



REFORM to TRANSFORM:

Secondary School 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 CERBC

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 come together as a 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 all 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. **But this can change.**

Education and Empowerment

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 teaching and minimal emphasis on climate change and sustainability, we see the opposite.

Although the topic of climate change is briefly mentioned in some science courses as an aspect of their units, 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 system change. By emphasizing forward-thinking and optimism for the future and by

illuminating solutions 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.”

Ie: “The average footprint of someone in the richest 1% could be 175 times that of someone in the poorest 10%.”

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 more description.](#)

What Can YOU Do?

- 1. [Become a CERBC school ambassador!](#)**
 - a. As our campaign grows, we want to stay connected with students in all schools across the province, so sign onto our email list to stay connected and get more info on mobilizing your own school for this campaign in an upcoming toolkit!
 - b. Through our ambassador network, we can start opening up opportunities to reflect and discuss student frustrations around the current education system, and build a unified movement.
- 2. [Sign onto our Open Letter.](#)**
 - a. Our open letter 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!
- 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. As students, our voices are the priority of the education system, so sharing our concern through personal stories, and letters, will strengthen our call for action
 - b. Refer to this [letter writing toolkit](#) to learn how to write letters to your local government representatives
- 4. [Share the ‘Be The Change’ Climate Action Curriculum with your teachers and school staff!](#)**
 - 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

5. Join our organizing team

- a. If you want to take a step further in becoming involved, check out our [linktree](#) for more info!

6. Share our campaign with everyone you know; let's equip our peers with information about the urgency of climate action!

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

Stay Up to Date with Us

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

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

Final Words

"Hope is not something that you have. Hope is something that you create, with your actions." - Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

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."