



**Key Elements of a National Policy  
& Funding Strategy for Equitable  
Climate Literacy and Related  
Career and Workforce  
Development**

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## Preface:

The National Wildlife Federation is pleased to offer this summary of a series of policy actions that, in combination, would create a solid base for equitable and just climate literacy and related job and career development opportunities on a large scale across the U.S. Research shows that young people want to know more about climate and the emerging green economy but schools and professional development programs are failing to meet this demand. As a result, there is simply too little climate change education occurring in schools for students of all ages.

The answer goes beyond have effective model programs. We need more national and state funding and some new programs within the federal establishment. But we also need to channel the resources of existing programs and tailor them to support climate literacy and related job and career development.

The Federation is also pleased to be working with a consortium of allied organizations that share this commitment to climate literacy and career development policy. These organizations have thousands of organizational members and affiliates. They include the North American Association for Environmental Education, Earth Day Network, the Campaign for Environmental Literacy, Climate Generation, the Aspen Institute, the Climate Literacy and Energy Awareness (CLEAN) Network, and The U.S. Green Building Council.

Individuals and organizations wishing to join and become part of a policy initiative should simply contact Kevin Coyle - [CoyleK@NWF.org](mailto:CoyleK@NWF.org) at NWF or Sarah Bodor - the North American Association for Environmental Education at [sarah@naaee.org](mailto:sarah@naaee.org). We are hoping, over time, to build a strong nationwide coalition of public interest organizations focused on policy advocacy for climate education and training for children, youth, young adults, and worker/professionals.

We also recognize the importance of being especially mindful, through this work, that policy actions – new legislation, funding, and agency regulations – must address the education and career development needs of children, youth and workers from lower income front-line communities in the U.S. Climate justice can and will be supported throughout this agenda along with a vision of a prosperous future for everyone.

Finally, U.S. plans in 2021 to rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement need to encompass a framework for climate literacy and related career and job development. It would be a mistake to leave climate literacy out or give it light treatment. A new [framework document](#) has been developed by **Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)** to help inform adding a strong education commitment to the U.S. Paris Agreement reconnection. One recommendation of the ACE document is to develop a “national policy plan.” This document has been developed to help inform the national policy plan as it evolves.

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## Key Elements of a National Policy and Funding Strategy for Equitable Climate Literacy and Related Career and Workforce Development

March 1, 2021

Kevin J. Coyle, J.D. National Wildlife Federation

The set of policy opportunities outlined in this draft was developed to support and stimulate a more unified nationwide discussion of how the Federal Government could develop a truly large scale and environmentally just climate change education and training platform. Many different agencies need to be involved. The elements described below look at: a) what each agency and their guiding legislation and regulations could do to ramp up equitable climate education and related training, and b) the concept of establishing empowered coordinating entities within the federal government to facilitate a more organized and effective national response across the many relevant agencies. We have surely reached a time when the nation needs to become much more serious about climate literacy and related job and career development. Surveys by the Center for Climate Change Communication and others show that the public agrees with this and displays more than 80% support for climate literacy programs.

### Ramping up U.S. Climate Education and Related Job and Career Training with Emphasis on Climate Justice and Social Equity.

Massive changes are ahead for the United States in transportation and vehicles, energy production and distribution, the built environment, manufacturing, food production, and more. We need to look at these changes through the lens of human resource development via education and training in order to guarantee long-term success. Much of the public policy discussion around climate change in the U.S. has concentrated on political, technical and financial solutions to the problem itself without significantly considering the need for a well-versed, well-educated consuming public and workforce to implement the solutions we need so badly.

Climate change education, climate literacy, and the many climate-related pathways to future jobs and careers are not at all well-developed in the United States. Indeed, the persistent debate around climate has tended to inhibit widespread climate education and training. Surveys of science educators in the U.S. indicate that a large majority young people are not being provided with an effective climate change education that will:

- permit them to fully understand and observe the many aspects of climate change and what needs to be done about it, and
- provide them with the knowledge and skills they will need for the transformational opportunities in careers, community living and consumerism that addressing climate change will involve.

Climate literacy means more than an academic familiarity with the topic. Climate change is a highly complex subject that will require deep and systemic understanding and close attention, by policy makers, to equity and justice to avoid disproportionate negative impacts on lower income, front-line communities and/or communities of color. An individual's education needs range from simple understanding of the impact of consumer decisions and their associated green-house gas impacts to sophisticated knowledge of new technologies and even entrepreneurial approaches to business.

