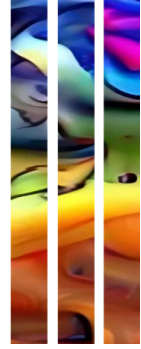


ACCELERATE / ACCÉLÉRER

CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION
IN CANADIAN TEACHER EDUCATION

L'ÉDUCATION AUX CHANGEMENTS
CLIMATIQUES DANS LA FORMATION
DES ENSEIGNEMENTS AU CANADA



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING VIGNETTE

Action Research for Transformative Climate Change Education

Stephanie Leite - McGill University
Amy Allison & Christianne Loupelle - Trafalgar School for Girls
March 2025

Program Foundation

This action research project was a professional learning experience and part of a graduate study on transformative Climate Change Education (CCE) in secondary schools led by PhD candidate, Stephanie Leite from McGill University and teachers, Amy Allison and Christianne Loupelle from Trafalgar School. The study was grounded in the theory of practice architectures, which asserts that individual teachers' CCE practices are enabled and constrained by systemic structures that influence classroom practices ([Kemmis, 2022](#)). Through participatory action research, the study aimed to: analyze teachers' CCE practices in terms of language, activities, and collaborations; identify the structures within and beyond the school that influence those practices; and create a participatory series of workshops for teachers to shift their practices towards transformative approaches to CCE.

Curriculum & Implementation

The five workshops were conducted with one researcher and six in-service teachers at an independent secondary school in Québec between November 2023 and April 2024. Teachers were recruited through an email sent by the school administration with an invitation to participate in a study on CCE. An interdisciplinary group of Grade 7-8 teachers responded to the call, bringing expertise in Science, English, Social Studies, Geography, and Ethics and Religious Culture. The professional learning program for

these teachers included five in-person curriculum design workshops, plus 1-3 individual planning sessions per teacher. The curriculum design workshops lasted 90-120 minutes each, and the individual planning sessions lasted 30-90 minutes each. The goal of this professional learning program was for each educator to build their knowledge base of transformative sustainability and CCE, and then design and pilot a lesson with students that incorporated their learnings. Several resources were developed to aid the educators in this process, including:

- an “iceberg” curriculum design model for identifying the values and worldviews that influence content, assessment and pedagogical decisions;
- an introduction to sustainability competencies and how they may be applied across subjects;
- a diagram to assist with writing learning outcomes across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains;
- a lesson planning worksheet for charting the alignment of sustainability competencies, learning outcomes, pedagogical approaches, and content.

Lessons Learned & Reflection

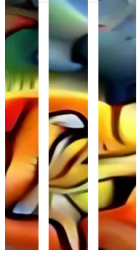
After the completion of these sessions, the educators reflected that their lesson planning had become more intentional and relational, both in how they collaborate with other teachers and teach their students. Alongside these positive shifts, teachers encountered several challenges. The experience highlighted the massive time commitment needed to make significant curriculum changes, plus a need for better integration across subjects. Finding ways to balance classroom time between preparing students for ministry exams and facilitating student-centred pedagogies discussed during these workshops also proved challenging.

This professional learning experience offers several insights for schools undertaking similar work, including the importance of:

- keeping notes throughout the process so educators can see their growth in thoughts and perceptions throughout the workshops;
- discussing lesson plans, ideas, and thinking strategies to deliver climate-based content across subjects;
- having dedicated time and space to discuss and co-construct lesson plans with the other members of the staff;
- building shared language for CCE practice with the aid of conceptual frameworks.

More Information

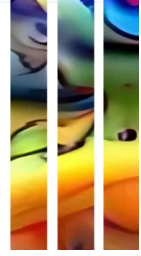
For more information on this professional learning program in CCE, please contact: Stephanie Leite at stephanie.leite@mail.mcgill.ca



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