

June 18, 2021

State Board of Education  
333 Market Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

RECEIVED

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PA. STATE BOARD  
OF EDUCATION



**RE: Pennsylvania Science, Environment & Ecology Standards**

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for supporting the process of revising the Pennsylvania Science, Technology, and Environment and Ecology standards. Based on the public information shared on the PA Department of Education website, I have concerns about the proposed Integrated Standards for Science, Environment and Ecology at the secondary level (grades 6-12) and how it will impact current and future students in our state.

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.

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 implore you 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.

Pennsylvania has been known as a leader in environmental education with its long history of conservation and its abundant natural resources.

Point of consideration:

- Pollution – water quality/water supply/aquatic life/recreation/agricultural runoff
- Flood Reduction & Storm Water Mgmt
- Land Conservation & Restoration – Abandoned mine land/orphaned oil/gas wells/Loss of 6000 Farms to development/declining farm incomes/retirements
- Outdoor Recreation – Use of parks, reserves, and trails has doubled, tripled or more across our state.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Wendi Fink". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wendi" and last name "Fink" clearly distinguishable.

Wendi Fink