



ESD/SDGs in ESD/UNESCO Associated School and Tohoku Consortium (Miyagi University of Education)

ESD/UNESCO Associated School and Tohoku Consortium

Table of contents

Introduction	1
① ESD/UNAESCO-Associated Schools and Tohoku Consortium (Miyagi University of Education) ...	2
② Hiraizumi Town Board of Education (Iwate Prefecture) ...	4
③ Kesenuma City Board of Education (Miyagi Prefecture) ...	6
④ Osaki City Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) Promotion Section ...	8
⑤ Tadami Town Board of Education (Fukushima Prefecture) ...	10
⑥ Daisen City Board of Education (Akita Prefecture) ...	12
⑦ Miyagi Prefectural Kesenuma High School ...	14
⑧ FEEL Sendai	16
⑨ Sendai UNESCO Association	18
⑩ Tohoku Gakuin Junior High School and Senior High School ...	20
⑪ Fukushima Prefectural Adachi High School ...	22
⑫ Aizu UNESCO Association	24
⑬ Miyagi Prefecture Tagajo High School	26
⑭ Miyagi Prefecture Tomiya High School	28
⑮ Tohoku Regional ESD Activities Support Center ...	30
Conclusion	32



ESD and SDGs as taken up by the ESD/UNESCO-Associated Schools and Tohoku Consortium

Introduction

In Japan, the government's new curriculum guidelines indicate that the course of education will henceforth entail the nurturing of "creators of a sustainable society".

That said, however, what kind of society does a *sustainable society* look like?

The Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, which began in 2005, has been the subject of all sorts of discussions. While the skills cultivated through ESD have been clarified, the notion of a *sustainable society* has been vague and insufficiently understood. In 2015, the United Nations set forth its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – goals (challenges) to be tackled by the international community by 2030 and resolved in order to create a *sustainable society* – and finally helped clarify the notion of a *sustainable society*.

The seventeen goals, with their 169 targets, comprising the SDGs constitute challenges that must be resolved soon if we are to realize a *sustainable society*. However, these challenges cannot be resolved at once. Each community and actor will be called upon to define and engage in their own challenges in accordance with their own circumstances. These SDGs will chart a course for the resolution of these goals (challenges) and also, at the same time, underpin education for sustainable development in order to cultivate those who will be tasked with finding solutions. Indeed, SDGs are what ESD is all about.

The ESD/UNESCO-Associated Schools and Tohoku Consortium is engaged in work to disseminate practical curricula and programs on ESD/SDGs from each area across the Tohoku region. This pamphlet introduces the features of measures that are currently being carried out in practice for ESD/SDGs in each area. A separate report outlining specific curricula and programs has been prepared.





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A network of activity centers engaged in the pursuit of ESD/SDGs across the Tohoku region



A consortium for the Tohoku region was developed through initiatives undertaken by the ESD/UNESCO-Associated Schools and Tohoku Consortium, which was supported by a program to subsidize UNESCO activity costs as run by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) between fiscal years 2014 and 2016, and successor initiatives. In addition, the framework for ESD activities centered around UNESCO-associated schools was fortified and ESD hub areas were established in collaboration with the Tohoku Regional ESD Activities Support Center through a program to subsidize UNESCO activity costs (Promoting ESD Through Collaborations With Schools and Communities for the Attainment of SDGs for the Tohoku Region) from fiscal year 2018. In Kesennuma City, Osaki City, Tadami Town, and Hiraizumi Town in particular, consortium activities have engendered the power of area centers and the power of networks to organize areas. In these areas, UNESCO-associated schools promoting ESD have begun learning from one another with a focus on school education.

In fiscal year 2019, class curricula were developed and community-development programs were created in these priority areas through four

learning seminars based on the theme of the development of curricula for SDGs and ESD based on the use of local resources by local citizens and the results of this process were then made visible.

Other satellite areas have been keeping themselves apprised of the results in other priority areas and working to develop hub areas for ESD and SDGs for ten areas across the Tohoku region.

Consortium curricula and programs for ESD/SDGs

In Hiraizumi Town, *Hiraizumi-ology*, a field of study concerning the sustainable development of world cultural heritage sites, is taught in the context of school and social education and practiced in the context of community development. The curriculum for *Hiraizumi-ology* at kindergartens, primary schools, and junior high schools is incorporated into classroom lessons and extracurricular activities and implemented through the presentation of results at school talent shows and other on other such occasions. The town has published easy-to-understand features in local newsletters and proposed programs for community development based on these results.

In Kesennuma City, most kindergartens, primary schools, junior high schools, and senior high schools are UNESCO-associated schools, have developed a curriculum for ESD/SDGs in collaboration with the local community, and produced results in such areas as disaster-prevention education and marine education. In terms of a program of community development, ESD roundtable discussions have been continuously held for eighteen years and a system of partnership between schools and the local community has been created.

In the Osaki area, a traditional system of water management used for Osaki tilled soil in support of sustainable paddy field farming has been registered as a globally important agricultural heritage system. Work is being carried

out with a focus on developing a local program for the promotion of ESD/SDGs.

In Tadami Town, human resources with a genuine fondness for Tadami are being nurtured through the incorporation of *Tadami-ology* into primary schools and junior high schools as a study centered around a UNESCO eco-park and the creation of a curriculum for understanding the connections among mountains, rivers, and the sea in a way that takes into account perspectives informed by marine education.

Other areas are also working to develop human resources for the realization of a sustainable society (ESD) by setting forth SDGs to address local challenges.

Steering committees (● denotes a satellite area)

- Miyagi University of Education
- Shirakami area Shirakami-Sanchi Financial Group
- Hiraizumi area Hiraizumi Town Board of Education (Iwate Prefecture)
- Daisen area Daisen City Board of Education (Akita Prefecture)
- Kesenuma area Kesenuma ESD/RCE Promotion Committee and Kesenuma City Board of Education
- Osaki area Osaki City Board of Education, Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) Promotion Section
- Sendai area FEEL Sendai
 - Sendai UNESCO Association
 - Sendai City Yagiyama Zoological Park
 - NPO Environmental Chamber Tohoku
 - Miyagi Prefecture Tagajo High School
 - Tohoku Gakuin Junior High School and Senior High School
 - Tomiyama Welfare Association
- Shiroishi area Shiroishi UNESCO Association
- Adachi area Fukushima Prefectural Adachi High School
- Aizu area Tadami Town Board of Education
 - Aizu UNESCO Association
- Sendai Wide-Area ESD/RCE Steering Committee
- United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability
- Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO
- National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan
- Center for Ocean Literacy and Education, Graduate School of Education, The University of Tokyo
- AXA Life Insurance Co., Ltd.
- UNYgroup Holdings Co., Ltd.

■ Observers

- Sendai City Environmental Coexistence Section · Tohoku Regional Environmental Office · Tohoku Regional ESD Activities Support Center
- Miyagi ESD Research Society

Hiraizumi Town Board of Education

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Learn from the past, focus on the present, and think about the future with *Hiraizumi-ology*, a field of study for all generations

In the World Heritage town of Hiraizumi, *Hiraizumi-ology*, a field of study for all generations, is taught to all residents to allow people to learn about the thoughts and history of their ancestors, who developed a town of the (Buddhist) Pure Land for the here and now, and properly inherit a traditional culture and other local treasures. The town aims to be sustainable while conveying the values and appeal of Hiraizumi to others in Japan and abroad by expanding on this work.



Children stroll through Motsuji Temple's Ayame Garden.

Learning through the process of participatory experience → knowledge-oriented action → dissemination-oriented action

● From taking walks to obtaining a guided learning experience (study of *Hiraizumi-ology* as systemized for kindergartens, daycare centers, and primary and junior high schools)

The children of Hiraizumi learn *Hiraizumi-ology*, a systematic field of study designed to instill community pride through the lives of local people as derived from the World Heritage site, local heritage sites, and traditional culture that can be found in their town. This cycle of learning entails a cyclical process of learning whereby students gain participatory experience (by seeing, hearing, and participating in events), engage in knowledge-oriented thinking (by acquiring, discussing, and deepening their knowledge about Hiraizumi from materials), and carry out dissemination-oriented action (by sharing what they know about Hiraizumi with residents and visitors of the town).

Children attending kindergartens and daycare centers come into direct contact with nature while walking around town and are exposed to cultural elements that are unique to Hiraizumi by practicing *noh* chanting. In primary school, students explore sources of pride in their town as well as research local festivals and industries and the local environment and then present their findings in front of local residents or in pamphlets.

