



BRITISH COLUMBIA

Sustainable Energy
ASSOCIATION

COOL IT!
CLIMATE LEADERSHIP TRAINING



Final Report

2025/26



Executive summary

The City of Penticton provided generous support to the BC Sustainable Energy Association's (BCSEA) Cool It! Climate Leadership Training Program (The Cool It! Program) enabling the delivery of the program to up to 4 elementary classes and 4 high school classes in Penticton throughout the 2025/26 school year.

During 2025/26, the Cool It! Program was delivered to **9 classes** (6 elementary and 3 high school). Per agreement mid-year, one high school class spot was used to support an additional elementary class. We were able to work with one more elementary class by utilizing funding from a separate grant stream. Overall, the program reached **218 students** (136 elementary and 82 high school). Students collectively completed **1,247 actions** focused on climate change and sustainability.

Based on feedback collected in recent years from schools and teachers, The Cool It! Program continues to offer the option of both in-person or virtual workshop delivery. As in previous years, the decision on the most appropriate delivery method for each class was left in the hands of participating teachers.

The four-week Cool It! Climate Challenge encouraged students to choose from a variety of actions that would reduce theirs and their family's carbon and ecological footprints. It also provided opportunities for further investigation and reflection about issues related to climate change and sustainability as well as highlighting avenues for participation in local community action and programs.

Qualitative and quantitative data was collected from student actions prompted by their participation in the Cool It! Climate Challenge. Through energy conserving and emissions saving actions at home, along with research and inquiry activities, we expect City of Penticton student actions, completed in 2025/26, to result in an estimated annual saving of a total of **41.3 tonnes** of carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂e) if they commit to maintain their actions for one year.



The 2025/26 program curriculum

BCSEA has developed a unique program curriculum for both elementary and high school classes. This includes the content covered in workshops, actions provided in the climate challenge, and the format and language in which those actions are presented. For both curriculums, a climate workshop (two in the case of high school classes) and participation in a four-week climate challenge comprise the main components of the program.

Workshops

During 2025/26, BCSEA is offering teachers the option of participating in an in-person or virtual workshop — depending on which mode of learning best suits their class. This year, 80% of workshops were delivered in-person.

Each elementary class participated in a 60-minute workshop at the beginning of the program and a 30-minute wrap-up session after completing their four-week climate challenge. Each high school class participated in two 60-minute workshops, spaced roughly two weeks apart.

In the workshops, all students learnt about the fundamentals of climate change science, debunked common climate myths and misconceptions, watched videos detailing the scientific processes of climate change, practiced evaluating the production and consumption life cycle of everyday items, explored the causes, impacts and solutions to climate change, and learnt about taking climate action with their friends and families and in their local communities. High school classes used their second workshop to explore more advanced concepts related to climate science and the public and private solutions being developed. As well as discussing concepts of climate justice and the social and economic impacts of climate change, both locally and globally.



After four weeks, a wrap-up session was held with each class to share their successes and challenges, recap the key messages and learnings from the workshop and celebrate their collective results.

Climate Challenge

After their initial workshop, students participated in the Cool It! Climate Challenge for the next four weeks.

Elementary students were given a Climate Challenge Card - an interactive PDF document containing 25 unique actions that could be used digitally or printed out and completed by hand. When an action is completed, students check-off the corresponding square on the card as well as enter additional answers and information where required. A 15-page supplementary booklet was also provided, which offered additional information about each action, extra support to complete it, and opportunities to for optional further research and investigation alongside additional resources.

High school students registered on BCSEA's online platform climatecool.org. The platform guided each student through weekly action-taking. We revamped that climatecool.org platform for 2025/26, improving usability and actions and emissions tracking. We also updated sections of the curriculum, including the most up to date climate science as well adding additional actions on topics including to Indigenous climate action, wildfire mitigation and community engagement and development.

Traditionally, the Cool It! Program focuses on gathering quantitative data through the collation of completed actions and measuring outcomes (where possible) in carbon dioxide emissions savings. While some actions yielded a quantifiable emissions reduction, other actions yielded qualitative results through individual reflection, personal investigation, and research.



