

Ready or not?

Preparing youth for
21st century responsible
citizenship



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Introduction

Turnout at the polls dropped to a historic low for the Ontario 2011 election with less than 50 per cent of eligible voters casting a ballot. Declining trends in voter turnout and other forms of democratic participation show that Canadians are becoming increasingly disengaged in active expressions of citizenship. Lack of participation threatens our form of government, creating an urgent need to increase civic engagement. Since voter decline is most prominent in younger generations, it is useful to examine how the education system may be contributing to the problem, and also how it may be used as a means of preparing young people to be empowered and engaged citizens. In the ongoing process of education policy reform there is significant need to consider the reorientation of policy and practice to increase democratic participation. The overriding purpose of formal education should be reframed in the context of education for responsible citizenship. No other institution is better positioned to address the fundamental challenges we face.

The need to educate for responsible citizenship was the motivation behind the *Ready or Not? Preparing Youth for 21st Century Responsible Citizenship* roundtable discussions. The roundtables were a result of a partnership between Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF) and Deloitte. The discussions brought together senior decision makers from the education, government, business, and non-profit sectors, and were held in four cities across Canada – Toronto, Halifax, Edmonton, and Winnipeg – between March 22nd and May 1st, 2012. Participants were asked to consider the following question: *What do children and youth need to know, do, and value in order to ensure they are responsible, active, and contributing citizens, and how can formal education be reoriented to meet these goals?*

In preparation for the roundtable discussions, LSF launched an online informal poll to gather youth perspectives on the state of responsible citizenship education in Canada. The poll was generated through Survey Monkey, and distributed to Canadian youth through social media and LSF's networks. Responses were collected over a period of one month in the winter of 2012. As of March 16, 2012 there were 143 respondents to the survey, 30% of which were male and 70% female. The ages of the respondents can be broken down into the following categories: 15% under 16; 32% 17-18; 53% 19 and over. The survey received responses from youth in seven provinces across Canada: Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec.

Through a series of presentations, participants in the roundtable discussions were briefed on the state of responsible citizenship education. Presentations focused on the findings of the informal online poll into youth participation, and a recently issued Environics Institute report, *Canadians on Citizenship*. A keynote video address was provided by His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, who set the tone for the session by reminding participants that "our democracy is only as strong as our sense of responsibility as citizens." Participants worked as a group and within their sector sub-groups to develop recommendations for strengthening policy and practice in support of responsible citizenship in Canada. Participatory sessions included a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis related to youth and citizenship, a visioning exercise to describe a desired future state of citizenship for youth, structured brainstorming to identify possible initiatives, and breakout group work and presentations on sector-specific strategies for enhancing formal education policy and practice in support of youth citizenship.

This Final Report from the *Ready or Not? Preparing Youth for 21st Century Responsible Citizenship* roundtable discussions captures the outcomes that were developed at the roundtables, and draws on youth perspectives gathered through the online poll. The report provides a summary of the results of a diverse group of stakeholders responding to the issue of how to mobilize the education system to engage youth in responsible citizenship.

What is responsible citizenship?

Voting is a vital act of democracy; however, participation includes more than just voting. Citizens must be active and contributing members of their communities, recognizing their responsibility to work towards, and create, positive local and global change. Responsible citizenship involves the determination to act in the best interest of human and ecological communities, for social, environmental, and economic benefits. Ethical decision-making requires an understanding that one's actions have both direct and indirect effects on humans and environments, and acting conscientiously to support societal movement toward a sustainable future.

There are a number of useful taxonomies of political participation. LSF has identified three levels of democratic citizenship (adapted from Westheimer and Kahne (2005): knowledgeable citizens; participatory citizens; and citizens as change agents. Knowledgeable citizens understand the values, principles, responsibilities, and rights of being a citizen in a democracy. Participatory citizens understand the scope and skill of being an active citizen in democracy as it is currently practiced. Citizens as change agents understand the need for change and the means by which change is accomplished in order to improve their democracy and address existing social, economic, and environmental injustices.

Why is responsible citizenship essential?

Democracy by its very nature requires participation. In Canada, not only is voter turnout dropping, but other forms of participation are in decline, including joining or donating to political parties, signing petitions, and attending protests (Bastedo, et al., 2011).

“For many young people it can be easy to feel that the interconnected challenges of the 21st century are beyond our scope, that they are powerless as individuals and communities. But, they are not powerless. Each young person has a voice, and the ability to act. And together young people can multiply their influence through collaboration, creativity, and a commitment to bring about positive change.”

His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston,
Governor General of Canada

Democracy relies on the active involvement of its citizens to address problems from local to global scales. Contemporary society is facing more imminent and threatening issues than ever before, yet people are engaging with these issues less and less. Declining citizenship demands immediate attention. Why is civic engagement declining in Canada, and what can be done to reverse this trend?

Linking citizenship practice and educational experience

Declining voter turnout has shown the alarming trend of youth becoming increasingly detached from civic issues and participatory processes. The greatest decline in voter participation is amongst youth.

As each new cohort reaches the age of 18 and becomes eligible to vote, its members participate in fewer numbers than the cohort that came before it – only a third of first time voters today are actually voting, half the rate of a generation ago.

(Ibbitson, 2011)

Graduates are not leaving the school system as engaged and active citizens, yet the impact of formal education is often neglected (MacKinnon et al., 2006). Since voter decline is most prominent in younger generations, it is useful to examine how the education system may be contributing to the problem, and also how it may be used as a means of addressing it. We need to understand why graduates are not leaving the school system as engaged and active citizens?

According to Isaac Graves (2011) the mandate of citizenship education is to incorporate the knowledge, skills, and values required for active and ethical participation in democratic society:

Creating a generation of ‘solutionaries’... this begins with our young people. As such, we need to address these issues within our learning environments by creating authentic opportunities for young people to experience the power and possibilities democracy provides in loving and supportive community. We can transform our educational system to one based on respect for human rights and one that values freedom and responsibility, participation and collaboration, and equity and justice. To create a more just, sustainable and democratic world, we need democratic education.

Contemporary education often focuses on training workers for a competitive global economy. Instead, education must focus on developing engaged citizens (Osborne 2000). Research on how to engage youth often references the following strategies as essential in providing opportunities for youth to develop the competencies required for participation (LSF & Deloitte, 2012):

- View learning as a process that engages both the teacher and student
- Shift the emphasis of learning from an individualistic competitive focus to include more collaborative collective experiences
- Reduce the subject-based, siloed organization of learning in favour of more holistic, cross curricular approaches.
- Focus on inquiry and action, where children learn through direct experience
- Develop the competencies for collaborative, community-based participation
- Embed education in local communities
- Make learning self-directed
- Discuss controversial issues
- Involve students in decision making at all levels

Students should be graduating not only equipped with the knowledge of political structures, but with the skills of engagement, gained through experience. To do so, both the structure of the education system and schools, and the way that knowledge is acquired, should encompass ideals of the democratic process. Learning in support of responsible citizenship requires the use of strategies that transform the individual from one who receives knowledge to one who creates understandings by learning with others. Through democratizing the hidden curriculum, students can graduate with experience participating in communities, empowering them to continue to create change. Education for responsible citizenship should be made a cross-curricular theme, set as a guiding principle of education.