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## **Why the Climate Change Solutions Movement so Badly Needs a Strong and Equitable Climate Literacy Human Resource Development Focus.**

The scale of the global warming challenge in the U.S. is immense and will surely require massive shifts in policies, technologies and economic incentives. But it also demands that there be tens of millions of educated consumers, tens of thousands of brilliant entrepreneurs, millions of skilled technicians, a multitude of insightful planners, engineers, architects, enlightened corporate and government executives, and educators. To engage in the belief that new rules and regulations and technologies can reverse climate change while ignoring the need for human understanding, skill and preparation is to engage in magical thinking. We will never get a strong enough grip on the climate problem without also ramping up our education and training programs nationwide.

Designing and funding a large-scale and equitable climate literacy and related career development effort will mean: a) increasing funds for designated climate education grants and professional development at some agencies and b) infusing climate principles and tools into existing large-scale education programs such as at the U.S. Department of Education and state education departments. Many billions in climate literacy funding and career and job development training can be achieved with thorough infusion of climate in these existing educational efforts. And, because addressing climate change will be so transformational in American society in the coming decades, this infusion will be needed very soon. Consider:

- The next generation will be asked to live their lives with worsening climate-related challenges—drought, flooding, fires, heat waves, regional economic instability, new diseases, and more – and will need the education and tools to effectively address these and problems.
- People in lower income areas and many frontline communities of color will be disproportionately affected by climate and will experience profound and deadly environmental injustices.
- The fact of climate change, looked at in certain way, can offer significant opportunities for new economic growth, jobs, careers and future prosperity that will also help to remedy economic and social injustices that have emerged through institutional racism, and other social inequities.

Other major social and economic sectors, such as health care, digital technology, food and agriculture, and national defense recognize the vital importance of education, training and human resource development. It is time for the United States to embrace how critical the education and training realm is to a more livable climate future.

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## Key Elements of a National Policy and Funding -- At A Glance

### Government-wide Coordination

- Establish a new **White House Office of Climate Literacy and Career Development** with a strong authorization and an equally strong commitment to climate and social justice.

### Agency Strategies for Climate Literacy and Education

- Establish a **program of climate and sustainability education** within the Department of Education to coordinate climate education and literacy programs throughout the Department and for coordination with state departments of education.
- Increase the emphasis on equitable and just climate literacy in the **Every Student Succeeds Act** (also known as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) in keeping with support for Title 1 schools and for infusion in, not substitution for, STEM education, civics education, and after school programming among others programs under Title 4.
- Make climate change a specific and better-funded focus of the Education Department's **Teachers for a Competitive Tomorrow Program** under the COMPETES Act to support career development skills for all students including students from power income, front line communities.
- Increase public support for the **Advanced Placement Environmental Science (APES) program**, expand the program to more high schools, and incentivize giving it more of a climate emphasis.
- Expand the funding and programs of the **NOAA Office of Education** and support a range of agency programs in equitable teaching of climate change science and solutions.
- Expand the **Earth Science education programs of NASA** and focus them more effectively on climate change.
- Increase funding and program support for climate education by the **EPA Office of Environmental Education and the EPA Environmental Justice Program**.
- Reinstitute and fund the **Climate Change Education (CCE) program of the National Science Foundation** under the auspices of the COMPETES Act.
- Build the capacity of museums, libraries, aquariums, zoos via the **National Institute of Museums and Library Sciences**, and the **Endowments of Arts and Humanities** and other informal educational venues to educate children, educators and the general public on climate change.
- Incorporate climate education into the schools of the Interior Department's **Bureau of Indian Education**.

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## Policy for Green Schools and Infrastructure

- Pass the **Rebuild America's Schools Act** for the refurbishing of thousands of low-income area public Pre-K-12 schools with provisions to support green schools as part of national infrastructure legislation and refurbish schools in lower income, front-line communities across the U.S.
- Expand the goals of the Department of Education's **Green Ribbon Schools Program** to ensure a connection between green school facility improvements and their becoming tools for climate literacy and education.

