



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education, *DRW*

DATE: May 8, 2015

SUBJECT: Next Generation Science Standards Stakeholder Engagement

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), developed by 26 states in 2013, provide an unprecedented opportunity to transform science education so that more students are inspired to pursue and prepared to succeed in advanced studies and STEM careers.

The State Board of Education (SBE) is considering NGSS as one pillar in Next Generation Science-CT, a statewide effort to improve STEM education for all students. For over two years, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has actively engaged science educators and leaders in learning about the NGSS and implications of adoption.

The SBE, introduced to the standards earlier this year, has prioritized continued outreach to all stakeholders regarding NGSS. Our goal is to engage interested stakeholders in review and discourse about NGSS as a new K-12 science framework prior to possible adoption in Connecticut.

Between now and the end of the school year, superintendents, principals, and local school boards will have opportunities to learn about NGSS in two ways:

1. In-person presentations can be provided to school boards by trained district science leaders. These local science leaders have collaborated with CSDE consultants to develop presentation materials and survey questions to gather feedback from you and your school board members; and
2. Interactive and archived webinars hosted by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) and the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS). Webinar broadcast dates will be announced soon by both organizations.

Family outreach efforts include a CT PTA focus group and a “Brunch and Learn” event at Mystic Aquarium in June exclusively for school/family partnership liaisons, PTA members, and parent advocacy group representatives. Information about these events will be disseminated soon.

Feedback, comments, and questions will be collected at all these events and used to inform decisions. Transparency and inclusivity are at the core of the SBE’s approach to upgrading the State’s 10-year-old science standards.

We invite superintendents to learn more about NGSS. We invite you to work with your district science leader to arrange NGSS presentations and activities for your stakeholders. The Department values local input and has planned an efficient and effective way to dialogue with many local policymakers, school boards, and families, not only over the next two months, but continuously throughout the recommendation, possible adoption, and implementation phases. Thank you in advance for your interest in Next Generation Science Standards.

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