Our current reality

The following section summarizes insights from the SWOT analysis conducted by roundtable participants, as well as data collected from LSF's online youth poll, the Background Paper: Ready or not? Preparing youth for 21st century responsible citizenship, and the Environics *Canadians on Citizenship* survey.

Challenges

The Environics Institute published a survey in 2012 on the state of citizenship in Canada, *Canadians on Citizenship*. In the survey participants were asked if they were very proud to be Canadian. When the responses are broken down by respondent age, there is a clear generational divide: while 90% of those aged 60 and over replied yes, only 74% of respondents between the ages of 18 and 29 stated that they felt very proud to be Canadian. The same trend was evident in responses to the question, "do you feel like you are fully a good citizen". Of participants aged 60 and over, 82% perceived themselves as a fully good citizen, while only 62% of those between the ages 18 and 29 saw themselves in that light. These statistics are troubling, as they portray a generation that is not confident in their own roles as citizens, and in their ability to create present and future change. In the online youth perspectives poll performed by LSF, similar sentiments of disempowerment and disengagement were often articulated, with youth stating that they lack the agency to create change in their communities.

“I think people don't get involved because they don't think they will personally make a difference. Sometimes the issues feel so hopeless and big that people don't get why they should even try.”

Youth Response from LSF Survey

Youth often feel they do not have power, and do not have a voice in the decision-making process – a sentiment frequently reinforced through aspects of formal education. What students learn from the structure and administration of educational institutions is generally referred to as the 'hidden curriculum' (Shaver, 1991). When the structure of schools reinforces systems of hierarchical control, students can be given the perception that their input does not have value, undermining curricular reform that encourages democratic participation (Evans, 2006). Although youth spend the majority of waking hours in schools, they are often expected to do so without questioning how the institutions are run, or having a say in what they do during those hours. When not asked for their opinions, youth assume their input is not being valued.

“We feel disconnected and disempowered and feel that either we don't have a voice, or that it won't be heard.”

Youth Response from LSF Survey

Youth also tend to have negative preconceptions about politicians and political parties. We cannot expect the problem of declining engagement to be addressed until this view is revised, and youth are able to feel connected with politics. Teachers and politicians themselves can play key roles in altering this perception (Chareka & Sears, 2006).

In the SWOT analysis on the state of citizenship education in Canada, participants articulated a variety of threats and weaknesses that they think are jeopardizing the future of citizenship in Canada and stifling youth engagement. Commonly stated threats and weaknesses included a top-down approach to education that excludes the youth voice. This reflects a hierarchical approach to education, where knowledge is seen as being transferred from the teacher to the students (Bell, 1977; Freire, 2000). When education focuses on compliance, students learn that their role is to follow instructions and that engagement and participation are futile. These notions convey to youth an inaccurate and ineffective understanding of democracy (Bastedo et al., 2011; Schulz, et al., 2010). Participants also noted that the current climate of risk makes attempting to take students outside of the classroom so litigious and bureaucratic that it is often avoided by teachers and administration. (See Appendix A for a chart of weaknesses presented through the SWOT analysis, and Appendix B for threats.)

In LSF's informal poll, youth were asked about factors discouraging participation. Responses indicated that time commitment, disinterest, and feelings of disempowerment are the most common factors discouraging engagement. Youth often stated that they feel stretched to their limit with school and extracurricular activities, and unable to take on more responsibility. There was also a sense of social stress associated with participation, which is not perceived as being 'cool'. Many respondents who indicated negative perceptions associated with participation blamed the media, and stated the need to have positive role models setting examples. Lack of interest in civil participation also stemmed from the sense that issues are not relevant to youth culture, as school related initiatives may be assigned by teachers rather than chosen by the youth themselves, and not grounded in the local community. Youth sense of disempowerment was most commonly related to feeling intimidated at the size and complexity of societal issues, as well as lacking confidence in their own abilities to effect change.

Opportunities

The SWOT analysis conducted by roundtable participants identified opportunities to enhance citizenship education in Canada and current strengths of citizenship education. Opportunities highlighted included a need to collaborate to produce change and to take advantage of technology, social media in particular, to engage and educate populations. Also commonly mentioned were reorienting pedagogical approaches to include experiential learning and ensure that topics being covered are engaging and relevant. Encouraging collaboration and cooperation throughout school systems and with communities, government, and other bodies would further serve to enhance citizenship learning.

Strengths of citizenship education listed through the SWOT analysis focused on the need to utilize the many effective models of youth engagement that are already in existence, and learning from these best practice approaches. At all age levels there is a need to draw attention to positive role models who are currently actively working to bring about change in local and global communities, and can help mobilize others to do the same. (For a detailed account of the strengths presented, see Appendix C; for opportunities see Appendix D.)

In the youth online poll some respondents expressed confidence in being able to create great change. The majority of these empowered youth directly related their feelings to personal experience. In an open-ended question, poll respondents were asked about factors that encourage participation. The most common answers were: relevant issues, peer support, noticeable impact, positive role models, and incentives. In comments about making issues relevant, youth often stated that the most engaging educational experiences occurred when they were able to choose and explore issues that interested and affected them.

“Through the past work that I have done in my community, I know that my actions can have an even greater effect on both the youth and “adult audiences” in my community. I only wish more youth my age and younger knew the power they hold in creating positive change!”

Youth Response from LSF Survey

Youth stated that they would be more likely to get involved when their friends were participating as well, and many noted that the initiatives they were already involved in were started by friends, or they were recruited by friends to join. Respondents noted that involvement was much more positive when they were able to see results of the impact that they were taking, and when role models, such as media, teachers, and community leaders, helped them find opportunities to engage in the community. Incentives, such as resume building, reference letters, and recognition, were also listed as positive factors encouraging participation.

Viewing education through a responsible citizenship lens: Current initiatives

A review of citizenship education across Canada reveals many innovative programmes and policies to enhance citizenship education. The following examples of initiatives to enhance citizenship education have emerged at all levels of the education system.

Ministry

Ontario Education has a Student Voice initiative, which delivers grants to youth-led programs engaging students in school decisions, as well as a Minister’s Student Advisory council.

