

Supporting School Boards - Opening Pathways for Sustainability and Environmental Education

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ACEE Alberta Council for
Environmental Education

ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN ALBERTA

ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN ALBERTA

Alberta Council for Environmental Education

A vision for tomorrow....

Alberta students are literate around environment, energy and climate change, and help create a sustainable future.

Learn more at:
www.abcee.org



Land Acknowledgement







Truth and
Reconciliation
Commission of Canada



National Centre for
Truth and Reconciliation

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

“Reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, from an Aboriginal perspective, also requires reconciliation with the natural world.....**reconciliation will never occur unless we are also reconciled with the Earth.**”

- *Honoring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.*

Overview of Presentation

- Welcome and introductions
- Hear from students on the work they are doing to advance this integral education
- Supporting education leaders overview and update
- Share inspiring examples/ideas of environmental education in practice, including EcoSchools Canada in Alberta
- Group discussions - exploring ideas for next steps
- Closing

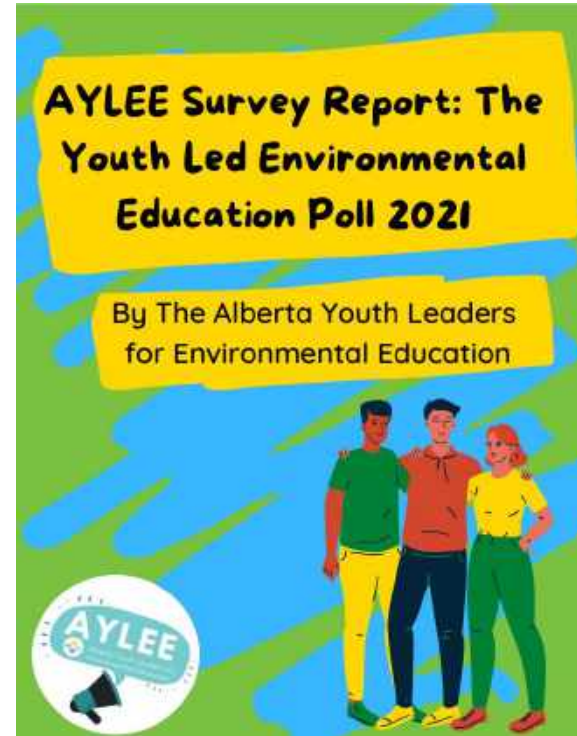
And now we will hear from some students!



Alberta Youth Leaders for Environmental Education (AYLEE)

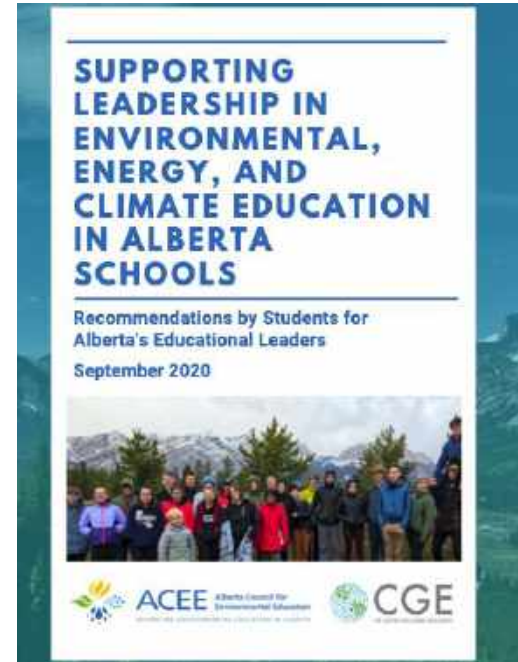
AYLEE Student Survey 2021

- The findings



AYLEE White Paper

- Student recommendations



Alberta Youth Leaders for Environmental Education

- Want to hear from these students?
- Do you know students that would like to join?

