



# **REFORM to TRANSFORM:** *General Community Action Toolkit*

**Share these Resources with your friends, family, schools, and more!**

Read our Needs: <https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/our-needs>

Sign our Open Letter: <https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/open-letter>

Find our other toolkits here: <https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/projects>

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## **About The Organization**

Climate Education Reform BC (CERBC; *pronounced sir-BC*) is a youth-led organization currently advocating for climate change education in the British Columbia K-12 curriculum. Our group has just launched the **Reform to Transform campaign**, which includes **6 calls for change** (detailed further below) directed at the **Ministry of Education**. We envision a transformed education system that fully and effectively addresses the complexity of the climate emergency. When all students understand how environmental wellbeing intersects with our health, economy, safety—and how our own inaction impacts our communities, especially those most vulnerable—we can create the first unified generation to solve the climate crisis.

Education is the first step in gaining the knowledge, skills, critical thinking, and empowerment needed to make this world a better place. British Columbia can pave a new trail for education systems around the world. **Let's create hope—together.**

## How Will Climate Change Affect Us?

In October 2018, the world's leading scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change cautioned that there are only 12 years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5 °C (Source: [The Guardian](#)). Exceeding the target by even half a degree will significantly worsen the risk and scale of drought, floods, extreme heat, and poverty for hundreds of millions of people globally (Source: [IPCC](#)). As we delay action on climate change and ignore its immediate threat to our lives due to a lack of proper understanding, we are working against our own futures, and the futures of people all around the world. **But this can change.**

## Why Education Reform?

As specified in the Statement of Education Policy Order, “the purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy”. Schools have the opportunity to teach and empower youth to protect their future; unfortunately, with the lack of due emphasis on climate change and sustainability, we see the opposite.

Although the topic of climate change is briefly mentioned in some science courses as a “content” area,, there is no compulsory curriculum placement; this means there is no course in which climate change is addressed and taught explicitly. Though there are three courses that do address the issue in greater depth: Environmental Science 11/12, Geography 12, and Earth Science 11/12, none are compulsory and are only offered in selected schools with sufficient teacher and student interest. **Climate change education needs to be compulsory and accessible for all students.**

Learning about climate science in school is not merely enough for students to address the climate emergency and ecological crisis, and focusing solely on the facts and impacts can be overwhelming for many students. Interdisciplinary and action-oriented climate change education is essential in guiding student mindsets and behaviour toward meaningful

systems change. By emphasizing forward-thinking and optimism for the future and by illuminating solutions and pathways to a sustainable future, our schools can equip future leaders with the necessary tools to create a more sustainable world.

## What is Climate Justice?

The concept that current classrooms overlook the most is climate justice. Climate justice is a concept that many do not understand, and should be a key part of the curriculum change. Climate justice, as opposed to environmentalism, means recognizing that the fight against climate change is a fight for the wellbeing of both the environment and its people.

In particular, climate justice recognizes that people from different regions, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic statuses are impacted in disproportionate ways. As marginalized groups continue to bear the disastrous and often lethal effects of climate change, we must recognize the deep injustice that has caused and has been worsened by climate change. For instance, though “the poorest half of the global population are responsible for only around 10% of global emissions,” they “live overwhelmingly in the countries most vulnerable to climate change.” Still, “the richest 10% of people in the world are responsible for around 50% of global emissions.”

*le: “The average footprint of someone in the richest 1% could be 175 times that of someone in the poorest 10%.” (Source: [Oxfam](#))*

## Our Call For Change

At the core, Reform to Transform, calls for interdisciplinary teaching that addresses the full scientific, social, and political complexity of the problem, as well as one that reflects the urgency of the crisis and puts a greater focus on empowering students to take action. **The 6 Needs are as follows:**

1. A public declaration of a Climate Emergency from the BC Ministry of Education, alongside a promise to act through a climate justice, decolonizing, and anti-oppressive lens.
2. The creation of diverse committees at the Ministry and District levels to guide the education reform process.
3. The creation of a youth advisory committee to work alongside the BC Ministry of

Education as well as individual district-level committees to give feedback and to continually ensure that students are receiving proper climate education.

4. A revision of the K-12 Curriculum to implement comprehensive intersectional, interdisciplinary, action-oriented climate education across subjects.
5. The assessment and provision of professional learning, resources, and support for school staff to enhance their knowledge, tools, and strategies in teaching the reformed curriculum and preparing students for the climate crisis.
6. The implementation of equitable school infrastructure in alignment with transitioning towards a 95% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

Please refer to the Our Needs Document for further details.