Manitoba Education has established a new Grade 12 Global Issues course, “Citizenship and Sustainability,” which consolidates learning across disciplines and works to empower students as change agents for a sustainable future.

Alberta Education has recently issued a document, *Framework for Student Learning: Competencies for Engaged Thinkers and Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit*, which includes the development of competency groupings to provide direction to new curriculum. Two competency groupings strongly related to citizenship are Social, Cultural, Global and Environmental Responsibility, and Collaboration and Leadership.

Nova Scotia Education is part of the Atlantic Canada core curriculum development program, which has named citizenship as a key focus, aiming for all graduates to be able to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence on local and global levels.

School

Alpha I Alternative School in Toronto, Ontario has incorporated democratic education into its governance. Alpha uses the consensus model of education, where students and the community are engaged in every facet of the decision-making process and school governance. Students help to set classroom rules and plans for the school at student-led meetings. In the classroom setting, Alpha allows students to direct their own learning by choosing subject matter based on their own values. Students then work with teacher, peers, and mentors to engage in the learning process and to find the best way that they learn. Students gain confidence through focusing on their strengths and interests, and develop interpersonal skills by working closely with their peers and school community members.

NGO

Student Vote is a national non-profit, non-partisan organization that aims to build the capacity and commitment of young Canadians to participate in their democracy. Student Vote's flagship program is a parallel election for students under the voting age, coinciding with official election periods. The program combines in-class learning, family dialogue, media consumption and voting experience. The purpose is to provide young Canadians with an opportunity to experience the democratic process firsthand and practice the habits of informed and engaged citizenship. To date, Student Vote has successfully designed and coordinated 18 parallel elections engaging over three million students across Canada.

Rights Respecting Schools is a national program of UNICEF, which works to add a rights-based approach to learning throughout the whole school environment. Schools independently sign up for this program, and work with UNICEF to implement it throughout their school. In this program, the value of respecting the rights of the child is used to create a cohesive community bonded by a shared goal. The philosophy of this approach is based on the principle that for children to want to achieve they have to feel included, that they belong in the community, and that they matter. Becoming a Rights Respecting School means that students have a voice in both how the school is governed and how they learn. Rights Respecting Schools programs have found that both teachers and students feel more empowered, and are able to form a more inclusive and participatory school community where both children and adults feel respected and act responsibly.

HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development is a charitable organization in Nova Scotia whose mission is youth engagement for positive community change through programs in Nova Scotia, and across Canada. HeartWood works with youth to develop their skills and confidence as community leaders. The organization focuses its work on connecting youth to their community and on relationship building. HeartWood also works with volunteers and service providers who work with youth, training and coaching them in meaningful youth engagement.

Samara is a national charitable organization that works to improve political and civic engagement in Canada. The organization works to make politics relevant, by educating populations to better understand democracy, and their role in improving it. Samara also conducts research into engagement in Canada. Samara is beginning to work with partners to develop primary and high-school level programming to support teachers and encourage greater understanding of politics and democracy among students.

TakingITGlobal (TIG) is a non-profit organization that works with students and educators in over 136 countries across the globe. The organization works to empower youth to understand and act on the world's greatest challenges. TIG uses global online social network to connect youth to share their questions, ideas, and passions about making the world a better place. Through hosting this online community, TIG can facilitate global education, social entrepreneurship, and civic engagement in youth. TIG offers learning resources for both educators and students, opportunities to share best practices for youth engagement, and outreach and collaboration tools for events, networks, campaigns, and causes.

The Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC) is a national, non-profit organization that engages Canadians in citizenship through programs, campaigns and partnerships designed to ensure new citizens are welcomed and included as equals, create meaningful connections among all Canadian citizens, foster a culture of active, engaged citizens and celebrate what it means to be Canadian. ICC conducts research, and provides programs that help new Canadians explore Canada's rich cultural history.

Educator competences in ESD

Learning for the future: Competences in Education for Sustainable Development (UN Economic and Social Council's Committee on Environmental Policy, 2011) outlines a framework for the professional development of educators and core competences required by educators to engage in ESD. (See Appendix G for the full chart). The competences framework includes:

Characteristics of ESD education

- a) **A holistic approach**, which seeks integrative thinking and practice;
- b) **Envisioning change**, which explores alternative futures, learns from the past and inspires engagement in the present; and
- c) **Achieving transformation**, which serves to change in the way people learn and in the systems that support learning.

Frameworks for ESD education

- a) **Learning to know** refers to understanding the challenges facing society both locally and globally and the potential role of educators and learners (*The educator understands...*);
- b) **Learning to do** refers to developing practical skills and action competence in relation to education for sustainable development (*The educator is able to...*);
- c) **Learning to live together** contributes to the development of partnerships and an appreciation of interdependence, pluralism, mutual understanding and peace (*The educator works with others in ways that...*);
- d) **Learning to be** addresses the development of one's personal attributes and ability to act with greater autonomy, judgement and personal responsibility in relation to sustainable development (*The educator is someone who...*).

International initiatives

Although Canada has many initiatives to enhance citizenship education, it continues to lag behind other countries leading in this area. England stands out with mandatory citizenship education that takes a cross-curricular approach. Sweden is notable for its systemic reform, which gives responsibility to childcare centers and schools to develop democratic values and skills in children at a young age (Skolverket, 2000). Australia is often also commended for the country's progress in this area. These leading initiatives should be looked at as great opportunities for Canada to learn from in shaping its own citizenship education policy and practice.

A vision for youth citizenship

During the roundtable discussions, a visioning exercise was conducted. Participants were asked to write desirable headlines to appear in newspapers in five years' time. The goal of this exercise was for participants to articulate their visions for the future so that they could begin to consider how to achieve these desired outcomes. The headlines were grouped into categories according to their content.

The categories that emerged from the visioning responses were:

- Increased electoral participation
- Engagement in citizenship activities
- Influence and impact
- System change, and
- Leadership

Increased electoral participation category headlines were dominated by good news stories of youth having a record voter turnout, as well as stories of the voting age being lowered to 16.

Engagement in citizenship activity headlines included stories of youth leading responses to local and global issues. These headlines often focused on youth setting the example for older generations, as well as Canadian youth being seen globally as change leaders.

Influence and impact focused headlines drew attention to political leadership roles being taken over by young people, and youth recommendations being adopted by governments.

System change articles portrayed educational reforms, such as the rethinking of assessment and curriculum in schools and connecting schools to communities.

Leadership centered article headlines showed provinces stepping up their sustainable development and youth education initiatives to set examples for the rest of Canada.

