



From: [Keith Atherholt](#)
To: [ED, State Board of Ed](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on the Board of Ed Standards
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Karen Molchanow, Executive Director
Pennsylvania State Board of Education
333 Market Street, 1st Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Dear Ms. Molchanow and Members of the State Board of Education:

As a supporter of Pennsylvania's Forest Products Industry, I am writing regarding the proposed revision of Pennsylvania's Science, Technology, and Environment and Ecology standards. I am concerned that the omission of Environment, Ecology and Agriculture as performance expectations in the proposed Integrated Standards for Science, Environment and Ecology at the secondary level (grades 6-12) risks depriving students of valuable understanding of the world around them and will negatively impact our education system's alignment with our Commonwealth's workforce needs.

The new proposed standards do not explicitly include Environment, Ecology and Agriculture as performance expectations. The following items from the 2002 standards are weakly connected or not connected at all to the new proposed standards:

1. Watersheds and Wetlands – Cycles, Role of Watersheds, Physical Factors, Characteristics and Functions of Wetlands, Impacts of Watersheds and Wetlands
2. Renewable and Nonrenewable Resources – Uses, Influential Factors
3. Environmental Health – Biological Diversity
4. Agriculture and Society – Society Needs, Agriculture Science, Agriculture Systems, Technology
5. Integrated Pest Management – Effects Benefits and Impacts, Health Risks, Management Practices
6. Ecosystems and their Interactions – Change Over Time
7. Threatened, Endangered, and Extinct Species – Management Strategies
8. Humans and the Environment – Society Needs, Sustainability, Supply and Demand
9. Environmental Laws and Regulations – Environmental Laws and their Impacts

You folks have an enormous responsibility and I am grateful for your

willingness to take on such a daunting task in reviewing and implementing curriculum to our next generations of leaders. The above list is certainly extensive and while it may be too much to include with issues seemingly brewing within our culture and environmental concerns, they are factual and healthy for our stewardship of this great resource of the Pennsylvania forests and the environment as a whole. Every industry is clambering for workforce development, and the Forest Products Industry is no different. To develop a curriculum that excludes an understanding of natural resource that is well managed, sustainable, and healthy for our planet (carbon neutral), would be potentially devastating. Please look to inject some understanding of our Forests!

Regards,
Keith D. Atherholt

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