ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3C
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CLEVELAND PARK • MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE HEIGHTS • WOODLAND-NORMANSTONE • WOODLEY PARK

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ANC 3C Resolution 2024-003
Resolution Regarding Support for a Green New Deal for Schools

WHEREAS, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3C (ANC 3C or Commission) ANC recognizes that local government must address climate change at the neighborhood level;

WHEREAS, students from the School Without Walls, a District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) magnet high school, presented their Green New Deal for Schools proposals at a public meeting of the ANC 3C Environmental Justice Committee on March 12, 2024, and appealed to ANC 3C and residents of ANC 3C to take action in support of a Green New Deal for Schools;

WHEREAS, ANC 3C commends the DC State Board of Education (DCBOE) for working with DCPS students to write a resolution outlining and supporting the demands of a Green New Deal for Schools, tailored to the needs of schools in the District, a resolution that DCBOE passed unanimously, and which ANC 3C endorses wholeheartedly;

WHEREAS, the following traditional DCPS public and public charter schools serve ANC 3C, and their students, staff, and school buildings, as well as their communities, like all schools and school communities in the District, deserve to be prepared and fully equipped to face the climate crisis: Oyster-Adams (ES), Eaton (ES), Hearst (ES), Deal (MS), Hardy (MS), Jackson-Reed (HS), and MacArthur (HS);

WHEREAS, at the above-mentioned ANC 3C Environmental Justice Committee meeting, the students testified that their demands are so scattered across DC government that enacting a Green New Deal for Schools requires sustained effort, determination, and oversight from both elected officials and government agencies across the District;

WHEREAS, we face a global climate crisis which requires action at all levels of government;

> WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Fourth National Climate Assessment, climate scientists from around the world, and across the country, have all declared a climate crisis requiring a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels by 2030, and net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, in order to mitigate the most catastrophic consequences of global warming and climate change;

WHEREAS, in order to meet these targets, a whole-of-society approach is required to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors of the economy at all levels of government;

WHEREAS, in its 2021 nationally determined contribution, the United States committed to a 50-52% reduction in net economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, from 2005 levels, in order to meet its obligations in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris Agreement;

WHEREAS, in 2017, the District of Columbia committed to zero emissions by 2045 in order to reduce the District's contribution to the climate crisis[1];

WHEREAS, in 2017, the District of Columbia committed to zero emissions by 2045 in order to build a more livable city for all[2].

WHEREAS, the greatest burden resulting from an inadequate response to the climate crisis will be carried by the youngest generation, and all who will follow;

WHEREAS, the climate crisis has increased rates of asthma,[3] birth defects,[4] pediatric cancer,[5] eczema,[6] food insecurity,[7] gastrointestinal illnesses,[8] heatstroke,[9] kidney disease,[10] lung infections,[11] malnutrition,[12] neurological disorders,[13] obesity,[14] psychological distress,[15] respiratory allergies,[16] vector-borne diseases,[17] waterborne diseases,[18] and zoonotic infections[19] in children across the world;

WHEREAS, according to a 2021 ten-country study published in *The Lancet*, 84% of Generation Z says that they are worried about climate change, more than half say climate change makes them feel afraid, sad, anxious, angry, powerless and helpless, and 40% of Generation Z says that fears about the future have made them reluctant to have children of their own;[20]

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[1] https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/034104405ef9462f8e02a49f2bd84fd9
[2] https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/034104405ef9462f8e02a49f2bd84fd9
[3] https://aafa.org/asthma-allergy-research/our-research/climate-health/
[4] https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jan/15/global-heating-linked-early-birth-damage-babies- health
[5] https://www.aacr.org/blog/2021/03/04/how-does-climate-change-impact-cancer/
[6] https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/eczema-climate-change-what-is-the-connection
[7] https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2022/10/17/what-you-need-to-know-about-food-security-and -climate-change
[8] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32235149/
[9] https://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/climate-change-indicators-heat-related-deaths
[10] https://www.kidney.org/news/new-study-heat-waves-climate-change-pushing-kidney-patients-to-er
[11] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9884560/
[12] https://www.csis.org/events/climate-change-and-malnutrition-many-channels-impact-many-opportunities -act
[13] https://www.ajmc.com/view/incidence-and-severity-of-neurologic-diseases-worsening-due-to-air-pollution-climate-change
[14] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34496408/
[15] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9280699/
[16] https://aafa.org/asthma-allergy-research/our-research/climate-health/
[17] https://wellcome.org/news/how-climate-change-affects-vector-borne-diseases
[18] https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/scc.2021.0070
[19] https://researchoutreach.org/articles/climate-change-driving-expansion-zoonotic-diseases-2/.
[20] https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(21)00278-3

WHEREAS, more frequent and intense natural disasters and extreme weather resulting from global warming increase a child's risk of having depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder;[21]

WHEREAS, air pollution from burning fossil fuels is linked to increased symptoms of anxiety and depression in children.[22]

WHEREAS, young generations are at the forefront of the movement for climate justice.

