



Jones, Stephanie

From: KD Davenport <kdavenport@philasd.org>
Sent: Friday, June 25, 2021 10:28 AM
To: ED, State Board of Ed
Cc: Caitlin Matyas; Rucco, Jesse; Pittman, Judd
Subject: [External] public comment on new science standards

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Dear Ms. Molchanow,

I am the Director of Science for the School District of Philadelphia. I am writing with my comments and concerns regarding the proposed rulemaking on new science standards in Pennsylvania.

First of all, I am delighted that Pennsylvania is considering revising its science standards in light of what we now know about how students learn science. The collaborative process and research-based approach that the committee took is commendable, and the proposed three-dimensional standards have the potential to transform how science is taught and learned in PA.

However, I have two areas of concern that I feel must be addressed:

The new PA standards are adapted from the Performance Expectations from the Next Generation Science Standards, but they leave out the Disciplinary Core ideas, Cross-Cutting Concepts, and Science and Engineering Practices that underlie those expectations. The Performance Expectations were written to weave the ideas in the DCIs, CCCs, and SEPs together; the PE by itself is not specific enough to show teachers and assessors the level of knowledge and achievement necessary to attain the standard. **Students cannot attain the Performance Expectation if the DCIs, CCCs, and SEPs are not part of the standards.**

My other concern involves assessment. It is essential for policymakers to understand that, like it or not, assessment will drive what is funded, planned for, taught, and ultimately learned by students. Great ideas in the standards will often be ignored if they do not appear on assessments.

Therefore I **strongly** suggest that assessments used for the purpose of demonstrating graduation requirements align with **an interdisciplinary science assessment**, including life, physical, and earth sciences. When only Biology is assessed, Biology will receive a disproportionate amount of attention, funding, and administrative scrutiny, and other key content areas will be ignored. If Pennsylvania truly wishes to transform its career landscape, it must invest in students' education in chemistry, physics, earth science, and other subjects in addition to Biology.

Thank you for your consideration. I am happy to discuss this further with any Board or committee.

Sincerely,
--KD Davenport.

KD Davenport

Director of Science

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