

NC State K-12 Education Standards: Some Background

To understand education policies in any state, it's important to have a clear idea about the main players and how they relate. The following is a brief outline of the education bureaucracy in North Carolina, which is fairly typical of most states...

1 - The NC [State Board of Education](#) (SBE) created and updates academic Standards for every subject area (e.g., Science).

2 - Typically there are separate academic [Standards](#) for each grade level (thru Grade 8), *plus* any specialized high school subsets of the subject area (e.g., Chemistry in Science).

For example, in **Science**, there are [fifteen NC Standards](#) (K thru 8, plus six subsets).

4 - These Standards are an **outline** of the **key material** that the State is expecting to be taught in each subject area, in each grade.

5 - The Standards are also the basis for the state **textbooks** that the SBE approves.

6 - The Standards are also the basis for statewide **tests** that the SBE approves.

7 - The Standards are the foundations for the actual curriculum that teachers in local school districts teach.

3 - The Standards are implemented by the [State's Department of Instruction](#) (DPI).

8 - The Standards apply to all K-12 in the state: **public schools, private schools, charter schools, and home schools.**

9 - In NC, by [statute](#), each of these subject Standards is reviewed every 6± years. When a formal review is done, DPI does this under the oversight and approval of the SBE.

(Note: DPI periodically chooses to skip such a review, when they claim that nothing of consequence needs changing.)

10-Both the SBE and DPI have to comply with State [legislation](#) regarding education matters. In NC, the state Legislature has the power to set the rules.

John Droz, jr,
Physicist, NC

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