Leaders gather to envision the future of education

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On June 19, the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council gathered leaders, stakeholders and advocates from 30 education-related organizations to envision a future in which students, educators and everyone who supports them are prepared for their role as global citizens. With generous support from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, attendees worked for seven straight hours to craft a shared vision for what success around sustainability education in the U.S. looks like, and proposed hundreds of recommendations, organized within eight strategic subsets, for the pathway to reach that desired future state.

Representing school districts, curriculum developers, technology vendors, publishers, research institutes and sustainability champions, the group reached consensus around the case for rapidly increasing the presence of sustainability themes in K-12 education. Inspired by a paradigm in which education builds and strengthens bridges between students, schools and communities; where students and educators work together on authentic problem solving; and student performance is improved in the classroom and beyond, the collaborative set its sight on a future in which all K-12 students graduate literate and equipped to make decisions in the "4Es:" environment, economy, equity and ethics. Looking to past education and sustainability turning points for insight on the path forward, attendees agreed that in order to reach this vision, a cross-sector collaborative should lead the charge to build capacity and integration across these subsets:

- Collaboration
- Economic drivers
- Integrated content/curriculum
- Leadership
- Policy
- Pre-service teacher education
- Professional development
- Public awareness
- Research
- Student assessment
- Teacher evaluation

We are incredibly grateful for the individuals who joined us in Washington, D.C. this month who committed to collectively advancing this incredibly important work. The Center for Green Schools will continue its role as convener, engaging new and existing audiences to transform our schools into high-performing places, inside and out. Over the next 4-6 weeks, the Center team will collect additional feedback on elements of the national action plan and will publish the plan in the fall as a result of the June convening, public comment and additional research and collaboration.

Take part!
Please visit the official national action plan public comment page over the coming weeks to weigh in on draft content. Be sure to share the page with your networks as well!

Jenny Wiedower
K12 Manager, The Center for Green Schools
U.S. Green Building Council

Member employees, USGBC staff

1 comment

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Joseph Sanches 1 year 16 weeks ago

Executive Vice President, D. Stephenson Construction, Inc.

Congratulations to Rachel and the Center for Green Schools staff on another great initiative. I fondly recall our successful fight to fund a Sustainability Coordinator position at the Palm Beach County School District. I also recognize how important it is for our schools' sustainability leaders to share ideas and support each other. I look forward to the day when all school districts and universities have a sustainability champion with the knowledge, authority and resources to impact real positive changes in our schools.

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