For junior high school students, the ultimate goal of *Hiraizumi-ology* is to have students gain experience as guides in their third year. To this end, they take on the challenge of transcribing sutras, sit in meditation, try their hand at excavation, and sit for a *Hiraizumi-ology* test in their first year of junior high school. In their second year, they learn about disaster prevention and create fire pits where large characters are burned as part of a ceremonial event. As third-year students, students work on promoting Hiraizumi while participating in school trips.



Primary school students sell golden melons, a local specialty product that they cultivated themselves.



Junior high school students guide tourists visiting Motsuji Temple and the Kanjizaoin Ruins in English.

Hiraizumi-ology in an administrative district where local treasures are studied in an effort to promote interactions across generations

● Community learning to connect different generations

Area learning initiatives are also being pursued in order to extend *Hiraizumi-ology* beyond children to also encompass learning with the cooperation of the whole community. Led by children's groups in each of twenty-one administrative districts in the town, people learn about their local heritage by studying historical ruins, traditional events and customs, local performing arts, local cuisine, and more. These represent wonderful opportunities for children and other local residents to gather together. When children cultivate an interest in local treasures and can learn about local history and culture from their grandparents' generation, an opportunity arises for not just children but also adults to be reminded of all the positive facets of their hometown.

Work is being carried out with the hope that local learning will pass on to members of the next generation a sense of affection and pride for their hometown and that this will lead to animated intergenerational interactions, the revitalization of local communities, and more children who are familiar with and can talk about their community.



A luncheon featuring local cuisine is served at a meeting of senior clubs and children's groups from eighteen wards.

Learning to disseminate information on Hiraizumi

● The Golden Hiraizumi Information Dissemination Project

Since 2013, Junior Hiraizumi Cultural Tour Groups have been organized with the aim of allowing participants to visit places with ties to Hiraizumi and World Heritage sites nationwide, find out how they are connected to Hiraizumi, expand the breadth of their experiences and deepen friendships through exchanges with children they meet on their travels, and proactively disseminate the values and appeal of Hiraizumi to others.

While the scope of these tours was initially limited to the Tohoku region, it was expanded to encompass destinations across the country as part of the Golden Hiraizumi Information Dissemination Project in 2018. That year, participants were able to visit Tanabe City, Wakayama Prefecture, the birthplace of Musashibo Benkei, walk on the Kumano Kodō pilgrimage route guided by young storytellers belonging to Hongu District Primary School, and communicate with locals. In 2019, participants visited Miyajima in Aki, Hiroshima Prefecture, where a shrine was built by Taira no Kiyomori. They were guided around the island by children attending Miyajima Gakuen and managed to deepen mutual dialog with them in the course of this trip. The study of peace at the Peace Memorial Park turned out to be an invaluable learning experience. Participants have indicated that they would like to continue communicating with others and learning by "thinking about Hiraizumi in the course of traveling elsewhere from Hiraizumi".



Primary school students from Hiraizumi Town visit Tanabe City in Wakayama Prefecture and are guided by primary school students residing in Hongu District.

● Making *Hiraizumi-ology* into a more profound field of study for all generations

While *Hiraizumi-ology* has grown from a focus on kindergarten, daycare, primary school, and junior high school students to a field of study for community learning, the evolution of this field of study into a way to learn about solutions to problems that would allow us to respond to our ancestors' desire for peace, look at the present, and think about the future would result in *Hiraizumi-ology* for all generations, which would be indispensable for achieving Hiraizumi's goal of developing a town that can stand for a thousand years.

Kesennuma City Board of Education

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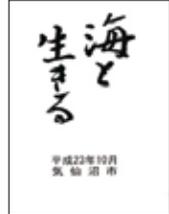


Kesennuma ESD aspires to provide “education to enable people to forge a better future with others and to live happily in accordance with their own values”

Kesennuma ESD began as an initiative adopted at Omoso Primary School in 2002. Work has since been carried out to develop human resources capable of helping create a sustainable society through studies designed to get students to confront local challenges and think about what is needed to solve these challenges.

The philosophy of ESD is also reflected in the government’s curriculum guidelines. With ESD expected to become increasingly important in the future, Kesennuma City aims to provide “education to enable people to forge a better future with others* and to live happily in accordance with their own values” as its version of ESD. Kesennuma ESD refers not to specific areas of education, such as environmental education, disaster-prevention education, or education pertaining to local traditional cultures, but to all forms of education for which the emphasis is placed on the value that such examples of education represent.

* *Others* mean “people around us and in the community”, “people on planet earth today”, and “people of the future”.



Slogan of the earthquake recovery plan.



Community-based practice and diverse partnerships

In the city, various curricula have been developed by harnessing the unique characteristics of each community and systematic, inquiry-based initiatives have been implemented upon being modified to meet local needs. Another important feature of such curricula is their deployment through collaborations and partnerships with stakeholders in the city as well as universities, specialist organizations, and a wide range of other concerned parties.

In order to exchange information and strengthen links, UNESCO-associated school workshops as well as the annual Kesennuma ESD/RCE round-table conference, which is usually attended by a broad range of stakeholders, are held to allow participants to think about what should be done while sharing the latest information and news.



2019 Kesennuma ESD/RCE round-table conference.

Disaster-prevention education: a part of Kesennuma ESD and based on lessons learned from the Great East-Japan Earthquake

In Kesennuma City, many people lost their lives to the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami of 2011. Lessons learned were used to review disaster-prevention education from the standpoint of ESD. A disaster-prevention study sheet sets forth specific examples of teaching based on these lessons and a study program adaptable for teaching is provided.

At Hashikami Junior High School, where disaster-prevention education has been erected as a pillar of ESD, storytelling activities at the Ruins of the Great East Japan Earthquake Kesennuma City Memorial Museum have begun in order to pass on the lessons learned from the earthquake to the next generation and nurture people of the future who will be able to act to protect lives.



Storytelling by students belonging to Hashikami Junior High School

Living With the Sea: a curriculum for Kesennuma

The slogan for Kesennuma City's earthquake recovery plan is *Living With the Sea*. As has been the case to date, Kesennuma City will continue to take advantage of the blessings of the sea and also embrace its harshness. Accordingly, Kesennuma City has been focused on restructuring education as it pertains to the sea and building a curriculum for marine education. A marine education promotion liaison council comprising fifteen kindergartens, primary schools, and junior high schools in the city has been formed to promote practical approaches while members share information and receive guidance and advice from and cooperate with universities and specialist organizations.

In addition, Kesennuma City has begun progressive initiatives for the protection of marine environments, such as by formulating an Action Plan for Addressing the Problem of Plastic Ocean Trash. In the context of Kesennuma ESD, people have been learning about this problem and practical activities have also been undertaken, such as by holding workshops for teachers and government officials in the city and organizing beach clean-up events.



Kindergarten kids incorporate experiences into their play.

Developing human resources through learning that paints a picture of and helps forge a future for Kesennuma

● Fostering a more profound and expanded attitude with ESD that is designed to encourage people to think on a habitual basis

As the economy globalizes, AI evolves, and society undergoes a dramatic transformation due to a lower rate of childbirth, we will strive to encourage people to think on a habitual basis in a way that is needed for people who will be living in the society of the future by developing experiential and exploratory activities that touch on the value of thinking about creating a sustainable society while we take advantage of past achievements. We would like to foster a more profound and expanded attitude towards responsible social participation while we endeavor to stabilize activities and render them more dynamic and while we further promote participation on the part of citizens.



The future of Kesennuma ESD and its possibilities.

● A project to cultivate the ability to create a community is also being run.

In high school, students engage in task-oriented studies based on the groundwork laid at the junior high school level. A project devoted to community development that connects learning activities in this context to Numa University and Numa Juku, which are programs for the development of human resources as run by the city government and NPOs, has been developed.

Osaki Area Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) Promotion Council

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Protection through utilization

Developing a sustainable community based on the use of a traditional system of water management used for Osaki tilled soil, which has been registered as a globally important agricultural heritage system

In order to develop the agriculture, culture, and rich ecosystem of Osaki tilled soil, which has been recognized as a globally important agricultural heritage system, as well as the beautiful, functional rural landscape consisting of a tapestry of rice paddies, waterways, and *igune* house trees and ensure that they can be bequeathed to future generations, the Osaki Area Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) Promotion Council and relevant organizations have joined forces to promote conservation and utilization measures and make the agriculture and lifestyle represented by Osaki tilled soil even greater sources of pride.



Certificate is conferred at the FAO Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) International Forum.

The Field Museum Concept

The Field Museum Concept aims to promote a greater understanding of local residents and increase the number of visitors by allowing people to visit and experience various local resources tied to the tilled soil of Osaki as if they were in an exhibition hall at a museum. The following initiatives are being implemented with a view to showcasing local resources.

