

# STRATEGIES TO ADVANCE CLIMATE ACTION IN SCHOOLS

Students can take the following actions to advance climate action in schools.

## Learn and Connect with Other Students



**Learn how climate change is impacting your community and school.**

- Ask your Social Studies, Science, Math, English, and other teachers to incorporate climate change in their lesson plans
- Read the local news and check out local organizations, such as local land trusts and conservation organizations, to learn about key issues impacting your community
- Learn more from sources such as:
  - [NOAA's Maps and Data](#).
  - [Classroom-Ready Data Resources](#)
  - [Probable Futures](#)
  - [This Is Cooler](#) (featuring student leader, Gianna!)



**Identify a climate- or environmental-focused club or community group to join. We recommend (though there are many, many more that you can connect with):**

- [American Conservation Coalition](#)
- [Big Blue and You](#)
- [Fridays for Future](#)
- [GenCLEO](#) (only in FL)
- [Local 4-H Clubs/ Extension Offices](#)
- [The Sierra Club](#)
- [The Sunrise Movement](#)
- [This is Zero Hour](#)
- [YOUNGO](#)
- [Youth Climate Strike](#)



**Build relationships with other students, community members, and local organizations.**

- Begin talking about these issues at sports games and other school events
- Connect with others through extracurriculars such as art, music, and athletics
- Have face-to-face and/or digital meetings with other students



## Develop Your Goals and Timeline



**Review resources or attend a training for key tips on grassroots advocacy.**

- [Climate Reality](#) offers a series of trainings on climate advocacy
- Connect with volunteer and advocacy opportunities through the [American Conservation Coalition](#)
- Programs such as the National Wildlife Federation's [Earth Tomorrow Program](#) can help students develop leadership and advocacy skills
- The Children's Trust Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) is a leadership development program with a focus on service and advocacy, especially relating to children and families (only in Miami-Dade County)
- The [Sunrise Summer Camp](#) introduces students to the Green New Deal for Schools and provides tools to start a climate campaign in school



**Establish goals for getting your school district to develop and implement a K-12 Climate Action Plan.**

- Have conversations with your friends, teachers, and other people in your community to share your climate concerns and solutions
  - Use The Nature Conservancy's [Let's Talk Climate Guide](#) and the talking points in the sections above as a place to start
  - Consider sending out a survey to your peers to better understand their demands
- Determine who should be a part of the process, including other students, educators, administrators, staff, and parents
- Using the mitigation, adaptation, education, and equity goals outlined above, collectively decide what climate solutions will be best for your school
  - To establish your goals and timeline, it is helpful to know where your district is starting. [These Key Questions](#) can help guide your understanding of what is already in place locally
- Based on your solutions, develop a budget in partnership with school staff
- Create a timeline that outlines key events and deadlines
  - Consider hosting a regular meeting with key stakeholders to keep everyone up to date

## Take Action



**Prepare communications.**

- Develop a common language for your advocacy efforts grounded in your local needs to help you achieve success.
- Reference the talking points in the sections above as a place to start
- Consider how to use social media to further your efforts



### Gather additional support.

- Host a walkout or another public event with students
- Engage local businesses and community organizations in your efforts



### Meet with School Board Members to share your goals.

- You can find contact information for your school board members on most school board websites and request a meeting
- You can also testify at local school board meetings to raise the opportunity for school districts to pass resolutions to develop climate action plans
- You can use or modify the following [Template School Board Climate Action Resolution](#) as a place for your school board to start

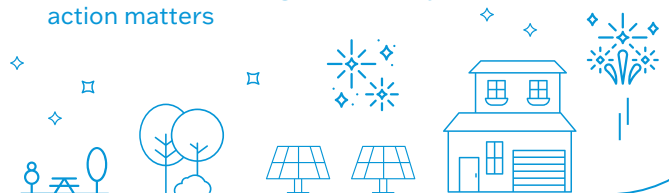


## Assess and Celebrate Success



### Once your school district develops a climate action plan, be sure to celebrate your success with other students!

- Consider hosting a public “launch” to kick off the work
- Celebrate small victories as well! Climate change will not be solved overnight, and every action matters



### Publicize climate accomplishments via local newspapers, website blogs, or school sites.



### Engage other students in art, music, and writing about climate issues



### Connect with other policymakers (council members, state representatives, etc.) to continue momentum in your region.

## Stay Involved



**Become part of an advisory board or run for school board.**

- Many local government agencies engage young people through committees, councils, and youth commissions. Numerous cities, counties, and states have established youth-led climate-specific commissions, including Los Angeles County, the state of Massachusetts, the City of Portland, the City of Boise, the City of San Antonio, the City of Miami, and the City of Austin. These groups often have a chance to steer policies that make a real impact at the local level.



**Volunteer!**

- Volunteer in an elementary school to further engage the next generation of climate leaders
- Host a project, such as a community tree planting or nature restoration, with a local organization



**Engage more students.**

- Host a green career fair in partnership with your school to introduce students to green careers

## WHAT ARE SCHOOL BOARDS?

Most school board members are elected by people in their community to represent their values, views, and desires for the public schools in their district. In general, all school boards have three major responsibilities: developing the annual budget to run the school system; setting school policies; and hiring and evaluating the superintendent. School boards often set policies through passing resolutions.

