

Youth Voice for Climate Readiness in School



Resource Guide

Content from October 13th, 2023 at the MAC - Leadership Summit.

Key Resources

Stating the Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● IPCC Climate Change 2023 Synthesis Report IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf● UNESCO - Getting Climate Ready Guide for School Getting climate-ready: a guide for schools on climate action - UNESCO Digital Library
Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Climate and Community - A Green New Deal: A GND for K-12 Public Schools Climate and Community● What is LEED certification? – U.S. Green Building Council (usgbc.org)● Leading strategies for climate-friendly school food (foe.org)● https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/06/17/1182556371/schools-parks-healthy-cities-kids● Green Your School: 5 Ways to Convert Your School into a Center for Sustainability - Student Conservation Association (thesca.org)● Green Schools Initiative : Executive Summary● Identifying Greener Cleaning Products US EPA● Green Your School (nrdc.org)
Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● K-12 Climate Action - Apsen Institute K12-StatePolicyLandscape2020_FINAL.pdf (aspeninstitute.org)● Equity in Education & Distance Learning - AfterSchool Network● Tips for Survivors of a Disaster or Other Traumatic Event: Managing Stress (samhsa.gov)● Survivors of Disasters Resource Portal SAMHSA
Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● UNESCO - Integrating Climate Needs Getting every school climate-ready: how countries are integrating climate change issues in education - UNESCO Digital Library● Your Guide to Talking With Kids of All Ages About Climate Change (nrdc.org)● Curriculum Climate Change Education (stanford.edu)● https://www.changeissimple.org/program● https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/everyday-actions/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-climate-change/?c_src=MDS22VX&c_src2=22vmmembcp&gad=1

Mitigation

The efforts in these 5 areas can help your school get to carbon neutrality.

- **Energy Reduction** - Shift toward renewable energy sources, updates to inefficient infrastructure, and energy saving practices.
- **Meals at School** - Focus on locally sourced food, create composts, reduce food waste, change offerings to vegetable forward meals.
- **Transportation** - Create carpools, encourage biking/walking, enforce “no-idle” zones for pickup and drop-off.
- **Green Space in schools** - Revamp playgrounds with non-toxic equipment, build rain gardens to eliminate runoff, encourage local flora and fauna growth.
- **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle** - Eliminate single use plastics, encourage recycling, reduce the use of chemicals in classrooms for cleaning.

Adaptation

By becoming prepared for upcoming climate events, we can help students feel more at ease adapting to changing environments, both ecologically and locationally.

- **Prepare for extreme weather events** - Teach students about their own local biome, and how to be safe in different types of weather.
- **Prepare for integrated online learning** - Have resources available online to keep access to programs if students and staff are unable to access school buildings.
- **Prepare on trauma informed practices** - Keep warmth and containment of emotion, both for the staff and youth, at the forefront of high stress situations and create environments where allowing youth to process emotions happens without disclosure.

Teaching and Learning

To enable youth to have a voice on the topic of climate readiness, they need to be brought in the conversation in developmentally appropriate ways.

- **Governance and Planning** - Develop an action orientation through which both adults and children can learn and bring a focus to climate readiness in their communities
- **Climate Content** - Integrate the topic of climate into all subjects, art and crafts, science projects, outdoor activities all have opportunities for conversations about climate.
- **Key Concepts** - Use and define key terms and concepts when talking about climate and processes involved in climate changes.
- **Framing Hope** - Teach the past, present, and possible future with the cause and effect of human behavior in all aspects of climate change. The past is not changeable but our present determines the future and we create that with our choices.
- **Ages and developmentally appropriate content**
 - **Littlest kids 0-6 yrs** - Introduce concepts and cultivate curiosity, teach stewardship based practices, be positive about the climate.
 - **School age 6-12 yrs** - Explain the science to them, be clear about facts and dispel myths, emphasize solution oriented discussions to climate, inform them of their personal power to create change.
 - **Youth 12-14 yrs** - Encourage discussions about climate that include both staff and youth, and when questions are asked with unknown answers advise youth to look up facts to find answers.
 - **Teens 15-18 yrs** - Empower them to become a resource of education and action within their schools, families and communities.