- ① Produce Field Museum maps
- ② Produce local stories and walking routes
- ③ Produce films
- ④ Set up information signage
- ⑤ Develop Field Museum sites
- ⑥ Establish a system for accepting culinary and agricultural experiences
- ⑦ Carry out promotional activities and build momentum
- ⑧ Conserve and utilize *igune* house trees



The upper reaches of a mountain stream in the Osaki area.



A unique landscape featuring an agricultural village consisting of a tapestry of *igune* house trees and waterways.

Agricultural products certification program in the Osaki area

A certification program to brand agricultural products and handicrafts produced in connection with Osaki tilled soil, which constitutes fertile land registered as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System, is designed to increase the value added to these products. This certification program was first used with rice harvested in 2019, which has been sold as rice certified as having been grown in an area with a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System.

It is notable that any rice that is to be certified needs to satisfy the following conditions: the rice constitutes a variety developed at the Miyagi Prefecture Furukawa Agricultural Experimental Station; the use of chemical fertilizers should be reduced by half compared to the amount used for conventional farming; and living organisms need to be monitored. This is the first certification program of its kind in the country to require the conducting of a wide-area survey of living organisms to such an extent.



Workshop on the monitoring of living organisms.



Certification mark.

Supplementary textbook pertaining to Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS)

In order to utilize Osaki tilled soil in a way that protects it as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System, it is vital that the wisdom and efforts of our ancestors be passed on to the next generation and that human resources for ensuring that this system is bequeathed as a local treasure of which residents should be proud are developed. With this in mind, a supplementary textbook pertaining to Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems will be distributed to all third- to sixth-year primary school students in one city and four towns from fiscal year 2020 to give them an opportunity to learn about the appeal of Osaki within the framework of their school-based education and help them deepen their understanding of the area in which they live.

For the production of this supplementary textbook, an editorial committee was formed with the participation of the boards of education of one city and four towns and the contents were written by educators who belonged to these boards of education and who were knowledgeable about local facts pertinent to this subject matter.

We hope to take advantage of this program of learning based on the use of a supplementary textbook in schools to share the appeal of the Osaki area with local residents and foster pride in the notion of living in an area recognized for having a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System.



Supplementary textbook pertaining to Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) (tentative)

Tadami Town Board of Education

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Developing a sustainable population of visitors around a UNESCO eco-park

Tadami Town is an intermediate and mountainous area situated in the southwestern corner of Fukushima Prefecture adjacent to Niigata Prefecture and is a place where mountains and forests account for approximately ninety-four percent of the town's total area of 747 square kilometers. Tadami Town is presently home to around 4,200 residents and the aging rate of the population of this town has reached forty-six percent.



Location of Tadami Town.

In fiscal year 2014, Tadami Town was certified as a UNESCO eco-park. The town aims to develop in a way that enables sustainable growth while it promotes “co-existence between people and nature”, the philosophy on which UNESCO eco-parks are based.

Curriculum through which *Tadami-ology* is taught in practice at UNESCO-associated schools

As UNESCO-associated schools, three primary schools and one junior-high school in Tadami Town offer ESD with *Tadami-ology*, a field of study designed to promote local understanding, at its core. Based on the development of human resources capable of safeguarding global peace, this curriculum aims to cultivate children and students who are proud of their hometown through the practice of ESD and who can help ensure the continued prosperity and survival of their hometown.

Since 2017, the town has partnered with the Center for Ocean Literacy and Education, Graduate School of Education, The University of Tokyo, to implement ESD with the inclusion of perspectives informed by marine education. The aim is to raise in children and students an awareness of how love for one's hometown helps protect the sea and the earth by encouraging them to think of Tadami from a broader perspective in terms of the global water cycle.

The Tadami Fun Learning Guidebook was also published and distributed to all households to allow children and adults to deepen their understanding of their own community and rediscover local values. In order to further promote this guidebook, the Tadami Fun Learning Test has been administered since 2015.

Major examples of learning activities carried out by primary and junior high schools include Hometown Mountain Climbing at Tadami Primary School, Marine Exchange Learning at Asahi Primary School, Learning for the Transmission of Traditional Performing Arts at Meiwa Primary School, and Local Collective Disaster-Prevention Training at Tadami Junior High School.



Grade five students at Meiwa Primary School discover the secrets of heavy snowfall at Lake Tagokura.



Tadami Fun Learning Guidebook

A program to attract more visitors through the use of the eco-park

With the rate of childbirth continuing to decline and society aging, the number of primary and junior high school students in Tadami Town as well as enrolment at Tadami High School, the only high school in the town, were both decreasing. Against the backdrop of these trends, the Mountain Village Educational Exchange Study Program was begun by Tadami Town in 2002 in order to ensure the survival of Tadami High School. This program aimed to secure enrollees on a stable basis by attracting enrollees to Tadami High School from elsewhere in the prefecture and the country at large. Participants are housed in dormitories divided according to sex.

It is expected that these participants will help ensure the survival of and revitalize Tadami High School as well as increase the population of visitors to Tadami Town.



(Left) Students participating in the Mountain Village Educational Exchange Study Program participate in a town-sponsored event by donning Santa costumes and delivering Christmas presents to the homes of children attending Tadami Daycare Center on Christmas Eve.

(Right) On September 15 (Sunday), sports festivals were held in each of the three districts of Tadami Town – Tadami, Asahi, and Meiwa. Students belonging to the Mountain Village Educational Exchange Study Program also participated in the sports festival held in Tadami District under the banner of Team High School Students and managed to compete fiercely enough for a third-place finish.



Students belonging to three primary schools learn traditional techniques unique to Tadami from members of the local vine craft preservation society in each area and showcase their skills at local cultural festivals. (Photographs depict grade six students belonging to Meiwa Primary School.)

A program for the development of a sustainable community through the use of local resources

● The development of local industry: Establishing Nekka LLC

Nekka LLC was established by five rice farmers in Tadami Town in July 2016 and produces and sells a brand of rice *shochu* known as Nekka. Made entirely from rice grown in Tadami, Nekka is a rice *shochu* that was created at what is described by the company as Japan's smallest distillery as a result of a profound hope on the part of these farmers that their hometown will always remain their hometown.

Nekka LLC is committed to local production for local consumption, makes contributions to the local community, is engaged in activities to pass on a legacy to future generations, holds events to allow participants to try their hands at planting and harvesting rice, and participates in lessons held at local primary schools by dispatching guest teachers.



Rice *shochu* Nekka
(From the website of Nekka LLC)

● Living with beech trees and living with snow / Traditional products represented by *Nature Capital Tadami*

Nature Capital Tadami constitutes a program under which traditional products are certified by the town to promote the protection and conservation of the natural environment and biodiversity of this area, ensure that local traditional industries and culture based on these natural advantages are passed on from generation to generation and developed, and allow local industries to be cultivated.

Made using traditional techniques with raw materials consisting of natural resources and agricultural products imbued with the blessings conferred by the extensive snowfalls and natural wonders found in Tadami, vine craft and processed agricultural goods that have passed a rigid examination have been certified as traditional products made in *Nature Capital Tadami* and sold accordingly.



A pamphlet in which traditional products are introduced.
(Community Creation Section, Tadami Town Hall)

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Situated in the southern part of Akita Prefecture, Daisen City is a pastoral rural city with a population of about 80,000 people and an area of around 867 square kilometers. With twenty-one primary schools and eleven junior-high schools, the city has embraced an educational goal of “cultivating the power of life and developing people brimming with creativity in support of society (creating, thinking, and blazing trails together)”. Even within Akita Prefecture, the city boasts a high level of academic achievement and welcomes many visitors of educational institutions from across the country. These visitors invariably find out to their satisfaction that this level of academic achievement is underpinned by various initiatives undertaken in collaboration with the community.

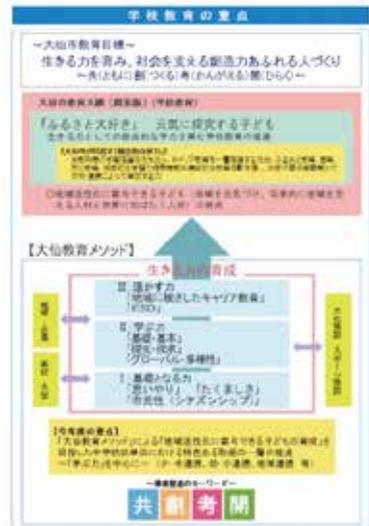
This fiscal year, a forum to raise academic performance was held and attended by around 1,000 participants from across Japan. Among the classes that were open to the public were numerous classes that explored matters from the perspective of SDGs, including an English-language class on food loss, a social studies class on poverty and the issue of a declining birthrate and aging population, and a technology and home economics class on the promotion of local agriculture. Reports on the practical aspects of meeting localized SDGs through partnerships between the community and primary and junior-high schools were given at the practical presentation stage. At this forum, it was demonstrated that scholastic learning can be developed from the perspective of ESD through the implementation of inquiry-based learning in Akita and that this can result in improved academic performance. This position was backed by many of the participants in attendance.

