

A stylized graphic of the Earth, showing a blue ocean and green landmasses. The Earth is partially obscured by a white banner with a grey shadow effect. The background is a light blue gradient.

ON THE MENU: *Saving the Planet*

HOW TO BRING **CLIMATE-FRIENDLY**
MENUS TO YOUR SCHOOL AND WHY IT
MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

ABOUT

WHO WE ARE

AUDREY LAWSON-SANCHEZ

Founder and Executive Director of Balanced,
Mom, Educator, Kansan, Unironic kale enthusiast.

BALANCED

Balanced is a nutrition and public health advocacy organization making it possible for anyone, anywhere to advocate for healthier, more balanced menus in their community institutions (*schools, hospitals, offices, etc...*)







WHY WE EXIST


AGENDA + OUTCOMES

- Introduction
- Agenda and Outcomes
- The Status Quo
- Food & the Planet
- Individual & Institutional
- Advocacy Process
- Taking the First Step
- Questions?

outcomes

-  Understand the impact food has on planetary and public health
-  Understand why institutional change is a key lever in the fight against climate change
-  Understand the process and role of advocacy in creating institutional change
-  Begin making a plan to advocate for more climate-friendly menus at your school

assumptions

-  Climate change is not caused by one singular factor, but we're agreeing to only focus on the role and impact of food in this workshop.

THE STATUS QUO



PLANETARY HEALTH

- Not great
- 9 of the 10 warmest years have occurred since 2005
- Since the Industrial Revolution, the concentration of CO2 in the atmosphere has increased by ~40%
- The former UN climate chief Christiana Figueres said we have until 2020 to avoid temperature thresholds leading to runaway, irreversible climate change.



PUBLIC HEALTH

- Also very bad.
- Unhealthy dietary patterns is the the leading cause of disease, disability, and premature death in the US.
- Diet-related disease is associated with roughly 700,000 American deaths each year.
- 117 million American adults (almost half) live with one or more chronic, preventable, diet-related disease(s).

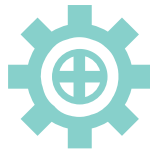
HOW DID WE GET HERE?

It's complicated.

(as systems-level crises are wont to be)



population
growth



industrialization



technological
advances



sociopolitical
change

These (and other) forces radically changed food production and global dietary patterns.

THE STANDARD AMERICAN DIET

Bad for planetary and public health.

222

pounds of meat consumed per capita in 2018
(twice as much as upper-limit recommendations)

90

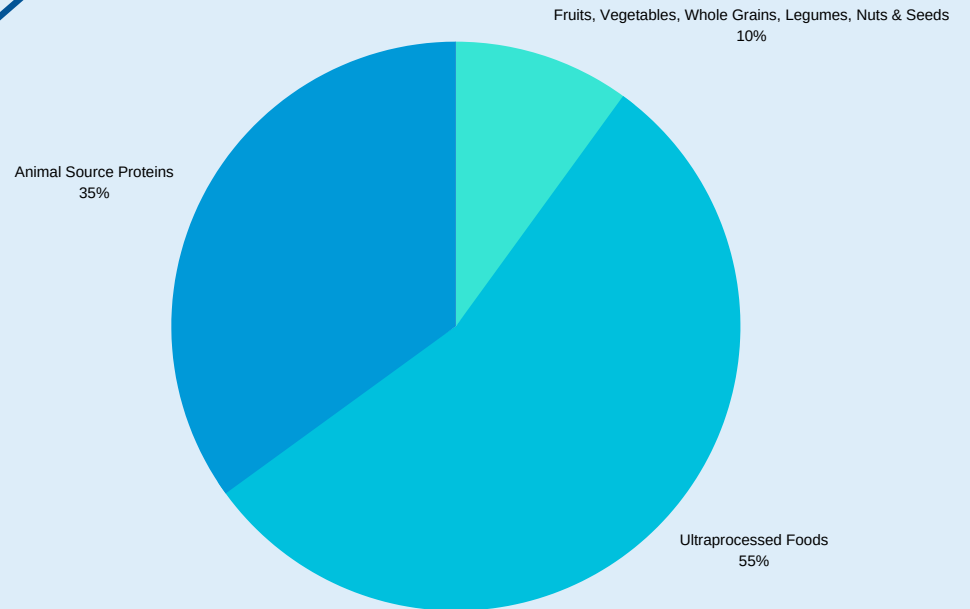
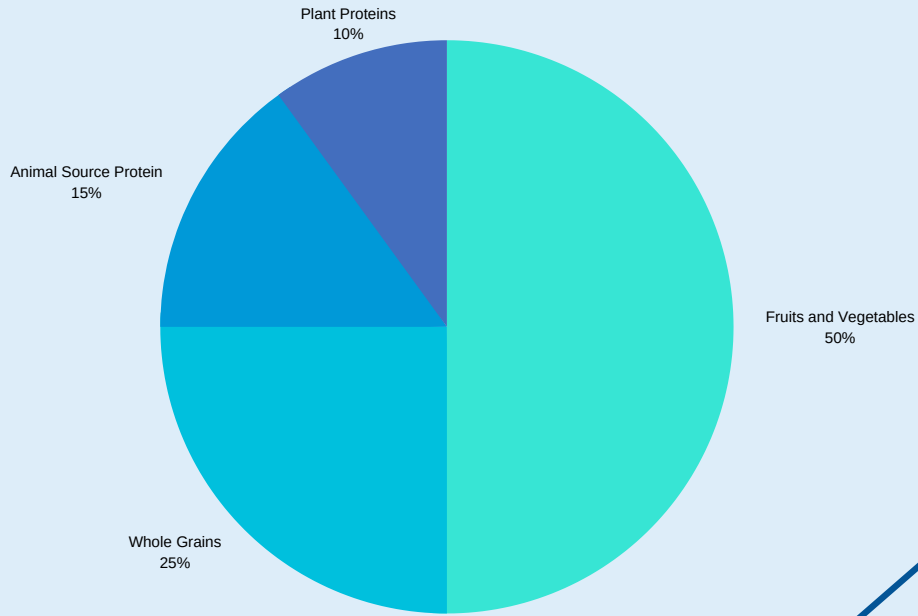
percent of Americans who eat fewer fruits and
vegetables than the lowest threshold recommendations