“Young People are Now Canada’s Most Active Voters”

“Student Led Initiative Addresses Water Crisis Abroad”

“Canadian Youth Lead the World in Volunteerism”

“Youth Led Advisory Committee to Prime Minister Announced”

“30% of Candidates in Next Election Under 35”

“Junior Chiefs Speak out for Aboriginal Youth”

“Active Citizenship to be Central Learning Outcome of K-12 Education”

Sample headlines from roundtable visioning exercise

Priority initiatives for citizenship education

During the roundtable discussions, participants were asked to generate suggested initiatives for enhancing citizenship education on a free-response basis. Participants then added 'votes' to prioritize items. The following chart displays the top items that were selected by roundtable participants.

Priority initiatives

Connect schools with community and global and local charities

Curriculum organized around citizenship themes, with citizenship as an essential learning goal

Engage marginalized/at risk youth

Increase emphasis on critical thinking and public speaking skills

Greater collaboration across youth serving sector and at the community level

Fund PD opportunities for teachers to learn and facilitate dialogue

Parents/teachers/community talk about controversial issues and encouraged to try new things

Sustainable education part of teacher education

Embed citizenship, equity, relationship building into school system and curriculum

Rethink assessment

Public engagement strategy for youth based around social media

Focus on creativity and innovation, less on testing

Help kids connect the dots in a practical way related to democracy in their world

More authentic inquiry work in school for kids to address issues

Global Issues should be mandatory and embedded in other courses

Have students participate in citizenship renewal

Demonstrate respect for youth

One of the most commonly articulated arguments was the importance of collaboration and cooperation, within education and across all sectors. When education is holistic, it can help students connect the dots in a way that is critical to achieving sustainable solutions to societal issues. Adequately preparing youth to make connections involves engaging them in conversations about the future. Youth must be able to think about complex and controversial issues, and be able to map out the future that they envision (Pike & Selby, 1999). Incorporating this perspective into education can help youth to realize their impact, and their agency in creating that chosen reality. Setting goals and creating road maps for change involves identifying democratic processes that must be utilized in the process, as well as identifying democracy itself as an ongoing process.

In order to meet this goal, participants stated a need to increase professional development for teachers to make certain they are equipped to teach in a holistic way. Rethinking assessment and curriculum to ensure that competencies for citizenship are developed in school are vital actions. Doing so means incorporating experiences outside of the classroom into formal education, making sure that learning is based on inquiry, creativity, innovation, and develops the skills to think critically about local and global issues.

Calls to action

The final sessions at each of the roundtables required participants to group themselves according to sector. Within these groups, participants worked to produce recommendations for sector-specific initiatives to mobilize citizenship learning within Canada's formal education system. The following calls to action focus on specific strategies identified by roundtable participants as necessary actions in transforming Canada's education system. (See Appendix E for a full chart of recommended calls to action).

Make responsible citizenship education a priority

The education sector group prioritized setting education for responsible citizenship as the guiding purpose of education, as well as establishing responsible citizenship as a graduation outcome for students who go through the Canadian education system. Making responsible citizenship a graduation outcome means that education policy and practice is oriented to ensure students are able to develop the necessary competences and skills for participation by the time they graduate from high school. To accomplish this, citizenship should be elevated to a cross-curricular theme applied across policy and practice at all grade levels.

Responsible citizenship education should not exist as an isolated subject within curriculum, but should be used as a cross-curricular theme. Setting education for responsible citizenship as a guiding principle in formal education can ensure education is holistic, integrative, and transformative. A cross-curricular theme approach is vital to achieving the transdisciplinary understandings key to arriving at sustainable solutions to societal issues.

A focus of participant feedback was on assessment. The concern was that policy is not always translated into practice if the proper structure is not in place to ensure that teachers have the adequate training and resources to implement these changes, and the proper assessment in place to insure it is tracked and reported on. Assessment was also listed as a concern when soft skills are not captured as adequately as hard skills. Many of the competencies for citizenship participation could be missed by contemporary reporting systems. Extra-curriculars were an area identified as key to the development of these soft skills; the importance of which should be incorporated into curriculum, instead of being considered as add-ons. The importance of early learning was also identified by participants as a priority.

Other sector specific strategies identified included:

- Develop Provincial framework on living sustainably: incorporate formal education, training (business) and awareness so it is seamless
- Expand the role of youth advocate office to include broader youth issues
- Encourage cross-sectoral partnerships with schools, post-secondary institutions, business, government and NGO's at all levels
- Create avenues for cross ministerial coordination and collaboration on common goals
- Host an internal semi-annual symposium to bring different ministries together to discuss initiatives and research for youth, including youth in the process
- Put risk taking back into schools and the system
- Develop a plan/vision for education

Much of the focus from the government sector was on developing holistic solutions through collaboration and cooperation. Participants articulated the need to break down silos, and to work together to create solutions, and ensure that youth are able to understand and make connections.

Learning through experience

This approach was highlighted by roundtable participants, and the research literature strongly supports their concern. When youth are asked why they are not engaged in civic affairs, a common response is that they do not feel that politics is something that includes them, but instead see politics as paying taxes and voting, that is boring, and has little to do with their lives, interests, and values (Cook et al., 2007). Civics in formal learning most often focuses on political structures, and not political participation – youth rarely get a chance to associate civic engagement with actions other than voting. What needs to be accomplished is the creation of an education system that allows youth to see themselves as important members of political institutions, and develop the competencies to effectively participate in them.

Citizenship education works to develop a learner who is...

- Informed, skilled in forming, using and critiquing knowledge claims;
- Skilled in interpersonal communication and civic participation;
- Committed to democratic values;
- Willing to participate in democratic processes;
- Committed to intelligent, ethical and active participation in civic life shaped by:
 - A global perspective (international as well as local and national)
 - A pluralistic perspective (regarding cultural diversity and differences of opinion)
 - A constructive or critical perspective (viewing democracy as unfinished business)

Parker and Kaltsounis 1991

The goal of responsible citizenship calls upon education to adopt a different set of learning tools and a different teacher-learner relationship that involves learning based upon inquiry and action. Paulo Freire (2000) terms this the “problem-posing” method of education, where teachers and students learn together through combining theory with action and emphasizing the importance of inquiry (Bell, 1977: Marino, 1998).

In LSF’s informal poll, youth articulated similar sentiments. They stated that to increase responsible citizenship education, schools should incorporate leadership and volunteer opportunities into courses, giving youth greater influence the school and community, and more opportunity to gain credit for this learning. One respondent stated:

“There should be classes that part of your mark stems from you being involved in your community, the main project should be some form of social responsibility focus to improve society for the better. I bet you would get some really great ideas coming from that, if people were willing to listen.”