Next, let us introduce initiatives that have been pursued here in Daisen City.

Developing the Daisen Education Method

The city has been engaged in the Daisen Education Method since fiscal year 2016. This method entails the development of distinctive educational activities designed to enhance three types of abilities – (1) basic abilities, (2) the ability to learn, and (3) the ability to apply what is learned – through collaborations between the community and kindergartens, primary schools, and junior high schools in eleven junior high school districts. With ESD having been incorporated into (3) (the ability to apply what is learned), which is regarded as the most important goal for the Method, the aim is to realize the fourth goal of SDGs (high-quality education for everyone) through the establishment of partnerships with the community and others and thereby develop children capable of contributing to the revitalization of their community. This initiative can also be seen as a way to nurture the creators of a sustainable society as set forth in the philosophy underpinning the government’s new curriculum guidelines.

The key unique initiatives being carried out in the junior high school districts are connected to SDGs and include the following: activities to pass on local traditional culture, the devising of an interdisciplinary curriculum from an ESD perspective, the enhancement of learning that is free of mental barriers, learning about forest environments, activities involving exchanges with disaster-affected areas, activities involving exchanges with Akita International University, and the enhancement of education with a focus on hometown careers.



Daisen City Junior High School Students' Assembly

In Daisen City, the Junior High School Students' Assembly is convened once every three years. This event is intended to deepen interest in and understanding of city administration and the workings of city council on the part of participants by having participating junior high school students, as future leaders, put forth questions and proposals on community development, the administration of education, and other pertinent topics familiar to students and to develop comprehensive academic skills by ensuring that this experience can be useful for participants in their actual day-to-day school life and at local events. The opinions expressed by junior high school students at this assembly are sometimes adopted as actual policies, which is a result that is effective for shaping people into those who are eager to proactively engage in tasks they are capable of performing while thinking about the future of the city. In accordance with the theme of a junior high school students' summit that was held on the day in question ("The future of Daisen City is ours to forge"), numerous proposals for a sustainable future were put forward.

Questions and proposals in line with SDGs on such topics as "the effective use of cultural assets incorporating local cuisine and hands-on activities and their transmission to the world", "community revitalization through the use of local specialty goods produced in Daisen City", "initiatives to deal with food loss", "child-rearing support that imparts joy and peace of mind", and "disaster-prevention measures and evacuation sites" were presented and carefully answered by city officials.

A video of the event has been uploaded to YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aV6JYy5ZB4s>



A poster of the junior high school students' summit.



A moment from the Junior High School Students' Assembly.

Daisen Furusato Doctor Development Program

The Daisen Furusato Doctor Development Program aims to cultivate love for Daisen as the hometown of local residents and develop community leaders of the future through participation in local events, visits to companies and facilities, and other community-related activities. The program assigns points according to the contents of each activity, which are tallied to determine each participant's conferred rank. Over time, a participant will work his or her way up the ranks as a Daisen Furusato Doctor: primary level, intermediate level, advanced level, and honorary doctor. At present, there are 4,185 primary-level participants, 1,728 intermediate-level participants, 308 advanced-level participants, and 52 honorary doctors.

Feedback from students who have participated in this program included the following:

"I came to understand just how difficult it is to make saké. It was amazing to me that you could harness the power of microorganisms to produce saké." (Saké brewery)

"I was surprised to hear that they also ship products overseas." (Agricultural corporation)

An accompanying parent also remarked: "I wasn't aware that there was a nearby factory that made goods for export. I thought it was an impressive company. As a parent, I'd be very interested in this place as a potential employer (for my children)." (Machine manufacturing factory)

In this way, this program actually seeks to address localized SDGs by perceiving the community through various prisms and finding solutions to local issues.



Badges conferred on Furusato Doctors.



Participants visit a factory.



Participants try harvesting vegetables.

Miyagi Prefecture Kesennuma High School

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Developing human resources possessing both the vision and the practical ability to help create local communities from a global perspective

Miyagi Prefecture Kesennuma High School is a school that opened after the result of the reorganization and consolidation in April 2005 of the former Kesennuma High School, which opened as the ninth junior high school under the old education system in the prefecture in 1927, and the former Kanaegaura High School, which opened as a town-run practical course girls' school in 1923, was merged in fiscal year 2018 with Kesennuma Nishi High School. Work continues to be carried out in developing a school that has inherited over ninety years of positive traditions at three different schools. Dynamic educational activities and progressive initiatives are being developed to produce a school that can meet local expectations. Academic guidance and exhortations to participate in club activities with a view to helping students enter university or otherwise pursue different options for their future pathways are provided. The school also actively encourages participation in international exchanges as well as cultural exchanges at a community level and has improved its standard of English-language education (such that it was recognized for excellence in the provision of English-language instruction by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in fiscal year 2006). Upon being accredited as a UNESCO-associated school in fiscal year 2008, the school developed activities meant to correspond to the final stage of Kesennuma ESD. The school was conferred the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Award at the 9th ESD Grand Prix in 2008 and a Practical Grand Prize at the first UNESCO-Associated Schools Competition for the Hokkaido and Tohoku Block in 2018. After the earthquake, the school took advantage of support programs to proactively carry out exchange activities with high schools in other prefectures and various types of organizations, was designated a super global high school (SGH) by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in fiscal year 2016, and aims to promote global literacy through the use of the sea as a subject matter for exploration.



Community-integrated, inquiry-based learning with an awareness of the final stage of learning

With inquiry-based learning primarily oriented towards school-set subjects consisting of Community Studies (first year) and Task-Oriented Studies I and II (second and third years), students are made aware of SDGs and the necessity, effectiveness, and independence of research, taught to shift their focus from the study of community issues to the study of global issues, and urged to pursue research that feels relevant. This type of learning also aims to cultivate global literacy (a term that collectively encompasses basic knowledge and skills, thinking skills, the ability to communicate, diversity, collaboration, and the ability to take action as enhanced through the qualities and skills this school sets out to foster).

In the Community Studies course, students study solutions to local problems selected from among five different domains (Sea and Industry, Sea and People, Sea and Culture, Nature in the Sanriku Area, and Sea and Disaster Prevention) and twenty-four fields. In the Task-Oriented Studies I course, student engage in individual research after setting a theme tied to SDGs in order to probe further and expand on what was learned in the Community Studies course. Students present research results twice a year (between October and November and in January) and proactively participate in events held by high schools and organizations within the prefecture and elsewhere in the country.



A poster session is held as part of presentations for the entire student body.



Fieldwork is carried out twice a year.

Learning about international understanding in order to think about solving problems from a global perspective

Many foreign nationals who are technical interns or who have moved here after getting married live in the city. All sorts of exchange activities have been organized to date and this fiscal year is no different, with an international understanding seminar involving foreign nationals residing in the city, disaster-prevention forum, and exchange meetings with technical interns having been held. In September, three local third-year students participated in the World Tsunami Day 2019 High School Students' Summit in Hokkaido and were able to learn about the threat of and measures for dealing with tsunamis with high school students from forty-four countries worldwide.

With a program for sending all second-year students to Taiwan for a creative training trip being launched this fiscal year, a five-day, four-night journey was undertaken between December 1 and 5. In Taiwan, an exchange meeting with local university professors and high school students was held and students were given the opportunity to make research presentations in English and engage in fieldwork to gain some exposure to history and culture existing outside of Japan. This training trip allowed students to polish their linguistic skills, consider a greater range of viewpoints through cross-cultural understanding, and broaden their horizons.

In addition, work is also being carried out to develop the ability to think from a global perspective and utilize English proficiently through the school's own C-cube activities, exchange meetings with overseas university students, Skype exchanges, overseas training trips, and other initiatives.



Serious discussions are held at the Tsunami Summit.



Photograph taken in Jiufen of participants training in Taiwan.

Community-integrated learning to translate learning into action

A system for visiting universities, city halls, local companies, and non-profit organizations in the prefecture and elsewhere and for learning about the current state of and challenges affecting communities has been set up to allow first-year and second-year students to partake in creative fieldwork. For the presentation of results, representatives of places where students undertake their fieldwork and city council members are invited and an opportunity to engage in discussions during a poster session is established. In addition, a system that enables results and outcomes from the appointment of fieldwork advisors, disaster-prevention studies offered in collaboration with the city government or fire department, student exchanges with primary and junior high school students, and other ESD activities to be put into practice has been created.

