



Guidelines for the Development and Revision of NSTA Position Statements

I. Rationale for Position Statements

NSTA provides national and international leadership in science education by identifying the qualities and standards for good science education. NSTA Position Statements are used to support the improvement of science education at all levels.

Position Statements are far-reaching statements for science education and represent the organization's official stand on issues and membership's response to issues. Position Statements are statements of intent and goals for science education. They are future oriented, data and research-based, and reach beyond a statement of standards. Position Statements should be informed by expert professional thinking and useful to all stakeholders.

II. Development Procedures

- A. Recommendation for the development, revision or removal of a Position Statement can be submitted to the NSTA Board by any Board member or through a formal motion by the NSTA Council. Recommendations to the NSTA Council can be made by any Standing Committee, Advisory Board, or by the National Congress on Science Education through a formal resolution.
- B. When a new position statement is proposed to the NSTA Board, it must be accompanied by a rationale that answers and addresses key questions about the need for a new statement. At a minimum, this rationale should clearly state the need for this position statement and draw upon relevant evidence, document how various NSTA audiences and constituents might use the statement to support science teaching and learning, cite any similar statements that are supported by other organizations (if other statements exist, a justification for developing an additional NSTA statement), and state why another NSTA product or vehicle would not better address the issue or need.
- C. Board approves development or revision of Position Statement.
- D. President assigns development or revision of a Position Statement to a Position Statement Panel consisting of select members from Standing Committees or Advisory Boards and national experts selected by NSTA staff. One active Board and Council

member should serve on the Panel. President selects Chair.

- E. Panel Chair and NSTA staff member will co-lead the development or revision process with designated Panel members and will assign writing task to a professional writer.
- F. The first task of the panel will be to determine if the current statement should be removed from the website during the revision process.
- G. NSTA staff member posts Preliminary Draft on the NSTA Extranet for Board and Council review and comment.
- H. Panel considers comments and recommendations from Board and Council and submits second draft to Board and Council for approval to send to membership.
- I. NSTA staff member makes Position Statement widely available to the membership for review and comment.
- J. Panel considers comments from NSTA membership and presents completed Position Statement to the Board and Council for final adoption.
- K. Position Statement is posted on NSTA website, published in the *NSTA Handbook*, and distributed widely to NSTA membership and other appropriate audiences.

III. Removal/Retirement Procedures

NSTA staff shall conduct a review of any statement over 10 years (or sooner if deemed appropriate by the Board or staff) and make recommendation to the NSTA Board to retire the statement or keep it on the list for development. This review includes opinions of Board or Council members, and/or other NSTA staff members, and possibly outside experts.

- A. NSTA staff shall determine if there is a significantly reduced membership attention or demand for this position statement.
- B. The removal or retirement process should provide a rationale that addresses the following areas as appropriate: The demand for the position statement, the detrimental impact of the position statement on NSTA, and/or the importance of the topic to the leadership.
- C. The final recommendation of the process should be for removal, which means that the statement will not be revised, nor will it be available for review; or retirement, which means the statement will be stored and can be drawn upon in future statements.

IV. Review of Position Statement Queue

- A. Once a year, the Board and Council will review the position statement queue. In evaluating the queue, Board and Council members will need to determine the necessity and order of the suggested position statements.

- B. During this review, position statements will be ranked and possibly removed from the queue. Statements that are in the last two spots of the queue during three consecutive reviews will be brought back to the Board for reconsideration as a position statement. The Board can elect to remove the low ranking position statement from the queue, as it may no longer be timely, or the Board can elect to place the position statement back in the queue. Removed statements can be brought back through the normal position statement process.

V. Recommended Format for NSTA Position Statements

- A. **TITLE:** Each statement should have a title that clearly and concisely identifies the issue/position.
- B. **INTRODUCTION:** Each Position Statement should lead with succinct comments that explain the importance of the position/issue to science educators, why NSTA desires to go on record with an opinion, contributing factors that have a major impact on the position/issue, and/or information needed to better define the issue.
- C. **DECLARATIONS:** Each statement should contain bulleted items that make up the body of the statement. The declaration may be followed by a series of sub-clauses but no additional narrative text.
- D. **REFERENCES:** Complete references to cited research and publications should be listed at the end of each Position Statement.
- E. **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:** Additional resources can be listed to identify important research or publications that were not referenced in the paper but were important in its development.
- F. **PANEL MEMBERS:** A list of preparers' names and affiliations should be provided when the statement is submitted to Board and Council for approval and will be published when the position is introduced to the membership.

VI. Guidelines

- A. This process of position statement development and revision should be reviewed every four years. During this discussion, the effectiveness of this process should be considered.

*Adopted by the
NSTA Board of Directors
February 2010*