55

percent of the Standard American Diet that is made up of
ultra-processed foods and food type products like chicken
nuggets, frozen pizza, breakfast meat, deli meat, and pastries.

THE STATUS QUO

CURRENT USDA DIETARY GUIDELINES



ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICES DATA

THE STATUS QUO

DIETARY PATTERNS REFLECT THE CHANGING **FOOD SYSTEM**



Our industrialized food system prioritizes cost and convenience over public and planetary health.

As a result, children and families overconsume foods high in cholesterol, saturated fat, and sodium like meat, egg, processed and convenience products. Coupled with the **radical underconsumption** of fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains, our unbalanced dietary patterns are damaging public health in epidemic proportions.

The consequences of which are overwhelming American health, global sustainability and economic systems.



TL;DR:

our diets are unbalanced

We're overconsuming foods that are burdensome to planetary and public health, while underconsuming more climate-friendly, health-promoting others.

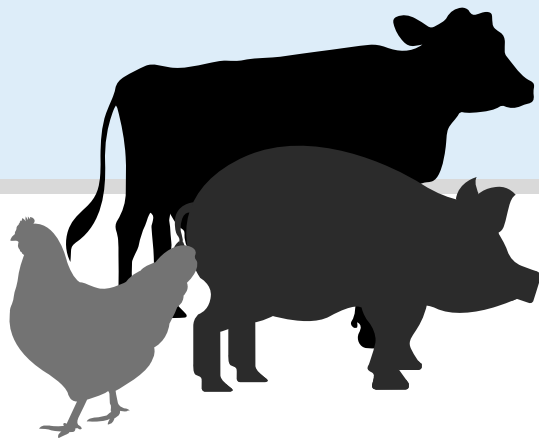
THE CLIMATE CHANGE CONNECTION

assumptions

- Not all greenhouse gases matter equally
- Methane and Nitrous Oxide are most urgent to address
- Deforestation matters

