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In a May 15, 2018, [letter](#) [4] (PDF) to Arizona's Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane Douglas, the Association for Science Education — representing the United Kingdom's community of science educators — expressed its opposition to the changes to the Arizona draft science standards that compromised the treatment of evolution.

As NCSE previously reported, staffers at the Arizona state department of education tampered with the treatment of evolution and allied topics in the standards — not long after Douglas endorsed the teaching of "intelligent design" along with evolution at a Republican candidate forum in Tempe in November 2017, as KPHX (May 18, 2018) [reported](#) [5].

In its letter, the ASE noted that its publication *Working with Big Ideas of Science Education* served as a basis for the draft standards in Arizona. "Among the fourteen Big Ideas is evolution," the ASE wrote. But the description of evolution in the draft standards differs from the description in *Working with Big Ideas* in ways "that deserve comment from ASE."

After explaining in detail the inappropriateness of the divergences, the ASE summarized by recommending the restoration of the original description of evolution from *Working with Big Ideas*: "Not doing so would mischaracterize the Big Idea of Evolution and undermine the scientific literacy of Arizona's students."

The ASE ended its letter by saluting "the hard work and good intentions of those who have contributed to [the standards]," adding, "Whether in London or Phoenix, Birmingham or Tucson, Manchester or Mesa,

students deserve our best efforts to ensure that they receive the best science education possible."

The draft standards are [available](#) [6] for public comment on-line at the state department of education's website until May 28, 2018. NCSE strongly encourages Arizonans concerned about the integrity of science education in their state to review the standards and comment appropriately; NCSE is [available](#) [7] to help.

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