The elementary Climate Challenge Card used in Penticton during 2025/26:

CLIMATE CHALLENGE

First Name:

Teacher:

Parent/Guardian signature:

1. GETTING AROUND 2. FOOD CHOICES 3. HOME ENERGY 4. WASTE 5. WATER 6. NATURE 7. RESEARCH + REFLECTION

2.1 TASTY LEFTOVERS Re-use leftovers 3 times. I ate: 1. 2. 3.	1.1 CAR SMART Learn about electric cars, cargo-bikes, and active transportation and complete two of the actions in the information page below. 	6.2 BEE FRIENDLY Protect your local bee population by building a bee bath using the instructions in the information page below. 	7.1 GAMING FOR NATURE Watch two videos or play two of the games and complete the actions in the information page below. 	7.2 LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION Do some research and find out what local climate action is happening at your school and in your community. 
7.4 COMMUNITY EXPLORATION Map your community and think of ways to make it more sustainable using the instructions and actions in the information page below.	6.3 GO BIO Make a biodegradable cleaning or bath product. I made:	2.2 LOCAL FOOD Use ingredients grown in BC in meals. I used: 1. 2.	7.5 MUNICIPAL ACTION Explore your municipality's website and find out what kind of action they are taking on climate change. 	5.1 WATER WISE Learn about water conservation and calculate your household's daily water consumption. My family consumes of water per day litres 
2.4 GROW YOUR OWN Plant garden veggies, balcony or windowsill plants. I planted:	1.3 LOCAL VACATION Plan three local vacations with a small carbon footprint. Where could you and your family vacation locally? 	4.1 MORE THAN RECYCLING Reuse/swap/up-cycle instead of throwing stuff away or buying new. I did: 	6.1 NATIVE TREES & PLANTS Learn about plants native to BC and if you can, plant some of your own. A native plant I planted or researched is:	3.1 EARTH HOUR Have an Earth Hour at home, with friends or at school. Use the time to do some of the other challenge actions. 
7.6 CLIMATE REFLECTION Write a short reflection on the future and complete the actions in the information page below. 	3.2 GET EFFICIENT Use the resources in the information page below to learn how to be more energy efficient at home. 	5.2 ADOPT A STORM DRAIN Clean up a storm drain in your neighborhood to prevent flooding after it rains or snows. 	1.2 TRAVEL SMART Swap the car for public transit, walking or biking. I went to: by:	2.3 LOVE VEGGIES Have one meat-free day per week or give up eating beef and lamb for one week. ☐ didn't eat beef/lamb ☐ meat-free days 
5.3 EVERY DROP COUNTS Aim for at least 4 showers of 4 minutes or less. My showers are now! minutes	7.7 YOUR OWN IDEA Create your own activity to reduce your environmental footprint. I did:	7.3 LIFE CYCLES Sketch a life cycle of a household item and complete the actions in the information page below. 	4.2 HOME WASTE Do an audit of your garbage bins at home and learn how you can start composting food waste at home. 	3.3 STAY SNUG/COOL If it is cold outside: Lower the heat in your house and close the curtains four times each week. If it is hot outside: Only run your A/C at night or during hot periods of the day

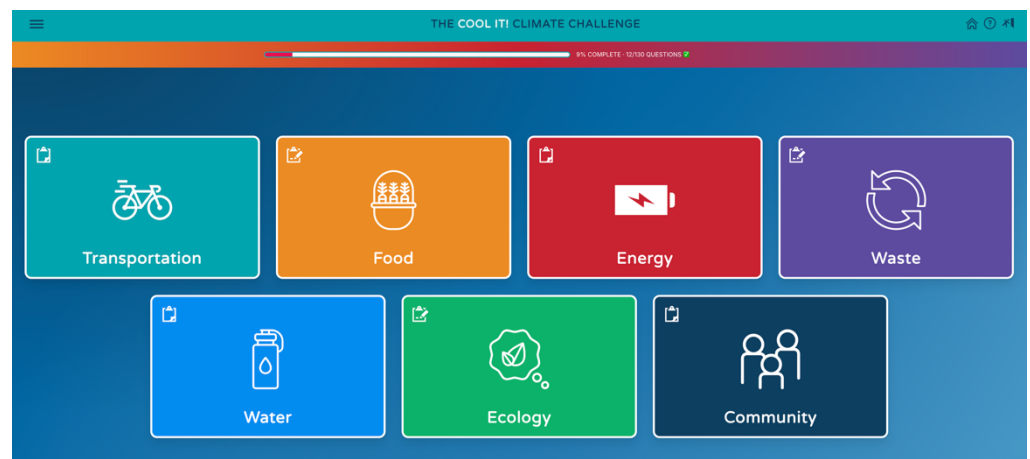
MY PROGRESS

	Transportation	0%
	Food	21%
	Energy	0%
	Waste	15%
	Water	0%
	Ecology	14%
	Community	0%

ADMINISTRATIVE DASHBOARDS

	Student Progress	→
	Analytics	→
	My Students	→

New climatecool.org platform for 2025/26



City of Penticton funded classes

Program results

City of Penticton funding has enabled BCSEA to work with 9 classes and 218 students in 2025/26. Students' actions through their participation in the Cool It! Climate Challenge resulted in an estimated total reduction of 41.3 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions (tCO₂e).



