

# Climate Justice League fellows.

For the last year, student leaders from the Boise School District have been getting together to elevate the issue of climate change and push leaders to enact local solutions. The group of students enlisted in the Climate Justice League, a 10-week fellowship in climate organizing developed by the Sierra Student Coalition.

The fellows attended four webinars with student organizers from around the county to sharpen their skills on explaining the climate crisis, unpacking just solutions, and learning how to organize for lasting change in their community. Idaho's cohort of student leaders was the largest in the program.

Students were recruited through visits to classrooms at local high schools.

# Legacy time capsule.

At the end of the fellowship students were charged with organizing one local action that put their learning into action. Boise students decided to organize a rally around a national day of action for Climate Legacy Time Capsules. The idea was to demonstrate broad support from community members around the country in solidarity of the last day of climate negotiations between world leaders in Bonn, Germany. The students coordinated with the Sierra Club and a local Sunrise Movement organizer.

The event was held at the Idaho State Capitol and featured words from student speakers as well as Chris Taylor from the Boise School District. The students gathered more than 50 contributions for a time capsule that joined other submissions from around the nation to be buried in Washington D.C. for the next 50 years. After the rally, the Climate Justice League leaders felt they had made a significant contribution to the climate conversation in Idaho and decided to continue organizing through the rest of the year.

**"When my grandchildren open this thing up, in the better world that I believe will ultimately come to pass, they will find a range of emotions that are deeply, profoundly, human. And that's what this fight is about." Jai Bansal**



# Winter Gathering.

Fired up from their rally organizing, a group of the six Idaho students were excited to learn more and headed down to Atlanta, Georgia for the Sierra Student Coalition Winter Gathering.

At the weekend long training the students received instruction from Sierra Club trainers and worked with other student leaders from around the country to better prepare them for work on climate issues in their communities.

The students priorities three areas of work for 2018 - elevate the conversation about climate change, ensure equitable science education was mandated in the content standards, and help the City of Boise commit to 100% clean, renewable energy.

# Science standards.

The first campaign the students concentrated on was to push the state to include climate change in the proposed statewide content standards, a fight that had failed the prior two years. After checking in with folks that had been leading the statehouse efforts to collaborate on strategy, students got to work to collecting more than 1,000 signatures in just three days to support the full passage of the proposed science standards..

Therese, Cassie, and Emily all testified at the House Education Committee hearing. Emily started her testimony with turning over the petitions to the House leaders. The petition signatures were ignored, two students were reprimanded by state leaders for saying the words climate change, and eventually the House voted to remove supporting materials referencing climate change.

The students used this opportunity to push there message out through the media. Student organizers spoke to several newspapers, including the New York Times, about their experience fighting for updated science standards. Emily wrote an opinion editorial that was published in the Idaho Statesman, calling on Idaho's Senate leadership to approve the updated science standards in full. Therese and Adam kept pressure on by testifying before the Senate committee.

Thanks to the elevation of student voices and the groundwork laid by many great folks over the years, the Senate passed the updated science standards and the students claimed statewide victory to climate education in Idaho. One thing that stuck with the students was the lack of understanding from state leaders on the issue of climate. This drove them to want to continue working with local leaders to help educate them about scope of bold solutions that are necessary and possible to stop climate change.



**"Education is being censored due to political fears, and students are the ones that are suffering." Cassie Kenyon**

**"Every student, regardless of zip code, should be provided with the basic knowledge and understanding of real world problems like climate." Therese Etoke**