” December 9, 2019 https://libguides.snhu.edu/ld.php?content_id=46168957

⁵ “Universal Design for Learning: What You Need to Know,” Understood, 2014 <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/treatments-approaches/educational-strategies/universal-design-for-learning-what-it-is-and-how-it-works>

Program Quality Standard 6: Staffing

Program has appropriate standards for instructors, staff, and volunteers that meet the need for the program and participants. Qualifications, education, and expertise of staff or volunteers are in line with program outcomes and goals. Training and professional development are considered when making improvements based on program assessments.

Focus	Beginning	Emerging	Advanced
Qualification and Expertise	<p>Program has defined qualifications of adults/educators and outline basic requirements for experience and/or education.</p> <p>Minimum qualifications of staff and basic requirements for experience and/or education are regularly reviewed and are directly aligned to program offerings and goals.</p> <p>Program staff has some specialized expertise in specific program areas.</p> <p>Program ensures all staff complete a California Department of Justice Live Scan.</p>	<p>Some staff have advanced expertise to work with digital literacy.</p> <p>Program activities inform the development of guidelines for staff qualifications.</p> <p>Program staff are familiar with basic technology equipment including computers, Internet, software, etc.</p>	<p>Staff members have specific training and experience in digital literacy. There is diversity among staff in the type of qualifications and a structure in place that allows for cross-disciplinary experience.</p> <p>Program staff qualifications and basic requirements are reviewed annually.</p> <p>Program staff have experience in community based technology teaching/training. This could include basic computer skills and Internet use, safety and security, and support participants in acquiring affordable computers and home Internet access.</p>
Training and Professional Development for Staff	<p>Onboarding and program orientation will be provided and directly related to the job description and work requirements. Staff are aware of certifications related to the programming area.</p> <p>Program has basic training for staff and volunteers as well as policies and procedures outlined in the program employee handbook.</p> <p>A process is in place for continuous review of staff development plans.</p>	<p>Staff is trained on diversity and equity as addressed in standard 8.</p> <p>Staff is trained in San Jose’s City-Wide Privacy Principles.</p>	<p>Program staff can revisit relevant training and professional development opportunities regularly.</p> <p>Staff complies and applies the DLQS and San Jose’s City-Wide Privacy Principles. Additional trainings, webinars, classes, conferences, or professional development opportunities are made available to staff, instructors, or volunteers.</p>
Volunteers	<p>Training is provided in class</p>	<p>Program volunteers are trained on program’s health and safety practices and</p>	

	<p>management.</p> <p>Potential volunteers present some form of documentation that describes their expertise in Digital Literacy.</p> <p>Program ensures all volunteers to complete a California Department of Justice Live Scan.</p>	<p>emergency procedures.</p> <p>Program volunteers verify their knowledge/background in digital tools and technology.</p>	
<p>International Society for Technology in Education Standards (ISTE) Educator Standards</p>	<p>Program makes ISTE Educator Standards available to staff and volunteers.</p>	<p>Program prioritizes and ensures that staff and volunteers apply and understand the ISTE Educator Standards.</p>	<p>Program provides staff and volunteers with ISTE Educator Standards related resources, training or professional development.</p>

Program Quality Standard 7: Program Leadership and Management

Program implements policies, procedures, and systems that support program outcomes, goals, and/or grant requirements. Program utilizes an assessment and evaluation model for the purposes of enhancing program quality. Program is designed to foster community and family engagement allowing participants to play a meaningful role in iterating and improving upon existing programs. Program intentionally builds and maintains collaborative partnerships among internal and external stakeholders.

Focus Areas			
Ethical Standard	<p>Every program is aligned to the City of San José’s City-Wide Privacy Principle and Privacy Policy⁶;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We Value Privacy: We affirm that privacy is an inherent human right. San Jose commits to fully evaluating risk to your privacy before collecting, using, or sharing your information. • We collect only what we need: We collect only what is required to provide and improve city services and comply with the law. We seek community input about what information is used and collected. • We are open and transparent: We are transparent about what information we collect, why we collect it, and how it is used. We commit to being open about our actions, policies, and procedures related to your data. We make our policy documents publicly available and easy to understand. • We will give you control over your data: we will provide you with the information to make an informed decision about sharing your data. We have clear processes that ensure data accuracy and provide you visibility into what data the city has collected from you. • We share only what we need: We anonymize your information before we share it outside the city, except in very limited circumstances. Business partners and contracted vendors who receive or collect personal information from us or for us to deliver city series must agree to our privacy requirements. • We design for privacy and security: We integrate privacy and security into every aspect of our designs, systems, and processes. We commit to updating our technology and processed to effectively protect your information while under our care. We follow strict protocols in the event your information is compromised. 		
	Beginning	Emerging	Advanced
Vision, Mission, and Values	Organization has an adopted vision, mission, and value statement that is shared throughout the organization and with community stakeholders.	Program has a plan to evaluate its alignment to the organization’s vision, mission and values.	Program continuously improves and evaluates its alignment to the vision, mission and values of the organization as it relates to developing digital literacy skills and inclusion to their users.

