

Declaration in Support of Environmental Education in Alberta

23 May 2019

This document was created by over 80 environmental educators in May 2019, at an event hosted by the Alberta Council for Environmental Education.

We came together because we believe that Alberta students need to learn more about the environment, develop skills to investigate it, and make intelligent, informed decisions to create a sustainable and prosperous future. Our definition of environmental education includes education about energy, the outdoors, wellness, climate, water, conservation, and sustainability.

We identified the following priorities for environmental education in Alberta. It must:

- be available for every child, every day across all grades and subjects
- foster a sense of place and increase personal wellbeing through regular connection with nature
- empower students to be active environmental stewards that build vibrant and resilient communities
- incorporate expertise from outside the classroom, and indigenous knowledge and perspectives

We will work alongside the government of Alberta, and Alberta's educational leadership, to create the conditions to support environmental education for all K-12 students. We outlined the following conditions:

Creating school board policies and plans that support student environmental literacy. To achieve this, educational leaders should...

- make it easier for teachers and students to spend time in nature
- provide recognition for exemplary practices by school boards, schools and teachers
- connect 'green infrastructure' with student learning

Supporting relevant teacher professional learning and planning. To achieve this, educational leaders should provide...

- financial resources to the Alberta Regional Consortia
- more opportunities through the Alberta Teachers' Association conventions, specialist council conferences, and other offerings
- more opportunities for professional learning within school districts, such as professional learning communities to help teachers learn and share together
- opportunities for pre-service teachers through Faculties of Education
- stronger links between teachers, experts and quality resources offered by community education groups to support teaching and learning

Ensuring that new K-12 curriculum enhances student environmental literacy. We support the community-created Curriculum for a Sustainable Future, an 'evergreen' document created by a multi-stakeholder Education Task Force in consultation with over three dozen Albertan opinion leaders that supports cross-curricular learning.