### Programs for Advancing Climate-Related Jobs and Careers

- Increase funding and add legislative intent to the Carl H. Perkins Act for **Career and Technical Education (CTE)** to more effectively address equitable and just climate change education and sustainability education and job and career development.
- Establish and fund a new **Civilian Conservation and Climate Corps** aimed at addressing youth unemployment for lower income, underemployed youth.
- Infuse climate change education and skill development into the **youth education and training programs of the Department of Labor** such as Job Corps, apprenticeships, Youth-Build and others to help build pathways out of poverty for lower income youth in front line communities.
- Infuse climate change principles and education into the educational programs of the **Department of Agriculture** including at the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, Conservation Education at the Forest Service and educational programs for the Natural Resource Conservation Service.
- Expand authorization, funding and support for the equitable and just education programs of the **Department of Energy** on energy conservation and alternative energy scenarios.
- Increase funding for the professional educational programs of the **National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences** to help health care professionals to better address the health impacts of climate change particularly on lower income, front line communities of color.
- Infuse a higher level of funding and a focus on climate change and sustainability into the **Higher Education Act (via the University Sustainability Program)** and also into the **COMPETES Act** to support colleges and universities and community colleges to help insure equitable career paths for students in lower income front line communities.
- Empower and fund NOAA to expand its programs for the **climate education of meteorologists**, particularly broadcast meteorologists.

In addition to the opportunities listed below, a valuable early step in the establishment of a cohesive and effective national climate education and training strategy would be for Congress to request the Congressional Research Service to do a comprehensive assessment and review of the opportunities that exist to improve and increase climate literacy.

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## Legislative, Agency and Other Policy Opportunities – Specifics:

### Government-wide Coordination

#### **National Leadership: Establish a new White House Office or Program of Climate Literacy and Career Development.**

The U.S. needs a stable and effective federal government center for championing and coordinating climate education and career development. This new office could be housed in many places in the federal establishment but being within the White House would position it well for strong coordination among the more than 25 agencies that can play a role in environmental literacy and related jobs and careers. This office would provide overall technical assistance and coordination of the federal government's approach to developing broad-based climate literacy and supporting climate-related career and workforce development programs and priorities, as detailed below in this agenda document. This Office will need funding and authority to continuously assess and make actionable recommendations to and coordinate with a range of agencies on climate change education and career development programs and opportunities. There must also be a strong commitment, consistent with overall Administration policy, to developing educational programs that reflect social equity and justice.

The authorization for this office should include a high-level interagency council of key program heads, as compared to lower-level staff. Current legislative proposals such as S. 477 in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress could be supplemented to include this authorization. The authorization for this coordination may begin with agency caveat but should likely be confirmed via legislation. The authorization should most likely be for at least a ten-year term, to cover what many scientists have identified as the key window of time for materially reversing the trend toward global warming. There are other options for the placement of this office, including the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), but the mission must be broader than science and technology and include education and human resource development.

### Climate Literacy and Education

#### **Mainstream Education: Establish a new Program of Climate and Sustainability Education and the U.S Department of Education.**

This program would need leadership support within the Department of Education and would help to coordinate education programs, funding and policies throughout the Department. The aim would be to infuse, not substitute, climate literacy and related career development programs into mainstream education as it is reflected in the numerous programs administered by the Department. It would support both federal programs and work with state departments of education to pursue climate literacy goals. This office could likewise encourage climate literacy connections and outcomes related to green school developments such as could emerge from federal infrastructure legislation as it affects school refurbishment.

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**Mainstream Education: Increase the emphasis on climate literacy in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (also known as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act).**

This legislation, overseen by the Department of Education, is the federal government's main vehicle for supporting elementary and secondary education. It provides over \$40 billion annually for programmatic block grants to states. In the 2015 reauthorization of the legislation, Title 4 included billions of dollars in targeted funding to support educational enhancement, including STEM Education, after-school education and other subject- area needs such as civics education.

Specific ESSA opportunities to enhance climate education and literacy include:

**Title 4 STEM Education:** Orient the Title 4 STEM provisions (over \$1 billion in grants) toward greater support for climate education by amending agency regulations and guidelines to reflect more of an emphasis on climate literacy. Develop agency guidance to the states on how a climate literacy emphasis supports STEM education overall, is consistent with the principles of the Next Generation Science Standards, and is particularly germane to the emphasis on Title 4 STEM provisions and grants on supporting applied science learning via climate change solutions project work. Legislative intent can also be specified in appropriations language and reports. This emphasis would be on the infusion of climate principles and solutions in STEM education rather than positioning climate education as a substitution for STEM education.

**Title 4 Civics Education:** Acknowledge via legislative language, agency regulations and/or related grant priorities how climate change education and climate solutions project work also support civics and civic-engagement education by demonstrating an exemplary cross-connection between social studies standards and science standards. <https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/ESSA-Mapping-opportunities-for-civic-education.pdf> Legislative intent can be specified in appropriations language and reports. Again, the goal is to infuse more climate education and applied solutions in American civics education.