Contact: Shauna@abcee.org



Exploring youth knowledge and attitudes in relation to environment, energy and climate

How we collected our evidence

*Advancing environmental, energy and climate education
A call to Action*

Online Surveys



one-hour
workshops

14

172

students in
grades 4-12

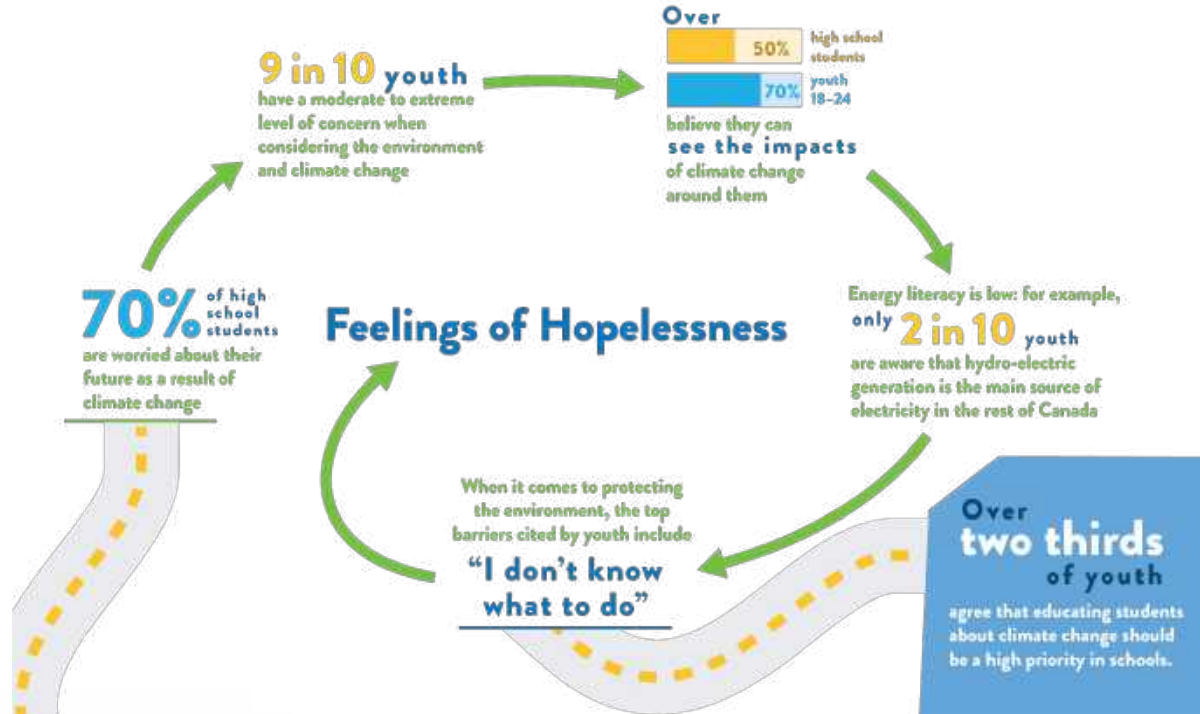
in **nine**
communities
across
Alberta



ACEE

Alberta Council for
Environmental Education

By the numbers - we polled 500 Alberta youth in 2020



Focus group conversations - student quotes

I don't know much about climate...I'd like to learn more - Grade 7 student

I get worried about climate change on what the future will be like...Grade 7 student

...and adults they made the earth polluted and then they're like relying on us to fix it - Grade 7/8

Focus group - key findings

- Students are concerned about nature, wildlife and their own future.
- Students are struggling with key climate change concepts.
- Students have drastically different experiences when it comes to acceptance of 'green perspectives'.

Supporting education leaders...



The Sustainability and Education Policy Network (SEPN)



Responding to Climate Change: A Primer for K-12 Education



GOVERNANCE

- Establish a sustainability portfolio and hire sustainability staff^{40,47}
- Establish an environmental committee to support sustainable and climate-friendly initiatives⁴¹
- Run an eco-certification program through the division office⁴² and encourage schools to participate⁴³
- Create a climate action plan with specific measurable targets within all four whole institution areas⁴⁴
- Create grants for eco-friendly projects to incentivize schools⁴⁵
- Declare a climate emergency⁴¹
- Pass a climate resolution^{42,43,44}

TEACHING & LEARNING

- Provide environmental and climate change education resources, programs, workshops, and professional development opportunities⁴⁷
- Support environmental education and climate change education within all subjects⁴⁸
- Not penalize student participation in climate strikes^{44,44}
- Develop eco-challenges for staff and students⁴¹
- Hold events where students develop climate solutions in line with the division's climate action plan⁴¹

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Partner with local organizations and/or provincial governments to install solar panels on school roofs and reduce carbon emissions^{46,49}
- Partner with the municipality or region to co-develop climate solutions
- Partner on CCE projects such as Student Action for a Sustainable Future⁴⁷
- Create a program connecting farmers to schools to discuss local effects of climate change
- Encourage schools to create gardens and share their crops with the school and local community

FACILITIES & OPERATIONS

- Implement an anti-idling policy and use low emissions vehicles for school buses and division transportation⁵¹
- Install solar panels on schools^{46,50}, water bottle fountains in all schools,⁵² low-flush toilets, and light timers⁴⁹
- Support schools to setup student led recycling and composting programs^{44,53} and implement similar programs in division offices
- Issue carbon reduction challenges to encourage staff, students, and teachers to take eco-friendly transportation to school⁵³
- Develop policies supporting access to local food in school cafeterias

The Aspen Institute



Recommendations

- Support mitigation strategies
- Support adaptation and resilience strategies
- Support teaching and learning on climate change, climate solutions and sustainability
- Advance equity while developing K-12 climate action plans

Encouraging developments by education leaders...

