



National
Center for
Science
Education

*Defending the teaching of evolution and
climate science*

420 40th Street, Suite 2
Oakland CA 94609-2688
510.601.7203 • 800.290.6006
FAX 510.601.7204 • www.ncse.com

A Message to the Texas State Board of Education:

The textbooks adopted for use in Texas schools have a profound influence on science education in Texas and across the United States. As societies of educators and scientists, we are concerned by reports that textbook reviewers unqualified in the relevant science are seeking to undermine the teaching of evolution and climate change, and that good textbooks may be revised or rejected based on these reviewers' comments. The undersigned scientific and educational societies call on the Texas State Board of Education to adopt textbooks based on the guidance of Texas's many excellent scholars and master teachers, not based on ideology, ensuring that Texas students learn the best science, especially evolution and the scientific basis of climate change.

Evolution is the foundation of modern biology, an explanation for the diversity of life on earth which has opened up tremendous scientific and technological opportunities. It is central to fields as diverse as agriculture, computer science, engineering, geology, and medicine. The teaching of evolution and—for similar reasons—climate change should not be undermined in textbooks, whether by minimizing, misrepresenting, or misleadingly singling them out as controversial or in need of greater scrutiny than other topics are given.

Some textbook reviewers openly called for creationism to be included in textbooks, which would be scientifically and legally improper. But we are equally concerned by some reviewers insisting that evolutionary mechanisms cannot produce biological novelties, or explain the fossil record. These claims are false and misleading, and would undermine student understanding of both the natural world and what constitutes the formation of adequate, evidence-based explanations. If textbooks incorporate those criticisms, students will be denied a full understanding of the tremendous explanatory power that evolution has offered to scientists for over a century, and which doctors, oilfield geologists, farmers, ranchers, and NASA engineers all rely upon for their vital work.

By adopting textbooks recommended by the top scientists and teachers in Texas, you will give students and teachers the foundation for an exemplary science education, the sort of education that they will need to succeed in the 21st century.

Signed:

Eugenie C. Scott, Executive Director

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Bruce Alberts, *U.C. San Francisco*
Francisco J. Ayala, *U.C. Irvine*
Frederick Borsch, *L.T.S.P.*
Stephen G. Brush, *U. MD*
Sean B. Carroll, *U. WI*
Johnnetta B. Cole, *Smithsonian*
Joel Cracraft, *AMNH*
Brent Dalrymple, *OR State U.*
James E. Darnell Jr., *Rockefeller U.*
Richard E. Dickerson, *UCLA*
Robert H. Dott Jr., *U. WI*
Niles Eldredge, *AMNH*
Milton Fingerma, *Tulane*
Douglas J. Futuyma, *SUNY Stony Brook*
Alfred G. Gilman, *U. Texas SMC*
Laurie Godfrey, *U. MA*
Ursula Goodenough, *Wash. U. St Louis*
James Hansen, *NASA Goddard Inst.*
Donald Hornig, *Harvard*
Duane E. Jeffery, *Brigham Young*
Donald Johanson, *Inst. Hum. Origins*
Patricia Kelley, *U. NC Wilmington*
Philip Kitcher, *Columbia*
Richard C. Lewontin, *Harvard*
Michael McCracken, *Climate Inst.*
Bill McKibben, *350.org*
Keith B. Miller, *Kansas State U.*
Kenneth R. Miller, *Brown*
David Morrison, *NASA Ames*
Bill Nye, *The Science Guy*
Kevin Padian, *U.C. Berkeley*
Robert L. Park, *U. MD*
James Randi, *Conjuror*
Michael Ruse, *Florida State U.*
James W. Skehan, *SJ, Weston Obs.*
Elliott Sober, *U. WI*
Frank Sonleitner, *U. OK*
Rickard Stucky, *Denver Mus. Nat. & Sci.*
Neil DeGrasse Tyson, *AMNH*
Marvalee Wake, *U.C. Berkeley*
Mary Jane West-Eberhard, *Smithsonian*
Tim D. White, *U.C. Berkeley*

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Brian Alters, *President*
Lorne Trotter, *VP/Treasurer*
Robert M. West, *Secretary*

Barbara Forrest, *Director*
Richard B. Katskee, *Director*
Andrew J. Petto, *Director*
Benjamin D. Santer, *Director*
Bernard Winograd, *Director*

Stanley L. Weinberg, *Founder*

A nonprofit, tax exempt corporation

*Affiliated with the American Association
for the Advancement of Science and the
National Science Teachers Association*

American Anthropological Association
American Association of Physical Anthropologists
American Association of Anatomists
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Association of Physics Teachers
American Astronomical Society
Association of College & University Biology Educators
Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists
American Genetics Association
American Geophysical Union
American Institute for Biological Sciences
American Phytopathological Society
American Psychological Association
American Society for Cell Biology
American Society for Human Genetics
American Society for Investigative Pathology
American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists
American Society of Mammalogy
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Naturalists
American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics
Association of Southeastern Biologists
Biological Sciences Curriculum Study
The Biophysical Society
Botanical Society of America
Climate Central
Council on Undergraduate Research
Ecological Society of America
Charles D. Ferguson, President
Federation of American Scientists
Geological Society of America
The Herpetologists' League
Human Anatomy and Physiology Society
National Academy of Sciences
National Association of Biology Teachers
National Association for Geoscience Teachers
National Science Teachers Association
National Wildlife Federation
Elizabeth Losos, President
Organization for Tropical Studies
The Paleontological Society
Phycological Society of America
Society for American Archaeology
Society for Developmental Biology
Society of Economic Geologists
Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology
Society for Organic Petrology
SEPM Society for Sedimentary Geology
Society for the Study of Amphibians & Reptiles
Society for the Study of Evolution
Society for Systematic Biology
Society for Vertebrate Paleontology
Southwestern Association of Naturalists