Workshops and lesson study group sessions are also being actively organized for the purpose of improving teacher's teaching skills and the teaching of subjects is being managed to ensure the establishment of links with inquiry-based learning.



Little teachers
(Learning support is provided to local primary and junior high school students.)



A workshop to improve teaching skills for task-oriented studies.

FEEL Sendai

(Council for the Promotion of Environmental Education and Learning for the Citizens of Morinomiya)

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Developing a scheme and the people that can support a positive environment

The Council for the Promotion of Environmental Education and Learning for the Citizens of Morinomiya (FEEL Sendai) was established in May 2004 as an organization dedicated to the development of people who care about the environment through every aspect of society.

A comprehensive approach to environmental education and learning is promoted by building partnerships with citizens, NPOs, schools, businesses, government, and other actors and leveraging a broad network of members. Work is being carried out in a variety of ways to develop a sustainable society, such as by developing and providing environmental learning programs in accordance with the government's curriculum guidelines for use in school education, supporting organizations dealing with environmental issues, and cultivating the next generation of leaders in the field of environmental education and learning.



FEEL Sendai pamphlet.

Environmental learning programs that make use of the natural and social environment in Sendai, the City of Trees (Morinomiya)

NPOs and others have created environmental learning programs and deployed them for use in the context of school education by making use of the natural and social environment in Sendai, a place known as the City of Trees (Morinomiya). By enabling children and other citizens to learn from these programs on a hands-on basis, these programs aim to develop people who can think about environmental issues on a global scale and at a local level and take environmentally-friendly action for the protection of the earth and their communities (ultimately as Morimori Environmental Rescue Troopers).

In fiscal year 2019, a total of twenty-six programs spanning various fields, including nature, waterfronts, food and agriculture, daily living, and the global environment, were offered and eighty-five sessions were conducted at daycare centers, primary schools, and elsewhere.



Take a close look and behold the lively worlds that exist in soil!
A session at a primary school.

Developing frameworks for the realization of a sustainable society

In order to realize a sustainable society in which everyone, including generations of the future, can live with peace of mind, citizens, NPOs, and others are invited to submit project proposals that could spread and consolidate environmentally-friendly actions across society. Accepted projects have been implemented. This process aims to fuel NPO activities and popularize environmentally-friendly actions among citizens.

This program comprises two sections; one is known as Trees of the Environment, which welcomes project proposals that could potentially give rise to a broad ripple effect on citizens, and the other is known as Buds of the Environment, which extends support for the first steps taken by groups seeking to engage in environmental activities. Program steps are carried out around three or four times a year.



A workshop to allow participants to observe water hyacinths in rice paddies.

Partnerships with a wide range of actors

Students, non-profit organizations, and citizens band together to hold an annual event to help many local residents deepen their understanding of ESD and environmental issues while having fun participating in a casual manner. This event is notable for having an executive committee consisting of organizations that normally act independently of one another and for being planned and run primarily by a student-led secretariat.

In fiscal year 2019, this event was held on December 7 in accordance with the theme of "Gain knowledge of and benefit from environmental learning: a new age! Become more familiar with the environment". Twenty-one booths in total were put up for display and the event was attended by 1,400 visitors. Panels, games, the production of small articles and models, and various other elements were planned for each booth. For the event as a whole, a sticker rally was organized, a list of seventeen SDGs was posted at the reception desk, and a single goal indicator was also affixed to each booth to bring attention to various initiatives undertaken for the promotion of SDGs.



Making wreaths.



Booth display.



Playing an eco-board game.

Developing people involved in environmental education

This initiative is being carried out to develop young people between the ages of eighteen and thirty years into leaders involved in environmental education and learning by having participants establish links with people undertaking environmental activities while they acquire knowledge and experience concerning the environment.

Thanks to three programs, which consist of a program for lecture-based learning, a program for activities run by non-profit organizations, and a program of presentations based on the foregoing at Environmental Forum Sendai, knowledge and experience concerning the environment are deepened and the establishment of links with people who deal with the environment is supported, such as by way of interactions with students and NPOs.



Raising animals at the Miyagi University of Education.



Clean-up activity in the heart of the city.



Observing insects up close at an event where the audible wonders of insects can be appreciated.

Sendai UNESCO Association

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With awareness and responsibility as the birthplace of the private-sector UNESCO movement, the Sendai UNESCO Association advocates the creation of a society in which nobody is left behind

The Sendai UNESCO Association was established on July 19, 1947, as the world's first private-sector UNESCO organization (known at the time as the Sendai UNESCO Cooperative Association). It is reported that it served as the driving force behind Japan's admission to UNESCO (1951) and the approval that was granted to allow Japan to become a member of the United Nations (1956). Koichi Ueda of the Foreign Ministry, who played a crucial role in helping establish this organization, was appointed its Secretary-General while Yasutaro Satake, President of Tohoku University, served as its first Director-General. The private-sector UNESCO movement lost no time in expanding into a worldwide phenomenon, such that there are now over 5,000 associations and clubs operating in 118 countries around the globe. Conscious of its responsibilities as the birthplace of this movement, the Sendai UNESCO Association will continue to play a leading role.

● Two copies of *Young Girl in Boots* (by Churyo Sato)

The first ever Private-Sector UNESCO World Congress was held in Sendai in 1984 in accordance with the theme of Peace, Development, and Participation. There were 370 foreign participants from eighty-six countries in attendance and 1,500 UNESCO officials and members of the general public who participated in this event. A sculpture entitled *Young Girl in Boots* was erected at Tsutsujigaoka Park in commemoration of this congress. A duplicate of this sculpture was donated to the Paris headquarters of UNESCO. These two sculptures were erected in such a way that they face each other and stand watch to ensure that the spirit of peace, as referenced in UNESCO's constitution and inscribed on the pedestal of each sculpture, will be passed on to future generations.

● Private-Sector UNESCO Movement Day: Contributing to world peace and passing on the spirit of UNESCO

As the day on which the Sendai UNESCO Association was founded, July 19 has been declared the Private-Sector UNESCO Movement Day and commemorative events are held by all UNESCO associations nationwide on this day. Commemorative lectures are given by the Sendai UNESCO Association in an effort to enlighten people about the philosophy behind UNESCO. In fiscal year 2019, a lecture entitled *Now is the time for everyone to expand the scope of ESD!* was delivered by Shuichi Saito, former superintendent of the Tadami Town Board of Education in Fukushima Prefecture. The program for this day also included the conferring of certificates of appreciation on those who supported the World Terakoya Movement, the presentation of a report on activities by the association's youth club, and a session for discussions.

Civic-engagement activities promoted through partnerships

● UNESCO College Courses: Preserving cultural heritage sites and natural heritage sites for posterity

As part of activities designed to preserve and pass on World Heritage and local heritage sites, courses combining classroom lessons and field trips have been offered, including a course organized by the UNESCO Women's University, a course organized by Sendai UNESCO University, and a citizens' course that has been continuously offered with UNESCO College. A series exploring the Nara and Heian periods and a series about the Teizan Canal, a local heritage site, have recently been launched. Since the Great East Japan Earthquake struck, learning from the perspective of the history and prevention of disasters has also been incorporated.



Commemorative photograph taken on Magaki Island, Shioigama City

● **Supporting the development of youth for the future: *Sharing my town's treasures with others through pictures!* (art exhibition)**

Future leaders are being developed from the perspective of activities designed to foster a love of community and help preserve local heritage sites. This art exhibition is held for the benefit of primary and junior high school students in order to raise levels of interest in World Heritage sites and local heritage sites and cultivate a spirit of respect for the town and place where students live. Each year, between 250 and 300 works of art are collected. This exhibition, which is held in the center of Sendai City, is popular with citizens. Fiscal year 2019 marked the twenty-second time this event was held.



Art exhibition awards ceremony. The children who participate are encouraged by the many awards that are handed out at this event, including the Governor's Prize, Sendai City Mayor's Prize, Tomiya City Mayor's Prize, and UNESCO Association Director-General's Prize.

● **Learning and actions deliberately undertaken for a sustainable global environment: UNESCO College ESD Courses and the World Peace and Disaster-Prevention Project**

ESD is being further promoted as a tool that will contribute to the attainment of SDGs. Registered as an area ESD center, the Sendai UNESCO Association provides learning on solving problems affecting communities and society as a whole and supports various organizations engaged in activities as a partner. Since fiscal year 2018, the Association has been holding ESD courses for citizens in collaboration with the Tohoku Region ESD Activities Support Center. In fiscal year 2018, it hosted a talk by Kentaro Ono from Kiribati and a briefing on global warming by an expert from the Meteorological Observatory in accordance with the theme of climate change. In fiscal year 2019, the Association organized a lecture given by Miyagi University's Professor Ryuichi Sakuta and a workshop by Shokei Gakuin University's Professor Chieko Watanabe. Both courses are structured to have a variety of learning provided by government and school officials and experts and encourage participants to think about ways they can act. In fiscal year 2019, the World Peace and Disaster-Prevention Project was held in accordance with the sub-theme of "SDGs for linking disaster-affected areas with the future" with the support of S-PAL Sendai to raise awareness of SDGs among citizens and administer a survey on public awareness.



