



## NJDOE News

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### Department of Education Launches Core Curriculum Content Standards Review Process

The New Jersey Department of Education has launched the first five year review of its rigorous academic standards as is required by the State Board of Education. The standards were first enacted in 1996 in the seven subject areas of math, science, world languages, social studies, language arts literacy, comprehensive health and physical education, visual and performing arts and in workplace readiness. When the standards were first approved by the State Board in 1996, it required the department to review and update the standards as needed in 2001.

The review process was launched today with a meeting of all of the standards review committees, one for each content area. Also present was the [Standards Revision Advisory Committee](#) chaired by Dr. Alan Markowitz of Fairleigh Dickinson University (complete list of advisory committee members is attached). The major role of the advisory committee is to provide recommendations to the Department of Education about the revision and readoption process and the work of the standards committees.

The initial work of this committee will be to review the process that has been established by the department for this task, to assist in preparing the charge to the standards revision committees, and to establish a work plan for the coming year. Once a first draft plan of the revised standards has been completed, the advisory committee will review the document and provide feedback to the department.

"We are proud of the rigorous standards that were approved by the State Board of Education five years ago," said Commissioner of Education Dr. Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. "During the five years since the standards were adopted, schools and districts have been utilizing them to guide the development of curriculum, the improvement of instruction, and the planning of professional development of teachers.

"From the experiences of teachers and others in the field we can learn much about how our standards might be productively refined. Many constructive suggestions are to be found in the survey responses that we have gathered from teachers, administrators, parents, board of education members, and the representatives from higher education, business and industry."

In preparation for this five year review, the department has coordinated the external review of the standards by Achieve, Inc. for language arts literacy and mathematics, and the Council of Chief State School Officers for science and social studies. In June, the department will coordinate the review of our standards in the arts, world languages, health and physical education and cross-content workplace readiness. Achieve is also reviewing the standards and assessments in science. The department will also be considering the recommendations contained in the Business Coalition for Educational Excellence report [Getting Down to the Business of Learning](#).

"It is my hope that the standards will continue to focus on the essential core of learning in each subject area that is most important for all students to understand and be able to use," said Gagliardi. "We will continue the clear intent of the original standards—to emphasize a depth of understanding that challenges students to apply and use knowledge rather than emphasizing surface coverage and recall."

The department expects the review to take place over the next year. It is expected that revised standards will be presented to the State Board sometime late next spring.