



Ms. Jamie Gonzales
Policy Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Ms. Gonzales:

Over nearly twenty-five years Quality New Mexico has promoted a national standard for systems improvement. Since 2011 through New Mexico Excellence in Learning (NMEXL), we have promoted the application of a systems framework to improve the quality of education in our State. The *Next Generation Science Standards* were developed using a transparent process including key stakeholders such as teachers, scientists, engineers, and business leaders. In 2013, the Math & Science Advisory Council for the New Mexico Public Education Department and New Mexico Science Teachers Association reviewed the *Next Generation Science Standards* and recommended their adoption as written. A robust systems approach builds on such community input. We endorse these recommendations and encourage the Public Education Department to pursue an open and transparent adoption process, including the hearing scheduled for October 16, 2017 and subsequent communications with the community as a result of that public input.

We share your stated commitment to systematic continuous improvement which includes assessment and data-driven decisions. Adoption of the *Next Generation Science Standards* as written would further this shared commitment by enabling comparisons of assessment results in New Mexico to the 18 other states and District of Columbia that have already adopted them. Having a broader and more diverse set of comparative data promotes learning and improvement.

Looking to the future, honoring the work of the original committee helps to ensure generations of students will have access to peer-reviewed science. As a systems approach to learning, it makes sense to join with a significant portion of the nation in a shared belief about the importance of empirical science. The commitment of the Public Education Department to science and the use of the same set of standards as other states will help ensure that the quality of science education in New Mexico stands at the same level of rigor as our neighbors. In addition, adopting the *Next Generation Science Standards* without modification ensures New Mexico students' performance can be assessed and comparatively analyzed with confidence. It also helps to ensure that regardless of what profession a graduate may choose, New Mexico graduates will have learned science in a way that truly prepare them for the next generation.

Respectfully,

Jeff Weinrach
CEO Quality New Mexico

Nancee Whittington
President Quality New Mexico

Cc: Quality New Mexico Advisory Board
Legislative Education Study Committee