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TO: Members of the State Board
FROM: Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. *JmLowery*
DATE: April 23, 2013
SUBJECT: Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)

PURPOSE:

To provide information and background regarding the development and release of the Final Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) .

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

There is no doubt that science—and, therefore, science education—is central to the lives of all Americans. Never before has our world been so complex and science knowledge so critical to making sense of it all. When comprehending current events, choosing and using technology, or making informed decisions about one’s healthcare, science understanding is key. Science is also at the heart of the United States’ ability to continue to innovate, lead, and create the jobs of the future. All students—whether they become technicians in a hospital, workers in a high tech manufacturing facility, or Ph.D. researchers—must have a solid K–12 science education.

Process for Developing Next Generation Science Standards

State teams have provided confidential and continuous guidance and feedback throughout the *Next Generation Science Standards* development process. These teams include representatives from the K–12 education, education policy, scientific, post-secondary education, and informal science communities. All states were invited to apply to be Lead State Partners and take a leadership role in the NGSS process from the beginning. Twenty-six Lead State Partners, of which Maryland is one, were selected to guide the writing team and work together to develop plans for adoption, implementation, and transition that can be considered by all states.

The *writing team*, composed of 41 members from 26 states, represents states, K–12 and postsecondary education, and the scientific, engineering, and business communities. The members have expertise in cognitive, life, earth, and physical sciences and engineering. The team is charged with creating draft standards true to the NRC *Framework* that also take into account feedback from states and stakeholders.

The NGSS and Common Core State Standards (English Language Arts and Mathematics) are **aligned** to ensure a symbiotic pace of learning in all content areas.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

With the final release of the NGSS in April 2013, states will begin their individual processes to consider adoption. The lead states are under no obligation to adopt, only to seriously consider adoption. There is no set timeline for adoption or implementation. As with all K-12 educational standards, the decision to adopt by any given state is voluntary. Stephen L. Pruitt, Ph.D., Vice President of Achieve, who has guided the development of the NGSS, is present for this presentation and discussion. The three attached documents provide an overview of the standards, their development, and the instructional outcomes that they are designed to achieve.

ACTION:

Information for review and future consideration of adoption and plan for implementation.

<http://www.nextgenscience.org/>