

Start School Climate Clubs

With the looming and urgent threat of climate change, **School Climate Clubs** would be a good way to bring youth into the desperate effort to save the planet for human habitation. Climate Clubs would bring kids together and offer them a positive framework for grappling with the threats of climate change. Recent events indicate that youth worldwide know humanity is in peril, and some are starting to work to save themselves from pending disasters. Here in the USA most high schools focus on sports, but sports won't save the world from climate change.

Recent environmental disasters are raising awareness that climate change is already happening. Michael Soule, UC Santa Cruz professor emeritus of environmental studies, is one of many who have predicted that our planet will be unlivable for our children and grandchildren by the end of this century, in other words, in 82 years. Regardless of the causes of climate change, we, earth residents, especially the young, have to deal with the biggest threat to our survival.

Once club members understand the scientific causes and consequences of climate change, they could focus upon the most serious environmental problems of their own bioregions that will affect them directly and then take action that will have positive impacts on their lives and community. The members will also need to learn how to make the social, economic and political changes necessary to make up for decades of ignorance and inaction.

Starting School Climate Clubs will take a partnership between concerned informed and parents, teachers, school administrators and youth leaders. Science teachers are the obvious sponsors of Climate Clubs. One advantage of school clubs is that they will likely be easier and quicker to form than adding to or changing the school curriculum. Another advantage is that clubs would allow students to become change agents for their own communities.

Think of the huge progress that could be made in dealing with climate change if every elementary school, high school and college had active Climate Clubs. They could be models for the rest of us to make headway in this most difficult urgent crisis. What better place than schools for starting a worldwide effort to save our planet for future generations.

Wayne Kessler, Mount Shasta, California
wayne2@shasta.com