



From: [David Himes](#)
To: [ED, State Board of Ed](#)
Subject: [External] PA Science Standards and Environment, Ecology, and Agriculture
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Karen Molchanow,

The strength and resilience of our communities and society is contingent on our use and renewal of our environment and ecological resources. Understanding the intrinsic nature of habitats and human environment is paramount to healthy development and growth. Fostering this knowledge at a younger age not only helps to integrate future thinkers and leaders in the framework of ecosystem services and environmental management but can shepherd the next generation toward personal and civic responsibility of their consumption and action.

At present, the approved Pennsylvania Science Standards seems to greatly omit Environment, Ecology, and Agriculture from the secondary level. Some fundamental examples:

- Understanding watersheds and wetlands as critical habitats for our watercycle and for coastal resilience
- Renewables and nonrenewables for energy production and materials manufacturing, their interplay, and the impacts of each on local economies and environmental inequities.
- Biological diversity, the impact of invasive species as well as monoculture planting and agricultural practices.
- Integrated pest management, the history of pesticides and herbicides, and how we are still poisoning soils, which are fundamental to food production, carbon sequestration, and healthy environments.
- Environmental laws, their impacts, and how they have succeeded and failed in curtailing pollution, dumping, and environmental catastrophes.

I kindly implore that you consider reevaluating the Standards to integrate Environment, Ecology, and Agriculture at the secondary level to help develop future citizens, researchers, and decision-makers that have a foundational understanding and appreciation for the value that our ecosystems can provide when mindfully managed.

Kindly,

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