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OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

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Walters: New Science Standards to Elevate Education and Workforce Preparedness

Oklahoma City, Okla – The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) has submitted updated Oklahoma Academic Standards for Science (OAS-S) for public comment through January 21, 2025. The new standards represent a transformative framework that raises the bar for all Oklahoma students. These standards are designed to prepare students with the essential knowledge and expertise required to excel in higher education and meet the demands of a rapidly evolving workforce.

“These improvements are more than an educational upgrade; they are a strategic move to bolster Oklahoma’s economic future,” said State Superintendent Ryan Walters. “They will provide our students with the tools to think critically, innovate, and solve problems—skills that are essential in today’s academic and professional landscapes. By adopting these standards, we are ensuring that every student in Oklahoma is equipped with the scientific knowledge and expertise they need to thrive, whether they choose to attend college or enter the workforce directly after graduation.”

Upon final approval, the updated standards will be implemented in the 2026-2027 school year and feature several key enhancements:

- **Three-Dimensional Learning:** The standards integrate science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts, fostering a deeper understanding of how scientific principles are applied in the real world.
- **Connections to Scientific Literacy:** The new framework emphasizes the importance of scientific reasoning and critical thinking skills, ensuring that students are prepared to make informed decisions in their personal and professional lives.

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- **Grade-Specific Innovations:** Enhanced clarity and progression provide educators with clear guidelines for implementing hands-on, inquiry-based learning from Pre-K through high school.
- **Focus on Workforce Readiness:** Engineering practices and technology applications are embedded throughout the standards, aligning with industry needs and preparing students for STEM careers.

“Companies across Oklahoma consistently emphasize the need for workers who are not only knowledgeable in STEM areas but also capable of critical thinking and problem-solving,” Walters continued. “These standards directly respond to those needs, providing businesses with the confidence that Oklahoma’s graduates are prepared to excel in the workplace.”

The standards also ensure alignment with national benchmarks, keeping Oklahoma competitive in attracting and retaining businesses that rely on a highly skilled workforce. As the state invests in education, it simultaneously invests in its economic future, creating a cycle of opportunity and growth for generations to come.

For Oklahoma students, these standards represent the promise of a brighter future. They will empower students to take ownership of their learning and explore the possibilities of science and technology in ways that inspire curiosity and ambition. For educators, the framework provides robust resources and professional development opportunities to deliver high-quality science instruction.

For more information about the updated Oklahoma Academic Standards for Science, visit: <https://sde.ok.gov/newstandards>.

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