

## **Overview**

Under the direction of Florida Citizens Alliance, a science textbook review was conducted in order to determine if the textbook publishing companies seeking to have their textbooks adopted by school districts adhered to the Florida State statutes. 23 reviewers throughout the State of Florida were involved in the process of reading a particular textbook, or sections/chapters of a textbook that was assigned to them. In preparation for the textbook review, the reviewers went through an extensive training process. They read articles about critical race theory and social-emotional learning, viewed and participated a training Zoom session and were taught to identify omission of facts, factual errors, slants, biased half-truths, incorrect terminology, and printing and formatting errors, and they used The New B.E.S.T. Standards and State benchmarks to assess the textbooks they read.

Below you will find the results of the textbook review. The minority of the textbooks reviewed contained significant errors or should not be considered for adoption. Some social-emotional learning permeated these textbooks. However, the biggest issue found was the presentation of evolution as the only theory, leaving out creation theory. The other equally troubling objection is the presentation of climate change as man-made.

The conclusions are these:

- The Standards and State benchmarks, which have both evolution and climate change in them, need to be updated to have the presentation of more than just one theory. The textbooks also need to reflect this as well.
- The textbooks that had social-emotional learning need to be updated to not include those portions.
- Minor and moderate changes should be addressed with the publishers to insure the best education for students in Florida.
- The legislature must update State Statute 1006.28(2)(e)1 and State Statute 1006.283(2)(b)8.a which eliminates the words “excluding teacher editions.”

## **Books Reviewed**

Savvas Learning Company LLC: Florida Savvas Science Explorations ©2025, Life  
McGraw Hill: Florida Hole's Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology  
McGraw Hill: Florida Science, Grade K  
Savvas Learning Company LLC: Florida Savvas Science Explorations ©2025 Grade 5  
Discovery Education, INC: Science Techbook for Florida by Discovery Education - Grade 1  
McGraw Hill: McGraw Hill Florida Science, Physical Science  
McGraw Hill: McGraw Hill Florida Science, Comprehensive Course 2  
Savvas Learning Company LLC: Florida Savvas Science Explorations ©2025, Earth

Savvas Learning Company LLC: Florida Miller & Levine Experience Biology ©2025

## **Results**

### **Not Recommended for Adoption:**

Savvas Learning Company LLC: Florida Savvas Science Explorations ©2025, Life  
Savvas Learning Company LLC: Florida Miller & Levine Experience Biology ©2025

### **Substantial Changes Needed:**

Savvas Learning Company LLC: Florida Savvas Science Explorations ©2025, Earth

### **Moderate Changes Needed:**

McGraw Hill: McGraw Hill Florida Science, Comprehensive Course 2  
McGraw Hill: McGraw Hill Florida Science, Physical Science

### **Minor Changes Needed:**

McGraw Hill: Florida Science, Grade K  
Savvas Learning Company LLC: Florida Savvas Science Explorations ©2025 Grade 5  
Discovery Education, INC: Science Techbook vs Textbook for Florida by Discovery Education - Grade 1  
McGraw Hill: Florida Hole's Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology

## **Topics Included in Textbooks**

Topics included Earth science, Life Science, Physical Science, Evolution, Climate Change, Global Warming, Biology, and Anatomy.

## **Definitions from State Statutes and the FIMA handbook Used in this Summary**

The Department of Education's Policies and Procedures Specifications for the Florida Instructional Materials Adoption Manual (FIMA) - Procedural manual that was developed and is utilized by the Florida Department of Education, Office of Instructional Materials that should align with State Statute and provide the process by which textbooks are adopted in the State of Florida.

**Instructional materials-** (State Statute definition, 1006.29(2)) - Items having intellectual content that by design serve as a major tool for assisting in the instruction of a subject or course. These items may be available in bound, unbound, kit, or package form and may consist of hardback or soft back textbooks, electronic content, consumables, learning laboratories, manipulatives, electronic media, and computer courseware or software (per statute, this exact definition is also found the FIMA handbook).

