Maine Department of Education  
attn: Paul Hambleton  
23 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333  

To whom it may concern;

We are educators and administrators from AOS #94 located in central Maine and represent the schools of Dexter Regional High School and Ridge View Community School. We are writing to express our support for the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) as the new science standards for the Maine Learning Results. Our district has already recognized the benefit of using these updated standards, and several years ago our school board adopted their use for our district in anticipation of their adoption by the state. Since that time we have spent countless hours modifying, aligning, and revamping our curriculums to better reflect the standards that will help to make our students better prepared for their own future.

As we move into that future, our students should be given the absolute highest quality education we can provide. The NGSS and the Framework behind them are built to prepare our students for the world of the future. Today, facts and information are readily available to anyone with internet access, but it is the process of doing science that becomes more critical for students to understand. The eight practices that the NGSS are built on address this need. Because NGSS does not focus on content alone, when students leave high school and join communities they will have scientific reasoning skills that will help them make informed decisions about scientific and technological issues. As educators and administrators we want to help open doors for our graduates. This enhanced science background will enable them to choose to continue their study of science and technology in a post secondary setting and to enter wide-open career opportunities in these fields.

The current Maine learning results are very content focused and treat science as a set of siloed topics that do not interact in a meaningful way. Our students do not need to memorize a series of facts to spit back on a test. More rigorous standards that are flexible and provide clarity are what our students deserve across the state and nation. We owe it to them to prepare them and assess them in ways that will meet their needs for a future that is far from certain. They need to understand how to ask questions, build models, problem solve, understand data, create and test ideas, and be challenged to communicate and work together. If we want our students prepared for the future, we need to get them ready today.
We are urging you to support adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards as the new Maine Learning Results science standards so that we can all move forward with the best available tools and information to help our students be successful in the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

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