



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

BRIAN J. WHISTON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 18, 2016

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent 
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

SUBJECT: Alternatives to Dissection / New Science Standards

With the adoption of our new science standards, it is important to note that none of our standards actually require the dissection of animals in order to demonstrate proficiency. The methods schools will use to assess student proficiency on the new science standards are a local decision. However, if a school feels that dissection activities should be a part of their curriculum, the State Board of Education would like to remind educators that the State of Michigan has an alternative to dissections policy. You may find this policy by following this link and then scrolling to page 14 Exhibit A:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Item_G_Minutes_May_13_2014_458448_7.pdf

For further information on this topic and resources available, please review the National Science Teachers Association position statement on dissection:
http://www.nsta.org/docs/PositionStatement_LiveAnimalsAndDissection.pdf.

Some alternatives to dissection may also be found at: www.bioleap.org.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance

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