



Celebrating the end of a school year is not hard, every part of you is rejoicing that the year is over. But do you view this time as the end of the current year or the beginning of the next?

Whether you think of it as the end or beginning, take some time to breathe, relax, and celebrate!

So much great work has happened this year! Our end-of-year newsletter is a synthesis of some of the best resources, and those resources are a result of the hard work of our partners around the country!

Onward,
Jennifer Seydel



Leadership

A [recent report](#) explored the financial advantages of hiring sustainability directors and environment managers. [This EducationWeek](#) article breaks down how school districts could collectively save millions by hiring sustainability specialists.

[Learn more about the benefits](#)



At our [End of Year Event](#) earlier this month, Dr. Ghita Carroll, Sustainability & Energy Officer at [Boulder Valley School District](#), spoke with us about the amazing work she's done in Boulder Valley. She gave us insight into Boulder Valley's five-year action plan, spending extra time focusing on its leadership impact system and the four goals that support the district's leadership development.

 **Culture & Climate**



"Imagine schools as places where we learn through contribution to all life. Not places where we are inspected for our knowledge and facts and skills. Imagine success no longer determined by individual assessments or grades. Rather, success is measured by the contributions made to the thriving of the bio-collective."

This [Getting Smart](#) article broaches the idea of truly treating students as members of the school collective and reconceptualizing the way we expect them to learn.

[Read more about collective learning](#)



Interested in planning schoolyard forests this summer? This educator's guide from [Green Schoolyards America](#) is full of resources to help with both strategizing and implementation. It even features outdoor lessons for every grade level.

[Check out the resource guide](#)

This article from [Edutopia](#) features six ways to add SEL to your school's curriculum without adding to your educators' current workload. As we wrap up this school year and start planning for the next, incorporating SEL into everyday lessons could benefit us all.

Look into the tips

Facilities & Operations

This report, published by the [Center for Green Schools](#) features insights from a national survey on the financial costs and benefits of hiring sustainability and environmental health staff to drive better working and learning conditions within schools.

Read the report



Climate change is happening now and we must ensure our school buildings are prepared to withstand what's coming. This article for [Stanford Medicine](#) shares how best to climate-proof our schools and the importance of doing so equitably..

[Learn more](#)

 **Network News**

During this month's Catalyst Leaders Meeting, we highlighted honorable efforts

of incorporating student input in sustainability policy development, curriculum, and initiatives within the Network. We showcased successful case studies of three schools that have effectively engaged students in sustainability initiatives. Here's a little of what you missed:



[Encinitas Union School District](#) has taken on a district-wide initiative focused on having an established eco-literacy program in every school in the district. The program is driven by a standards-based curriculum that is centered on sustainability topics, resulting in real school and community changes. Amy Illingworth, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services at EUSD, shared some of the solutions students have come up with that are really making a difference in the schools.



Ashna Shah, a rising junior in [Boulder Valley School District](#), shared how her school's environmental education program has become an authentic piece of her life. Environmental issues directly impact students, and they can offer real-world concerns and experiences. Students have insights and potential solutions to

many environmental challenges, and the student leaders on Ashna's campus are ensuring their voices get heard.



[Shiva Rajbhandari](#) has received numerous accolades, including Student Advocate of the Year at the most recent Green Schools Conference. In addition to being an athlete and community activist, and wrapping up his senior year, Shiva is on the Boise Board of Education. He is headed off to college this fall and will continue lifting both his and other students' voices on behalf of environmental and social justice issues. He made it clear that students belong everywhere, especially where educational decisions are made.



Schandra Madha, Clouds Mutale, and Jozelynn Natal are Student Composting & Farm Leaders at [Common Ground High School](#). Common Ground is a charter school, urban farm, and environmental education center sitting on 20 acres of land at the base of a New Haven state park. The trio shared how vital the experiences they receive through the environment that Common Ground creates are for them in their efforts to grow into leaders for a just and

sustainable world.



*Do you have anything you'd like to see us cover in our newsletter? [Shoot us an email!](#)
We want this communication to be practical and useful for all in our Network, suggestions are
always welcome.*



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