"BE IT RESOLVED... That the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) supports sustainable development... **all Alberta students must be provided access to an environmental education.**"

- ASBA Resolution, passed in 2016

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"BE IT RESOLVED that the Association accept the scientific consensus that anthropogenic climate change is a real and critical challenge.. and supports the **inclusion of curriculum that explicitly addresses issues relating to anthropogenic climate change** in a manner that is subject and age appropriate."

- Resolutions 3-13 and 3-14, passed by the Alberta Teachers' Association in 2020

Curriculum Development - K-6 Input ongoing - Dec updates

- Increased specificity of language related to the environmental impact of waste materials
- Additional factual and scientific learnings about climate change, including the release of greenhouse gases and personal actions that can be taken to address climate change

Environmental, Energy and Climate Change Education in Alberta's Draft K-6 Curriculum
Analysis and Recommendations,
September 2021



Submitted by the following organizations and working group members:



School Boards - important role in opening pathways

For schools and teachers to engage in environmental education that prepare students for their future and gives them hope. School board level pathways...

- Direction setting through policies
- Decision making
- Accountability



Four areas for policies or initiatives...



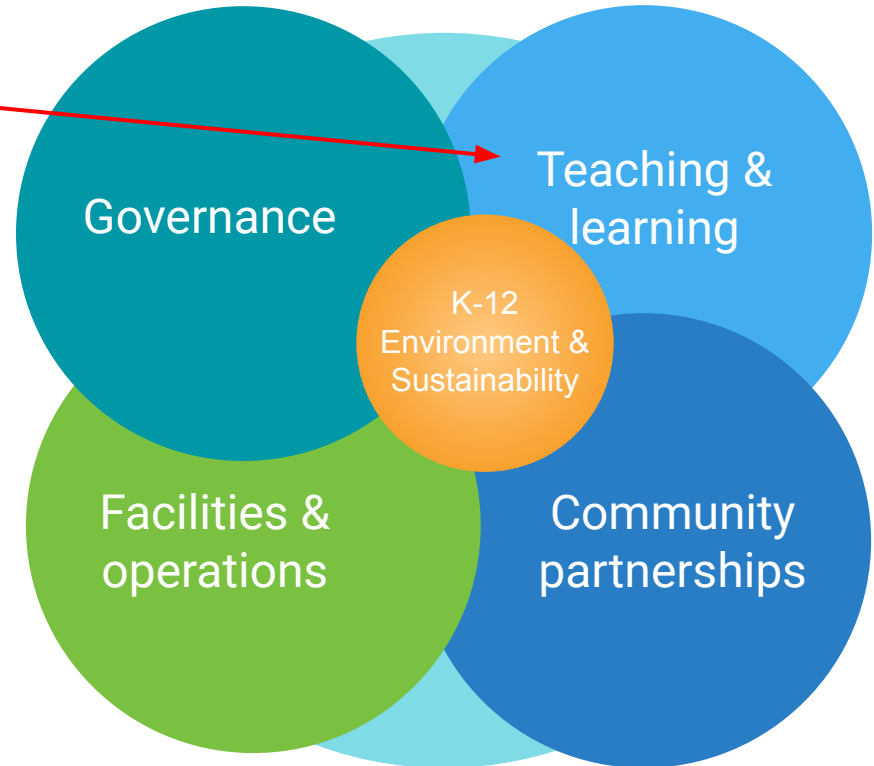
Governance - policy and initiatives

- Sustainability portfolio & staff position
- Environmental committee
- Eco-certification program such as EcoSchools
- Climate action plan with measurable targets
- Grants for eco-friendly school projects
- A climate resolution



