



February 20, 2007

**Position Statement of the Minnesota Science Teachers Association
Board of Directors regarding Minnesota's High School Assessment in Science**

As an educational organization representing Minnesota science teachers, the Minnesota Science Teachers Association (MnSTA) Board of Directors wishes to inform you of its position concerning high school science standards and testing. The Minnesota Academic Standards in Science demand a broad background in all science content areas for all students. We believe the scope of these standards builds the necessary foundation for students to become literate members of society in the twenty-first century. As such, we need to see that same foundation be encompassed in the MCA II testing plan for high school science.

The current academic standards were derived from the Benchmarks for Science Literacy (Project 2061, American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1993) and the National Science Education Standards (National Research Council, 1996). Both of these documents emphasize science for all students, in much the same way that No Child Left Behind emphasizes evidence of learning for all students. Because testing tends to encourage districts to place an importance and value on content areas that are tested, MnSTA requests that the Minnesota Legislature support our national and state documents in promoting the literacy of our students in *all* content areas of science. Currently, state statutes require high school science testing only for the biology and nature of science standards. MnSTA would support your efforts to revise the current high school testing plan to include *all* science content areas.

We recommend that the 2004 Minnesota Session Laws, Chapter 294 be amended to require earth and physical science questions, in addition to the current life and nature of science areas on the high school MCA II test. This will then reflect a statewide commitment from science teachers, school districts and legislators to our academic standards and to science for all Minnesota students.

Sincerely,

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