

Kirsten Baesler
State Superintendent
Robert J. Christman
Deputy Superintendent



600 E Boulevard Ave., Dept. 201
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440
Phone (701) 328-2260
Fax (701) 328-2461
www.nd.gov/dpi

For Immediate Release

Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2015
Contact: Kay Mayer, Director, Information, Communication and Research Division
Office 701-328-3216
Email: kmayer@nd.gov

Science Standards Status—Nov. 25, 2015

The drafting to update the North Dakota Science Standards has been paused since the first draft occurred in 2014. Supt. Baesler hopes to reconvene the full standards committee in the fall of 2016.

In the meantime, Supt. Baesler encourages North Dakota School district leaders and science educators to determine the expectations they feel best meets the needs of their students. Many schools are using a combination of the current North Dakota science standards and the standards endorsed by the National Science Teachers' Association. Science teachers can crosswalk our current standards to the national science standards and teach more. Superintendent Baesler states while the committee is looking at national standards, she recognizes there is certain aspects specific to North Dakota such as unique geology that our students would benefit from having included in a revised set of North Dakota science standards.

Superintendent Baesler affirms North Dakota is aligned with the rest of the nation in its students' knowledge and command of science. This is evidenced by the fact that North Dakota students have led the nation in science education success in the NAEP report cards. North Dakota Students are leading the way in the available 2009 and 2011 reports respectively.

Superintendent Baesler is aware there are some concerns that our current assessment, taking place in grades 4,8, and 11, is aligned to the 2006 standards. At this time, there is no assessment that exists aligned to the standards endorsed by the National Science Teachers' Association. Many states and organizations are working on developing and testing a new assessment, but rest assured, other states are not ahead of us on this endeavor. It is our belief when North Dakota does adopt new science standards, the [process to develop a new test bank of assessment questions will be further along and North Dakota will be able to participate in securing access to newly aligned test bank items. The new standards must be released and implemented for a least a year. Then, and only then, will our process and search for a new science assessment begin. The days are gone, in which educators taught to the test. Now, standards are established, implemented, and then assessment development begins.

The fall of 2016 is the projected timeline for the State Science Committee to reconvene to attempt to finalize the North Dakota State Standards.

###