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A Paradigm of Hope for the 21st Century

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A Paradigm of Hope for the 21st Century

Edited by

Keith A. Wheeler and Anne Perraca Bijur

The Center for a Sustainable Future
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To Courtney and Ross Wheeler and to Oliver Bijur
May their lives and the lives of their children be filled with
the Hope, Passion, and the Opportunity
to create a truly Sustainable Future!

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Foreword

WHY EDUCATE FOR SUSTAINABILITY?

Ask most people—especially young people—what the future looks like to them. They will paint for you a rosy picture of their individual lives, their future homes, their careers and sometimes even the lives of their children. Then they will paint for you a depleted, conflicted and weary picture of the planet as a whole. Do any of us note the incongruence? We are becoming increasingly aware that the very things we need, the things we adore most in this world are the very things we are undermining through our individual and collective behaviors. We can feel the disconnect between the consequences of our actions and our values, but we do not necessarily understand it or know how to reconcile it.

Living with behavior that feels, and in fact is, inconsistent with our values is a recipe for anguish. We have disconnected so drastically from our sense of place that ironically we poison our water, our air, and our food while at the same time we work hard to secure a healthy and meaningful future for ourselves and our children. This just doesn't make sense.

Hope is the union of a vision with the capacity to realize it. Education for sustainability helps us to create optimistic visions and develops in us the capacity for actions that are consistent with those visions. It makes sense for us to cultivate hope in our children for themselves and for the world around them. What would be the point of being educated for a future for which we have no hope?

Another reason to educate for sustainability is that it is the ethical thing to do. Aldo Leopold wrote: "All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent

parts. His instincts prompt him to compete for his place in the community but his ethics prompt him also to co-operate (perhaps in order that there may be a place to compete for).” Simply put, it is the right thing to do.

Finally those of us who have already been provoked to educate for sustainability continue to do so because it is the most ambitious, creative, elegant, innovative, out of the box, exhilarating, difficult, frustrating, comprehensive, enlightening, rewarding, holistic, ego-boosting, and humbling work there is to do. And we would not miss it for the world.

Whoever you are and whatever compels you to move, to grow, and to change, this book is an invitation to you to learn, and to educate for a sustainable future.

Jamie P. Cloud, Founder and Director
The Sustainability Education Center
New York, NY

Preface to the Series

The mandate to expand and improve science education is an educational imperative and an enormous challenge. Implementing change, however, is very complicated given that science as well as science education is dynamic, continually incorporating new ideas, practices, and procedures; takes place in varying contexts; and must deal with amazingly rapid technological advances. Lacking clear paths for improvement, we can and should learn from the results of all types of science education, traditional as well as experimental. Successful reform of science education requires careful orchestration of a number of factors which take into account technological developments, cognitive development, societal impacts and relationships, organizational issues, impacts of standards and assessment, teacher preparation and enhancement, as well as advances in the scientific disciplines themselves. Understanding and dealing with such a complex mission is the focus of this book series. Each book in this series deals in depth with one or more of these factors, these potential factors for understanding, creating and sustaining effective science education improvement and reform.

In 1992, a multidisciplinary forum was launched for sharing the perspectives and research findings of the widest possible community of people involved in addressing the challenge. Those who had something to share regarding impacts on science education were invited to contribute. This forum was the *Journal of Science Education and Technology*. Since the inception of the journal, many articles have highlighted relevant themes and topics and expanded the context of understanding to include historical, current, and future perspectives in an increasingly global context. Recurring topics and themes have emerged as foci requiring expanded treatment

and presentation. This book series, “Innovations in Science Education and Technology” is the result.

It is a privilege to be able to continue to elucidate and effect improvement and reform in science education by providing this in-depth forum for the works of others. The series brings focus and understanding to efforts worldwide, helping readers to understand, to incorporate, and to utilize what we know, what we are learning, and what we are inventing technologically to advance the mission of science education reform worldwide.

Karen C. Cohen
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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