



From: [Barbara Malt](#)
To: [ED, State Board of Ed](#)
Subject: [External] state environmental education standards
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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am deeply concerned about the proposed changes to the Science, Technology, and Environment Standards with regard to their potential impact on environmental education.

It is crucial for students to receive the basic knowledge to equip them for the environmental challenges they will need to contend with as citizens in the 21st century. Our environment is in dire straits, and poor decisions are made by those with insufficient understanding of how ecosystems work and the impact of their decisions on the environment.

As an educator myself, I know how important it is to lay the foundations early for understanding the complexities of the world our children live in. Students must be educated to make decisions and take actions that will leave a clean and healthy environment for their children and their children's children.

Among my specific concerns are:

- The new “integrated approach” in the proposed standards eliminates the explicit inclusions of the environment and ecology standards, which allows these topics to more easily be brushed aside
- Some crucial areas are only weakly connected or not connected at all to the proposed standards. Some specific examples include:
 - o Watersheds and Wetlands, including their characteristics, role and function, and the impact and importance as an ecosystem
 - o Ecosystems and their Interactions
 - o Threatened, Endangered, and Extinct Species
 - o Environmental Laws and Regulations and understanding the responsibilities and role of

citizenship

The current proposals need to be put on hold and more time be provided for the content committee to provide a thorough review and consider how better to ensure adequate education in this critical area.

In conclusion, the Environment and Ecology Standards need to be maintained as a separate, fifth domain and not lost or underserved as a result of their integration with other areas. In addition, full consideration needs to be given to refer the proposed standards back to the "content committee" so they receive a full and adequate review.

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