<https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/our-needs>

## What Can YOU do?

### Parents:

1. **Sign onto our Open Letter:** <https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/open-letter>
  - a. This is a very important tool to get the attention of the BC Ministry of Education to implement climate change education
  - b. Please also share this with your friends, family, and community!
2. **Start conversations about our campaign with your children!**
  - a. Make space for your children to discuss climate education, and possible education reform. This will empower youth voices and provide safe spaces to listen, learn and vision with one another.
  - b. Check out these toolkits for Elementary students and high school toolkits.
  - c. <https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/projects>
3. **Share the 'Be The Change' Climate Action Curriculum with teachers in your community**
  - a. Many resources have been developed to integrate climate action into the classroom already, so we want to highlight these for teachers to immediately start equipping students for the climate crisis
4. **Write your own emails and letters to the Ministry of Education, and local MLAs sharing about your concern of the lack of climate education**
  - a. Sharing our concern through personal stories, and letters, especially from the greater community of so called BC, will strengthen our call for action
  - b. Refer to the letter writing toolkit here:  
<https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/projects>

**5. Consider making a donation [here](#)**

- a. Helping support campaigns such as ours, or others working for Climate Justice through donations helps us to support our team and community.

**6. Share our campaign with everyone you know**

- a. Making sure people are aware and engaged on these issues makes collective action more effective

**7. Join our emailing list, and facebook groups!**

- a. Facebook group for community members concerned about Climate Education: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/313526066801465/>

## **Educators:**

**1. Sign onto our Open Letter:** <https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/open-letter>

- a. This is a very important tool to get the attention of the BC Ministry of Education to implement Climate Change Education
- b. Please also share this with your friends, family, and community!

**2. Try out the [‘Be The Change’ Climate Action Curriculum](#)**

- a. Many resources have been developed to integrate climate action into the classroom already, so we want to highlight these for teachers to be able to immediately start equipping students for the climate crisis
- b. Also take a look at teacher networks, like [Education International](#), Climate Generation’s [Teach Climate Network](#), and [National Geographic’s Educator Community](#), which are dedicated to peer mentoring, training, and resource sharing with an interest in advancing climate change education.

**3. Write your own emails and letters to the Ministry of Education, and local MLAs sharing about your concern of the lack of climate education**

- a. Sharing our concern through personal stories, and letters, especially from the greater community of so called BC, will strengthen our call for action
- b. Refer to the letter writing toolkit here:  
<https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/projects>

**4. Share our campaign with your colleagues, and school administrators**

- a. We want to highlight this campaign in all schools, as a change this bold will impact us all! So start conversations around our campaign, share our open letter, and stay connected with us for more resources!

**5. Join the Climate Change Education Facebook Group to connect with other educators calling for this change!**

- a. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1035598969945458/>

## Other Community Members:

1. **Sign onto our Open Letter:** <https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/open-letter>
  - a. This is a very important tool to get the attention of the BC Ministry of Education to implement climate change education
  - b. Please also share this with your friends, family, and community!
2. **Write your own emails and letters to the Ministry of Education, and local MLAs sharing about your concern of the lack of climate education**
  - a. Even if you are not directly connected in the education system, being a community member, there is still an impact to hear from you! Sharing our concern through personal stories, and letters, will strengthen our call for action
  - b. Refer to the letter writing toolkit here:  
<https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/projects>
3. **Share our campaign with your friends, family, and coworkers**
  - a. We want to highlight this campaign in all schools, as a change this bold will impact us all! So start conversations around our campaign, share our open letter, and stay connected with us for more resources!
4. **Join our emailing list, and facebook groups!**
  - a. Facebook group for community members concerned about climate education <https://www.facebook.com/groups/313526066801465/>

## Stay Up to Date with Us

Our Instagram, Twitter and Facebook here: <https://linktr.ee/CERBC>

Sign onto our Emailing List: [here](#).

Our Website: <https://www.climateeducationreformbc.ca/>

## Final Words

“We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends”

-Mary Mcleod Bethune

Implementing climate change education is the first step to creating global change. By creating a solution and action-oriented learning environment on a local scale, students can feel empowered and prepared rather than overwhelmed, hopeless, or apathetic. On a larger scale, this education change will encourage informed decision-making, play an

essential role in increasing the adaptation and mitigation capacities of communities and empower individuals to adopt sustainable lifestyles. The impacts of education reach far beyond the classroom, which is vital to combat climate change. With that said, we hope that you join us in our mission for change.

CERBC Organizing Team

*We acknowledge that CERBC is not the first to be advocating for climate action and that First Peoples have been leading and are continuing to organize for climate and environmental justice for generations before us across Turtle Island. We are thankful to reside, work and study on First Peoples' traditional, unceded, and stolen territories across so called "British Columbia."*