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As a draft of new science standards for Arizona are undergoing public comment, "experts are alarmed" about changes imposed by staffers at the department of education, KNAU in Flagstaff [reports](#) [4] (May 14, 2018) — and evolution is affected.

"Department staff deleted or qualified the word 'evolution' throughout the document," KNAU reports. NCSE's deputy director Glenn Branch was quoted as saying, "We can [be] quite sure, I think, that the revisions are aimed deliberately at softening the treatment of evolution, and thus misleading teachers and students about the scientific standing of evolution."

For example, where the writing committee's version of a standard for the eighth grade explained, "the process of natural selection provides an explanation of how new species can evolve," the revised version refers instead to "the processes by which a species may change over time in response to environmental conditions," thus avoiding both the e-word and the idea of speciation.

KNAU added, "Evolution has been amply confirmed by science, just like photosynthesis or relativity. Branch says it's absurd to use ambiguous or tentative language. 'These are very bad revisions that were made, they clearly weren't endorsed by the writing committee, and it's somewhat disrespectful to [the members of the writing committee] to make these changes.'" The department declined to be interviewed.

The draft standards are [available](#) [5] for public comment on-line until May 28, 2018. NCSE encourages Arizonans concerned about the integrity of science education in their state to review and comment; NCSE is [available](#) [6] to help.

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