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## **Actions taken to move New Mexico Science Standards towards objectivity in origins science**

In 2003 concerned citizens in New Mexico influenced the State Department of Education to change dogmatic language in the Working Draft to more objective language in the Final New Mexico Science Content Standards, Benchmarks and Performance Standards (Approved August 28, 2003, [http://164.64.166.11/cilt/downloads/science/science\\_standards.pdf](http://164.64.166.11/cilt/downloads/science/science_standards.pdf)). It should be noted that the New Mexico Standards do not on their face advance explicit naturalism via an exclusionary definition of science or other learning objectives that explicitly exclude design as a cause of natural phenomena. It is believed that the following changes exclude an unstated naturalistic philosophy.

### **Origin of Life**

- “Recognize that life on Earth began over 3.5 billion years ago; and species today have evolved from earlier, distinctly different species.” (Working Draft)
- “Explain that one-celled organisms developed into increasingly complex multi-cellular organisms.” (Working Draft)
- “8. Describe the evidence for the first appearance of life on Earth as one-celled organisms, over 3.5 billion years ago, and for the later appearance of a diversity of multi-cellular organisms over millions of years.” (Final: Grade 9-12, Strand II, Standard II (Life Science), Benchmark II, Performance Standard 8)

### **Common Ancestry**

- “Explain that millions of different species that live on Earth today are related by descent from common ancestors.” (Working Draft)
- “9. Critically analyze the data and observations supporting the conclusion that the species living on Earth today are related by descent from the ancestral one-celled organisms.” (Final: Grade 9-12, Strand II, Standard II (Life Science), Benchmark II, Performance Standard 9)

### **Natural Selection**

- Explain that evolution by natural selection explains both the fossil record of ancient life forms and DNA similarities among species. (Working Draft)

- 13. Analyze how evolution by natural selection and other mechanisms explains many phenomena including the fossil record of ancient life forms and similarities (both physical and molecular) among different species. (Final: Grade 9-12, Strand II, Standard II (Life Science), Benchmark II, Performance Standard 13)