WHEREAS, according to Amnesty International, Generation Z consistently ranks climate change and pollution as most and second most important issues facing the world, respectively, and sees climate change as a significantly bigger problem than older generations, on average;[23]

WHEREAS, in 2022, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously recognized the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as an inalienable human right;

AND WHEREAS, the continued propagation of fossil fuels and inadequate response to the climate crisis by governments of all levels has violated this right for young people globally.

WHEREAS, according to the UN Development Programme's Peoples' Climate Vote, 70% of children believe that climate change is a global emergency.[24]

WHEREAS, according to Pew Research, in 2021, 32% of Generation Z said they had donated money, contacted an elected official, volunteered, and/or attended a rally to help address climate change in the last year, which is more than any other generation.[25]

WHEREAS, millions of high school students across the country and the world have taken part in school strikes calling for climate justice.[26]

WHEREAS, the climate crisis is adversely affecting the learning environment and student performance in the District of Columbia Public Schools, but climate resilient infrastructure can reverse some of these effects;

WHEREAS, the climate crisis is increasing the frequency and intensity of heat waves, hurricanes, flooding, wildfires, and extreme cold events in the District of Columbia Public Schools which disrupt school operations and pose a direct threat to district infrastructure;

WHEREAS, the adverse effects of climate change on student health increase rates of chronic absenteeism, especially for students with asthma and environmentally-affected chronic conditions;[27]

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[21] https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/c-change/subtopics/climate-change-and-mental-health/
[22] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31553231/
[23] https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/12/climate-change-ranks-highest-as-vital-issue-of- our-time/
[24] https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/UNDP-Oxford-Peoples-Climate-Vote-Res ults.pdf
[25] https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2021/05/26/gen-z-millennials-stand-out-for-climate-change-activism-social-media-engagement-with-issue/
[26] https://www.npr.org/2019/09/20/762629200/mass-protests-in-australia-kick-off-global-climate-strike-ahead-of-u-n-summit
[27] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5708036/

WHEREAS, the adverse effects of climate change on the health of District of Columbia Public Schools faculty and staff increase substitute expenditures and can interrupt school curriculum;

WHEREAS, fossil fuel combustion and increased rates of wildfires lower air quality across the country;

AND WHEREAS, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, indoor air pollution can be two to five times worse than outdoor air pollution;[28]

AND WHEREAS, numerous studies have shown that poor classroom air quality reduces cognitive ability for children, limiting student performance;[29]

AND WHEREAS, heating, cooling, and ventilation systems are frequent sources of harmful inhaled biological substances, and replacing these systems with newer and cleaner ones would decrease the amount of carbon dioxide, ensure proper ventilation, prevent the spread of germs, and save energy;

WHEREAS, studies have shown that hotter days reduce student performance, especially in low-income communities and communities of color;[30]

WHEREAS, academic success has also been linked to health and well-being, and students' hope for their own futures, and includes focus on social and emotional health, quality nutrition, air quality, natural light, and room temperature;

WHEREAS, climate change is causing a significant increase in days when outdoor activity is unsafe which limits place-based learning and outdoor recesses, as well as their associated benefits to memory, attention, and concentration;[31]

WHEREAS, higher temperatures mean greater cooling needs to keep students comfortable indoors, leading to increasing energy costs in the District of Columbia Public Schools;

WHEREAS, dependence on fossil fuels and centralized electricity generation causes schools to be prone to blackouts, which can interrupt the school day;

WHEREAS, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, improvements in school environmental quality can enhance academic performance, as well as teacher and staff productivity and retention;[32]

WHEREAS, aging school infrastructure stemming from inadequate investment across the District of Columbia has made public schools more vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

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[28] https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/why-indoor-air-quality-important-schools
[29] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0360132320301074
[30] https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/05/climate/heat-minority-school-performance.html
[31] https://blog.ucsusa.org/jamesine-rogers-gibson/climate-change-affects-students-well-being-case-study-of-extreme-heat-in-san-joaquin-valley-and-need-for-climate-smart-schools/
[32] https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/how-does-indoor-air-quality-impact-student-health-and-academic-perfo rmance

WHEREAS, the climate crisis aggravates existing systemic inequities, especially educational inequities, among children and young people;

WHEREAS, 74% of educators have students who regularly come to school hungry and 46% of children from low-income families nationwide say hunger negatively impacts their academic performance;[33]