**Digital materials-** (State Statute Definition - 1006.29) Digital format means text-based or image-based content in a form that provides the student with various interactive functions; that can be searched, tagged, distributed, and used for individualized and group learning; that includes multimedia content such as video clips, animations, and virtual reality; and that has the ability to be accessed at anytime and anywhere.

**Electronic materials-** (State Statute Definition- 1006.29) Electronic format means text-based or image-based content in a form that is produced on, published by, and readable on computers or other digital devices and is an electronic version of a printed book, whether or not any printed equivalent exists. The terms digital and electronic do not include electronic or computer hardware even if such hardware is bundled with software or other electronic media, nor does it include equipment or supplies.

**Major Tool -** (FIMA definition; Not defined by State Statute) Major tools refers to materials that provide instructional content and student learning activities for each of the Florida standards that are in the course descriptions for reading, language arts, literature, math, science, social studies, physical education, health, world languages, visual arts and performing arts.

**Ancillary Items-** (FIMA definition; Not defined by State Statute) Those items that were designed to work with the Major Tool and may be priced or free with order.

**Supplementary Materials-** (FIMA definition; Not defined by State Statute) - Supporting materials that do not qualify as the Major Tool and are not designated to accompany the specific Major Tool with which they were submitted but could be used with any publisher's materials. Florida does not have a process for the adoption of supplementary materials.

## **Analysis of Textbook Review**

The Florida Department of Education started public input on 2/20/2024 and lasted through 3/5/2024 for 2023-2024 K-12 science textbook adoption. This year's public input window was shorter than last year. The public could review 146 books that are on the short bid list for this year.

We had a total of 23 reviewers from across the state. Many of these reviewers had prior experience reviewing textbooks during the public input period from previous years. Some reviewers worked in teams for the middle and high school level textbooks.

We reviewed a total of 9 textbooks. The publishers covered were McGraw Hill LLC, Savvas Learning Company, LLC, formerly known as Pearson K12 Learning LLC, and Discovery Education, Inc.

Like last year, we were not able to review teacher's editions due to State Statute 1006.28(2)(e)1. The textbooks reviewed varied in levels of changes needed. There were 4 books that needed minor changes, 2 books that needed moderate changes, 1 book needing substantial changes, and 2 books not recommended for adoption.

There were two big issues within the textbook this year. First, was the presentation of evolution theory as the only theory. Even though the books did not present evolution as fact it did not present any other theories, for example the theory of creation. This sort of presentation provides bias against many religious faiths such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, etc. Along these lines, even the state benchmarks/standards state that evolution must be taught.

The other was the discussions related to man-made climate change/global warming as the only explanation. Even though the books did not present man-made climate change/global warming as fact, it did not present any other theories. Along these lines, even the state benchmarks/standards state that climate change must be taught.

## **The State Science Benchmarks, the Education Rules, and the State Statutes**

The definitions for the following Act, Education Rules, and State Statutes are presented to show what governs this process.

### **Education Rule 6A-7.0710: Instructional Materials Evaluation Procedures**

Publishers and manufacturers of instructional materials may submit sealed bids or proposals for the adoption of instructional materials by the Department of Education in response to the advertisement submitted. The student and teacher editions of the major tool of instruction, along with any ancillary materials deemed appropriate by the department, will be evaluated for alignment to the applicable State standards, course descriptions, and other requirements outlined in the specifications.

Electronic samples of the student and teacher editions, along with any ancillary materials deemed appropriate for sampling by the department, will be evaluated. Forms IM19 and IM20, the Principles of Individual Freedom Assurance for publishers, must be signed by the publishers to acknowledge that they are aware of and are complying with Statute and Standards.

### **Statute 1006.29: State Instructional Materials Reviewers**

This statute serves to detail what publishers are required to do in order to submit bids for textbook adoption. 1006.29 (2) states that for the purpose of this part, the term instructional material means having intellectual content that by design serves as a major tool for assisting in the instruction of a particular subject or course. These items may be available in bound, unbound, kit, or package form and may consist of hardback or soft back textbooks, electronic content, consumables, learning laboratories, manipulatives, electronic media, and computer courseware or software. This statute further defines the definitions for electronic format and digital format as referenced above in the definition section.

