

**New Challenges & Next Steps**

Our partner middle school faced enormous obstacles in 21/22: unparalled covid-related absences, lack of substitute teachers, a revolving door (with scant warning) between in-person and remote teaching, 125% teaching loads with no prep times, and, to add insult to injury, the school was targeted for closure during their first CELI curriculum roll-out. The NIC rallied together successfully fighting closure, and becoming ‘the only point of cohesion’ in the terrible, turned wondrously successful, year for the project.

The biggest barrier to activating an interdisciplinary team of teachers to co-develop, implement, and improve a school-wide cross-disciplinary climate curriculum that motivates science learning is the fact that most teachers are anxious and overwhelmed by the scope and complexity of the climate crisis, lack the subject matter competence (and therefore the confidence) to make the connections to their subjects.  Rapid adaption and transformation of the NIC can be achieved by adopting a highly collaborative climate-solutionaries approach that connects physically-oriented and socially oriented climate solutions to key subject area competencies.

**Title The Climate Empowerment Learning Initiative (CELI)**

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NSF Award Number​: 2049130 Dates: (2021-2025)​

Project type:​ Developing and Testing Innovations

Project URL: [NSF Abstract](https://nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=2049130&HistoricalAwards=false)

Project Overview: CELI uses a networked improvement community (NIC) approach to school-wide transformation, teacher, agency, and minoritized students’ climate science and belonging in two low-income public schools receiving all of the District’s new-immigrant students in Hayward, CA.

**Strategies to Address Equity Include:**

* Foregrounding BIPOC Youth climate action in shared curriculum
* Heavily emphasizing BIPOC voices and authors in teaching materials
* Initiating teacher and student learning with identity self-exploration (e.g. [Circles of Identity](https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/paseo.pdf)) and finding one’s climate-solutionary niche through [Venn-diagramming at the intersection](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsOJR40M0as) of: What brings you joy? What are you good at? What needs doing?

**Lessons Learned & Insights Gained**

Teacher transformation is greatly facilitated by solutions-oriented teaching and learning materials and tools, an openness to learning along-side one’s students, on-going engagement in cross-curricular climate learning experiences rooted in existing culture, structures, processes, and self-and-group exploration, adequate dedicated time to participate in collaborative curriculum development and outcomes sharing, broad participation across departments and key actors, encouraging self-defined emergent leadership, and diverse rolls and niches.