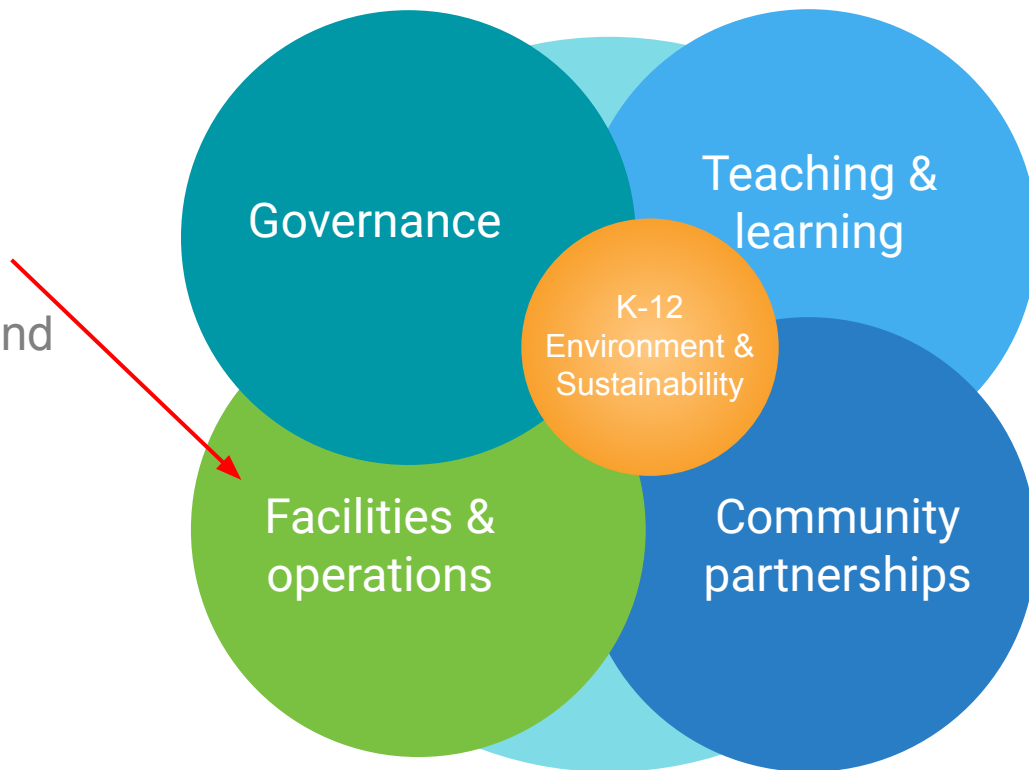
Teaching and learning

- Support development of education programs and environmental clubs
- Support teacher professional development on these topics with policies
- Support students learning in natural environments
- Develop eco-challenges for staff and students
- Student learning connections to facilities & operations (e.g. solar panel dashboards)



