



Christie Administration Announces Re-adoption of Curriculum Standards

For Immediate Release

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Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey State Board of Education today re-adopted curriculum standards in seven K-12 subject areas, including the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards. The standards reflect the Christie Administration's goal of ensuring that all children graduate from high school ready for college and career, regardless of where they live.

"I applaud Governor Christie and the State Board of Education for taking the steps necessary to ensure that our students are gaining the knowledge and skills that will allow them to successfully compete in a global economy and contribute to the growth and well-being of our communities," said Acting Commissioner of Education David Hespe. "I also thank the dozens of representatives from the state's education community, the business sector, higher education, and interested citizens for their participation and suggestions."

"New Jersey historically has adopted curriculum standards that establish a high bar for student learning. Today's re-adoption of six content areas and the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards maintain the state's commitment to providing schools with curriculum frameworks that convey higher-level skills and advanced learning," said State Board President Mark W. Biedron. "The Next Generation Science Standards will enable schools to take science to the next level and to challenge and inspire students to embrace scientific inquiry both in and out of the classroom."

Every five years, the state Department of Education conducts a review of the standards, which describe what students should know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school. The process includes naming statewide panels in various content areas and holding public hearings around the state to collect feedback from citizens and stakeholders. The review also takes into account the latest research in the content areas.

New Jersey has identified nine distinct content areas in its K-12 Core Curriculum Content Standards that must be taught in public schools. The State Board today re-adopted standards in seven of the areas: Visual and Performing Arts; Comprehensive Health and Physical Education; Science; Social Studies; World Languages; English Language Arts; and Mathematics. No changes were proposed to the English Language Arts and Mathematics standards, as the State Board of Education had fully reconsidered these standards in 2010 and elected to adopt New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in these areas that reflect the Common Core State Standards.

As part of the five-year review process, the State Board today also re-adopted revisions to the Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards. The preschool language and math revisions now match the Common Core standards for kindergarten; include greater clarity regarding what children should know by the end of the 4-year-old preschool year; incorporate additional examples of teaching practices; provide an aligned framework that is consistent through third grade; and embed the use of technology in teaching practices. Added to the preschool standards were "Approaches to Learning," which include behaviors – such as initiative and persistence – that show *how* children learn, not just *what* they learn.

The two K-12 content areas not voted on today – Technology and 21st Century Life and Careers Standards – will be put through a review process later in the year.

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) were developed by a consortium of 26 states, including New Jersey. The NGSS were established after research found a solid foundation of math and science is needed to build the nation's capacity for economic growth, and the current level of science instruction, if not improved, may leave millions of young Americans unprepared to succeed in a global economy.

The NGSS are designed to promote hands-on experience and experimentation to deepen students' understanding of core concepts, rather than reward students simply for memorizing facts and formulas. For instance, while students previously would have been given an established model or experiment and taught how to use it to observe scientific phenomena, the new science standards may ask students to design a model on their own. Additional information about the NGSS can be found at www.nextgenscience.org.

"New Jersey's performance standards will build the foundation for high academic expectations to ensure that all of our students are nationally and internationally competitive," stated Acting Commissioner Hespe. "As a result, our students will graduate from college with higher-level skills that will enable them to create a well-prepared

workforce that is necessary for a thriving economy."