Learning through experiential and collaborative activities can help children develop the skills deemed essential for constructive participation in society: communication, cooperation, decision-making, negotiation, and problem solving (Pike & Selby, 1999).

In one research study, students and policy makers alike agreed on the following set of competencies required for strong citizenship.

“The ability to understand, accept, and tolerate cultural differences; the ability to work with others in a cooperative way and to take responsibility for one’s roles and duties within society; a willingness to change one’s lifestyle and consumption habits to protect the environment; a willingness to resolve conflict in a non-violent manner; the ability to be sensitive towards and to defend human rights; and the capacity to think in a critical and systemic way.”

(Kubow, as quoted in Cook et al., p. 27)

In the roundtable group strategy reports, participants noted that in K-12 education students should be required to engage in praxis, and that this should be enabled by a supporting structure. Engaging in praxis means combining theory and action – a goal that should be accomplished by taking students outside of the classroom to learn from first-hand, real-world experiences.

A commonly noted concern was that education outside of the classroom is being threatened by a fear of risk. Risk taking has often been removed from the school experience due to liability concerns. This fear has escalated to the point that common field trips into the local community have often been cancelled and replaced with in class experiences. Participants noted this loss as one of the more pressing concerns facing educational institutions. In order for student to learn to participate in the real world, they must be allowed to learn through experience and action. Risk taking must be reintroduced into education.

In Manitoba, teachers can receive grants to support initiatives that actively engage youth in innovative citizenship projects. These grants are given with the understanding that action can help students to acquire the knowledge, values, and skills to participate in their schools and communities, and will make them more likely to continue to be active citizens as adults (Manitoba Education, 2012). Action-based learning can create opportunities for collaboration, teaching students the valuable skill of working together to reach common goals while improving their communities and empowering them for further action. As conventionally seen in democratic structures, collaborative action can produce the most change.

The world is ever changing, as is the learner; therefore, learning is the process of adapting to our environment (Kolb, 1984). In this context learning is viewed as a continuous process acknowledging that no environment is static, and that people must adapt and learn within a dynamic world (Kolb, 1984). Learning this can help youth to see democracy as a work in progress, with room for more voices and views in its development and transformation. When the conventional student/teacher dichotomy is altered, learners are able to see that knowledge is not only delivered by those deemed as experts, but can come from personal investigation and interaction. Learning to be open to more forms of knowledge building can allow children to value their own discoveries and understandings (Pike & Selby, 1999).

Ground education in real world issues through learning from local communities and environments

To engage students in action-based learning, education must extend beyond the confines of the classroom and into local communities – both human and ecological. Embedding learning within local communities can help develop connections to a place, giving people a sense of belonging and responsibility and forming foundations for positive environmental and social behaviour (Ardoin, 2006; Chawla & Flanders Cushing, 2007). Children must learn that their community is both human and ecological, developing a holistic perspective that allows them to act on behalf of the cultural and ecological integrity of that place (Curthoys, 2007). Children are more able to relate and connect to local environments, and gain immediately applicable knowledge and first-hand experience to enhance learning (Sobel, 1996; 2004).

When children can engage in action-based learning within local environments, they are able to see the results of their actions, and can see that their engagement is not futile, but that they are able to produce real change. This theme was brought up by roundtable participants in their group strategy reports. Participants noted the need for community engagement to validate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) outcomes, and to focus education on developing creativity and critical thinking skills through project and inquiry-based learning.

Whether the attempts of children succeed or fail, the experience of testing their ability to act in a safe environment can be invaluable. UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools program has had great success in empowering students by giving them a voice. After having her grade five class participate in this program, one teacher stated: "when children know their rights it empowers them to make a difference in their community. They become leaders. They end up becoming more responsible for their actions for leadership, friendship, and in relationships. They're not so much me-centered" (UNICEF, 2011).

In the informal youth poll, respondents stated the need to have open discussions in education environments. Youth said that they want to be able to explore topics of their choice in class, without controversial topics being censored:

“Teachers need to be reassured they will not suffer negative consequences for introducing controversial subjects in their classes, that administrators cannot tell them what to discuss or not discuss in their classes. Teachers need to feel comfortable letting students discuss issues and voicing their opinions and helping students learn how to defend their opinion through good research and analysis.”

Giving students the opportunity to learn how to articulate their opinions, listen to those of others, and critically assess controversial issues is integral to participation in democratic society. The ability to address complex and controversial issues is required for effective citizenship. Instead of thwarting student interest in controversial issues (Cook et al., 2007, p. 27), learning needs to embrace these opportunities to practice effective engagement skills, share perspectives and grasp the complex interplay of facts, values, and views of others. School should be viewed as a safe space to develop and practice these skills.

Empowering youth as change agents

As learners develop the skills of active citizenship they must be prepared to become change agents, addressing complexity and controversial issues in order to think constructively about the future. Graham Pike and David Selby (1999), argue that education must bring learners to envision the future that they believe is presently being created, while simultaneously imagining alternate futures for themselves and the world, and to map out how they believe those futures can be created. Pike and Selby (1999) coin this type of learning as “futures thinking.” Empowering children to imagine alternative futures and realities can bring them to realize that they have choice and agency in creating the chosen reality. Viewing democracy as an ongoing process is a dialogue involving futures thinking. Students must be able to set goals and determine how to reach those goals, engaging in the appropriate democratic processes to make those alternate futures a reality – meeting the ultimate stage of democratic citizenship: citizens as change agents.

In the youth poll, respondents indicated the importance of role models and the media in promoting and encouraging engagement. Youth stated that media can encourage youth involvement through good news stories, as well having positive role models, such as politicians and community leaders, come into schools. These influencers can help youth feel connected to political systems, and help to promote the view of youth as active and contributing members of their communities.

“Role models should be our local and national journalists, our politicians, who make it known they believe in participation from youth.”

“The media plays a large role in defining how we youth define ourselves. We have been given an image of apathetic acceptance and we have accepted it. Educators need to actively promote civic engagement.”

Another important aspect of democratic education is that learning should be self-directed. Students must be able to ask questions and work collaboratively to find answers. In studies of youth engagement, youth constantly state a desire to learn about issues that are relevant in their lives and important to them, giving the absence of this as a reason for civic disengagement (Cook et al., 2007). In order to address this issue, roundtable participants recommended the following strategies to ensure meaningful civic engagement at all levels:

- Make business more accessible to youth and to organizations supporting youth
- Engage young people through hiring, co-ops, corporate mentorship programs, and volunteer experience
- Enable and inspire authentic and meaningful youth involvement in political structures
- Legislate youth involvement in boards
- Ensure government and non-profit organizations are acting as ethical role models
- Create centers for parent and youth support
- Fund creative and innovative youth initiatives
- Help youth identify their assets, skills, and strengths, and empower them to use them through experience

The above strategies focus on getting youth acquainted with, and involved in, different organizations and structures through direct experience. The need for these institutions to be positive places that youth can learn from as well as contribute to is also stressed. Instead of feeling disillusioned by political and corporate processes, youth should be integrated into them, developing a mutually beneficial system of collaboration.