At the closing ceremony for the World Peace and Disaster-Prevention Project. With a video message from the late Dr. Pachauri.

Activities of the youth club

● **UNESCO children's camp in Miyagi**

This youth camp is an event that is becoming increasingly popular with each passing year as an activity that is especially important for the youth club. Open to students in the prefecture ranging in age from fourth year students in primary school to third year students in junior high school, this camp features a program for which a theme is set to enable children to develop independence and communication and social skills by camping in nature. In fiscal year 2019, a program for raising awareness of SDGs was added to contents designed to teach about the spirit and activities of UNESCO through experiences.



100 participants in total camp for three days and two nights. A commemorative photograph to mark the end of camp is taken in front of the O-ENCE Izumigatake Nature Center

● **Study tours**

The youth club has planned study groups led by university students for a new program that began in fiscal year 2019 for the purpose of learning through travel. The participants themselves determine locations, objectives, and activities with an awareness of the issues. The first tour to remember involved a trip to Okinawa. Participants learned a lot from activities carried out by high school students working to pass on local traditions and culture and from interactions with people who told stories about the war. Participants also partook in activities designed to relay what they learned to members of the next generation.



Okinawa Peace Memorial Park with the Cornerstone of Peace in the background.

Tohoku Gakuin Junior High School and High School

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3L Hope Studies, a form of the comprehensive learning period designed to develop the ability to take on challenges independently, creatively, and collaboratively and allow students to contemplate their own mission in life with eyes on the future through ESD and career studies

In 2017, the comprehensive learning period was updated and incorporated into ESD as 3L Hope Studies. Professor (Emeritus) Takaaki Koganezawa of the Miyagi University of Education designed a six-year field of inquiry encompassing everything from the world around us to the wider world at large and formulated an approach to inquiry-based learning for which SDGs are treated as a starting point. With each student having access to his or her own computer at the same time, this approach has students probing deeper into the contents of study over a course of six years (or three years for participants starting from high school) by amassing a portfolio of study contents that are reviewed from time to time and clearly seeks to reconcile the goal of overcoming societal issues with each student's decision regarding his or her own future path in terms of achieving this goal.



Designing a field of inquiry

Learning by junior high school students

Learning for first year students in junior high school starts with fieldwork conducted at Umeda River, which runs near their school. Working in groups, students make predictions regarding water quality, organisms, and trash in advance, compare these predictions with actual observations, consider the factors that account for their findings, and then summarize and present these findings using slides. Guest teachers are also invited and give talks on the role of microorganisms in water purification and on the characteristics of rivers in Japan. In the middle of the school year, students explore crops and vegetation that grow in cold climates ahead of a camping trip to Iwate that they will be taking at a later date. Comparisons are then made with the contents of learning through groupwork conducted in collaboration with Iwate University and notable points are then summarized and presented on slides with group members. At the end of the school year, students work independently by finding someone who works hard to attain sustainable development goals number 13, 14, and 15 and preparing slides to showcase that person's activities. Capping off the school year is a lecture given by a guest teacher to encourage students to think about what they should do to help.

Second-year students investigate the current state of child labor and try to determine the causes of this issue in groups. At the same time, they deepen their understanding of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and, based on their understanding of the fact that there are children their age or younger who have no choice but to work, consider and propose ways of changing the status quo and share the results of this process with the entire class. Afterwards, students deepen their understanding of what they learned by receiving feedback from a guest teacher with experience providing support to street children overseas. In the middle of the school year, students visit workplaces to get a sense of what kinds of social issues business face in the real world and deepen their understanding of the current state of child labor by asking about people's motivation to work. They then summarize what they learned at different businesses on slides and share these findings with the entire grade through a presentation. In the second half of the school year, students undergo training to learn from people who have been engaged in the attainment of SDGs in Tokyo and thereby consolidate what they have been learning.

Third-year students pursue ongoing studies on cross-cultural understanding and the development of a sustainable society ahead of a training trip to Singapore to be undertaken in December. At the same time, each student works on a graduate research project by deciding on a theme that links SDGs with their own interests and producing an original paper. The contents of this paper are then summarized on slides that are presented to the class. Exceptional papers are presented in front of and shared with the whole grade and younger classes. Support is provided to students to ensure that viewpoints that link their identity with solutions to social issues are learned through three years of studies.



First-year students learn from people who are engaged in exceptional work.



A part of a slide used to announce the results of a river survey.

Learning by high school students

At the beginning of the school year, first-year high school students go on a three-day, two-night orientation camp primarily for the purpose of "learning how to learn". As part of the program, students try to come up with a plan for solving societal issues in groups with members from different groups and take time to make proposals and presentations. (In fiscal year 2019, students worked on a plan for using mobile sales vehicles as set forth as a question in an entrance examination for Miyagi University.) Afterwards, students learn about careers based on the use of commercially available workbooks and engage in groups in studies for international understanding for which SDGs are treated as a starting point. The entire grade is divided into seventeen groups, which are then further subdivided into smaller groups. Under this arrangement, students then learn by (i) comparing communities that are effectively working to attain goals with those that are not and analyzing the causes behind the differences that are revealed, (ii) identifying companies that are enthusiastically working to attain goals and introducing the contents of their initiatives, and (iii) establishing their own hypothetical company and considering and proposing the contents of the business to be run by their company. Each small group will present their findings and proposals and share what they learned with the entire grade by having a representative make a presentation in front of everyone. Foreign exchange students will also be invited and asked to give advice on the contents of these presentations. Learning will be further expanded at a social gathering for interested students.

Second-year students will engage in peace studies by learning about the Second World War, the atomic bombings, and the aerial attacks on Sendai using books, documents, academic papers, and videos. What is learned will be reinforced through talks given by atomic bombing victims and visits to atomic bombing sites with volunteers during a study trip to be taken in December. At the end of this trip, students will break off into groups to engage in discussions in English with the assistance of foreign exchange students, summarize and present proposals to the entire grade on what can be done to create a peaceful society. Each student will also learn about careers using commercially available booklets and consolidate their ESD studies at the end of the school year by way of the production of a statement of purpose to be submitted to institutions of higher learning.

Third-year students will refine the statement of purpose they began preparing at the end of the preceding school year by engaging in collaborative learning with each other, attending lectures and receiving feedback from special guests, and participating in lecture presentations and taking advantage of training opportunities on their own. While most students will likely go on to university, the school will help each student make the best choice for solving social issues he or she would like to address irrespective of whether such a choice is unconventional or objectionable to others and thereby become creators of a sustainable society in the future.



Presentations on studies for international understanding are made before the entire grade.



Learning about peace at the time of the atomic bombing.

Learning through study tours

ESD has been made one of the pillars of learning for events involving overnight stays for each grade, with the exception of the third and final year of high school.

At a camp held in Iwate in October for first-year junior high school students, participants engage in cold-climate field work and learn about World Heritage sites in Hiraizumi in collaboration with Iwate University.

Second-year junior high school students go on a study trip to Tokyo in February to visit ministries, agencies, and companies working to attain SDGs. They will also be presented with an opportunity to gain cross-cultural understanding through interactions with exchange students.

Third-year junior high school students participating in a study trip to Singapore in December gain opportunities to think about a sustainable society in terms of resources at such sites as the NEWater Visitor Centre as well as an opportunity to ponder matters of cross-cultural significance through interactions with people working locally for Japanese companies and students attending the National University of Singapore.

At an orientation camp held in April in Fukushima for first-year high school students, participants deepen their understanding of ESD and collaborative learning through groupwork.

During a study trip to Hiroshima and Kansai organized for second-year high school students in December, participants visit World Heritage sites in Miyajima, learn about peace in Hiroshima, and study ESD in Kobe and Osaka.

On the third day of fieldwork in particular, fieldwork is divided into around twenty courses and undertaken accordingly with the assistance of the Tohoku Consortium of UNESCO-Associated Schools and support of RCE Hyogo-Kobe. Participants share the contents of their learning through a process of reflection. By also making comparisons with Hyogo's life-oriented ESD, each student is able to take advantage of a highly meaningful learning opportunity to think deeply about his or her own school's ESD and future path.