READ THIS

Chapter II: How to Prevent the Greatest Dying, pgs. 73-100

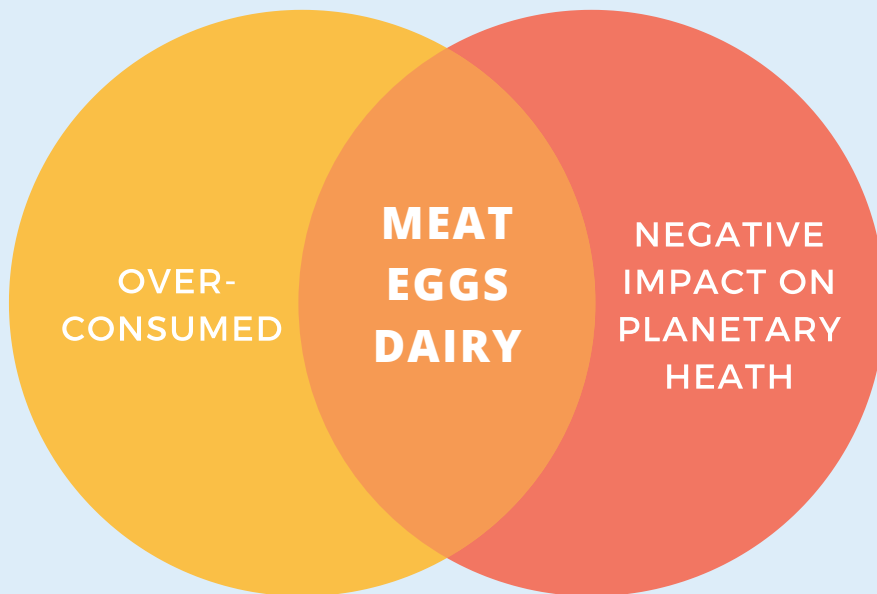


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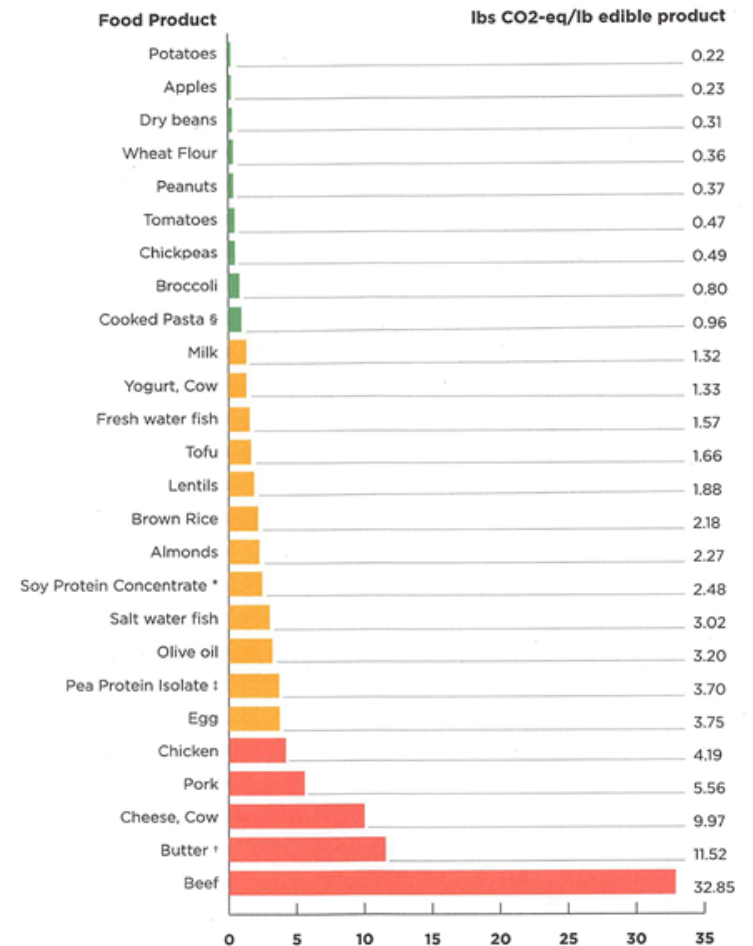
SOURCE OF METHANE EMISSIONS
SOURCE OF NITROUS OXIDE EMISSIONS
CAUSE OF DEFORESTATION

COMPOUNDED

A disproportionate amount of the foods we eat have a disproportionate impact on the planet.