Supporting teachers: Pre-service and in-service

Pre-service and in-service teachers both need ongoing support in ensuring they are using best practice techniques for youth engagement. In order to ensure that pre-service teachers enter classrooms as new teachers ready to meet a graduation outcome of responsible citizenship, citizenship should become a core focus of teacher training programs.

Roundtable participants made the following recommendations for the post secondary education sector, concerning teacher preparation:

- Develop a strong pre-service education that is grounded in an understanding of the purpose of education as developing active citizens in a participatory democracy
- Create open opportunities for pre-service teachers and students to reconnect with the community
- Ensure faculty commitment to experiential learning, inquiry-based learning, outdoor education, collaboration, and a culture of teaching embedded in social justice and sustainability

Professional development and structural changes can be used to support in-service teachers in ensuring the goal of responsible citizenship education. Recommendations for ongoing support for in-service teachers included the following:

- Develop a capacity in our teachers to encourage best practices through democratic engagement of youth at all levels
- Create professional development opportunities emphasizing citizenship education.

Through pre-service education and ongoing support, teachers can be better equipped to teach democratically, and engage their students in civic participation. Both pre-service and in-service support and education are necessary to ensure that best practices are being used, and teachers continue to learn from their own experiences. The structure of educational institutions can often undermine student participation. Current demands on teachers to 'cover the curriculum', as well as fear of risk in taking students out of the classroom must be mitigated to facilitate student involvement. Since these factors are often out of a teacher's control, professional development opportunities must be combined with systemic changes that facilitate student involvement.

Next steps

In addition to the calls to action generated through the roundtable discussions, the series also generated ideas to continue the momentum generated through the roundtable discussions. The goal of these follow up initiatives is to continue to include more diverse stakeholders in the conversation about responsible citizenship education, and begin to put ideas to action. An evaluation was also circulated at each roundtable session. (Evaluation result details can be seen in Appendix F.)

Symposium

The roundtable discussions began a conversation about education for responsible citizenship, and how to mobilize it in Canada's education system. In order to further develop this conversation, Learning for a Sustainable future is working to organize a symposium for the spring of 2013 asking the question: what's worth knowing in education for responsible citizenship. This symposium will work to expand participation beyond those provinces included in the roundtables, in order to incorporate more voices and diversify the conversation. It will also include a strong focus on moving from ideas and recommendations to action.

Youth voice

A focus of follow up activities will be to more actively include youth in conversations about the future of citizenship education. In addition to the Citizenship Symposium, LSF is planning a Youth Roundtable. Youth from across Canada will be brought together in a facilitated symposium to generate actionable ideas for advancing citizenship education. The youth delegates will also work to design a competition to be launched across Canada, inviting students to write a Code of Responsibilities and Duties for Canadian youth that parallels the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This competition will be launched across Canada in the Fall of 2012. Youth forums will also be held in order to bring more youth perspectives into the discussion.

LSF is also working to expand the youth poll to reach a larger and more diverse number of Canadian youth. A potential partnership with Environics to advance this research is being reviewed.

Resources and professional development for teachers

LSF is committed to continue to advance teacher education and professional development in the field of responsible citizenship education. This will be done through the development of online professional development sessions. Additionally, LSF will expand its existing Resources for Rethinking (R4R) teacher resource database, to ensure that teachers have access to quality resources that help to achieve the goals of education for sustainable development and responsible citizenship.

Support for service learning and action-based learning

LSF has two existing projects that encourage action-based service learning in schools: EcoLeague™ and Project FLOW™. These youth empowerment programs challenge and motivate students across the country to engage in community and school-based sustainability action projects that build citizenship competences. Students and teachers can apply for funding through EcoLeague™ and Project FLOW™ in order to obtain the necessary resources for their project and receive continued support from LSF throughout the duration of their project. LSF will fundraise to continue to expand these programs, and will attempt to reach new audiences.

Step Outside for Learning assists teacher in taking their students outside of the classroom and into the local community. Each month, LSF publishes three Step Outside newsletters linked to lesson plans on natural happenings, encouraging teachers to take their classes outside and into nature. Engaging more teachers to participate in the program is another way LSF can help encourage action-based learning.

Identify and support best practice schools

One effective way of transforming schools into democratic and engaging spaces for youth is to find the best practice models and share their techniques. LSF has played a role in identifying schools that encompass a whole school model of ESD learning, and is committed to finding the best practice schools for citizenship education. Transforming the operations, the physical surroundings, the curriculum, and extra-curricular activities of a school fosters the creation of responsible citizens. Working with these schools can help to identify key strategies for transformation, and encourage other schools through sharing their success stories.

Knowledge sharing

During the roundtable discussions, participants indicated that it would be helpful to have a centralized document providing a review of all youth engagement initiatives across Canada. In order to meet this demand, Learning for a Sustainable Future has worked to launch an environmental scan of these initiatives, inviting participants, and the broader community to help gather data.

This report has been generated in order to share the results of the roundtable discussions, and capture the key recommendations generated by the diverse group of stakeholders. Dissemination of this report will help to share knowledge, and encourage others to become involved in the conversation.

“As this initiative reminds us, our schools provide a wonderful microcosm of society, as well as a supportive environment in which to develop our instincts for citizenship. It is often said that young people are the leaders of tomorrow, but we must go beyond this cliché and understand that young people actually create the world of tomorrow through their actions today, and that we help or hinder them by the environment we create.”

His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada

Conclusion

Making responsible citizenship a guiding purpose of education can help ensure that education is holistic, connecting learning across disciplines. Responsible citizenship education can help prepare youth to take action today, and tomorrow, to solve issues in a dynamic and ever-changing world. To do so, youth must be taken out of the classroom, and gain the competencies and confidence to collaborate with others, and produce change in their local and global communities. Learning through experiential and collaborative activities can help children develop the skills deemed essential for constructive participation in society: communication, cooperation, decision-making, negotiation, and problem solving (Pike & Selby, 1999). In order to empower youth and provide them with opportunities to gain these competencies, education should be taken out of the classroom and into local communities, where youth can learn about issues that are important to them, and see their own abilities to create positive impact.