**Title 4 After School:** Amend agency regulations to make climate change education and project work a priority of after school grants (\$1 billion) via the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Program. This program is particularly critical for climate justice by reaching students from lower income, front line communities. The federal interest in quality after-school programming for both in-school and out-of-school venues across the U.S. is supported by subject areas that enrich student experiences and learning during out-of-school time.

**An Educator Force: Make climate change a specific and better-funded focus of the Education Department's Teachers for a Competitive Tomorrow Program under the COMPETES Act.**

The language and intent of the [America COMPETES Act](#) is about placing the United States in a better position to stay competitive in a rapidly shifting and evolving technologically-focused world economy. This will naturally involve the global shift toward sustainability, and addressing climate change will take center stage in that discussion. This will be particularly important for teaching in lower income, front line communities. The COMPETES Act recognizes the importance of making sure that educators are able to convey the knowledge



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students will need to keep the United States up to speed on science, technology and business systems, including those related to climate change and sustainability. Increasing funding for this program to support an emphasis on climate and sustainability, while also amending agency guidance and regulations to support grant making and professional-development programs for educator climate literacy and skill, will be paramount.

**Advanced Placement: Increase public support for the Advanced Placement Environmental Science (APES) program, expand the program to more high schools, and incentivize giving it more of a climate emphasis.**

The COMPETES Act also seeks to raise the proficiency of college students in subject areas that will keep the United States competitive in a global economy. Using the language and intent of the America COMPETES Act, we need to provide specific funding to states and school districts to incentivize expansion of APES to more schools and to orient the APES program more toward climate-related environmental science and solutions. Used creatively, the APES program can also support high schools playing a more effective role in helping students in lower income areas to prepare for higher education.

**Tribal Schools: Incorporate climate education and funding for schools of the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Education.**

The Bureau operates or has partnerships with schools in many parts of the U.S. that would benefit from increased emphasis on climate literacy programs and an emphasis on climate related Career and Technical (CTE) education.

**Earth and Atmospheric Science and Solutions: Expand the funding and programs of the NOAA Office of Education.**

There are several opportunities:

Expand the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Environmental Literacy Grants Program to include the provisions of the proposed National Climate Education Act. This would give NOAA a stronger climate education mandate and increased funding for climate change education consistent with its current educational grants programs and its agency mission around weather, oceans, fisheries and more.

Expand the role of NOAA's and NASA's applied earth monitoring education efforts, in accordance with the COMPETES Act, and its goal of providing a base for careers, through increased funding of the GLOBE Program, a school-based climate and earth science protocol and monitoring program, and via increased access by schools, students and educators to earth monitoring systems such as NASA and NOAA satellites. (see NASA below). This expansion must also address the STEM education and career needs of student in lower income, front communities.

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Increase annual funding to NOAA's Office of Education to better coordinate and support its national network of non-formal education partners, such as aquariums, to increased applied-science learning around climate.

Establish a strong program for climate literacy among the nation's meteorologists including broadcast meteorologists who are key to public education on climate change and its impacts and solutions.

**NASA: Expand the Earth Science education programs of NASA and focus them more effectively on climate change.**

As noted above, NASA and NOAA often work hand in hand to support earth science and earth systems monitoring on a global scale. Each agency likewise supports related education programs. The COMPETES Act offers a particular opportunity for NASA and climate change education:

NASA STEM programs and COMPETES—funding to increase and deliver real-time satellite data on climate, global conditions, planetary conditions (such as drought, floods, wildfires and other disturbances) to school, college and university classrooms for the study of earth science.

Expand the [GLOBE program](#) with increased funding to recruit a larger network of schools, consistent with developing citizen science and data monitoring skills as part of the COMPETES Act.

**Environmental Science and Solutions: Increase funding and program support for climate education by the EPA Office of Environmental Education and Environmental Justice Programs.**

Expand the existing grant program conducted by EPA under the auspices of the National Environmental Education Act to support best practices in climate-change and related sustainability education via increased funding and statements of legislative intent via appropriations.

Make EPA a model of climate change and environmental education programming focused on social and environmental justice in lower income, frontline communities. This could, for example, provide increase support and funding to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), tribal colleges, and other minority-serving institutions.

Expand and increase funding for professional development programs for teaching conducted under the National Environmental Education Act, to place greater emphasis on educators becoming more effective on climate instruction in the classroom and in the field.

