Guidelines for Content Advisor Feedback

Please review the draft recommendations for the science Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for kindergarten–grade 8.

There is no specific format required for your feedback. When referencing specific portions of the TEKS, please indicate the grade level and the specific letter/number of the standard to which you are referring, as appropriate.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Does each grade level follow a complete and logical development of science concepts presented? If not, what suggestions do you have for improvement?

Yes, in general, there is a logical development of concepts and a reasonable progression in rigor and expectations from one grade level to the next. The guidelines also promote progression and building upon foundational principles while avoiding redundancy and overlap. There seems to be a significant jump in rigor and expectations from grade 5 to grades 6-8. The principles covered in grades 6-8 are foundational to subjects in 9-12 and for the postsecondary level.

2. Do the standards for the grade(s) adequately address scientific concepts? If not, please give examples of how the standards might be improved.

Yes, the concepts to be covered are at or above the level needed to establish the scientific concepts in grades K-8. As previously stated, the foundation set forth in these guideless will adequately prepare students for 9-12 and postsecondary education.

3. Is the level of rigor appropriate for each grade level? If not, please provide suggestions for areas where improvements are needed.

The general progression of rigor up through the grades is evident, so in general, I would conclude the level of rigor by grade is appropriate, especially in grades K-5. In some instances, in grades K-5, the change from one year to the next is a simple change the subject (i.e., plant followed by animal) to reiterate the same concepts, which provides the opportunity for reinforcement of the same concepts in a new model. One observation would be that it is somewhat difficult to conclude that in grades 6-8 that there an increase in rigor rather than just an introduction of new concepts; however, the expectation for building from year to year appears to be appropriate and good as a whole.

4. Are the TEKS aligned horizontally and vertically? If not, what gaps or concepts are missing that should be addressed?

Yes, I believe that the alignment is evident and acceptable. In my opinion, there are no major gaps in foundational concepts and principles as amended and proposed for K-8.

5. Does each grade level include sufficient standards focused on classroom and outdoor investigations?

I do not know that this question can be adequately answered from the written guidelines. Certainly, there are many concepts that are to be addressed that can or should be presented outside of the traditional classroom and/or outdoors. If it is the desire of the guidelines to get students outdoors, then that should be more explicitly stated in the guidelines.

6. Are the student expectations clear and specific? If not, please give examples of how the language might be improved.

The expectations are stated with clarity and specificity. I do believe that the expectations are stated clearly enough for the teachers to follow and execute them sufficiently, and the teachers have a tremendous range in opportunity to expand topics, deepen the experience, and to increase rigor beyond the specific citations in these guidelines.

7. Are there student expectations that are not essential or unnecessarily duplicative and can be eliminated? If so, please identify by grade level and student expectation number, e.g., 1.7.B (Grade 1, student expectation (7)(B)).

No.

8. Do you have any other suggestions for ways in which the elementary and middle school TEKS can be improved?

As is the case for all of the TEKS, teaching and exercise guides will be essential for teachers to execute these guidelines to a satisfactory level. Teaching and exercise examples will multiple the impact that teachers will be able to have reaching students.