



SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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Date: September 15, 2009
To: Curriculum Directors and Education Leaders
From: Randy I. Dorn
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Subject: K-12 Science Core/Comprehensive Instructional Materials Final Recommendations

The purpose of this message is to communicate the K-12 Science Core/Comprehensive Instructional Materials Final Recommendations, pursuant to 2008 Senate Bill 6534 in which the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) was directed to make recommendations for no more than three basic science curricula each for elementary, middle, and high school grade spans to the State Board of Education (SBE).

Subsequent legislation during the 2009 session (House Bill 5414) modified the terms of the original legislation to allow for recommendations by major courses at the high school level, and extended the deadline for making the initial recommendations to the SBE by June 30, 2009 for their comment and input to OSPI in making the final recommendations.

The SBE provided official comment and recommendations to OSPI on August 25, 2009 regarding the initially recommended science curricula. As a result, Superintendent Dorn made changes to the initial recommendations based on the input from the SBE.

These final recommendations serve as a guide to school districts in the state of Washington regarding which curricula are most aligned with the revised K-12 science standards. Superintendent Dorn's final recommendations are based on both the work of OSPI and the SBE as directed by statute.

Final Recommendations:

Elementary School (Grades K-5)	
Publisher	Program Name
Chicago Ed Pub Co, LLC	Science Companion
Carolina Curriculum	Science and Technology for Children (STC)
Delta Education	Full Option Science System (FOSS)

Middle School (Grades 6-8)	
Publisher	Program Name
Pearson (Prentice Hall)	<i>Science Explorer</i>
Holt McDougal	<i>McDougal Littell Science Modules</i>
Delta Education	<i>Full Option Science System (FOSS)</i>

High School Biology (Grades 9-12) (Life Science Domain)	
Publisher	Program Name
Kendall/Hunt (BSCS)	<i>Biology: A Human Approach</i>
Kendall/Hunt	<i>Insights in Biology</i>

High School Chemistry (Grades 9-12) (Physical Science Domain)	
Publisher	Program Name
It's About Time Publishing	<i>Active Chemistry</i>
Kendall/Hunt	<i>Chemistry</i>

High School Earth/Space Science (Grades 9-12) (Earth and Space Science Domain)	
Publisher	Program Name
It's About Time Publishing	<i>EarthComm</i>

High School Integrated Science (Grades 9-12) (Physical Science Domain)	
Publisher	Program Name
Kendall/Hunt	<i>Science: An Inquiry Approach</i>
It's About Time Publishing	<i>Coordinated Science¹</i>

High School Physical Science (Grades 9-12) (Physical Science Domain)	
Publisher	Program Name
It's About Time Publishing	<i>Active Physical Science</i>
CPO Science	<i>Foundations of Physical Science</i>

High School Physics (Grades 9-12) (Physical Science Domain)	
Publisher	Program Name
It's About Time Publishing	<i>Active Physics</i>

Note: Overall, at the high school level, the SBE's Science Advisory Panel raised a concern with the application of the recommended materials to advanced studies courses. Their concern is that the texts reviewed during this process were compared to science standards designed to develop science literacy for all high school students, and that districts who offer upper level science courses (e.g. International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, or other upper-level advanced studies) may need to select alternative curricula to fully prepare advanced students for STEM careers.

Due to the high levels of alignment of recommended materials to the current K-12 science standards, OSPI suggests that the first year curricular materials in domains in which there are opportunities for upper level studies follow the above recommendations

¹Coordinated Science is comprised of EarthComm, Active Chemistry and Active Physics. It does not have a life science component.

and alternative materials may be considered for courses of study that go beyond the first year.

Please note that OSPI has recommended the science curricula as per the legislated requirement. It is not the role of OSPI to direct which curricula a school district may or should select. It is not a state requirement for any district to specifically use the recommended curricula.

It is the position of Superintendent Dorn that the SBE and OSPI recognize that additional study and a review of the current recommendation may be appropriate in the next few years after curricula publishers have had sufficient time to make revisions to better align their products with Washington State's science standards.

BACKGROUND and PROCESS

Publishers voluntarily submitted programs to be reviewed in spring 2009. Typically the most recent copyrighted version was reviewed. Submitted programs were evaluated for their alignment with the revised Washington State K-12 Science Standards and Key Program Elements (such as assessment, equity and accessibility, facilitating instruction, and student learning) with input provided by external advisory groups, including the SBE Science Panel. OSPI presented initial recommendations to the SBE in June 2009 for their comment per the legislative directive. Sections 2.2.1 – 2.2.3 of the "K-12 Core/Comprehensive Science Instructional Materials Review and Recommendations Final Report" provide specific detail about the criteria and weightings that were considered in this analysis.

On June 30, 2009, Superintendent Dorn made initial K-12 Science Core/Comprehensive Instructional Materials recommendations to the SBE. He specifically asked the SBE for guidance regarding the elementary programs and high school integrated science programs. The SBE was required to "provide review and formal comment on proposed recommendations" to OSPI regarding science curricula. SBE made their comments and recommendations to OSPI during the August 25, 2009 special SBE meeting.

As districts are making adoption decisions, excellent information is available from OSPI and SBE. OSPI's K-12 Science Core Instructional Materials review and report includes detailed analysis of each of the programs reviewed in relation to the revised standards. The full report and additional resource materials can be found at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/publishernoticesScience.aspx>.

The final results of the SBE's review of the science instructional materials are posted on the SBE website: <http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/08-26-09%20Board%20response%20to%20Randy%20Dorn%20letter.pdf>.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

It is important to note that successful science programs may exist with virtually any of the reviewed curricula. While instructional materials matter, other factors contribute to the success of students learning science in Washington State. Those factors include quality of instruction, parent involvement, available supports, and numerous other aspects.

The results of the science basic curriculum reviews is coupled with the results of our recently completed K-12 science supplemental materials review, to build a system of support for districts using any science curricula. This supplemental materials report can be found at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/publishernoticesScience.aspx>. In addition, OSPI is working closely with the regional Educational Service Districts and LASER Alliances to share information about the review of the various curricula in use across the state and to determine what supplemental materials best fills the gaps in the existing core curricula.

Questions concerning this communication may be directed to the Teaching & Learning Science Office at (360) 725-6311 or Mary McClellan, Science Director for Teaching & Learning, at mary.mcclellan@k12.wa.us. The agency TTY number is (360) 664-3631.

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