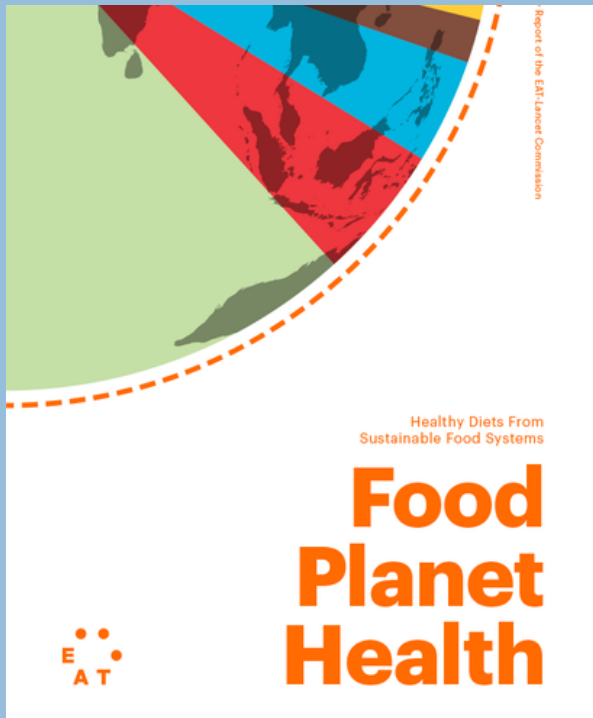


Appendix E. Greenhouse Gas Emissions of Select Foods



Source: Hamerschlag, K., Dalton, J., and Kraus-Polk, J. 2018.

FOOD & THE PLANET



“Food is the single strongest lever to optimize human health and environmental sustainability on Earth.

“A major report on land use and climate change says the West's high consumption of meat and dairy is fueling global warming.

Science & Environment

Plant-based diet can fight climate change - UN

By Roger Harrabin
BBC environment analyst, Geneva

8 August 2019

Share

Climate change



Report: we have to change how we eat and grow food to fight climate change

Forestry and farming can both worsen and relieve the climate crisis, a panel of UN scientists says. But time is running out to act.

By Umair Irfan | Updated Aug 8, 2019, 12:08pm EDT

Share



“Our destructive patterns of... agriculture, deforestation, and development of wetlands – contribute 23 percent of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions.

CHANGEMAKING CONTINUUM

Change begets change.

