

Next Generation Science Standards for Today's Students and Tomorrow's Workforce Draft Open for Adult Education Stakeholders' Review and Comment

Science—and, therefore, science education—is central to the lives of all Americans. It is at the heart of the United States' ability to continue to innovate, lead and create the jobs of the future. Through a collaborative, state-led process, new K–12 science standards are being developed. They are intended to be rich in content and arranged in a coherent manner across disciplines and grades, to improve practice and to provide all students an internationally benchmarked science education. These Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) are based on [A Framework for K–12 Science Education](#) issued by the National Research Council in 2011, which defines the major practices, crosscutting concepts, and disciplinary core ideas that all students should know by the time they finish high school to be scientifically literate citizens and effective members of the U.S. workforce. The first public [draft](#) of the NGSS was released on May 11, 2012, and is [open for review until June 1, 2012](#). **All adult education stakeholders are strongly encouraged to take the opportunity to provide comments during the open period.** To learn more, we encourage you to visit and explore the full range of information available on the [NGSS](#) website.

OVAE's Steve Brown Named One of U.S. Agriculture's Most Influential Leaders

Steve A. Brown, an education program specialist in agriculture, food and natural resources with OVAE and the [National FFA Organization](#)'s top advisor, has been named one of the most influential leaders in American agriculture by [CropLife magazine](#). In a story published May 2, 2012, *CropLife* cited Brown's work as head of FFA (also known as Future Farmers of America) and the role he has played in the advancement of agricultural education, saying he is an individual “with the leadership to responsibly and creatively influence the future.”

During his 30 years in agricultural education Brown served as the Missouri state FFA executive secretary, a district supervisor in agricultural education for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and an FFA advisor at the Macon Area Career and Technical Center in Missouri, where he taught agriculture. Originally from Orrick, Mo., Brown received a doctorate in agricultural education, and undergraduate and master's degrees from the University of Missouri at Columbia.

The National FFA Organization provides leadership, personal growth and career success training through agricultural education to 540,379 student members in grades seven through 12 who belong to one of 7,489 local FFA chapters throughout the U.S.

Accountability's Role in CTE

“Meaningful accountability and rewards based upon clear metrics” is the third core principal in [Investing in America's Future: A Blueprint for Transforming Career and Technical Education](#). The *Blueprint* proposes three specific reforms to ensure that the highest-quality programs are available to all students regardless of background or circumstance.

The first reform is competition to distribute *Perkins* funding within states. Such competition provides flexibility and autonomy in identifying and funding CTE programs that are rigorous and responsive to local and state labor market needs, particularly those associated with in-demand occupations in high-growth industry sectors.

The second reform calls for common participation and performance indicators so that programs can be evaluated and assessed in a standard and clear way. In addition to using common definitions for participation and performance indicators, states must include CTE data in their own longitudinal data systems.

The third reform is the introduction of performance-based funding. Once program data systems have been updated to reflect the new definitions for the indicators, states would use performance-based funding to reward local consortia that demonstrate success in improving student outcomes and closing equity gaps.

The result of these three specific reforms will be a stronger CTE system in which *Perkins* funding is distributed more strategically to meet the education and skill needs of students and the labor market, performance and participation data can be effectively analyzed to support better education decisions, and local consortia have financial incentives to create educational programming that produces better and more equitable student outcomes.

Reminder: Feedback About OVAE Connection Welcome

From our initial issue in May, 2010, we at *OVAE Connection* have appreciated the feedback offered by our readers. We encourage you to continue to suggest ways we might improve. Thank you in advance!