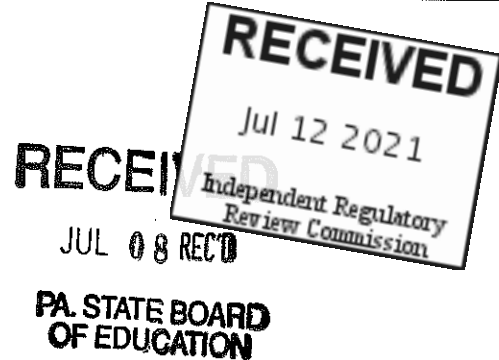


July 4, 2021

Director Molchanow
Executive Director, State Board of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17128



Director Molchanow –

As an educator know that I recognize the importance of curricular review and revisions to assure the ongoing relevance of learning content. Furthermore, I am aware that assurance of quality education and the oversight of our public schools, charter, cyber and vocational training schools as well as the education of youth in our state juvenile correctional institutions is an immense collective undertaking

Comment:

That being said, based on the accelerating challenges facing our state I find the proposed elimination of the K-12 topics of Environment, Ecology and Agriculture to be extremely disappointing. Not only is this decision inconsistent with the accelerating natural and anthropogenic threats to our state's quality of air, water and soil, and thus, the health and welfare of all its human and wildlife inhabitants, It is also blatantly inconsistent with Article 1, section 27 Natural Resources and Public Estate of our state Constitution; and, Number 6 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Keystone principles for Growth, Investment, and Resources Conservation.

Indeed, the Pennsylvania Standards of Education should be current and designed to be relevant to the real world and reflect the changing knowledge and skills students need to succeed in life following graduation. I believe, as well, that it is likewise critical that our students leave fully informed of state, national and global environmental threats to our sustainability; become responsible citizens and stewards of the state's finite natural resources by understanding the dire consequences of environmental degradation, destruction of wildlife habitats, decline of pollinators, mass removal of trees, pollution of streams and lakes, air, and soil; and, be prepared to assume civic responsibility for the protection and preservation of our natural resources and the environment upon which we all depend. It is difficult to understand how the authors of this proposal are seemingly unaware that these deleted standards are actually more important now than when originally adopted in 20002.

It is the intent of this correspondence to call upon the Pa Department of Education to reinstate the Environment, Ecology and Agriculture Education standards K-12 across the state to assure our graduates leave the sheltered academic setting fully prepared for that real world enabling them to recognize and respond proactively to potential life-altering challenges such as the forthcoming global climate crisis for which there is credible predictive scientific evidence.

This comment is based on my personal witness to the adverse impact of unrestrained nonconventional natural gas development and underground long-wall mining within the state in general and the watershed in which I reside in particular; and, to the disrespect of our waterways and roadways evidenced by the defacing volumes of trash and litter strewn about our pristine state. Respect for and protection of our wildlife and their natural habitats as well as our food, land and water quality does not come naturally. It comes from education and role modeling. We owe it to our youth to provide them with both for our own sakes and that of future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the proposed K-12 Academic Standards update.

Respectfully,

Judith Campsey