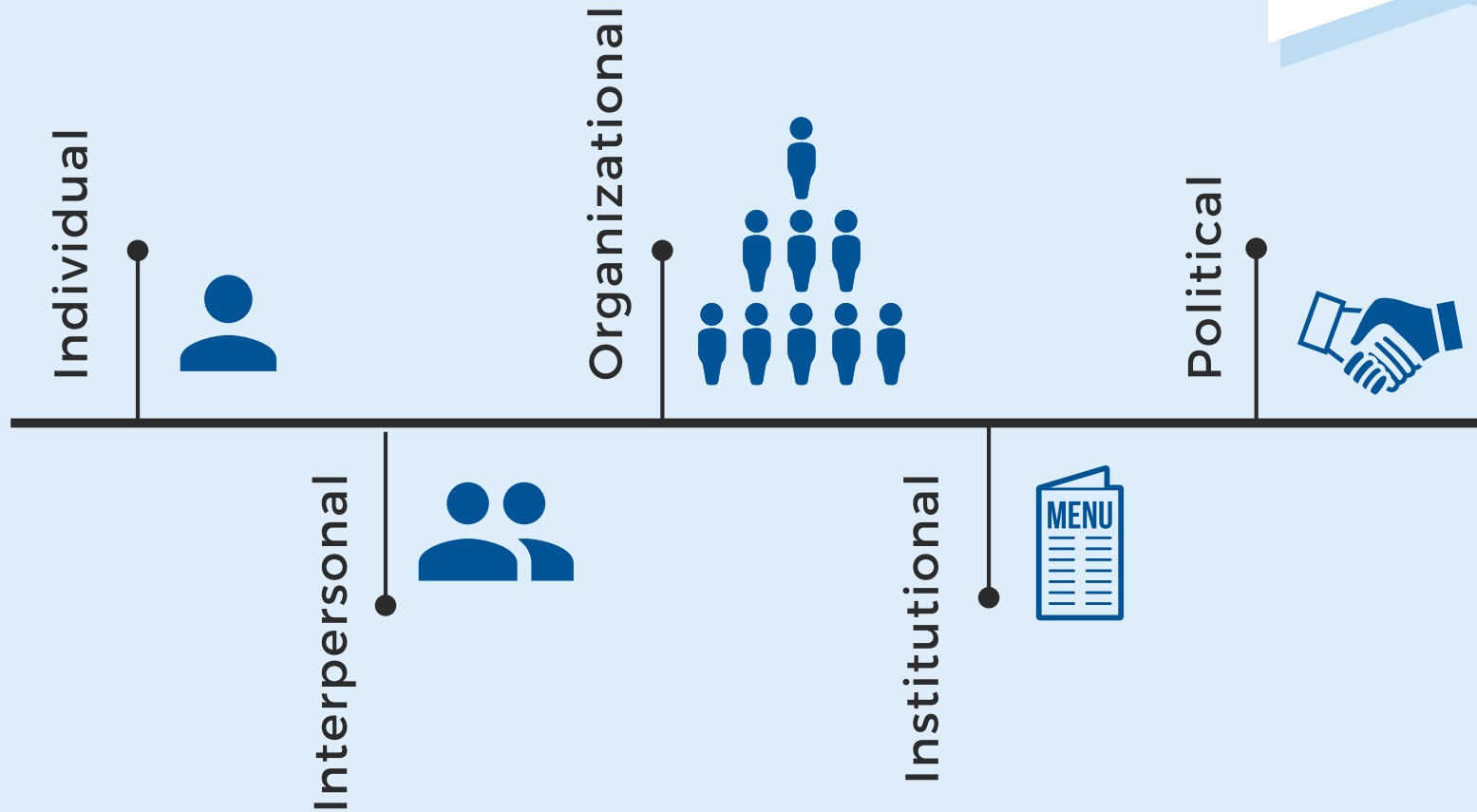
considerations

Resources

(time, money, energy, fearlessness)

Impact

Social Capital



Key LEVER

Education



- Individual
- Interpersonal
- Organizational

*Necessary,
not sufficient.*

Key LEVER

Advocacy



- Organizational
- *Institutional*
- *Political*

*Necessary,
not sufficient.*



I WANT TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION. WHERE DO I START?

The four highest-impact things an individual can do to tackle climate change are eat a plant-based diet, avoid air travel, live car-free, and have fewer children...Everyone will eat a meal relatively soon and can immediately participate in the reversal of climate change.

Jonathan Safran Foer, We Are The Weather

INDIVIDUAL & INSTITUTIONAL



I WANT TO BROADEN MY IMPACT AND I WANT TO DO IT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. WHERE DO I START?



**Any institution in which
you're a stakeholder**

University Food Service

WHY INSTITUTIONAL ADVOCACY?

Honestly, it's about ROI.

Resources
are finite

#1 determiner of
food choice = food
environment

change food
environments = change
consumer behavior

{ How many students at your
university have a meal plan? }



“I am deeply depressed. But on the other hand,
**the solution seems so, so unbelievably
transformational. . . .**”

We can restore the health of the planet while also
restoring the health of people and communities.”

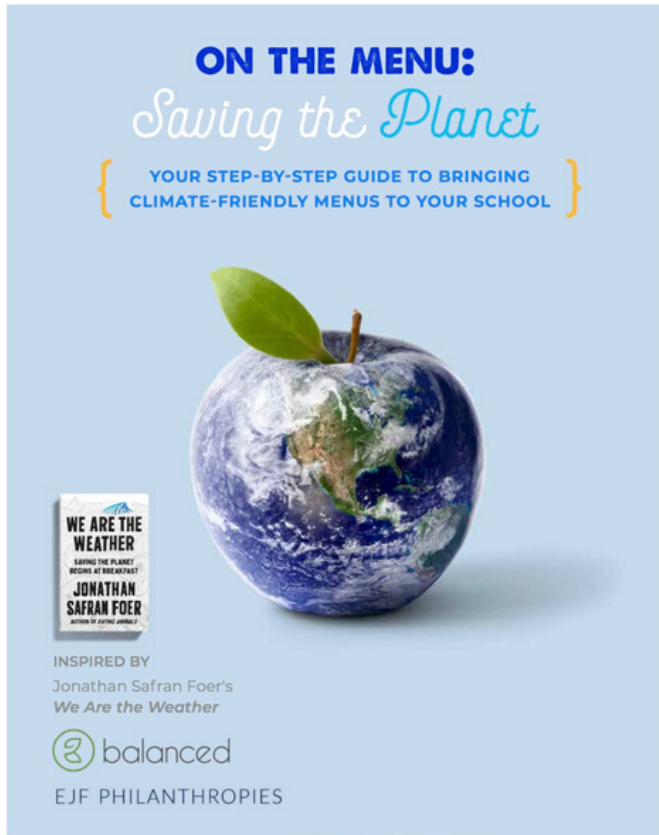
- Alice Waters



**SHE'S NOT
WRONG**

ADVOCACY PROCESS

STUDENT ADVOCACY GUIDE



CRAFT A REASONABLE ASK

Feasible, High-Impact, Mutually Beneficial



GUIDANCE & TEMPLATES

FEASIBLE

Be aware of and sensitive to the real barriers key decision makers face (and then prepare to help address them!)