Increase funding for the National Environmental Education Foundation, established under the National Environmental Education Act, to support highly leveraged climate-change education and solutions partnerships with private sector and non-profit sector partners.

**Energy: Expand authorization, funding and support for the education programs of the Department of Energy on energy conservation and alternative energy scenarios.**

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The U.S. Department of Energy would benefit and be more effective with a legislative education mandate. Energy management is at the heart of many educational efforts to address and solve the climate crisis and yet our leading agency on energy does not have a clear mandate. The Department of Energy is well-positioned through its education efforts around energy conservation and alternative energy to support a much broader climate-based education effort and it will be critical to give the agency the education and training tools it needs to support climate-smart energy literacy. This can be done through a combination of legislative authorizing language and increased appropriations.

**Research: Reinstitute and fund the Climate Change Education (CCE) program of the National Science Foundation under the auspices of the COMPETES Act.**

Restore and increase funding for climate education research on best practices to the Foundation's Directorates for Education and Human Resources, Geoscience, and Biological Sciences for grants in support of research-based investigations of best practices in climate education for secondary and higher education. NSF has sufficient authorization to work on climate but needs funding.

**Non-Formal Education Network: Build the capacity of Museums, Libraries, Aquariums, Zoos and other informal educational venues to educate children, educators and the general public on climate change.**

Bolster climate education funding at the National Institute of Museums and Library Sciences to support grants and technical assistance for professional development, educational displays, reading materials and more for student and family education at the nation's extensive network of museums, aquariums, zoos, libraries and similar public and NGO venues. This funding would, among other things, deploy the expertise of these institutions and agencies in creating effective educational visualizations of the effects of climate change and its solutions and build digital and physical libraries of educational materials for public distribution and use.

Install and fund a climate change education program at the National Endowment for the Humanities to support a deeper understanding of the cultural aspects of attitudinal and behavioral change necessary to implement broad-based programs for addressing and solving the climate crisis. The Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) provides direct grants to museums, universities, archives, and libraries in support of research to strengthen teaching and scholarship, develop contextual knowledge and support opportunities for lifelong learning.

Install and fund a climate change education program at the National Endowment of the Arts to support visual and other art-based interpretations of climate change to increase public understanding and find impactful ways of helping society see and understand its implications.

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## Policy for Green Schools and Infrastructure

### **Pass the Rebuild America's Schools Act with provisions to support green schools as part of infrastructure legislation.**

The Rebuild America's Schools Act, part of the 2020 House-passed infrastructure legislation, would provide \$130 billion over five years for grants and loans to K-12 public schools in lower-income, front-line communities to conduct major refurbishments and upgrades. This legislation has good prospects for passing in the Congress beginning in 2021. If passed, as many as 40,000 schools will benefit from major building overhauls. Many of these schools are in very poor condition as a result of policies dating back nearly a century, reflecting community red-lining and institutional racism. Importantly, these overhauls will be done in accordance with the programs and guidelines of the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED program and with guidance from the Collaborative for High Performance Schools, among others.

### **Expand the Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools Program to ensure a connection between green school facility improvements and climate literacy.**

The passage of the Rebuild America's School Act will provide a major opportunity for structure climate education and literacy via the Department of Education and state departments of education. It makes sense to have the improvements made to these schools operate as on-site educational labs and demonstrations of green technologies around energy, water usage, recycling, and more. The expansion of the existing Department of Education **Green Ribbon School** recognition and awards program for grants to states to develop education and interpretation programs around green schools could facilitate the use of many billions of dollars in facility improvements as opportunities to educate students hands-on about climate change and its solutions.

## Climate-related Jobs and Careers

### **Career and Technical Education (CTE): Increase funding and add legislative intent to the Carl H. Perkins Act for CTE to more effectively address climate change education and sustainability education.**

The Carl Perkins Act at the Department of Education is consistent with the intent of the COMPETES Act in promoting job and career skills for high schools and community college students at a large scale. Nearly every public high school and community college has a CTE program that supports students in developing knowledge and applied skills in a wide range of career clusters, ranging from STEM careers to careers in the building trades, manufacturing, natural resources, computer technologies, and more.

In addition to supporting CTE programs at high schools, most CTE programs have partnerships with local community colleges, so that students can go directly from secondary education to participate in job and career certification programs, earn associate degrees in technical areas, and more. These credentialing programs can lead to high paying jobs that provide pathways out of poverty for lower income students. They can also serve as entry points to higher education degrees in STEM and in the design professions such as engineering and architecture.

