

This is the cover letter to the science standards adopted by the State Board of Education on April 12, 2000 in an attempt to explain their actions to the educational community.

State Board of Education Cover Letter to the Science Standards:

To: Kansas Educators

Setting high standards of achievement for all Kansas students continues to be of primary importance to the State Board of Education. The science standards contained in this document reflect the State Board’s efforts to strengthen state standards and assessments by providing greater clarity and specificity as to what students should know and be able to do.

Even while expressing the hope that these standards provide a framework for local curriculum development efforts, we cannot ignore the significant amount of contention and speculation that has surrounded the science standards since their adoption by the State Board. For clarification purposes, it should be noted that the science standards contained in this document still include the evolutionary concepts of variation within a species and natural selection. However, the standards do not include the evolutionary theory that one species can evolve into another species, references to geologic time or the Big Bang theory of the origin of the Earth.

The absence of those items in the standards does not prevent schools from providing instruction in those areas. While it is the hope and intent of the State Board that all schools will teach up to the standards, each school also has the ability to teach beyond the standards.

We remain grateful to all the educational stakeholders who provided input on how to strengthen these curricular standards. Your continued efforts to improve student learning in Kansas are appreciated.

Sincerely,

The Kansas State Board of Education