

## Presentation to Energy Efficiency panel, 16 Sept 2016

I'd like to begin by thanking the Panel, and Mike Fulsom and his team, for the opportunity to convene this group here today; and Terry Godwaldt, Queen E. students, and the Edmonton Public School Board for hosting this important meeting.

Today I'd like to speak on behalf of the 670,000 K-12 students in this province, and those that support them. These students are the ones who will create a sustainable future for Alberta and for the planet – and they need our help. Later we'll discuss system barriers that we've all encountered on this front; but I want to take a few minutes to talk about the **bridges** our organization has built over these barriers.

I am the Executive Director of the [Alberta Council for Environmental Education – ACEE](#). We're a non-profit charity with the mission of working collaboratively to advance environmental education in Alberta. Our volunteer board includes Aaron Dublenko, and we have just three full-time staff, including Education Director Kathy Worobec who is here today.

We believe that energy and environment are two sides of the same coin, and our work reflects that:

- We have two '[Education for Planet Earth](#)' conferences this year, in partnership with the Calgary Board of Education on October 7<sup>th</sup>, and with Edmonton Public School Board on February 6<sup>th</sup>, where we'll highlight best practices and support students' career pathways in the new economy.
- Our [Youtube channel](#) contains dozens of classroom stories of like the ones you've heard here today
- our searchable database lists 124 different organizations active in Alberta, with over 500 programs that teachers can access. MANY of these groups play hard in the energy/environmental education space: I'll mention specifically the following, as we have folk from all these groups here with us today: Green Calgary, Elements Society/Destination Conservation, Greenlearning.ca, Canada Green Building Council, Star EcoWorks, Inside Education, and Emerald Foundation
- **When it comes to weaving education and energy efficiency together, the community is ready, and prepared, to dramatically increase its impact and support student learning and action.**

Last year ACEE supported an Education Task Force that asked 35 opinion leaders 'What should students learn about energy and the environment?' This led to the "[Curriculum for a Sustainable Future.](#)" our proposal to the Education Minister of student learning outcomes that – if included in new curriculum – would dramatically increase literacy around environment, energy, and climate change in Alberta students. **It is essential that these outcomes find their way into new curriculum.**

ACEE convened over 3000 students earlier this year, resulting in their "[Supporting Climate Leadership in Alberta schools:](#)" Students' recommendations regarding school infrastructure include 'Create a fund that schools could apply to for relevant Climate Leadership projects.' BC did something very similar to this with their British Columbia Climate Action Charter: an agreement between the Province and individual school boards in which boards "agree to develop strategies and take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions." This includes "offering educational opportunities for students, in partnership with their parents, that promote sustainability and climate action both at school and at home." What do Boards receive in return? "Grants .. provide an opportunity for Boards to accelerate actions to reduce GHG emissions... the Province will reimburse the Board based on the actual costs of the carbon tax, derived from the Board's fuel purchases." **Whatever the actual mechanism might be, school boards need incentives, and support, from this panel and this government.**