

David L. Evans, Executive Director

September 22, 2017

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Public Education Commission
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the Board, Council and 55,000 members of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), we strongly encourage you to reject the altered version of the New Mexico STEM-Ready Science Standards and retain the original text of the *Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)*, including those statements related to climate change and evolution. While the draft New Mexico standards are based heavily on the *NGSS*, select changes made to many of the performance expectations do not reflect the intent of the official *NGSS* document or the *Framework for K-12 Science Education*. These changes include the removal of the Earth's age, the substitution of the "rise" in global temperatures with the word "fluctuation," and the removal of other language regarding climate change and evolution.

NSTA supports the adoption of the *NGSS* the way the writers wrote them because it reflects the best research in science and how students learn science. We also stand with the teachers of New Mexico, who support the adoption of the *NGSS* as written and have worked hard to advocate for these high-quality standards for their students.

While we are encouraged that most of the *NGSS* are reflected in the New Mexico standards, we are disappointed that personal opinion and politics have trumped good science. This is evident in the select language that was removed and/or altered, as well as proposed language that was added, including asking students to "describe the benefits associated with technologies related to the local industries and energy production." This language is non-scientific, and addresses neither scientific fact nor practice. Clearly the intent of these changes is not to improve science education, but rather to advance a political view. For the benefit of New Mexico's students, only science should be taught in science classrooms.

It is our hope that you will reject the changes made to the draft document so that New Mexico standards clearly reflect the work of science and education experts from New Mexico and across the country.

Sincerely,



David L. Evans
Executive Director

Cc: Jamie Gonzales, Policy Division, New Mexico PED
Christopher Ruszkowski, Secretary-Designate of Education, New Mexico PED
Board Members, New Mexico Science Teachers Association