All participants engage in reflection with the help of RCE Hyogo-Kobe.



Participants carrying out fieldwork.

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An overview of a UNESCO-associated school

At this school, reconstruction education based on the current state of Fukushima in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake was begun in fiscal year 2012. In addition, ESD (education for sustainable development) was adopted as the central component of educational activities. In recognition of the positive benefits that resulted from these decisions, this school became the first high school in Fukushima Prefecture to be accredited as a UNESCO-associated school in December 2012.

The goal of education at this school is to "develop human resources who can lead better lives in the society of the future". The school is working to attain this goal through a dual-prong approach by which it enhances basic knowledge and experiences (school classes) and encourages students to ask questions with no apparent answers (ESD). The school is now running inquiry-based activities based on sustainable development goals (SDGs) as a concrete guide for proceeding.

The key steps that are followed over the course of the three years a student attends this school are as follows. In the first year, ESD and SDGs are explored and poster sessions are organized through various activities centered around the promotion of international understanding. In the second year, presentations based on activities carried out over the previous year are made in front of the entire student body. In the third year, students leverage their experiences to date in pursuit of whatever future paths they wish to take.

Education for international understanding

This school has gained momentum in terms of enhancing activities for the promotion of international understanding by participating in the OECD Tohoku School and in an international conference of UNESCO-associated schools. It has since then engaged in the following activities and helped hone their students' qualities.

In July of each year, students belonging to Dartmouth College in the United States arrive to continue exchange activities with students. In fiscal year 2015, an overseas summertime language studies program operating in Australia was launched. Post-earthquake disaster reconstruction efforts and the current state of reconstruction are reported to local residents. A global camp and talks delivered by dispatched lecturers are organized through a joint project with JICA Nihonmatsu. Lecture presentations given by Marie Louise Towari, a native of Rwanda and resident of Fukushima Prefecture, are held annually. Some graduates have indicated their desire to someday join the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers and make a difference in developing countries.



Students participating in a study abroad program.



Interacting with students from Dartmouth College.

Public ESD presentations

At this school, ESD presentations that are open to the public and that are undertaken by the entire student body are held to allow each group to explore and present on a theme of their choice. Presentations are made all morning by groups selected by each second-year class while presentations by study-abroad groups and volunteer organizations are given in the afternoon. As there is a different theme for these presentations each year, you can see how the interests of high school students in Fukushima Prefecture have changed since the earthquake. While themes after the earthquake largely dealt with such topics as reputational damage and renewable energy, they now encompass everything from LGBT issues, nursing-care issues, and child abuse to matters concerning water resources. At the same time, presentations on the contents of activities are also given through posters.



Students make a presentation.



Posters on display.

Partnerships with schools and local businesses and other activities

Exchanges with schools across Japan and overseas have been carried out in connection with the provision of reconstruction education. For example, tours of and exploratory meetings concerning disaster-affected areas, such as Iitate Village, have been conducted with Hyogo Prefectural Kitasuma High School.

This school has also worked with a junior high school affiliated with the Kyoto University of Education, engaged in discussions with them at a national summit of junior and senior high school students, and visited the Fukushima evacuation zone together. Students have participated in Fukushima Prefectural Futaba Future Gakuen High School's JICA Global Camp and attended lectures given by experts in different fields pertaining to international understanding.

The school applied to the ACCU-organized International Collaborative Learning Project in fiscal years 2015 and 2016 and engaged in collaborative learning with overseas schools on the topic of food in different countries. Through investigations and research conducted for this project, the school was able to strengthen its links to the local government and various businesses, including Nihonmatsu City Hall, Kunitaya Brewery, Nanakusa Farm, and JA Michinoku Adachi. These links remain in place to this day and help support education in the school.



Participants in an exchange program.



A student checks out rice grown in Fukushima.

Aizu UNESCO Association

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ESD that reflects the hopes of Aizu for world peace and the happiness of people everywhere

The Aizu UNESCO Association was established by local volunteers on November 18, 1980. Presently, there are ninety-four members, including juridical persons. From the time of its establishment, it has pursued activities across all of Aizu in order to realize a sustainable society for everyone without exception as a way to help expand the extent to which the UNESCO Constitution applies while wishing for peace and happiness for people throughout the world.

Within the areas in which activities are being carried out, six UNESCO-associated primary and junior high schools (five primary schools and one junior high school) have been established. A combined junior and senior high school in Aizuwakamatsu City is currently in the process of applying to join their ranks. In this way, these schools are gradually spreading in the community.

As key activities, the Aizu UNESCO Association has been focused on developing human resources by providing ongoing support for UNESCO-associated schools; holding exhibitions of children's artwork for kindergartens, daycare centers, and certified centers for early childhood education and care and UNESCO essay-writing contents for primary schools; and continuously collecting spoiled postcards in partnership with local community centers and educational institutions. It has also established a program to award persons of merit who have made distinctive contributions to local culture and has been engaged in activities to pass on and conserve elements of local cultural heritage for the purpose of conserving the traditions and culture of the Aizu area.



Annual general conference.

A bell of peace whose ringing reverberates throughout the world

The Aizu UNESCO Association is proactively promoting ESD in accordance with the watchword: *We must build a fortress of peace within the hearts of people.* At the end of July of each year, a campaign is organized to get people to ring a bell of peace in a bell-ringing hall situated on the grounds of Aizu-Wakamatsu (Tsurugajo) Castle. The ringing of this bell represents a powerful assertion of the significance of the existence of people made to the world and future generations and a call for more cooperation and support. Visitors to Tsurugajo Castle are invited to ring this bell and lend their support.

It is said that bell keepers took turns ringing this bell, the solemn sounds of which can be formidable indeed, during the Boshin War to announce the time even as the western army advanced and the fighting raged. Many foreign visitors also participate in this campaign to make this activity a cosmopolitan affair consistent with Goal 16 of the SDGs.



A full view of the bell-ringing hall.



Visitors ring the bell.



Activity supporters.

Seeking to cultivate a rich sensitivity and develop a greater zeal for providing mutual support

Local children and youth residing in Aizu eagerly participate in exhibitions of children's artwork, essay-writing contests, and UNESCO classes organized by the Aizu UNESCO Association as well as the nationwide campaign to collect spoiled postcards. It is through such activities that future leaders are being developed. The pictures produced by these young people reflect their exceptional sensitivity and are a source of encouragement for the participants and great joy for their parents, and are received favorably by members of the general public, who take great pleasure in appreciating the art on display.



A children's painting exhibition put on by the Aizu UNESCO Association.

As an opportunity for children to learn about the role of UNESCO as a United Nations organization, UNESCO classes are to be held at three primary and junior high schools a year in the Kita-Aizu district beginning this fiscal year. UNESCO members serve as lecturers and explain what sorts of activities are carried out by UNESCO. Essay-writing contests for children attending schools where UNESCO classes are held have been organized. UNESCO classes are seen as being highly meaningful since they allow children to regard the activities of UNESCO as being familiar to them.



A UNESCO classroom.

For the campaign to collect spoiled postcards, work to ask for and collect postcards from primary and junior high schools in the Kita-Aizu district, primary and junior high schools in Tadami Town, and primary schools in neighboring towns is being carried out. In addition, collection boxes have been set up in community centers in the city and the general public too has been called upon to cooperate with this campaign. This activity is one that allows an international contribution to be made with just a single postcard. It represents an excellent opportunity to get children and students to turn their attention to the world and think about the reality behind the existence of 750 million illiterate people in east Asia in particular and elsewhere around the globe.

Working to share and continue preserving and passing on local culture together

The Aizu UNESCO Association established an award for persons of merit who have made distinctive contributions to local culture in 2004 to help preserve elements of cultural heritage remaining in the community for posterity and facilitate the evolution and bequeathing to future generations of local culture. To date, awards have been conferred in fourteen cases, including one for *hebi no gonenshi* (Suzumebayashi, Aizu-Misato Town), *saotome odori* (dance) (Kobayashi Saotome Preservation Society), and *kagura* (dance) (Yanaizu Town). The organizations that have been conferred this award have expressed their delight in winning it. For local stakeholders concerned about the shortage of people who can keep these cultural traditions alive, this award provides substantial encouragement to persist with efforts to preserve and pass on these traditions. The Aizu area is home to the likes of the Thirty-Three Aizu Kannon Pilgrimage Sites, which was designated a Japanese heritage site in 2016, and Nisshinkan Astronomical Observatory Heritage Site, which was designated a Japanese astronomical observatory heritage site in 2019. How these valuable sites should be promoted and preserved in the future remains an important question to be answered.



Aizu Misato Town: Heralding the arrival of the Year of the Snake.



Kobayashi Preservation Society: Saotome dance.