### **Statute 1006.28 Duties of District School Board, District School Superintendent; and School Principal Regarding K-12 Instructional Materials**

Subsection 1006.28(1)2. States that instructional materials have the same meaning as in statute 1006.29(2).

### **Statute 1006.29(1)(b) State Instructional Materials Reviewers**

This statute is designed to explain the Commissioner of Education's responsibilities with regard to textbook adoption and the requirement to appoint state or national experts to review the instructional materials to make sure that they are in alignment with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. Statute 1006.29(2) State Instructional Materials Reviewers (2022) Statute 1006.29(2) follows statute 1006.29(1)(b) and reads for the purpose of this part, the term instructional material means having intellectual content that by design serve as a major tool for assisting in the instruction of a subject or course. These items may be available inbound, unbound, kit, or package form and may consist of hardback or soft back textbooks, electronic content, consumables, learning laboratories, manipulatives, electronic media, and computer coursework or software. The definitions for electronic format and digital format are described in the definition section above.

### **State Statute 1006.28(2)(e)1. Duties of District School Board, District School Superintendent; and School Principal Regarding K-12 Instructional Materials: Public Participation**

This statute serves to detail the school district's responsibility in terms of public participation with regard to reviewing textbooks prior to adoption. It specifically reads that district school boards must provide access to all materials, *excluding teacher editions*, In accordance with **statute 1006.283(2)(b)8.a.** before the school district takes any official action on such materials.

### **Statute 1003.41 Next Generation Sunshine State Standards**

This statute defines what should be taught in the various subject areas.

#### **Benchmark: SC.7.L.15.1**

Recognize that fossil evidence is consistent with the scientific theory of evolution that living things evolved from earlier species.

#### **Benchmark: SC.7.L.15.2**

Explore the scientific theory of evolution by recognizing and explaining ways in which genetic variation and environmental factors contribute to evolution by natural selection and diversity of organisms.

#### **Benchmark: SC.7.L.15.3**

Explore the scientific theory of evolution by relating how the inability of a species to adapt within a changing environment may contribute to the extinction of that species.

#### **Benchmark: SC.912.L.15.1**

Explain how the scientific theory of evolution is supported by the fossil record, comparative anatomy, comparative embryology, biogeography, molecular biology, and observed evolutionary change.

#### **Benchmark: SC.912.L.15.2**

Discuss the use of molecular clocks to estimate how long ago various groups of organisms diverged evolutionarily from one another.

#### **Benchmark: SC.912.L.15.4**

Describe how and why organisms are hierarchically classified and based on evolutionary relationships.

**Benchmark: SC.912.L.15.8**

Describe the scientific explanations of the origin of life on Earth.

**Benchmark: SC.912.E.6.6**

Analyze past, present, and potential future consequences to the environment resulting from various energy production technologies.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

1. A number of legislative and/or Department of Education rule-making updates need to happen when it comes to teaching evolution and man-made climate change.
  1. As you can see from the above referenced benchmarks, there are a number that touch on evolution. As such, the textbooks present evolution as the only theory as to why humans are how we are and how humans came to be. This approach leaves out creation theory, which alienates many religions. If evolution is going to be taught, there must be conversations on more than just the theory alone.
  2. The textbooks also put an emphasis on man-made climate change for the same reason due to needing to address the benchmark. This again should be balanced with other theories.
2. Until legislative and/or Department of Education rule-making updates happen, the Department of Education should insist the textbook publishers address these objections to how evolution and man-made climate change is taught due to the biased nature of how they are currently written.
3. Other minor and moderate changes should be addressed with the publishers to ensure the best education for students in Florida.
4. The textbooks that had social-emotional learning need to be updated to not include those portions.

The legislature must update **State Statute 1006.28(2)(e)1** and **State Statute 1006.283(2)(b)8.a** to eliminate the words “**excluding teacher editions.**”