THE BIG IDEAS of SUSTAINABILITY

ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY
SOCIAL EQUITY

Community

A group of living and non-living things sharing a common purpose or space.

Diversity

All systems and places function because of variety.

Systems

Parts are connected through larger patterns.

Cycles

Every organism and every system goes through different stages.

Interdependence

All living things are connected. Every organism, system, and place depends on others.

Limits

Every system has a carrying capacity.

Change over Time

All organisms, places, and systems are constantly changing.

Place

Natural and human communities together make up one's place.

Long-Term Effects

Actions have effects beyond immediate reactions.

Fairness/Equity

Resources are shared to meet the needs of living things— across places and generations.

Ability to Make a Difference

Everyone has the ability to change or impact a system, community, and themselves.

"Sustainability means doing more good than harm with the people around us and the stuff we have."

— STUDENT, SUSTAINABILITY ACADEMY, BURLINGTON, VT

Equilibrium

A state of balance.



SUSTAINABILITY

When the environmental, economic and social needs of a society are met in the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.



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