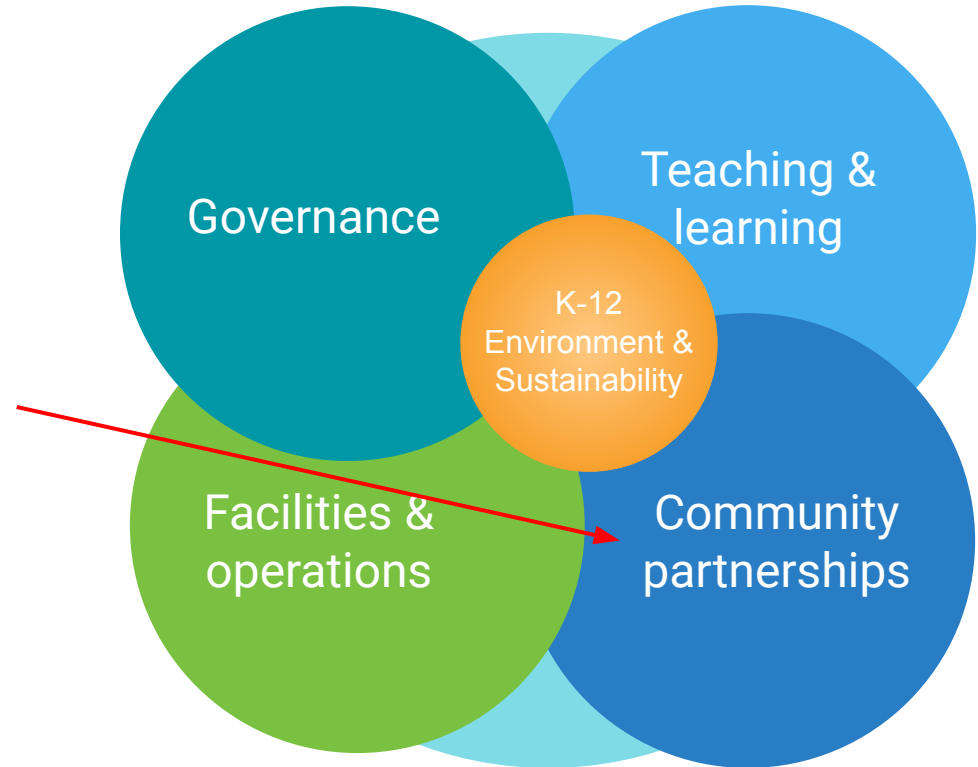
Facilities & Operations

- Sustainability policies
 - Anti-idling policies
 - Electric school buses
 - Solar panels
 - Student-led recycling and composting
- Connect to eco-challenges
- Active transportation
- Access to local food for cafeterias



Community Partnerships

- Partnerships for solar panels (e.g. Municipal Climate Action Centre - Solar for Schools)
- Connect with municipal or region climate plans
- Connect schools with local agriculture
- School and community gardens
- Grants for school projects



Inspiring examples of sustainability and environmental education in practice



Calgary Board of Education - Sustainability Framework

cbe.ab.ca

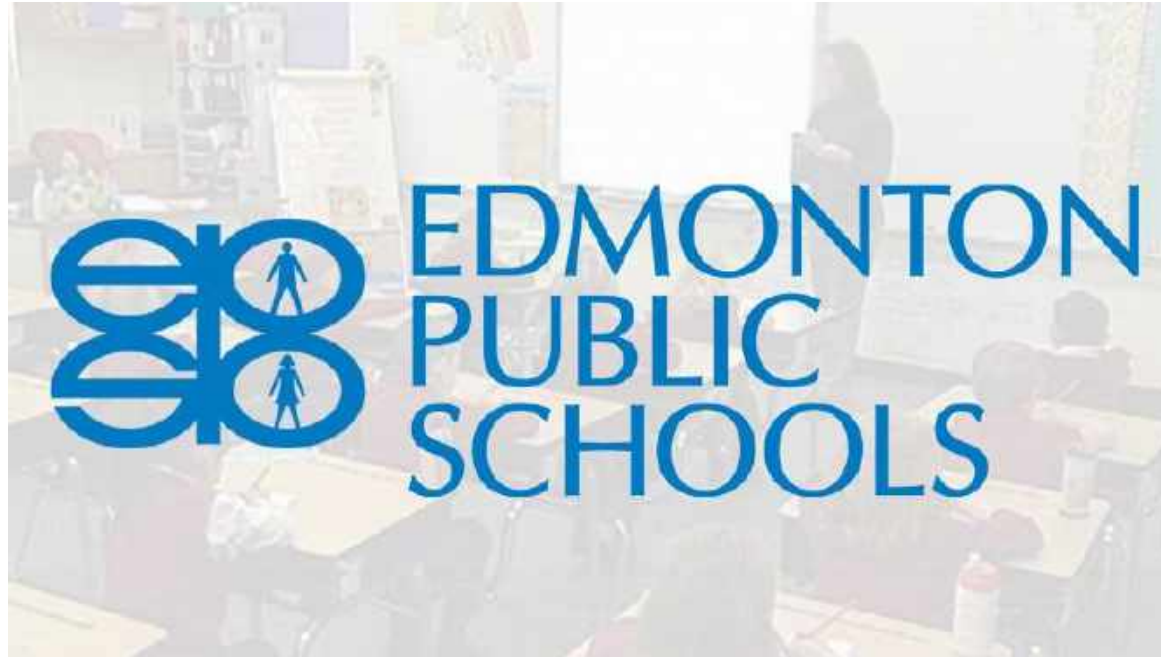
Sustainability Framework



The Calgary Board of Education's
Commitment to Sustainable Development



Edmonton Public Schools - District Energy and Environment Strategy



Fort McMurray Public Schools - Green Scene



Fort McMurray Public Green Scene partners



Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools - Policy 17

Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools is committed to the principle of sustainability in all its operations.

Schools shall ensure...activities are organized for students and staff to promote awareness and understanding of environmental issues and solutions.