HIGH-IMPACT

Example: simply adding plant-based option vs. replacing meat with plant-based item.

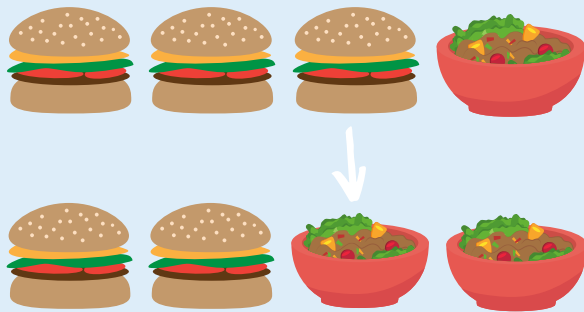
MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL

How does the change benefit the institution? Money? PR? Student satisfaction? Sustainability goals?

Our ask is that [your institution] issue a public statement outlining a commitment to replace at least 20% of the meat, poultry, and egg products purchased and served with health and climate-promoting fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, and other plant-proteins over the next two years. Further, [your institution] should commit to the eventual goal of serving completely plant-based breakfasts and/or lunches by 2025.

- **MARKET IMPACT**
- **REPLACE VS. ADD**

ADVOCACY PROCESS



40-80%

When the proportion of meatless options doubled from one to two of four choices, overall sales remained about constant. But sales of meat-containing meals dropped, and sales of vegetarian meals, such as “wild mushroom, roasted butternut squash and sun blushed tomato risotto with parmesan”, rose 40–80%.

Increases in plant-based dining were largest among people with the lowest baseline rates of vegetarian-meal consumption. The researchers found no evidence that higher sales of vegetarian dishes at lunch led to lower vegetarian sales at dinner.

Even meat lovers go veggie when plant-heavy meals abound, Nature, September 2019

MEET & PRESENT

It's your time to shine.



GUIDANCE & EXAMPLES



- REHEARSE YOUR ASK
- BE ON TIME
- ASK QUESTIONS
- POLITE BUT DETERMINED
- LET CAMPAIGN BE THE PRESSURE POINT
(NOT YOUR INTERACTIONS)

ADVOCACY PROCESS

One of the best ways to guarantee success is to fully understand the

BARRIERS

experienced by the food service teams at your university.



MONEY



STAFF



CUSTOMERS



CONTRACTS

CAMPAIGNING

When, Why, & How

WHEN

- *When you hear "no" or meet resistance behaviors like stalling, stonewalling, or backtracking*
- *When an agreed upon timeline comes and goes without change*

WHY

1. *Apply pressure*
2. *Demonstrate demand*
3. *Start a conversation*

HOW

- *Start positively, ramp up pressure over time*
- *Organize others*
- *Facilitate campaign "actions" like email blasts, drafting a petition, distributing leaflets*
- *Educate peers*
- *Attract attention - media, social media, etc...*
- *Negotiate with key decision makers*



**STEP-BY-STEP
GUIDANCE**

{ TIP: Regularly reflect on your reason for campaigning to build resilience **}**

What success might look like:

- Commitment & Execution of Campaign Ask Right Away
- Commitment & Execution of Campaign Ask On Delayed/Staggered Timeline
- Incremental Change or Partial Commitment & Execution
(requires different follow up)

What to do when you succeed:

FOR YOURSELF

- Celebrate
- Broadcast it
- Dance and squeal and laugh and feel all the things

FOR YOUR SUPPORTERS

- Update them
- Thank them profusely
- Let them know what's coming next
- Ask them to thank the institution
(give them a template)

FOR THE INSTITUTION

- Thank them profusely
- Send a small gift if possible
- Let them know how you'll be following up
- Inform the media and highlight the Institution as "the hero"

TAKING THE FIRST STEP

1. ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS



Depth of Knowledge

What do I already know?
What do I need to learn?
Do I know the right people?
Who should I meet?



Landscape Analysis

What barriers are currently in my way?
What barriers/challenges are malleable?
What barriers would really hold me back?
What would hold others back?



Support System

Who can help me?
What resources can I leverage?
What proof points exist?
What groups or organizations share a similar goal (perhaps different strategy)?

2. TAKE ACTION

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Turn to page 1



NEED HELP WITH THE PROCESS?

Turn to page 1



QUESTIONS?



audreys@balanced.org
advocate@balanced.org
balanced.org/planet

Facebook: /getbalancednow
Instagram: @getbalancednow
Twitter: @getbalanced_now