

4. **Collaborate and Share with each other.** Working together rather than reinventing the wheel. Developing and sharing best practices together, coordinating projects and resources and keeping each other updated on successes.
5. **Cultivate Leaders/Change Agents** to increase the number of confident, capable and engaged individuals within the movement.
6. **Develop common planning & measurement processes and tools** to reduce work and allow for cross sector, organization and project comparisons
7. **Develop new funding and resource strategies** to sustain the movement and ensure the legitimacy of sustainability education within the system
8. **Collectively advocate for policies** that support top down AND bottom up change within the education system

1. Redesign the System

What is or should be the role of the education system in a society on the brink of radical transformation?

This action theme encompassed the participants overall feeling that the system itself should be called into question and reinvented through a sustainability lens. Participants talked about reimagining the education system's place in society, how it would operate on a day to day basis, who would participate in it's redesign and continued development and what the outcomes of this system change would look like over the long term.

Participants felt that the current system supported and legitimized the destructive and unsustainable society we currently live in. They expressed frustration that the education system was not currently a significant leverage point for change and that the bureaucratic, silo driven and competitive nature of the system was a barrier to the development of a sustainable society.

Discussions focused on the need for an education system that embraced a systems approach, encouraged innovation, utilized experiential learning, collaboration and connections to community and prepared students to be leaders, critical thinkers and citizens of the world.

This action theme recognizes that more needs to be done than simply adding a few courses here and there. Sustainability needs to be integrated into all courses and all learning experiences and into the very process that curriculum is developed and delivered. This includes how the built environment and the actions of each person within the system educate the people within it. Participants called for operationally sustainable institutions embedded in their communities and responding to community needs.

In order to redesign the system, participants emphasized the need for a collective visioning and testing of this new system for its sustainability implications (e.g., does a policy that supports green product purchasing also consider social justice implications?). This vision could then be advanced through the Ministry of Education and the multitudes of leaders and change agents through out each sector. There are also many examples of systems, processes, tools, projects, curriculum, experiential learning, pedagogy of place and non-formal education programs. These best practices and success stories should guide the collective visioning and form the foundation for the new system.

2. Involve Everyone

How can we ensure that all stakeholders are involved in each stage of the process?

This action theme encompasses the feeling of participants that everyone needs to be involved in the advancement of sustainability education. This means that sustainability education is not just for those labeled "sustainability educators". Students, teachers, faculty members, operational managers, administrators, local



community members, business leaders, family members, political representatives, and civil servants should all be a part of the process of learning and teaching for a sustainable society.

Discussions focused on the need to not only *identify* everyone as important participants in the process, but how to ensure that people are really meaningfully included and that we avoid tokenism wherever possible. We should be careful to be culturally inclusive (see report on a new model for cultural inclusivity on website), ensure everyone has a chance to participate with their hands and their hearts and that we are making an effort to meet people where they are and engage them, listen to them and work with them to achieve our collective goals.

Involving everyone includes multiple generations. Everyone has value and something to contribute and much more can be learned when elders teach youth and youth inspire and energize elders, when university students mentor high school students, high school students mentor elementary students and elementary students remind their parents, teachers and elders that it's the future we are all working towards. Intergenerational learning and participation was a strong theme throughout the dialogue. Participants urged that no one be discounted due to their age and that we open up opportunities for people in all areas of participation. Youth for example should be actively encouraged to join boards and committees and elders should be passing along wisdom in elementary school classrooms.

The movement for an education system that serves as a foundation for a sustainable society requires a diversity of people, viewpoints, cultures, and local approaches. One participant even recommended we not stop at humans, that we also include the potential perspectives and needs of flora and fauna considering that a sustainable society is only sustainable when it is in harmony with the natural environment.

3. Communicate & Connect

How do we ensure that our mutually created discourse continues to be transformative?

This action theme embraces the need for a transformative discourse, one that weaves a new story about our place in the world, what makes a good and prosperous society and why and how sustainability education can get us there. Many participants discussed developing tools and approaches for collective and collaborative visioning. They also urged us all to reach out beyond the institutions and organizations we are members of and talk with the people in our communities and within the wider public sphere. To do this well, we need a common and accessible language to work with. Sustainability is a complex and sometimes confusing concept and the better we are at helping people connect the concept of sustainability with their own lived experiences, the more likely our discourse will be truly transformative.

Communication is the starting point for involving everyone, since *how* we communicate can make the difference between engaging people and alienating them. If we can't communicate with each other, we can't work together. Participants discussed developing strong relationships within and outside the movement, building systems and tools for ongoing networking and dialogue, creating our own media and messaging outlets and going out into our communities to speak face to face with people directly. Learning and teaching members of the movement about interacting with the media, developing marketing materials and engaging in effective public relations was also deemed important.