⁶ “Digital Privacy Principles,” City of San Jose, September 17, 2019, <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/city-manager/civic-innovation-digital-strategy/digital-privacy>

<p>Policy, Procedures, and Programs Best Practices</p>	<p>Program has policies and practices that are clearly and consistently communicated to staff and the community.</p> <p>Policy and procedures are documented and readily available and visible to all.</p> <p>Program identifies a need in the community for digital literacy skill development.</p> <p>Curriculum and content are consistently reviewed and current to learn and know.</p> <p>Program is accountable for its policies, procedures, and best practices.</p>	<p>Program develops policies and practices that reflect a strong foundation in developmental theory, inclusivity and current research.</p> <p>Program engages adults/educators, colleagues, and stakeholders to analyze developmental theory for relevance to practice and cultural sensitivity.</p> <p>Policies and practices are regularly reviewed by program adults/educators and administrators to support a positive program climate.</p> <p>Program leadership monitors programs and offerings regularly to review delivery and determine areas for quality improvement.</p>	<p>Program managers, leadership and staff stay current on literature and research about digital literacy promising practices.</p> <p>Program conducts an evaluation at least once every two years to review policies and practices. Policy and procedural changes are implemented, and supportive training is planned. The community stakeholders are solicited to provide input in determining practices, policies and procedures.</p> <p>Organization is committed to continuous quality improvement and reflective practice.</p> <p>Organization develops, grows and changes based on the needs of the community (see standard 5).</p>
<p>Program Assessment and Evaluation</p>	<p>Program understands the community needs.</p> <p>Program intends to use assessment and evaluation tools to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the program.</p>	<p>Program understands and responds to the community needs.</p> <p>Program is driven and guided by the assessment and evaluation tools used to analyze outcomes and outputs.</p>	<p>Program understands, responds to, and designs with the community to meet their needs.</p> <p>Program uses outcomes and outputs from the assessment and evaluation tools. It is validated to ensure participants retain information and are satisfied with program content.</p>
<p>Community Engagement</p>	<p>Program goals are communicated to stakeholders through conversations, newsletters, etc.</p> <p>Program shows interest in working with the community to meet objectives.</p> <p>Program shows interest in starting the feedback cycle or community inquiry.</p>	<p>Program management and leadership solicit information directly from the community and users.</p> <p>Program has a system in place to receive formal feedback (e.g., surveys, focus groups, etc.) from community stakeholders to inform changes in program goals.</p>	<p>Program continues to improve quality based on community feedback to implement actionable goals.</p>

		Recommendations are reviewed to address any emerging needs within the program and community.	
Partnerships	<p>Program emphasizes that importance of partnerships and engagement.</p> <p>Program seeks outside partnerships to enhance or add to programs that are already in place.</p>	<p>Program establishes effective relationships with partners to bolster a continuity of learning.</p> <p>Program has established partnerships with outside stakeholders and services to integrate with programs in place.</p>	<p>Program has a reciprocal relationship with other organizations throughout the community to support the success of digital inclusion.</p> <p>Program has established partnerships with outside services and neighboring stakeholders to formally conduct referrals and introduce participants to additional programs and services around their area. Program invites outside services to the agency and provides in-person information to participants.</p>

Program Quality Standard 8: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Program is committed to an inclusive and supportive space that honors and embraces the diversity of the community regardless of ability, race, religion, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status/income level, housing status, immigration status/national origin, gender identity and/or expression.

Focus	Beginning	Emerging	Advanced
Inclusive and Supportive Practices	<p>Program abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)⁷.</p> <p>Program has policies and practices regarding race, equity, culture, status, and level that are clear and consistent and are communicated to all.</p> <p>Program has supportive practices in place that serve participants needing accommodations.</p>	<p>Program abides by ADA guidelines and regularly evaluates efforts to create an inclusive and supportive in-person and online environments.</p> <p>Program collects appropriate data to better understand the diversity of the community they serve and use that data to better understand barriers and provides accommodations.</p> <p>Program identifies strategies and/or has documented plans for participants needing additional supportive services.</p>	<p>Program has policies and practices that advance inclusion by assessing and considering the readiness of participants in order to provide reasonable accommodations.</p> <p>Program conducts an evaluation at least once every two years to review and understand racial and equity policies, best practices, and understandings. Findings of evaluations are implemented and incorporated for program improvement.</p> <p>Program actively implements supportive practices and curriculum that are inclusive to participants with academic, linguistic, physical, cognitive, or economic factors that impede their ability to access resources provided by the program.</p>
Equity and Diversity	<p>Program creates an environment for participants promoting equal access and opportunities to digital tools, resources, and services that increase digital knowledge, awareness, and skills.</p> <p>Program collects appropriate data to better understand the diversity of the community they serve and use that data to better understand current needs.</p>	<p>Program actively provides participants with equal access to technology. Trained staff provide support to navigate the digital tools.</p> <p>Program reviews and analyzes data collected to understand the participants’ culture, socioeconomic status, language, motivation, ability, and personal interest, and utilize data for continuous quality program improvement practices.</p>	<p>Program has policies and practices that advance inclusion. Program reviews documented processes for receiving and assessing requests for reasonable accommodation through community feedback.</p> <p>Program recognizes participants’ strengths and supports their learning/advancement in digital literacy without imposing cultural biases.</p> <p>Program incorporates anti-bias</p>

⁷ “ADA Online Learning” ADA National Network, December, 2019 <https://adata.org/project/ada-online-learning>

			curriculum and professional development opportunities for program staff and participants.
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