9 classes
6 elementary
3 high school



218 students
136 elementary
82 high school



1,247 actions
765 elementary
482 high school



41.3 GHG savings (tCO₂e)
24.2 elementary
17.1 high school

Student engagement in Penticton was, once again, extremely strong across 2025/26. The Climate Challenge return rate among all participating students (the proportion of students who returned a completed climate challenge form or maintained an active account on climatecool.org) was 74% - above our program-wide average of ~65%.

7 of the 9 participating classes completed over 100 cumulative actions each and the winning class, Rachel McWirtter's grade 4/5 group, completed more than 200. Overall, results across Penticton constitutes some of the most consistent levels of high student engagement across our program in 2025/26.

Detailed, class-by-class results are provided below.



Elementary class details

School name	Teacher name	Grade	Class size	# Cards returned	Return Rate (%)*	Total actions completed	GHG totals per class
Shawna Crichton	Wiltse Elementary	3	23	13	57%	66	1.6
Kaeli Benoit	Wiltse Elementary	4	24	16	67%	193	6.9
Niki Reichert	Skaha Lake Elementary	5	23	16	70%	110	3.6
Nicole Mann	Skaha Lake Elementary	5/6	25	15	60%	109	3.2
Sydney Cartwright	Wiltse Elementary	6	24	13	54%	83	2.7
Rachel McWirter	Ecole Entre-Lacs	4/5	17	15	88%	204	6.1
Total			136	88	66%	765	24.2

* % of students who returned a completed Climate Challenge Card

2025/26 class winner

Summary of elementary student actions

1.1 Car Smart	1.2 Travel Smart	1.3 Local Vacation	2.1 Tasty Leftovers	2.2 Local Food
33	38	35	39	42
2.3 Love Veggies	2.4 Grow Your Own	3.1 Earth Hour	3.2 Get Efficient	3.3 Stay Snug
40	45	28	29	32
4.1 More than Recycling	4.2 Home Waste	5.1 Water Wise	5.2 Adopt a Storm Drain	5.3 Every Drop Counts
33	25	30	25	35
6.1 Native Trees and Plants	6.2 Bee Friendly	6.3 Go Bio	7.1 Gaming for Nature	7.2 Local Climate Action
27	29	27	33	36
7.3 Life Cycles	7.4 Community Exploration	7.5 Community Action	7.6 Climate Reflections	7.7 Your Own Idea
25	18	22	12	27
TOTAL ACTIONS				765

1. Getting Around 2. Food Choices 3. Home Energy 4. Waste 5. Water 6. Go Green 7. Research + Reflection



High school class details

School name	Teacher name	Grade	Discipline	Class size	# active accounts	Participati- on Rate (%)*	Estimated actions completed	GHG totals per class
KVR Middle School	Melissa Burdock	7	General	27	24	89%	146	5.4
KVR Middle School	Brooke Hall-Eckes	7	General	27	22	81%	117	3.1
KVR Middle School	Jaclyn Cousins	7	General	28	27	96%	219	8.6
Totals				82	73	89%	482	17.1

* % of students who activate an account on climatecool.org

Student and Teacher Recognition and Rewards

BCSEA rewarded the hard work and dedication of students and teachers who did their best to complete the four-week program. We rewarded top performing students and classes with e-gift cards. We also offered random prize draws to encourage students to submit their cards no matter how many activities they completed. We are also sending personal thank you notes to all teachers who achieved over 75% return rate, or who filled in our teacher survey.

Acknowledgement of the City of Penticton's sponsorship and support

BCSEA is grateful for the continued support from funders like the City of Penticton who have made climate change education programming possible in their community. The City of Penticton was acknowledged for their support of the Cool It! Program in the following ways:

- The City of Penticton logo was featured on the Climate Change Card.
- City of Penticton suggested actions were incorporated into the Climate Challenge Card – including links to specific City materials and resources.
- The City of Penticton logo is featured on the sponsor section of the Cool It! webpage <http://www.bcsea.org/cool-it>.



- The BCSEA would like to thank the City of Penticton for its ongoing support and partnership in achieving our shared goals of promoting of climate change science, increasing awareness of local climate action and community support, and empowering students and their families to make tangible behaviour changes towards more sustainable lifestyles.

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