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The Act is currently funded at about \$1 billion per year and presents an opportunity to support the greening of CTE career clusters, a subject that has been analyzed by the Association for Career and Technical Education. [https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/sustainability\\_issuebrief.pdf](https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/sustainability_issuebrief.pdf)

***Colleges and Universities: Infuse a higher level of funding and a focus on climate change and sustainability into the Higher Education Act (via the University Sustainability Program) and also via the COMPETES Act.***

The Higher Education Act supports students, educators and institutions with many billions of dollars each year. This funding supports student loans, grants and other assistance, but also offers other opportunities. Higher education institutions prepare the practitioners in a wide range of professions with a direct bearing on addressing climate change. These include engineering, architecture, land planning, natural resources, landscape architecture, environmental science and more. Moreover, colleges and universities provide education and career preparation for private business leaders, entrepreneurs and other business professions. The University Sustainability Program (USP) is a small program within the Higher Education Act that could be greatly expanded to support centers of excellence that advance the global shift toward climate friendly businesses, transportation, energy and communities. This presents a particular opportunity to support climate and sustainability education and career development at minority-serving institutions such as tribal schools and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

This focus on higher education is also consistent with the intent of the COMPETES Act, which promotes assessments of the ability of U.S. higher education to keep America competitive in world markets.

***Labor Programs: Infuse climate change education and skill development into the youth education and training programs of the Department of Labor.***

The Labor Department supports a range of programs that target under-employed youth and that help them develop skills to work in a variety of trades and in the computer sciences. These programs can, with added funding and additional guidance, become more oriented toward the knowledge and skills needed for a changing world where climate sustainability and career paths are more widespread. They include:

[Apprenticeships](#) - Apprenticeship is a combination of on-the-job training and related classroom instruction in which workers learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a highly skilled occupation.

[Job Corps](#) - Job Corps is the nation's largest and most comprehensive residential education and job training program for at-risk youth, ages 16 through 24. Private companies, state agencies, federal agencies, and unions recruit young people to participate in Job Corps, where they can train for and be placed in jobs.

[YouthBuild](#) - YouthBuild programs give at-risk youth, ages 16-24, the opportunity to transform their lives by earning their high school diploma or state-recognized equivalency degree, learning to be community leaders, and preparing for college and other post-secondary training opportunities.

[Youth Connections](#) - The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 enacted a comprehensive youth employment program for serving eligible youth, ages 14-24, who face barriers to education, training, and employment.

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While this list is not comprehensive, it does address many of the key opportunities that, when woven together, would reach tens of millions of young people at critical times in their education and career preparation.

**CCC: Establish and fund a new Civilian Conservation and Climate Corps aimed at addressing youth unemployment.**

The economic fallout of the global pandemic has cut off job and career prospects for many young people in the U.S. These job losses are being addressed in part through a nationwide network of youth conservation corps, funded through a variety of means and supported by the Corps Network. Key U.S. Senators are proposing to greatly expand this funding and weave it into a much larger workforce initiative reminiscent of the 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps, which built roads and parks, planted forests, and more. A modern-day version has been shaped into legislation for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Civilian Conservation Corps and has been considered in various Covid-19 relief packages. This effort includes the opportunity for a Climate Corps, whose participants could help address a range of natural resource challenges posed by climate change while becoming educated and skilled in how to address them. As with other programs the Corps should emphasize employment for youth in lower income communities seeking job and career development opportunities and pathways out of poverty.

**Agriculture: Infuse climate change into the educational programs of the Department of Agriculture including at the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, Conservation Education at the Forest Service and educational programs for the Natural Resource Conservation Service.**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has major influence over American farming, ranching and forestry. Building stronger climate education into such programs as Extension based at Land Grant Universities, supporting K-14 educational programs for future farmers and more would mean a more climate friendly and climate mitigating future for America's farms and forest lands constituting hundreds of millions of acres.

**Health Professionals: Increase funding for the educational programs of the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences to health impacts of climate change**

It will be critical for health professionals to understand how changes in climate affect people's mental and physical health. The NIEHS currently offers educational resources on climate for health practitioners, public health professionals and health related educational institutions. These programs need to be expanded particularly as it affects children, lower income, front-line communities, mental health and more.

**Moving forward:**

There are a number of consortia and coalitions developing to address the need for a more comprehensive approach to climate change education and to ramp up funding and support. These organizations support various aspects of federal and state education policy improvements for climate, and many are in discussion over how to create a system of support for a massive ramping up of federal funding and support for climate literacy and related career development.

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