

From: sfurlong5@verizon.net
To: [ED, State Board of Ed](#)
Subject: [External] Current standard in K-12
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Dear Karen Molchanow, and whomever else this email gets read by:

It has come to our attention that the Pennsylvania State Board of Education has recently called for the discarding of the current State standards of education from K-12 regarding the environment, ecology and agriculture. Unless there are also equivalent plans to replace these standards with newly researched, updated and even peer reviewed standards, we in Bucks Environmental Action, a grassroots organization, are adamantly opposed. This is not the time to fully eliminate the curriculum (which also serves to eliminate the incentive) that teaches our future generations, when we are in the midst of a climate emergency, indeed a crisis, that these young students will be forced to face and to solve if life as we know it will be able to continue. We will be gone, but they will be here.

It is our understanding that there are two sets of science standards for all Pennsylvania schools: science and technology, and environment/ecology/agriculture. It is the latter that has been targeted for elimination. Why? What is the reasoning? And once again, unless the elimination of these standards are in the service of updating (not carte blanche elimination) based on the latest science, as is covered by the former category named here, then this is a disservice to children of all ages. It also makes little sense. Who has promulgated this change? Why now?

The State of Pennsylvania emits 1% of the world's methane emissions, all on its own. It is the home of an estimated 100,00 to over 500,00 abandoned wells (DEP estimates), many of which leak this dangerous gas. Our forests have been battling not only drilling for natural gas with the concomitant outbuilding and roadwork that goes along with that exploitation and serves to fragment forest habitat, but also numerous tree-related blights and diseases that are decimating our state. We are currently losing insects worldwide at rates that are not sustainable. Our pollinators are declining precipitously. We have lost 3 Billion birds in North America alone. Agriculture has been put on notice for its polluting ways, such as the overuse of pesticides and herbicides, along with fertilizers, that kill too many insects, contaminate and "burn out" ground soils, and increase pollution in waterways. Our weather is getting more severe, as a result mostly of climate change and this is predicted to only get worse. Indeed, the most recent reports for our State and this

Nation indicate that temperatures are changing faster than predicted, and the oceans are changing for the worse faster than predicted, both of which are altering jet streams and ocean currents which also contribute to environmental changes along with severe weather conditions, the onset and maintenance of drought the destruction of soils, etc. Now is not the time to decrease the amount, depth and breadth of environmental, ecological and agricultural information....one does not know which young child sitting in a classroom is our next George Washington Carver, Rachel Carson, or John Jay Audubon. This information should not be relegated to colleges. This education needs to start quite young so that our children can grow up and tackle what is possibly the ultimate existence-related set of difficulties in the brief course of human history. We need educated, critical thinkers who just might be able to do a better job than we as a species has done in the past 200+ years in terms of advancing our civilization but not at the expense of human beings not blessed in wealthy countries, as well as all the other living things that inhabit this world for many years before we were upright who have been paying for our incessant exploitation of resources beyond what the ecosystem can sustain.....with their lives.

Thank you for accepting these comments.

Very Truly Yours,

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