

38TH DISTRICT  
STATE SENATOR  
**LINDSEY M. WILLIAMS**

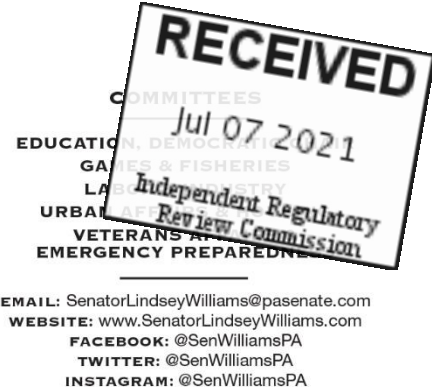
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**Senate of Pennsylvania**



July 6, 2021

*Via email at ra-stateboardofed@pa.gov*

State Board of Education  
333 Market Street, 1st Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Re: Proposed amendments to 22 Pa. Code Chapter 4

Dear Colleagues:

As a member of the State Board of Education Council of Higher Education, I submit my comments on the proposed revisions to 22 Pa. Code Chapter 4, Academic Standards. Numerous stakeholders have raised significant concerns about these proposed revisions - concerns that I share and would like to highlight today.

First, I want to express my appreciation to everyone who submitted public comments. The work of the State Board of Education is incredibly important, but so often it happens unnoticed in the background. I am grateful for the considerable time, energy, and attention that so many people have given to lend their voice to these important issues. Academic standards impact not only today's students, but have long term implications on Pennsylvania's environmental health, communal well-being, and economic future.

Second, I want to acknowledge the specific questions that many stakeholders have raised around the consolidation of the environment, ecology, and agriculture standards – and their fears that key pieces of these individual standards will be lost in the revisions. I also want to elevate that many commenters provided compelling reasons to have science standards that explicitly address climate change and humanity's role in it.

Third, I applaud the Department's commitment to prioritizing equity in the proposed amendments and its broader work. However, I fear that without a focus on these specific topics, we miss the mark on equity and inclusion. Pennsylvanians who are already marginalized by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic, and disability status disproportionality experience

the harms of Pennsylvania's air, waste, and water challenges. We must position our children of today to be leaders for a clean environment tomorrow.

As minority chair of the Senate Education Committee, I spend considerable time working to better understand the needs of Pennsylvania's educators, students, and their families. I will continue to work to ensure that our schools are fully and equitably funded so that all students have the resources they need to meet the state's academic standards and the expectations we set for them as a Board.

Given the growing concern that critical environment, ecology, and agriculture standards will be lost under the proposed revisions, I urge the Pennsylvania Department of Education and my fellow Board members to meaningfully consider these comments in formulating the final regulations.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lindsey M. Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, flowing initial "L".

Senator Lindsey M. Williams  
Pennsylvania's 38th Senatorial District