Children and youth must be given opportunities to learn skills to function in democratic society and a chance to gain and test those skills through experience. Since democracy is learned through practice, education must become a democratic process to ensure citizens have the actionable skills and confidence to fully participate in society (Cooke et al., 2007). For democracy to be effective, it must be viewed as a work in progress, so that its participants are always striving to create ever-better futures. For this to be possible, citizens must constantly question and consider alternative perspectives (Parker & Kaltsounis, 1991). To democratize education, student perspectives must be incorporated into all levels of the decision-making process. When youth are given a voice in the governance of their school and classroom communities they can learn how to create change and that their opinions are valuable.

Involving youth voices should be adopted much more broadly than in just the education sector, but in all sectors. Youth advisory committees and youth involvement on boards can help provide intergenerational perspective on issues. Ensuring that young people develop the competencies needed for civic engagement empowers them to create change, both now and in the future. For this to be made possible, responsible citizenship must be set as a guiding purpose of education.

Appendix A: Strengths

Strengths

- Wider relational circles
- Optimism and interest of a new generation
- Number of supporting programs and initiatives
- Increased participation in post-secondary education
- Greater tolerance of differences and focus on equity
- Resiliency of youth
- Greater awareness of need to change
- Some ministries already active on the topic
- Youth-led NGOs with active voice and resources
- Some schools involving youth in decisions and leadership
- Variety of stakeholders already engaged
- Engrained volunteerism culture
- Focus on inclusion
- Already have youth empowerment strategies
- Leadership role models driving change
- Social justice oriented teachers, parents and private sector
- Leadership opportunities in schools
- Collaborative curriculum redesign including students, corporate, other stakeholders
- Student voice in schools, boards, youth councils
- Social media exposure to intergenerational causes – reaching out to youth
- Global vision, knowledge and awareness
- Self-directed learning
- Acceptance of diversity
- Corporate leadership, ethics and integrity
- Advocacy by youth and corporations
- Social media ability to share information and expose to issues and opportunities
- Population better educated than other countries, high literacy
- Many excellent examples of active youth volunteering
- Pride in being Canadian
- Conversation has started, momentum

Appendix B: Weaknesses

Weaknesses

- Relevancy of subjects to youth
- Lack of student voice: top-down, non-inclusive approach
- Silos of curriculum and stakeholders
- Loss of faith in politicians and loss of youth connection to politics
- Economic inequity
- Risk avoidance and fear
- Avoidance of controversial topics
- Lack of role models and adult support
- Lack of teaching resources, capacity, and funding
- National-level understanding of “citizenship”
- Not enough professional development
- Pace of information
- Difficulties in getting local focus with huge global issues
- Rigid institutional frameworks and structures
- Lack of problem-solving and inquiry-based teaching
- Lack of critical thinking
- Consumer mentality
- Pursuit of ‘freedom’ prioritized over responsibility
- Overemphasis on standardized testing and grades
- Public school system rooted in 100 year-old thinking
- Lack of political will
- Baby boomers “me generation” approach/attitude
- Lack of synergy
- “Quick fix” or not sustainable funding
- No inter-sectoral pan-Canadian networks
- Competing public viewpoints on education’s purpose
- No consistent involvement of First Nations
- Complacency, lack of sense of urgency
- Schools isolated from communities
- Content vs. issues teaching framework
- Subjects not mandatory, need to be embedded
- Challenges involving males, immigrants, disadvantaged kids
- Sense of helplessness, that problems are too big
- Need for value proposition
- Lack of peer leadership
- Short-term thinking
- Wanting to see immediate results
- Lack of incentives and rewards for engagement
- Lack of accountability

Appendix C: Opportunities

Opportunities

- Social media increasing awareness and connectivity
- More women in leadership roles
- Community based learning opportunities (service learning)
- Technology
- Youth role models
- Multilateral, cross-sectoral partnerships
- Increasing involvement of parents, family, and community, in schools
- Mentors and role models
- Teacher education and professional development
- Making learning engaging and relevant
- Engaging the student vote
- Formalizing youth voice in all levels of government
- Providing leadership opportunities to youth
- Connecting with NGO's to build capacity
- New engagement practices (Occupy Movement)
- Changing the education system to address changing demographics
- Charter schools
- Intelligent communities
- Leveraging social enterprise
- Learning from other countries' successes
- Gaming – in our classrooms to virtual-real connections
- Students are asking
- Social and political activism
- Citizenship integration in curriculum
- Linking K-12 to higher education re: sustainability education
- Acknowledging learning during early childhood
- Redefining/redesigning purpose of education
- Strong Canadian leadership
- Moving to social justice view
- Pedagogical shifts – choice and voice for students, authenticity and relevance
- Experiential learning
- Valuing diversity
- Bringing politicians into schools

Appendix D: Threats

Threats

- Lack of positive role models
- Disillusionment with politics
- Lack of information sharing and collaboration
- Limited school funding and teacher capacity
- Technology and information overload
- Attitudes, sometimes fear of young people
- Aging population draw on resources
- Disinterest and pushback from government
- Negative portrayals of youth
- Government not encouraging Peace Corps and other initiatives
- Poverty and social exclusion
- Old thinking by old people in old problems and old constructs trying to change youth rather than being open to changing the options to fit the modern world
- Apathy
- Sense of entitlement in society
- Power of the driving economic agenda, consumerism
- Technology disconnects from community
- Risk adversity
- Lack of national vision and leadership
- Lack of empowerment, questioning of authority not supported
- Undervaluing voting
- Gender disparity for youth engagement
- Out-dated education system with resistance to change
- Impact not being measured, valued
- Lack of critical/creative thinking
- Lack of action/courage
- Need to transform politics, business and organizations to engage students
- Youth growing up in poverty, especially new Canadians and Aboriginal youth

Appendix E: Group strategy reports

Group Strategy Reports

Education K-12

1. Community engagement to validate ESD outcomes driving practice and accountability
2. Develop a capacity in our teachers to encourage best practices through democratic engagement of youth at all levels
3. Establish linkage between government policy and accountability structures, assessment, and reporting
4. Students required to engage in praxis, and a supporting structure to enable this
5. Adopt a broader approach to assessment
6. Ensure meaningful civic engagement at all levels
7. Create a new curriculum through engagement with community, using big integrated ideas and a developmental framework
8. Make extra-curriculars curricular
9. Focus on critical thinking and creativity skills through project and inquiry based learning
10. Address importance of early learning

Post Secondary Education

1. A strong pre-service education that is grounded in an understanding of the purpose of education as developing active citizens in a participatory democracy
2. Professional development opportunities emphasizing citizenship education
3. Faculty commitment to experiential learning, enquiry based learning, outdoor education, collaboration and a culture of teaching embedded in social justice and sustainability.
4. Increase teacher preparation through pre-service and ongoing support
5. Open opportunities for pre-service teachers and students to reconnect with community