AND WHEREAS, studies published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Pediatrics, and the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry show that hunger causes lower math scores,[34] increased likelihood of repeating a grade, and increased rates of tardiness and absenteeism;[35]

AND WHEREAS, the climate crisis is increasing the costs of food, disrupting hourly and seasonal employment, and increasing unemployment overall, which will exacerbate childhood food insecurity, especially among low-income families and in communities of color;[36]

WHEREAS, climate change disproportionately affects the communities that are least responsible for the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming, especially communities of color and working class communities, which, due to inadequate investment in infrastructure, lack of economic diversification, and histories of colonization and genocide that have left these communities geographically and economically isolated, are also least able to adapt to these effects;

WHEREAS, the climate crisis results from the exploitation, theft, and destruction of native lands and BIPOC bodies, cultures, and institutions, and this crisis is inextricable from the same colonization, slavery, segregation, mass incarceration, gender violence, policing, and systematic disenfranchisement whose legacies and ongoing practices have plagued our country since its founding;

AND WHEREAS, the climate crisis cannot be solved without simultaneously addressing these systemic injustices that caused and perpetuate it;

WHEREAS, public schools are cornerstone institutions of the District of Columbia community and are essential components of any community-wide to the climate crisis;

WHEREAS, public schools serve as hubs for social interaction and community integration, bringing together diverse groups of students from various backgrounds, fostering social connections, empathy, and cultural understanding;

WHEREAS, schools provide access to health services, nutritious meals, counseling, and support systems that contribute to communities' overall health and happiness;

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[33] https://www.nokidhungry.org/who-we-are/hunger-facts
[34] https://largescaleassessmentsineducation.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40536-023-00161-z
[35] https://www.nokidhungry.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/school-breakfast-program-factsheet.pdf
[36] https://reliefweb.int/report/world/climate-change-hunger-children-s-futures-dangerously-under-discusse d-consequence

WHEREAS, public schools actively engage with parents, families, and the broader community, establishing partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and institutions to enrich educational experiences, provide resources, and create opportunities for students beyond the classroom;

WHEREAS, school districts have a responsibility to model responsible citizenship for students, of which action on the climate crisis is an integral component;

WHEREAS, when natural disasters strike, schools are often used as places of refuge and resources distribution and as hubs for disaster response coordination;

AND WHEREAS, as climate change increases rates of natural disaster, schools should be better equipped to meet community needs in the event of a community-wide emergency.

WHEREAS, students across the country are insufficiently prepared to face to the climate crisis;

WHEREAS, according to a 2019 IPSOS/NPR survey, 86% of K-12 teachers and 84% of parents of kids under age 18 believe that climate change should be taught in schools;[37]

AND WHEREAS, according to the Yale Program on Climate Communication, 77% of U.S. adults believe that schools should teach about the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to global warming, including 86% in the District of Columbia;[38]

WHEREAS, according to a North American Association for Environmental Education poll, only 21 percent of teachers feel "very informed" about climate change.[39]

WHEREAS, according to a 2022 Education Week Research Center study, while 60% of teachers across grade levels and subjects say they have addressed climate change in some capacity with students, only 22 percent talk about either job opportunities related to sustainability or environmental justice, and less than 25% of teachers say they have received any professional training or education on how to teach climate change;[40]

WHEREAS, according to a separate 2022 Education Week Research Center study, 46% of 14- to 18-year-olds believe that "the hole in the ozone layer created by gasses from spray cans and refrigerators is a significant contributor to global warming," which is false and only 44% of teenagers

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[37] https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2019-04/npr_teachers_climate_change_topline_april_22_2019.pdf

[38] https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/ycom-us/

[39] https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1164164.pdf

[40] https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/white-students-are-less-concerned-about-climate-change-than-students-of-color-heres-why/2023/04

surveyed correctly identified that “the greenhouse effect is when gases in our atmosphere trap heat and block it from escaping our planet.”[41]

WHEREAS, according to a Washington Post and the Kaiser Family Foundation poll, 57% of U.S. teens cite “plastic bottles and bags” as a “major” contributor to climate change, which is incorrect and 45% of U.S. teens said they knew little to nothing about ways to reduce the effects of climate change, with 46% and 54% saying they’d learned little to nothing about the causes of climate change and ways to reduce the effects of climate change in school, respectively;[42]

WHEREAS, in a Hechinger Report/HuffPost review of 32 textbooks used in California, Florida, Oklahoma or Texas, at least 12 included descriptions of climate change that were superficial or contained errors, four of the science books did not discuss the topic at all;[43]

WHEREAS, academic success has been directly linked to education with sustainability measures that includes connection to the natural world, place-based learning, good indoor environmental quality, ecological stewardship, and curricula tied to green technologies, clean energy, and climate solutions;[44]

WHEREAS, in order to best prepare students to face the challenges climate change poses in every sector of the economy, K-12 education must be integrated into content standards across all subject areas and all grade levels.

