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"The Utah State Board of Education greenlit plans Thursday [April 12, 2018] to begin drafting new school science standards, a process likely to touch on divisive issues like climate change and evolution," [according](#) [4] to the *Salt Lake Tribune* (April 13, 2018).

As NCSE previously reported, the Utah state board of education voted in November 2017 to begin the process of revising the state science standards for elementary and high school, with the first step the formation of a committee to review the existing standards and to offer recommendations for the revised standards.

At the board's April 12, 2018, meeting, the committee offered a variety of recommendations for the revised standards. A strong majority (14 of 15) also urged the use of current research on science education, "with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) as a primary resource." Nineteen states plus the District of Columbia have already adopted the NGSS.

A single, unidentified, member of the committee recommended including "a statement to encourage student inquiry by exploring scientific literature that challenges standard theories" to the introduction to the revised standards. While no specific theories are identified as worthy of challenge, it is likely that evolution and/or climate change are the targets.

Back in November 2017, the prospect that the revised standards would resemble the NGSS elicited

concern from a member of the state board of education, who complained, "There's a heavy emphasis on global warming. There's a heavy emphasis on evolution as a fact and not as a theory," as the *Deseret News* (November 2, 2017) [reported](#) [5].

"A writing committee will now work to draft the new science standards for the elementary and high schools," the *Salt Lake Tribune* notes; the new standards will be drafted, revised in response to public comment, and submitted to the board for its approval.

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[5] <https://www.deseretnews.com/article/900003334/science-curriculum-changes-long-overdue-or-godless-instruction.html>

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