

# Dane County Youth Environmental Committee

Sustainable Madison Committee



# What is the Dane County Youth Environmental Committee (DCYEC)?



## **Mission statement**

Our mission is to collaborate and create a united Dane County student front, to inspire each other, and come back to our respective communities with ideas and hope. We are completely youth-led and we hope to become the face of the Dane County youth sustainability movement.

# What we do



- **Liaison** between local governments + nonprofits in Dane County and high school students
- Create a culture of open-mindedness and discussion around sustainability for passionate youth
- Encourage/teach **civic engagement**: LTEs and letters to representatives
- Connect and support **green teams**
- With student representatives on school boards + gov't boards around Dane County, we push for **intergenerational equity**
- **Youth Climate Conference!**

How to effectively engage with high school students on climate: our struggles and successes

# Challenge: Nonprofit status (but really, disempowerment)

- DCYEC is trying to become a 501(c)(3), which is incredibly difficult because our members are, largely, not 18, and we want to maintain our youth autonomy → **barriers to entry**
- Emblematic of a broader problem: young people have more barriers to gaining power w/ sustainability and **need support!**
- Solution: Help high schoolers build a **community**. Organize opportunities for us to take on **leadership** roles OR low stakes events that are **catered towards youth** to make it less intimidating

# Challenge: Engagement/retention

- Even DCYEC, an organization entirely led by high schoolers, struggles with getting high schoolers to participate, so don't be discouraged if your organization does too :)
- Solutions:
  1. **Social media** outreach
  2. Work with schools/**green teams**
  3. Reaching out to DCYEC + making sure students know when there are specific opportunities to give **public comment**

# Challenge: Climate doomism

- It's important to remember that high schoolers face the same climate doomism fears, despite the constant rhetoric around our hope and optimism!
- Solution:
  - Messaging should come from an angle of **hope** and **opportunity**
  - Community and empowerment is key!



**Contact us:**

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