Catalyzing Environmental and Climate Action in Schools Requires Communities Moving From Adversaries to Allies

Environmental Education - School-Community Engagement Webinar
NAAEE May 2023

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**Referenced Experience for This Session**

Andra Yeghoian - Bio and Publications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Start - End</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Humanities Classroom Teacher</td>
<td>2006 - 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site-Level Director of Sustainability</td>
<td>2013 - 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>County Environmental Literacy and Sustainability Coordinator</td>
<td>2017 - 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ten Strands Chief Innovation Officer</td>
<td>2022 - Present</td>
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What have I learned in my journey as a changemaker?
Whole Systems Change

Whole systems change is transformative, and requires all hands on deck!

4Cs Whole Systems Framework for Environmental and Climate Action in Schools

*Adapted from Sustainable Schools Project & Plymouth University: Andrea Veghohan - 2013

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Constituents

- Students
- Faculty and Staff
- Administrators
- Community Partners and Families
**Key Terms**

**Adversary (n):** One that contends with, opposes, or resists; an enemy or opponent in contest, conflict, or dispute; a clever or antagonist opposing interest

**Ally (n/v):** one that is associated with another as a helper; a person or group that provides assistance or support with an ongoing activity, effort, or struggle
Taking People from Adversary to Allies Takes a Deep Understanding of Change

Readiness for Change

Prepare, Plan, & Design Change

Change Management

Disruptive Change

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Transformative Change is Disruptive Change

- Willing to take bold risks
- Don’t follow conventions and beliefs of hierarchies and status quo legacies
- Believe that what matters is what is relevant
- Understand that change is inevitable so it is better to get uncomfortable now and tackle it
- Leverage cultural and multigenerational intelligence
- Understand global trends
- Provide vision and thought leadership
- Can manage in a crisis
- Know how to shift constituents from adversaries to allies

To what extent do you think of yourself as a changemaker? Which of the above characteristics are true for you?
Readiness for Change: Messaging Matters to Each Individual

STAGE 1: ENDINGS
DENIAL
It’s a natural reaction to look for evidence that isn’t true.

SHOCK
For many, the first reaction to change is panic.

DEPRESSION
Low mood, low energy

STAGE 2: TRANSITIONS
ACCEPTANCE
When it becomes clear that the change is real, frustration sets in and sometimes leads to anger.

STAGE 3: NEW BEGINNINGS
ENGAGEMENT
From here, it’s onward and upward!

DECISION
After accepting reality and tentatively engaging with the new situation, most people decide to just go with it.

EXPERIMENTAL
At some point, people put a toe in the water and engage with the new situation.

Clarity  Empathy  Motivation  Capability  Knowledge

THE KEYS TO ENGAGEMENT
Preparing and Planning Change:

You need both the top and the bottom!

Support a shared understanding of a timeline for change that works for each community.

- Mild
- Medium
- Spicy
Change Management: Understand Phases of Change and the Monsters that Lurk in the

Note: The phases of change are not always linear, and different smaller projects may be in different phases of change...AND the change monster will try to bring things back to status quo!
What ally-informed tools can I share with others for their journey as a changemaker?
Develop a Compelling Shared Vision

Schools as hubs of sustainability and climate resiliency - equipping students with the tools, resources, and life experiences to create an environmentally sustainable, socially just, and economically thriving world.

Explore: Vision Activity Handouts
### 4Cs Whole Systems Framework for Environmental and Climate Action in Schools

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Explore: [4Cs Whole Systems Framework for Environmental and Climate Action in Schools](#)
Non-indigenous human impact has caused an imbalance in the four spheres that has led to two separate but connected environmental crisis:

**Ecological Overshoot:** Natural Resource Depletion, Built Landscape, Pollution, etc.

**Global Warming → Climate Change** as a symptom of ecological overshoot and exacerbating overshoot issues.

Explore Overview in the Educator’s Shared Narrative of Contemporary Environmental Crisis
“The planetary emergency unfolding around us is, first and foremost a crisis of thought, values, perception, ideas and judgment. In other words, it is a crisis of mind, which makes it a crisis of those institutions which purport to improve minds.”

– David Orr, Professor of Environmental Studies, Oberlin College

Explore: Guiding Philosophies
Create Structures to Drive the Behavior You Want!

Move Forward and Succeed!

Explore: Successful District-Wide Sustainability Committees
THANK YOU!

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