

9 School District Commitments for Climate Resilience & Sustainability

Districts can act now to ensure schools are hubs of sustainability and climate resilience that equip students with the tools and experiences to create a resilient, equitable, and sustainable future. School board members can advance the following nine commitments to climate action by passing a school board resolution.



Healthy Environments

Ensure climate-resilient learning environments that promote student health and well-being and are conducive to their engagement and learning — including shaded schoolyards and indoor learning spaces with modern technologies to maintain indoor air quality (IAQ) and thermally comfortable classrooms.



Clean, Renewable Power

Increase reliance on power from clean, renewable sources — including, to the extent possible, electricity generated by equipment installed on district property — with the goal of eventually powering district operations exclusively with electricity from zero emission renewables.



Electric Equipment

Install modern electric equipment — including HVAC systems, water heaters, and cooking equipment — as part of any new construction or renovation. Proactively identify opportunities to replace all legacy fossil-fuel dependent equipment within the life cycle of such equipment.



Zero-Emission Vehicles

Select zero-emission vehicles for purchase or lease whenever a suitable vehicle exists for a district need and wherever necessary infrastructure (e.g. electric vehicle charging stations) is accessible; with the goal of transitioning the entire district vehicle fleet to zero-emission vehicles.



Sustainable School Grounds

Reduce the total area of school grounds that is paved or otherwise impermeable, increasing the area that is planted with sustainable, preferably native groundcover. Shade playgrounds and other areas where students congregate with trees or other sustainable cover to reduce heat impacts and improve water retention.



Sustainable Food

Increase the portion of produce used by district food services that is fresh, locally sourced, and minimally processed or packaged, and prepared onsite. Decrease waste by composting food and food ware.



Climate Education

Develop and/or select educational programs and materials, provide teacher professional development, and ensure equitable, standards-aligned instruction across the curriculum that promotes student understanding of the causes and consequences of climate change, opportunities to engage in climate solutions, and pathways to green jobs.



Emergency Preparation

Ensure that schools are ready to protect and support student learning and well-being (including social emotional learning and mental health) through extreme weather and other climate-driven crises, as well as other types of emergencies, and to serve as centers of community resilience.



Equity and Justice

Prioritize equity in all these actions, recognizing that climate change is a threat multiplier that amplifies existing patterns of injustice within society.