



AMERICAN CLIMATE
LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Schools for Climate Action

schoolsforclimateaction.org

This guide offers a successful and stepwise model for you to replicate in your community. It is part of a series featuring the award-winning programs from the finalists of the American Climate Leadership Awards 2022 by ecoAmerica.

OVERVIEW

Schools for Climate Action is a free grassroots initiative to engage the education sector in climate justice. Students draft climate action resolutions from our templates, engage school boards to acknowledge climate change as generational justice and equity issues, and commit school districts to local climate goals. There is a lack of resources for teachers to engage students in real, authentic climate education and our resolutions address the systemic issues underlying the climate crisis.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

- 1. It's free. Completely.** No money, no memberships, not even a forced subscription to our student-run newsletter or need to share your email with us. We wanted a truly democratized process that supports equity and inclusion. We offer free live support from our core team of 25 student leaders, led by one teacher. Schools for Climate is integrated into a class at a school in California providing a space during the school day for youth to organize and a dedicated teacher supported by the school.
- 2. We provide all the resources and templates you need** to get started to pass a school board climate resolution on our Schools for Climate Action website. Students and/or teachers can use the [template school board resolution](#) to get started. Take a look at the [resolution examples](#) linked under our tab: *Who Has Spoken Up?*
- 3. Explore ways to incorporate place-based elements into the resolution** so that it reflects the values of your school district. We suggest adding district initiatives like 100% Renewable Energy Pledges, the formation of a district climate committee, environmental justice initiatives, and climate literacy programs. Explore these examples at the end of the template resolution.
- 4. Once you have a draft of your resolution,** use our [template outreach email to your school board](#). You will copy/paste the text into an email, add a link to the resolution you created, and cc the Schools for Climate Action email: empower@schoolsforclimateaction.org, so we can track progress. Request the resolution be added as an agenda item at the next school board meeting.



5. **If you get a “no” or no response**, show up to the next school board meeting and speak during the general public comment period. Request the board add the climate action resolution to the school board’s agenda. Pull on community levers — reach out to a local environmental group to show up to speak in support, engage the eco-clubs at multiple schools, encourage teachers to join. Share a personal story about the climate crisis during the 3 minute public comment/person.
6. **If you get a “yes” from the school board** in response to your outreach email, great! Show up with students/allies/grandparents/teachers to speak in support of the resolution during the public comment period. Check the school board agenda to see when it will be your turn to speak. This is a great time for your personal climate story — what the changing climate means to you and why the board should adopt this resolution. We have a sample public comment and personal stories from other youth advocates as examples that we provide upon request.
7. **If the board votes “yes,” GREAT!** Thank them, amplify your resolution by sharing it on social media, and write a local press release. Go to the Schools for Climate website and use our form to [log your resolution](#) so we can add it to our website. If the board votes against it make sure you understand why and schedule meetings with board members directly to make revisions. If you continue to receive a “no” reach out to us at empower@schoolsforclimateaction.org for help.
8. Once we receive your resolution we’ll reach out to you to plan **a virtual meeting with your member of Congress**. Our core student leaders will host a virtual advocacy training for your group, and share our meeting planner template outlining the roles and goals of your meeting. We can also schedule the meeting with your representative (if requested). Our goal after the first meeting is to make sure your group feels confident to continue relationship-building with your congressional office.
9. Now, with the advocacy tools under your belt, along with the experience of the civic process of passing a resolution, **you have incredible tools to apply to your community to further action on the climate crisis**. You can continue to work with our core students to lead advocacy trainings, and/or create and engage in further calls-to-action. And yes, it’s still free.

Schools for Climate Action is an ACLA 2022 Finalist. For more information and replication guides, go to ecoAmerica.org.

