

California Department of Education
California Next Generation Science Standards
April 2014
Alternative Discipline Specific Course Overview

On September 4, 2013, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the *Next Generation Science Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve* (CA NGSS) as required by California *Education Code* 60605.85. The CA NGSS is based upon the nationally developed Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

The nationally developed NGSS presented middle grade standards in a grade span of sixth through eighth grade. However, California is a kindergarten through eighth grade instructional materials adoption state and requires that standards be placed at specific grade levels – sixth, seventh, and eighth. Therefore, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) recommended the adoption of the placement of these original NGSS standards at each grade level.

At their November 2013 meeting, the SBE approved the Integrated Learning Progression model as the preferred model for the grade span of six through eight. At that same meeting the SBE approved a recommendation to reconvene the Science Expert Panel (SEP) in order “to develop ... as an alternative model ... a discipline specific model” for the grade span of six through eight. This model was to be based upon the guidance for developing a domain specific model as outlined by Achieve in the NGSS Appendix K.

The SBE’s clear intent in their November action was for there to be one preferred Integrated Learning Progression CA NGSS model for grades six through eight and one Alternate Discipline Specific CA NGSS model for grades six through eight, as an alternate.

This course is aligned with the cognitive demands of the Common Core State Standards and contains the CA NGSS for grades six through eight organized into content-specific courses that match the three science domains of:

6th Grade- Earth and Space Science

7th Grade- Life Science

8th Grade- Physical Science and includes

6th – 8th grade- Engineering, Technology and Application of Science

In addition to the arrangement of the domain specific content, the SEP also considered what content, if any, from the other science domains would need to be introduced in order to facilitate student’s full understanding of each performance expectation. Therefore, the Alternative Discipline Specific Course standards contain supplemental Disciplinary Core Ideas from other domains.