Business

1. Encourage more businesses to develop Corporate Social Responsibility strategies
2. Mandate corporate board representation for youth
3. Create permanent infrastructure for cross-sectoral collaboration and communication
4. Senior leadership sustainability training (ICD)
5. Greater stakeholder engagement to inform business strategy
6. Articulate/define/support a business case for sustainability
7. Support employee involvement and leadership of corporate citizenship
8. Define business case/benefits/impact for increasing youth engagement
9. Make business more accessible to youth and to organizations supporting youth
10. Engage young people through hiring, co-ops, corporate mentorship programs, and volunteer experience

Group Strategy Reports

Government and NGO

1. Enable and inspire authentic and meaningful youth involvement in political structures
 2. Funding for active outreach to vulnerable children and youth
 3. Bring retired politicians into schools to mentor youth
 4. Provincial framework on living sustainably: incorporate formal education, training (business) and awareness so it is seamless
 5. Expand role of youth advocate office to include broader youth issues
 6. Legislate youth involvement in boards – NGO's, agencies funded by government
 7. Government and NGO's display ethical citizenship and values (role models)
 8. Encourage cross-sectoral partnerships with schools, post-secondary institutions, business, government and NGO's at all levels
 9. Cross ministerial coordination and collaboration on common goals
 10. Internal semi-annual symposium to bring different ministries together to discuss initiatives and research for youth, including youth in the process
 11. Centers for youth and parent support
 12. Put risk taking back into schools and the system
 13. Develop a plan/vision for education
 14. Fund creative and innovative youth initiatives
 15. Promote a holistic approach to bring together family, community, and business
 16. Increase collaboration and partnerships across NGO's
 17. Help youth identify their assets, skills, and strengths, and empower them to use them through experience
-

Appendix F: Roundtable feedback data analysis

At the end of each roundtable session participants were asked to fill out a written feedback form. Participants were asked to answer questions on a 5 point Likert Scale with response anchors of 1 (Unsatisfactory) and 5 (Excellent). Participants were also asked to provide qualitative responses to a set of questions. Provided below are the average ratings of feedback responses:

Item	Score
Background Materials	4.33
Depth and Comprehensiveness of information presented	4.42
Session Format	4.56
Facilitation	4.75
Overall Experience	4.71

Participants were also asked to respond to 2 qualitative questions. The first question asked participants: “Please list 3 key learnings and action items that you will take away from today’s roundtable.” Common responses to this question included:

Learnings

- Learning about the number of people and organizations working in youth advocacy
- Developed a greater awareness of looking for and creating opportunities to involve youth
- Importance of connecting ed to broader community
- Importance of collaborating, sharing, and creating partnerships – especially across sectors
- Everyone is a role model for youth
- About CSR initiatives of for-profit organizations

Action items

- Spreading this information
- Recognition that across sectors there is understanding of youth potential – time to turn into this into action...
- Critical to give youth a voice in decision making
- Learning more about social impact bonds
- Addressing risk adversity
- Continuing this dialogue

The second question asked participants: “Tell us what worked? What could have been better? Additional comments or questions for follow up?” Common responses to this question included:

What worked

- The quantity of data gathered from the sessions
- Facilitation allowed a high level of engagement and sharing
- Helpful to engage with stakeholders from all different areas
- Focusing on solutions and not just problems

What could have been better

- More youth present
- Could have engaged in more debate (too much consensus makes you wonder why things haven't changed)

“I thought it was an excellent session, well organized, and many insightful discussions were had. Initially I was worried about the time commitment – but now I wish it could have gone until the end of the day. There are so many great ideas and great people working in the area – it makes me very hopeful and inspired!”

Roundtable Participant

Appendix G- Competences for educators in education for sustainable development

The Competences for educators in education for sustainable development – From *Learning for the future: Competences in Education for Sustainable Development* (UN Economic and Social Council’s Committee on Environmental Policy, 2011)

	Holistic approach Integrative thinking and practice	Envisioning change Past, present and future	Achieving transformation People, pedagogy and education systems
Learning to know <i>The educator understands....</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basics of systems thinking • Ways in which natural, social and economic systems function and how they may be interrelated • The interdependent nature of relationships within the present generation and between generations, as well as those between rich and poor and between humans and nature Their personal world view and cultural assumptions and seek to understand those of others • The connection between sustainable futures and the way we think, live and work • Their own thinking and action in relation to sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The root causes of unsustainable development • That sustainable development is an evolving concept • The urgent need for change from unsustainable practices towards advancing quality of life, equity, solidarity, and environmental sustainability • The importance of problem setting, critical reflection, visioning and creative thinking in planning the future and effecting change • The importance of preparedness for the unforeseen and a precautionary approach • The importance of scientific evidence in supporting sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why there is a need to transform the education systems that support learning • Why there is a need to transform the way we educate/learn • Why it is important to prepare learners to meet new challenges • The importance of building on the experience of learners as a basis for transformation • How engagement in real-world issues enhances learning outcomes and helps learners to make a difference in practice

	Holistic approach Integrative thinking and practice	Envisioning change Past, present and future	Achieving transformation People, pedagogy and education systems
Learning to do <i>The educator is able to....</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for sharing ideas and experiences from different disciplines/places/cultures/generations without prejudice and preconceptions • Work with different perspectives on dilemmas, issues, tensions and conflicts • Connect the learner to their local and global spheres of influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically assess processes of change in society and envision sustainable futures • Communicate a sense of urgency for change and inspire hope • Facilitate the evaluation of potential consequences of different decisions and actions • Use the natural, social and built environment, including their own institution, as a context and source of learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate participatory and learner-centred education that develops critical thinking and active citizenship • Assess learning outcomes in terms of change and achievements in relation to sustainable development
Learning to live together <i>The educator works with others in ways that....</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively engage different groups across generations, cultures, places and disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the emergence of new worldviews that address sustainable development • Encourage negotiation of alternative futures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge unsustainable practices across educational systems, including at the institutional level • Help learners clarify their own and others worldviews through dialogue, and recognize that alternative frameworks exist
Learning to be <i>The educator is someone who....</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is inclusive of different disciplines, cultures and perspectives, including indigenous knowledge and worldviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is motivated to make a positive contribution to other people and their social and natural environment, locally and globally • Is willing to take considered action even in situations of uncertainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is willing to challenge assumptions underlying unsustainable practice • Is a facilitator and participant in the learning process • Is a critically reflective practitioner • Inspires creativity and innovation • Engages with learners in ways that build positive relationships

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