# 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.



**Sustainable Schools Project of Shelburne Farms** *Educating for a Sustainable Future* 

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