NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS
For States, By States

**Unless otherwise specified, "descriptions" referenced in the evidence statements could include but are not limited to written, oral, pictorial, and kinesthetic descriptions.*

MS-ESS2-6 Earth's Systems

Students who demonstrate understanding can:

MS-ESS2-6. Develop and use a model to describe how unequal heating and rotation of the Earth cause patterns of atmospheric and oceanic circulation that determine regional climates. [Clarification Statement: Emphasis is on how patterns vary by latitude, altitude, and geographic land distribution. Emphasis of atmospheric circulation is on the sunlight-driven latitudinal banding, the Coriolis effect, and resulting prevailing winds; emphasis of ocean circulation is on the transfer of heat by the global ocean convection cycle, which is constrained by the Coriolis effect and the outlines of continents. Examples of models can be diagrams, maps and globes, or digital representations.] [*Assessment Boundary: Assessment does not include the dynamics of the Coriolis effect.*]

The performance expectation above was developed using the following elements from the NRC document *A Framework for K-12 Science Education*:

Science and Engineering Practices

Developing and Using Models
Modeling in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to developing, using, and revising models to describe, test, and predict more abstract phenomena and design systems.

- Develop and use a model to describe phenomena.

Disciplinary Core Ideas

ESS2.C: The Roles of Water in Earth's Surface Processes

- Variations in density due to variations in temperature and salinity drive a global pattern of interconnected ocean currents.

ESS2.D: Weather and Climate

- Weather and climate are influenced by interactions involving sunlight, the ocean, the atmosphere, ice, landforms, and living things. These interactions vary with latitude, altitude, and local and regional geography, all of which can affect oceanic and atmospheric flow patterns.
- The ocean exerts a major influence on weather and climate by absorbing energy from the sun, releasing it over time, and globally redistributing it through ocean currents.

Crosscutting Concepts

Systems and System Models

- Models can be used to represent systems and their interactions—such as inputs, processes and outputs—and energy, matter, and information flows within systems.

Observable features of the student performance by the end of the course:

1	Components of the model		
	a	To make sense of a phenomenon, students develop a model in which they identify the relevant components of the system, with inputs and outputs, including:	
		i.	The rotating Earth.
		ii.	The atmosphere.
		iii.	The ocean, including the relative rate of thermal energy transfer of water compared to land or air.
		iv.	Continents and the distribution of landforms on the surface of Earth.
		v.	Global distribution of ice.
		vi.	Distribution of living things.
		vii.	Energy.
			1. Radiation from the sun as an input.
			2. Thermal energy that exists in the atmosphere, water, land, and ice (as represented by temperature).

2	Relationships	
	a	In the model, students identify and describe* the relationships between components of the system, including:
		i. Differences in the distribution of solar energy and temperature changes, including:
		1. Higher latitudes receive less solar energy per unit of area than do lower latitudes, resulting in temperature differences based on latitude.
		2. Smaller temperature changes tend to occur in oceans than on land in the same amount of time.
		3. In general, areas at higher elevations have lower average temperatures than do areas at lower elevations.
		4. Features on the Earth’s surface, such as the amount of solar energy reflected back into the atmosphere or the absorption of solar energy by living things, affect the amount of solar energy transferred into heat energy.
		ii. Motion of ocean waters and air masses (matter):
		1. Fluid matter (i.e., air, water) flows from areas of higher density to areas of lower density (due to temperature or salinity). The density of a fluid can vary for several different reasons (e.g., changes in salinity and temperature of water can each cause changes in density). Differences in salinity and temperature can, therefore, cause fluids to move vertically and, as a result of vertical movement, also horizontally because of density differences.
		iii. Factors affecting the motion of wind and currents:
		1. The Earth’s rotation causes oceanic and atmospheric flows to curve when viewed from the rotating surface of Earth (Coriolis force).
		2. The geographical distribution of land limits where ocean currents can flow.
		3. Landforms affect atmospheric flows (e.g., mountains deflect wind and/or force it to higher elevation).
		iv. Thermal energy transfer:
		1. Thermal energy moves from areas of high temperature to areas of lower temperature either through the movement of matter, via radiation, or via conduction of heat from warmer objects to cooler objects.
		2. Absorbing or releasing thermal energy produces a more rapid change in temperature on land compared to in water.
		3. Absorbing or releasing thermal energy produces a more rapid change in temperature in the atmosphere compared to either on land or in water so the atmosphere is warmed or cooled by being in contact with land or the ocean.
3	Connections	
	a	Students use the model to describe*:
		i. The general latitudinal pattern in climate (higher average annual temperatures near the equator and lower average annual temperatures at higher latitudes) caused by more direct light (greater energy per unit of area) at the equator (more solar energy) and less direct light at the poles (less solar energy).
		ii. The general latitudinal pattern of drier and wetter climates caused by the shift in the amount of air moisture during precipitation from rising moisture-rich air and the sinking of dry air.
		iii. The pattern of differing climates in continental areas as compared to the oceans. Because water can absorb more solar energy for every degree change in temperature compared to land, there is a greater and more rapid temperature change on land than in the ocean. At the centers of landmasses, this leads to conditions typical of continental climate patterns.
		iv. The pattern that climates near large water bodies, such as marine coasts, have comparatively smaller changes in temperature relative to the center of the landmass. Land near the oceans can exchange thermal energy through the air, resulting in smaller changes in temperature. At the edges of landmasses, this leads to marine climates.
		v. The pattern that climates at higher altitudes have lower temperatures than climates at lower altitudes. Because of the direct relationship between temperature and pressure, given the same amount of thermal energy, air at lower pressures (higher altitudes) will have lower temperatures than air at higher pressures (lower altitudes).

		vi. Regional patterns of climate (e.g., temperature or moisture) related to a specific pattern of water or air circulation, including the role of the following in contributing to the climate pattern:
		1. Air or water moving from areas of high temperature, density, and/or salinity to areas of low temperature, density, and/or salinity.
		2. The Earth's rotation, which affects atmospheric and oceanic circulation.
		3. The transfer of thermal energy with the movement of matter.
		4. The presence of landforms (e.g., the rain shadow effect).
	b	Students use the model to describe* the role of each of its components in producing a given regional climate.