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09.08.2017

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At its September 8, 2017, meeting, the Nebraska state board of education voted 6-1 to adopt a new set of [state science standards](#) [4] (PDF), the *Omaha World-Herald* (September 8, 2017) [reported](#) [5].

The standards, according to the *World-Herald*, "will introduce climate change in Nebraska high school science classes for the first time," since the previous standards, adopted in 2010, contained no specific references to climate change.

But the treatment of climate change in the new standards deteriorated while they were under development. In the May 2017 draft of the standards, sixth-grade students were expected to "[a]sk questions to clarify the evidence of the factors that have caused the rise in global temperatures over the past century," while in the adopted standards, they are expected to "[a]sk questions to clarify evidence of the factors that have caused a change in global temperatures over thousands of years." The revision obscures the rapidity of the rise in the last century and its connection to human activity.

Similarly, in the May 2017 draft of the standards, high school students were expected to "[g]ather and analyze models from past and current Earth conditions to recognize patterns in climate change over time and make a projection of future climate trends," while in the adopted standards, they are expected to "[a]nalyze the validity and reliability of past and present models of Earth conditions to make projections of future climate trends and their impacts." The revision thus unrealistically expects high school students to assess the validity of scientific models of the climate.

"The inclusion of climate change in the new Nebraska science standards is certainly welcome," commented NCSE's executive director Ann Reid. "But it's a shame that the better language of the original draft wasn't retained."

Public comment on the standards at the August 2017 meeting of the board of education reportedly centered on climate change and evolution, but no changes to those areas resulted.

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