WHEREAS District of Columbia Public Schools faces specific health, education, energy, and economic challenges;

WHEREAS, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency, temperatures, flood risks, severe storms, wind damage, and sea levels are expected to increase, negatively impacting all residents of the District of Columbia.[45]

WHEREAS, building maintenance and utility costs, over a 30 year period, can accumulate up to 50% of the initial construction budget, but holistically assessing building designs can dramatically mitigate these expenses;

WHEREAS climate action can reduce district expenditures on energy and maintenance and reinvest savings into student programs;

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[41] https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/teens-know-climate-change-is-real-they-want-schools-to-teach-more-about-it/2022/11
[42] https://www.washingtonpost.com/context/washington-post-kaiser-family-foundation-climate-change-survey-july-9-aug-5-2019/601ed8ff-a7c6-4839-b57e-3f5eaa8ed09f/
[43] https://hechingerreport.org/are-we-ready-how-we-are-teaching-and-not-teaching-kids-about-climate-cha nge/
[44] https://www.neefusa.org/what-we-do/k-12-education/benefits-environmental-education
[45] https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-11/documents/climate-change-dc.pdf

WHEREAS, including first cost, school districts that pursue net-zero greenhouse gas emissions spend 20-25% less on facilities, energy, and maintenance costs over a 30-year life cycle, before federal clean energy subsidies.[46]

WHEREAS, an analysis of schools in Fairfax County Virginia found that, before federal clean energy subsidies, annual energy costs and annual HVAC maintenance costs in a net-zero school are expected to be $0.68 per sq. ft as opposed to $1.77 per sq. ft. for a conventional school building, equating to approximately $110,000 of savings annually.[47]

WHEREAS, the National Institute of Building Sciences reports that for every $1 spent on climate resilient design, building owners save $6 in post-disaster recovery.[48]

WHEREAS, the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law enable school districts to take advantage of billions of dollars worth of federal incentives to invest in clean electricity generation, heat pumps, electric school buses, and building envelope efficiency, reimbursing 30-60% of the costs associated with these projects for school districts and offering competitive grants for HVAC upgrades, electric vehicles, and latent urban heat island effect mitigation;

WHEREAS, Denver Public Schools have saved over $5 million dollars since the adoption of their climate action plan in April 2022. [49]

WHEREAS, District of Columbia Public Schools is poised to join other schools and districts across the United States to increase educational outcomes, positive impact on student and community health, and future economic health;

WHEREAS, the District's Carbon Free DC Plan was adopted in 2017, committing the city to 100% clean energy by the year 2050;[50]

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, energy-related expenses are the second-largest expenditures in school district budgets, and energy savings can be redirected into students and classrooms;[51]

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[46] Perkins Eastman et. al. 2020. "Net-Zero Energy Schools", pg. 43.
[47] https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/Net-Zero-Energy-Study.pdf
[48] https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_mitsaves-factsheet_2018.pdf
[49] https://sustainability.dpsk12.org/
[50] https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/034104405ef9462f8e02a49f2bd84fd9
[51] https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-08/documents/k-12_guide.pd

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 3C calls on the Mayor and D.C. Council to support the Green New Deal for Schools by prioritizing legislative and budget measures that are consistent with the tenets of a Green New Deal for Schools, and, namely:

1. Update school buildings, buses, and other school infrastructure to run on 100% clean energy, be climate resilient, and ensure safe, non-toxic learning environments.

2. Provide locally-sourced and sustainably grown lunch for all students for free, to make sure no student goes through the school day hungry.

3. Offer opportunities to connect students with meaningful and good paying union jobs combatting the climate crisis.

4. Create climate disaster plans so that school administrations are prepared to help students recover and use buildings as designated relief zones for local communities.

5. Incorporate a comprehensive climate justice curriculum—developed by educators and students, not elites and extremists—that helps students understand our history and prepares them to face the climate crisis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the ANC3C calls on Congress and the President of the United States to pass the Green New Deal for Public Schools Act of 2023 and make landmark investments in K-12 educational equity, clean energy infrastructure, and climate resilience for students in communities across America.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission designates the Chair and the Commissioner for 3C04 to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this Resolution.

Attested by

Janell Pagats
Chair, on March 18, 2024

This resolution was approved by voice vote on March 18, 2024, at a scheduled and noticed public meeting of ANC 3C at which a quorum (a minimum of 5 of 8 commissioners) was present.