



austin
geological
society

P.O. Box 1302
Austin, Texas 78767

March 17, 2009

Mr. Rene Nunez
Texas State Board of Education
William B. Travis Building
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas, 78701

Re: State Science Curriculum

Dear Mr. Nunez:

The Austin Geological Society (AGS), a professional organization created in 1965 with a current membership of over 150 earth scientists, strongly urges you to support unbiased and credible science education in Texas. AGS concurs with the National Academy of Sciences' definition of science - "the use of evidence to construct testable explanations and predictions of natural phenomena, as well as the knowledge generated through this process". In addition, AGS has adopted the Geological Society of America's position on the teaching of evolution, as adopted in 2001 and amended in 2006.

AGS strongly believes that adherence to this definition of science is fundamental to effective science education in Texas schools. We request that you adopt the Biology and Earth and Space Science TEKS as written by the Working Groups in November, 2008 without any additional amendments or modifications. The working groups are composed of educators and scientists with deep expertise in science, and their proposed TEKS drafts should be given unreserved support without amendment. Please resist changes that are not approved by the working groups of scientists and educators.

The United States lags behind other industrialized and leading nations in educating our children and producing competent and leading-edge scientists. Science curriculum should reinforce critical thinking, scientific reasoning and problem solving. Introducing a science curriculum that blurs the sharp boundary between the scientific method and pseudo-science does a disservice to the students of Texas and the United States.

AGS understands the political pressure that is being exerted upon the SBOE and trusts that the Board will maintain a science curriculum based on the fundamental use of the scientific method to describe and explain natural phenomena.

Sincerely,

Shane Valentine, P.G.
President

Signing on behalf of:

Gay Gutierrez, P.G.
Vice-President

Brian B. Hunt, P.G.
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