

NEWS RELEASE

Distributed May 5, 2023

Cool It! Climate Education program had a busy first year

City funded climate education program continues into 2023

Summary

Nanaimo City Council committed up to \$10,000 in 2022 to support participation in the BC Sustainable Energy Association's (BCSEA) Cool It! Climate Leadership Training Program for Nanaimo school students. The City has since granted additional funding to continue the program into 2023.

The Cool It! program is a climate education workshop and contest for students in Grades 4 and 5 and secondary school classes. Students participate in interactive workshops and games to support discussion and build on knowledge of climate change. Following the workshop, students work on a four-week Cool It! challenge that encourages families to make important changes to their energy consumption. The classroom that completes the most challenges wins the Cool It! Climate Challenge for the area. In 2022, Ms. Keenleyside's Grade 5/6 class at Mountain View Elementary School won the first ever Cool It! Climate Challenge in the City of Nanaimo after completing more than 350 climate action challenges.

BCSEA delivered 26 Cool It! workshops to 583 elementary and high school students in Nanaimo in 2022. In total, 16 elementary and 10 high school classes participated in the program, completing 2,811 climate actions. Due to the interest from an entire cohort of grade 10 science teachers at Dover Bay Secondary (4 teachers covering 6 classes) in the program, BCSEA decided to fund the program through a separate grant at no additional cost to the City because BCSEA recognized offering the program to all grade 10 science classes at the school is a unique opportunity. Nanaimo schools' participation in this program has provided an opportunity for students and their families to increase their knowledge on climate change and take practical actions to help reach the City's greenhouse gas reduction targets.

In addition to the regular program, the City of Nanaimo approached Dr. Lindsay McCunn, professor of environmental psychology at Vancouver Island University, to undertake a retroactive evaluation of this program to measure whether parents and caregivers of the students who participated in the take home challenge experience changes in their pro-environmental behaviours in the household. This research will help evaluate and refine BCSEA's programming and offer additional knowledge about eco-conscious household behaviours in Nanaimo.

Strategic Link: n/a

Key Points

- The City of Nanaimo started funding the Cool It! Climate Leadership Training Program in March, 2022. Additional funding was provided to carry the program into 2023.
- The Cool It! program is a climate education workshop and contest for students in Grades 4 and 5, and secondary school classes delivered throughout the Province by the BC Sustainable Energy

Continued... Cool It! Climate Education program had a busy first year

Association(BCSEA). BCSEA is a non-profit association committed to promoting the understanding, development, and adoption of sustainable energy and energy conservation and efficiency in British Columbia.

- City of Nanaimo funding enabled BCSEA to deliver 26 Cool It! workshops to 583 elementary and high school students in Nanaimo in 2022.

Quotes

"It is truly encouraging to see future generations working together to reduce our impact on the environment. On behalf of Council, I wish to thank the students and teachers that participated in the Cool It! program to date and congratulate Ms. Keenleyside's Grade 5/6 class at Mountain View Elementary School on winning the City's first ever Cool It Climate Challenge."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- In 2022, Nanaimo students reduced an equivalent of 91.7 tonnes of greenhouse gasses (CO₂e) through their participation in the Cool It! program.

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