

Jones, Stephanie



From: Carol Holmgren <carol.holmgren@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 29, 2021 8:47 AM
To: ED, State Board of Ed
Subject: [External] Please ensure inclusion of Environment, Ecology and Agriculture in grade 6-12

ATTENTION: This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.

Dear Karen,

Thank you for your commitment to provide a strong education to Pennsylvania's young people.

I have deep concern about the proposed Integrated Standards for Science, Environment and Ecology at the secondary level (grades 6-12) based on the public information shared on the PA Department of Education website. It appears that Environment, Ecology and Agriculture are not explicitly included. It is critical that students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of these areas, and that schools and teachers be supported to prioritize these topics in their teaching through our educational standards. Failure to do so is a disservice to our students,

Previously PA has been a leader in preparing our students with fluency in these disciplines. It is more clear than ever that understanding human impact on the environment, and making changes to benefit both the environment and humans is critical for the future of humans in our country, and around the globe. We need to prepare students to understand the relationship between the environment, humans, and other species.

I am a wildlife professional and work with a worldwide organization called One Health, comprised of human physicians, veterinarians and environmental experts that addresses and monitors the relationship between health of humans, the environment and wildlife. Science and recent events are teaching us how intertwined these are. Understanding this and being fluent in key concepts is essential for students to be prepared for being good decision makers and entering the workforce. Our wildlife center also shares education programs with people of all ages, highlighting the interactions between humans and our environment.

The new proposed standards do not explicitly include Environment, Ecology and Agriculture as performance expectations. These were previously independent state standards that teachers were required to cover. **The proposed integrated standards for grades 6-12 must include Environment, Ecology, and Agriculture as a separate, fifth domain. Furthermore, watershed and wetlands, agriculture and society, and integrated pest management should be addressed through individual performance expectations.**

We are not preparing students to understand world events, act in the world, and to evaluate critical discussions if they do not have an demonstrated understanding of Environment, Ecology and Agriculture.

These three topics are critical to ensure that Pennsylvania students are informed citizens and are prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century economy. The new standards may be in place for several years, leaving these critical topics out of student's education will result in a deficit of valuable learning.

Please ensure Environment, Ecology, and Agriculture standards are not lost. I call on you to have the vision to create a fifth, separate domain for these three content topics, ensuring these vital subject areas are not neglected and that Pennsylvania students are set up for success.

Thank you for supporting meaningful learning for students across the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,
Carol Holmgren

Carol Holmgren
Executive Director and Wildlife Rehabilitator
Tamarack Wildlife Center
21601 Stull Rd.
Saegertown, PA 16433
814-763-2574
www.tamarackwildlife.org

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world." Gandhi