Wolf Creek School Division - EcoVision

- Started as a club
- Three pillars:
 - Environment
 - Education
 - Community



Wolf Creek EcoVision partners



St. Paul Education Regional Division - New Myrnam



Canadian Rockies Public Schools - Net Zero School

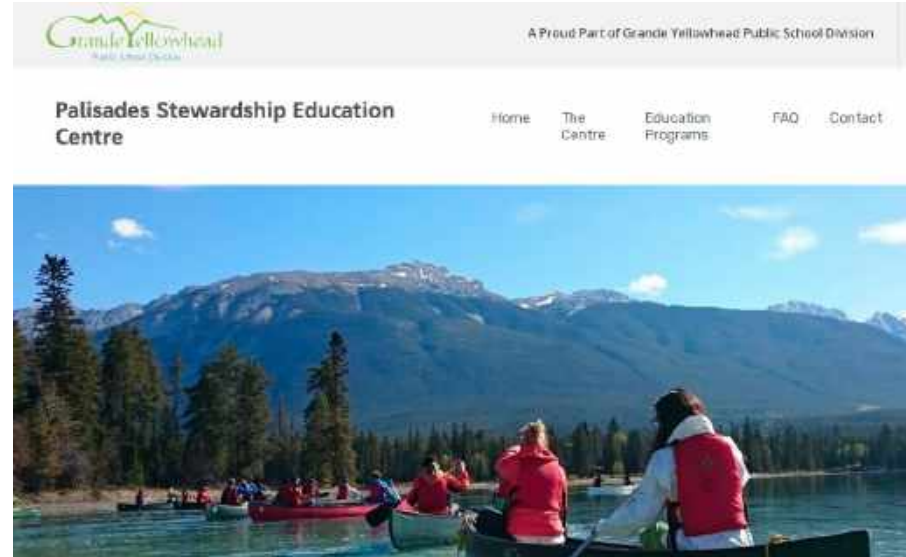


Canmore's Lawrence
Grassi becomes
Canada's first Net Zero
Certified School

Parkland School Division - LED Lighting Retrofit



Grande Yellowhead Public School Division - Outdoor Classrooms



Quebec's electrification of school buses

- The Quebec government will spend \$250 million over the next three years to electrically power 2,600 school buses



Seattle Public Schools

- School board policy resolution to transition the district to 100% clean, renewable energy by 2040
- Goal to improve student health and create more sustainable/equitable communities



Rainbow District School Board in Sudbury ON

- Declared a climate emergency in 2019
- Working to have all 42 schools EcoSchools certified by 2022.
- *"This year, if all of our schools were to carry on with their plans to be EcoSchools certified, we know that we would be saving 916 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions".*



Four areas for policies or initiatives...



Where can you find these resources and more...www.abcee.org/schoolboards

ABOUT US ▼

WE SUPPORT ▼

EVENTS ▼

RESOURCES ▼

DONATE ▼

- Supporting Education Leaders
- **School Board Support**
 - Governance Support
 - Facilities & Operations Support
 - Teaching & Learning Support
 - Community Partnership Support
 - EcoSchools Canada in Alberta
- School Councils Support
- Events
- Youth Reports & Initiatives
- Our Call to Action

We Support / Education Leaders / Supporting School Boards

Supporting School Boards

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With the help of research conducted by the [Sustainability and Education Policy Network \(SEPN\)](#), ACEE has outlined a list of policy recommendations that we are advocating on behalf of for Alberta school boards to adopt and implement.

Each policy recommendation fits under one of the four following categories: Governance, Facilities & Operations, Teaching & Learning, and Community Partnerships, which you can find above and on the left side-bar menu.

Along with each category and their respective recommendations, we have also outlined a list of resources, examples and policy templates to further support school board leadership.

For a complete list of these high priority policy recommendations and examples, check out our [downloadable handout](#).

For each category, the website includes...

- Priority recommendations
- Examples
- Resources - including a policy template and opportunities for financial support



Our ideas for supporting school boards

- Offer additional sessions to share information
- Continue to gather school board policy and initiative examples
- Share information in a variety of ways (associations, presentations, newsletters, social media, etc.)
- Sessions to support school boards in developing policies/initiatives and engaging with EcoSchools Canada
- Planning session to help school boards implement policies/initiatives

Break Out Room Discussions

- What initiatives are you aware of (either in your own school board or from others)?
- What ideas resonate with you?
- How would you go about advancing them in your own school district?
- What potential challenges or roadblocks can you anticipate and how can ACEE help you overcome these obstacles?

Next Steps...

- Next session - March 2022
- Email with the resources from this session
- Evaluation and feedback link

Thanks or Hiy, Hiy (Cree)

- To you for attending and considering action!
- To our funders



SUNCOR
ENERGY
FOUNDATION

