

International Exchange with Students from China !

～ 2019 Japan - China Tree Planting International Cooperation Project (3rd Delegation Group)～

On Friday, December 6th, thirty high school students from China visited our school to participate in an international exchange with 11 tenth grade and 29 eleventh grade Higashi students. As part of the Japan-China Tree Planting international Cooperation Project, 15 students (11 tenth graders, 4 eleventh graders) from Xi'an University of Foreign Studies Xi'an Foreign Language School in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China and 15 tenth grade students from Xi'an Tetsuichi Junior High School participated in the exchange.

■Opening



The exchange started with a welcoming speech by my Principal Noda followed by a greeting from the delegation leader each done in their native language of Japanese and Chinese respectively. A translator provided a translation of the speech into the other language so that all participants could understand the greetings given by both leaders. Next, Koshi Nakayama (from class 2-6) gave a welcome speech in Chinese followed by a short school introduction presentation given in English by his classmates Sora Tanabe and Kanami Taguchi. In addition, Yudai Yao (class 2-7) and Rinko Matsushima (class 2-6) presented on the SGH projects that they had been working on in English relating to revisions of hazard maps and providing clean water during disasters respectively. Following these presentations, the students formed small groups and shared their opinions on the issues further resulting in a lively discussion. Lastly, a student from Xi'an University of Foreign Studies Xi'an Foreign Language School wrapped up this part of the event with a short introduction of their school.

■Cultural Exchange Activity

Following the opening activities, the participants wrote messages on a traditional fan using a calligraphy brush with the assistance of Ms. Hanyu, the calligraphy teacher at Nagasaki Higashi. While some students struggled initially in deciding on their message, the activity resulted in many messages praying for world peace as well as expressions of gratitude for being able to participate in the exchange where they were able to meet students from a different area of the world. The fans that were written on through this activity were ultimately given to the visiting students as a final departing gift.



■Classroom Experience • Sports Exchange



After lunch, each visiting student was paired with a Higashi student and attended their 5th period class together. The visiting students were able to experience first-hand the style and atmosphere of a typical classroom in Japan. Among the classes that visiting students were able to experience were Japanese Kendo (in P.E. class) and world history. After shadowing a student for the fifth period class, all participants reconvened and split into two large groups. One group played badminton while the other played table tennis all the while conversing and laughing with one another.

■Commemorative Tree Planting • Closing

As the final activity of the exchange event, the participants planted two trees on each side of the Ajsai no Michi that separates the two main buildings of the school. These trees were planted as a commemoration of the cooperation, international exchange, and new friendships that were experienced on that day.



Compared to the shyness at the start of the event, one would have never believed that the participants had just met a few hours earlier based on the interactions and laughter at the end of the event. Even when it came time for the visiting students to get on their bus and depart, it seemed as if both sides wanted to delay the upcoming "goodbye" even for a couple more minutes. One Higashi student commented that they were able to realize differences in culture that allowed for better understanding of one another's position. Another student stated that they often hear about troubles between Japan and China in the news, but that none of these problems surfaced throughout the exchange. This student wished to continue to grow the friendships that were made on that day as a result of the exchange. Many other similar, positive messages were received from students as they reflected on the day's event. Surely, this cultural exchange will promote cross-cultural understanding of all participants involved as they continue to group into well-rounded global citizens and leaders of the future.

