Revised Academic Science Standards Approved for 2017-18

Teachers and students in science classes in all grade levels will be using a revised set of standards for instruction, evaluation, and assessment for the 2017-2018 school year. This will follow the first year of implementation for new English-language arts and mathematics standards which are in effect for the current school year.

The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved the Louisiana Student Standards for Science at the March 8, 2017, meeting. The standards define the scientific knowledge and skills that students need to learn throughout their education to successfully transition to college and the workplace.

A review committee consisting of content experts, elementary and secondary educators, post-secondary education leaders, and business and industry representatives spent six months developing the science content standards which define what a student should know or be able to accomplish at the end of a specific time period, grade level, or completion of a course. The process included participation by parents and the general public.

According to BESE, the standards provide developmentally appropriate content and allow teachers the freedom to determine the most appropriate methods of instruction. Science content standards call for students to apply content knowledge to real-world phenomena and design solutions, to demonstrate the practices of scientists and engineers, to connect scientific learning to all disciplines of science, and to express ideas grounded in scientific evidence.

Teachers will begin reviewing the new standards this summer and districts will begin making decisions on curriculum.

With revised academic standards and curriculum come re-aligned academic assessments. The 2017-2018 school year will be a transition year where students will take field tests in the spring to evaluate their progress. The 2018-2019 school year will begin operational science assessments for all tested students.