



October 16, 2017

Dear Secretary Ruszkowski and Members of the Public Education Department:

As educational stakeholders from across the state, we are writing to ask you to reconsider the adoption of the STEM-Ready standards and to adopt the Next Generation Science Standards as written. It is our mission that great educators participate in policy discussions that will impact their classrooms and their students. We believe educators have spoken and we support their research and recommendation.

The following indicate our reasons against the adoption of the STEM-Ready Science Standards and support for the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards as written, in its entirety:

- NMPED's Math & Science Advisory Council recommended full adoption of the NGSS in December 2013. In 2015, a working group was created, consisting of 85 members, including teachers from around the state. The group unanimously supported the adoption of the Next Generation science standards as written.
- "The scientific practices in the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), as defined by the National Research Council (NRC), include the critical thinking and communication skills that students need for postsecondary success and citizenship in a world fueled by innovations in science and technology." - <https://www.nextgenscience.org/>
- The minor changes suggested by the STEM-Ready Standards such as: eliminating a reference to Earth's "4.6-billion-year history" and replacing it with "geologic history" in the middle-school curriculum; omitting a reference to a "rise in global temperatures" and replacing it with "fluctuations" in temperature; and replacing the word "evolution" with the phrase "biological diversity" in standard HS-LS4-2, will not support a strong scientific education for New Mexico students.
- The addition of New Mexico specific standards creates a higher number of science standards for certain grade levels, including 9 additional standards in grades K-2, thus creating concerns for teachers' emphasis on breadth rather than depth in meeting the standards throughout the course of the school year.
- The adoption of specific state standards may create challenges for districts and/or the state when it comes to the selection and use of science curriculum and assessments, which may not connect with the explicit standards.

It is also our recommendation that once new science standards are placed into rule, a high quality assessment is selected that will accurately measure the learning of the new standards and the assessment is not used for evaluative purposes until districts have developed curriculum and instruction that are aligned to the new standards.

Like the Common Core State Standards, the NGSS lay out the crosscutting concepts that students should master in preparation for college and careers. The Next Generation Science Standards will teach students about up-to-date science, which will prepare them for the workforce in the future. As of current date, 19 states have adopted the NGSS without revisions, it is our request that New Mexico become the next state.

As 522 educational stakeholders from across New Mexico, we ask that you reconsider your rule recommendation and in doing so demonstrate your continued commitment to working with educators to move our schools and students forward.