Climate Change Education FAQs

1. **What are the climate change education standards?**
   In June 2020, New Jersey became the first state in the U.S. to incorporate K-12 climate change education across content areas when the State Board of Education adopted the 2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).

2. **What is the purpose of the climate change education standards?**
   The NJSLS are designed to prepare students to understand how and why climate change happens, the impact it has on our local and global communities and to act in informed and sustainable ways.

3. **Where can the climate change education standards be found?**
   The climate change education standards can be found on the New Jersey Department of Education website.

4. **What is the difference between standards and curriculum?**
   Standards are a blueprint that describe expectations of what students should know and be able to do. They guide the development of curriculum by each individual district. Curriculum is typically developed by teachers and school district leadership. It is proposed to the local board of education, which must, by law, vote to adopt. Individual districts have control over their curriculum and specific lesson plans.

5. **Is there any guidance to help school board members understand their role in implementing climate change education?**
   New Jersey School Boards Association partnered with Sustainable Jersey to convene the Climate Change Thought Leader Committee. The committee included local school board members, representatives from the New Jersey Department of Education, the federal government, the state's major education groups, non-profit environmental advocacy groups, higher education, and the private sector. The Report on Climate Change Education Needs in New Jersey was created by this group and includes 34 recommendations, focusing on the areas of professional learning, curricular resources, community-based climate change education and what boards of education can do to support the implementation of the standards.

6. **Are there any resources to support the implementation of the climate change education standards?**
   The New Jersey Department of Education has developed a website that includes instructional resources, information about relevant state agencies and community-based organizations, real world activities as well as podcasts, videos and webinars to support the implementation of climate change education.
   SubjectToClimate has partnered with NJSBA and Sustainable Jersey to develop the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub website. This website includes a repository of vetted lesson plans that are aligned to the NJSLS as well as exemplar lesson plans created by New Jersey educators.

In addition, there are professional learning opportunities and other resources that will aid in teaching climate change education.

7. **Does NJSBA have sample policies to support climate change education and sustainable practices in schools?**

   Yes, there are some examples of sustainability policies on the NJSBA website.

8. **Does NJSBA have any guidance about establishing effective protocols for the public comment period at school board meetings?**
   Yes, Navigating Your Board's Public Comment Session article on the NJSBA website provides useful information about leading productive board of education meetings.

9. **Are there additional professional learning opportunities for board members?**
   Yes, NJSBA periodically offers professional learning opportunities specific to sustainability and climate change education. Some of these sessions provide continuing education credits which can lead to Green Leader certification for board members.