

## **What does the Discovery Institute’s Center for Science and Culture recommend for science education curriculum?**

As a matter of public policy, Discovery Institute *opposes* any effort require the teaching of intelligent design by school districts or state boards of education. Attempts to mandate teaching about intelligent design only politicize the theory and will hinder fair and open discussion of the merits of the theory among scholars and within the scientific community. Furthermore, most teachers at the present time do not know enough about intelligent design to teach about it accurately and objectively.

Instead of mandating intelligent design, Discovery Institute seeks to increase the coverage of evolution in textbooks. It believes that evolution should be fully and completely presented to students, and they should learn more about evolutionary theory, including its unresolved issues. In other words, evolution should be taught as a scientific theory that is open to critical scrutiny, not as a sacred dogma that can't be questioned

Discovery Institute believes that a curriculum that aims to provide students with an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of neo-Darwinian and chemical evolutionary theories (rather than teaching an alternative theory, such as intelligent design) represents a common ground approach that all reasonable citizens can agree on.

Five states (Ohio, New Mexico, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Kansas) have already adopted science standards that require learning about some of the scientific controversies relating to evolution. Further, Ohio adopted a model curriculum that includes a lesson plan on the “Critical Analysis of Evolution.” (Available for download here: [http://www.ode.state.oh.us/academic\\_content\\_standards/sciencesboe/pdf\\_setA/L10-H23\\_Critical\\_Analysis\\_of\\_Evolution\\_Mar\\_SBOE\\_changes.pdf](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/academic_content_standards/sciencesboe/pdf_setA/L10-H23_Critical_Analysis_of_Evolution_Mar_SBOE_changes.pdf).)

Although Discovery Institute does not advocate requiring the teaching of intelligent design in public schools, it does believe there is nothing unconstitutional about voluntarily discussing the scientific theory of design in the classroom. In addition, the Institute opposes efforts to persecute individual teachers who may wish to discuss the scientific debate over design in an objective and pedagogically appropriate manner.

The U.S. Supreme Court in *Edwards v. Aguillard* strongly affirmed the individual teacher’s right to academic freedom. It also recognized that, while the statute requiring the teaching of creationism in that case was unconstitutional, “...teaching a variety of scientific theories about the origins of humankind to schoolchildren might be validly done with the clear secular intent of enhancing the effectiveness of science instruction.”