Finally, there was an emphasis on communicating hope and celebrating successes as a central theme of all communication efforts. While climate change and other environmental crises are a serious threat to us all, and we all need to be aware of this fact, scary messages of this type do not always get people engaged effectively. Participants recommended that we pair the facts with inspiring messages of hope and possibility as much as possible.

4. Collaborate & Share

How can we share information, best practices and workloads most effectively?

Participants collectively felt overall that there were enough models and examples of best practices to form the foundation for an education system transformation. What was missing, everyone agreed, was the sharing of these best practices, the promotion of success stories, and collaboration on the further development of these models and practices between and within organizations.

A key theme mentioned throughout the dialogue was the need to **avoid reinventing the wheel** and the need to find ways to reduce workloads by working together rather than recreating the same projects from scratch across the province. Two participants from two different universities discussed how empowering it was and how much work had been saved when they started to collaborate on the improvement of a similar program they both administered. The consensus was that this type of collaboration needed to be the norm not the exception.

Three main challenges seemed to get in the way of sharing these best practices and collaborating on a regular basis. The first is a lack of tools or systems (such as a clearinghouse online database) to enable easy sharing and connecting. The second challenge is a lack of time on the part of individuals who are already pushed to the edges of their desks with projects and to-do items. People found it hard to find the time and the space to share and connect with others on projects. The third challenge was a culture of competition both within organizations as individuals attempt to stake their claim and brand on projects, and between organizations that are competing for precious and elusive resources (e.g., students, funding).

Keeping these challenges in mind, sharing success stories and solid models was deemed a priority for further action. Many people learned about invaluable projects and tools at the Summit that they had never heard of before and stressed the need for a central location that this information could be stored and shared on a continual basis. Even the walking the talk website—a resource intended to connect people with each other and resources was not well known by many participants.

5. Cultivate Leaders/Change Agents

How do you engage people and build capacity at all levels and in all sectors to increase the number of active leaders/change agents within the movement?

This action theme expresses the need for increasing the number of people who could be considered competent change agents or leaders. Participants felt that we needed to go beyond educating people about sustainability concepts and teach them how to advance the social change process. Teachers need to learn about sustainability so they can teach it, but they also need to learn how to advocate for more appropriate evaluation methods and the development of new courses. Students need to learn how to be politically savvy, how to communicate to achieve their objectives and motivate and organize their peers. Staff members also need to learn how to increase buy-in for their projects and policy recommendations.

Some participants expressed frustration at not knowing how to initiate the change process and wanted to learn about approaches that were known to be most effective. Participants wanted to better understand how to motivate behavior change, organizational culture change, and community wide engagement processes. Capable and motivated change agents become leaders in their community and leverage their skills to engage, inspire and mobilize other community members. Participants felt that new change agents needed to be

cultivated intentionally and current change agents could benefit from additional training, support and mentorship.

Recommendations included sustainability focused Pro-D days and similar workshops and dialogues for teachers, a youth focused working group within the BC Working Group, a change agent training program or “bootcamp” and intergenerational mentorship trios.

6. Create common planning & measurement processes & tools

What are the best systems, processes and tools out there that we could standardize and utilize?

This action theme is concerned with systematizing the planning processes and measurement tools within and across organizations in the education sector. Developing common processes and reporting tools that allow for cross organizational comparison, benchmarking, planning and evaluation were deemed important for increasing efficiencies, reducing workloads, sharing information and keeping track of progress and successes. Widespread adoption of common processes and tools was seen to be advantageous for everyone.

7. Develop New Funding/ Resource Strategies

How can we increase funding for SE during hard times and how do we ensure this funding is being allocated for maximum impact?

This action theme speaks to the heart of legitimizing education as sustainability. There was an overall agreement that transforming the education system was going to cost money. In the long term, funding needs to be allocated to build a better system. This funding must be core funding from government to address operational requirements to be sustainable and to run programs, new courses, and hire people to do the work. In the short term changes need to be made to how funding is allocated to programs and projects so that collaboration can be made possible. We also need to seek ways of reducing overlaps and utilize our collective assets and resources not currently tapped into. For example, graduate students working on action projects for organizations were listed as valuable resources to take advantage of.

8. Advocate for policies that support top down and bottom up change

How do we ensure that change happens from the top down and the bottom up concurrently?

This action theme speaks to the need to advocate for a holistic approach to change and opening up spaces for change to happen at many different levels. The success of the Greenhouse Gas Reductions Targets Act (GGRTA) in leveraging change across the public sector was an example used frequently to show how much of an impact policy can make in initiating change from the top down. Participants emphasized that at the same time there needs to be room for change initiation from the grassroots since many policies such as the GGRTA focus on one area of sustainability and can focus efforts away from other areas not on the popular policy agenda (e.g., environmental justice, food issues etc).