Yanaizu Town: Kagura dance.

Miyagi Prefecture Tagajo High School

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ESD Study Presentations, an anniversary event

On October 15, 2019, an ESD Study Presentations event was held in the gymnasium of this school. With guests consisting of Tomonori Ichinose, an ESD researcher at the Miyagi University of Education Research Center for Education in International Understanding, and Hironobu Watanabe, a school trustee, this event featured presentations given by students in the school based on what they learned in terms of ESD in the preceding semester.



(1) World Tsunami Day 2019 High School Students' Summit in Hokkaido

Students made presentations of activities, shared information, and engaged in interactions to promote the study of the threat of tsunamis and measures that can be implemented to address this threat together with high school students from around the world.

(2) National Disaster-Prevention Junior Leaders Development Camp Tohoku

Students participated in activities held at Tagajo High School, the National Hanayama Youth Outdoor Learning Center, and Mt. Kurikoma Area Geopark Center facilities in August. Junior high school and high school students from across Japan – from Hokkaido to Kumamoto – gathered together to explore disaster-prevention and disaster-mitigation initiatives implemented by each school and discuss future challenges.

(3) Exchanges with high schools in other prefectures

Students from Maiko High School, which offers a course of study in disaster prevention, and other high schools in Hyogo Prefecture and high school students from Kochi Prefecture, where disaster-prevention education with a focus on measures to prepare for a Nankai Trough earthquake is provided, have visited this school, strolled around Tagajo City, and participated in workshops.

(4) Tsurugaya reconstruction housing volunteers

Members of the volunteer club have volunteered in various different capacities on Tsurugaya reconstruction housing projects for some time now in the context of project-based learning (PBL). This year, students participated as volunteers for a summer festival for residents in connection with these projects.

(5) Joint training with SSH-designated schools (Hokkaido Muroran Sakae High School and Hokkaido Kushiro Koryo High School)

- First- and second-year volunteers enrolled in the disaster science program participated in group tours of Toya Lake and Mt. Usu and conducted experiments at the Muroran Institute of Technology together with students from Hokkaido Muroran Sakae High School.
- First-year volunteers enrolled in the disaster science program participated in a group tour of the Kushiro Marsh and attended a lecture presented at a wildlife conservation center together with students from Kushiro Koryo High School.

(6) SSH student research presentations

Four third-year students enrolled in the disaster science program participated in a national event showcasing presentations by students belonging to SSH schools (in Kobe) and presented their research on the topic of urban tsunami risk predictions.

(7) Tsukuba Training (skill-upgrading training course I) and Kanto Training (skill-upgrading training course II)

- First-year students enrolled in the disaster science program visited the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Resilience (NIED), and Geological Museum in Tsukuba City, Ibaraki Prefecture, and underwent practical training on preventing and mitigating disasters.
- Second-year students enrolled in the disaster science program visited the Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC) and Port and Airport Research Institute (PARI) in Yokosuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture, and gained valuable exposure to cutting-edge science and also learned about disaster prevention by participating in a walking tour of Yokohama in Yokohama City (Yamate and Yamashita course) centered around the Great Kanto Earthquake.

Great East Japan Earthquake Memorial Day 2019



[Purpose]

The purpose of this day is to train high school students who seek to acquire knowledge and skills pertaining to disaster prevention and autonomously cooperate with and engage in disaster-prevention and disaster-mitigation initiatives as junior disaster-prevention leaders in Miyagi in order to support the future of Miyagi and cultivate next-generation leaders of voluntary organizations for disaster prevention and other persons who will be responsible for local disaster-prevention activities in the future. In addition, high school students from across the country presented their own research results and engaged in discussions through workshops with the aim of passing on the experiences and lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake to future generations and help mitigate disasters in Japan and overseas.



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What we aim to achieve with ESD

● Aims of ESD

- To develop human resources capable of sharing various values, becoming aware of the connections between global issues and themselves, and creating a sustainable society.

● Skills to be cultivated through ESD (qualities, abilities, and attitude)

- Qualities that enable students to move away from being taught and to instead think about matters together with others;
- An attitude that encourages students to regard themselves as global citizens and share various different values;
- A willingness to regard various issues and problems as matters that are personally important;
- The ability to consider matters and analyze materials.

Practical examples

● Designing a period for engaging in a comprehensive inquiry based on the theme of *sustainable community development*

- First year: Learning about issues in terms of SDGs based on the use of original texts.
Foster global citizenship by repeating a cycle of collaborative study, thinking, research, and presentations on such topics *as providing high-quality education to all and concrete measures for addressing climate change.*



- Second year: Students discover what is being carried out locally to solve global issues and visit nearby facilities to obtain hints for solutions, hone a sense of ownership when it comes to solving problems, and pursue their own research tasks. A transformation in students' conduct is encouraged in line with a broadening of their horizons. (To be implemented beginning in 2020.)
- Third year: Students will summarize the results of their efforts to date, develop their ability to galvanize and communicate with others to enable actions to be carried out in collaboration with as many people as possible, and present their results. (From 2021.)

● ESD lectures

- Workshop for thinking about the problem of child labor.



A workshop is held by inviting an instructor from ACE, an NGO dedicated to protecting children around the world from being exploited for child labor.



Students are split up into groups to think about why the problem of child labor occurs.



Students learn that the problem of child labor is heavily connected to our consumption patterns and discuss what should be done to address this matter.

- Workshop for learning about environmental issues and chemical technologies.



How Will 5G Change the World? By Assistant Professor Kazuma Suzuki of the National Institute of Technology, Sendai College.



How to Use the Energy of the Future by Professor Hiroshi Yamada of the National Institute of Technology, Sendai College.



The True Story of Warming by Associate Professor Masaru Sekido of the National Institute of Technology, Sendai College.



The Truth About and Future of Water by Assistant Professor Yoshihisa Miyazaki of the National Institute of Technology, Sendai College.



A Recycling Society in the Context of SDGs: There Are Ways We Can All Contribute by Dr. Tokuzo Nishino, professor emeritus at Tohoku University.



Under the guidance of Dr. Ginro Endo, a visiting professor at Tohoku Gakuin University's Research Institute for Engineering and Technology, students were able to personally conduct a water quality survey on actual water samples obtained from the Mekong River.

● Activities of the UNESCO Committee

- Primary school student exchange session for activities in support of refugees.



The UNESCO Committee visited nearby Narita Primary School and Narita Higashi Primary School and held an exchange session for sixth graders to organize a collection of children's clothing to be delivered to refugees. Students were taught in clear terms that half of all refugees are children just like them and other pertinent facts. Afterwards, students worked together to create educational posters and put them up inside their school.

- Japan-China friendship tree exchange ceremony based on the theme of the environment.



Following a presentation delivered by the Faculty of Natural Sciences on realizing Tomiya City's goal of a hydrogen-based society, participants looked over an assessment of the extent to which SDGs have been attained in Japan and China. After a commemorative tree planting ceremony was held, two UNESCO Committee members from each class invited Chinese high school students to accompany them to their class and enjoy spending a day as classmates. These students also got a chance to try out various club activities.

In addition to the foregoing activities, members of the UNESCO Committee also actively participate in various events as representatives of this school both inside and outside the school.

Tohoku Regional ESD Activities Support Center

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Intermediate support for ESD activities and initiatives for the attainment of SDGs in Tohoku

An ESD activities support center is a platform based on public-private collaborations that has been established to further promote the EPO. Regional ESD centers have been set up at eight sites nationwide. Exercising jurisdiction over Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Akita, Yamagata, and Fukushima prefectures, the Tohoku Regional ESD Activities Support Center provides support for the further revitalization and promotion of ESD activities on everyone's part by bringing together initiatives by various different organizations and actors, including schools, organs of public administration, companies, specialized agencies, and citizens.



Local ESD activity promotion centers

On the frontlines of school and social education, various actors are engaged in learning and activities pertaining to the resolution of local and societal issues. There is a program that allows local organizations and facilities supporting ESD to be registered as local ESD activity promotion centers. Fourteen organizations have been registered in the Tohoku area (as of December 2020).

The Tohoku Regional ESD Activities Support Center and local ESD activity promotion centers work together as partners with the aim of deepening ESD activities and learning, broadening opportunities and settings for learning, and increasing the ranks of leaders in this field.

* The list of local ESD centers can be seen by visiting the official website of the ESD Activities Support Center: <https://esdcenter.jp/kyoten/>



Meeting for the Environment of Earth



Study tour for SDGs



Developing opportunities for interactions and mutual learning

ESD is stated in 4.7 of the section on SDGs and contributes to the attainment of all seventeen goals through the development of leaders for a sustainable society. It is believed that the further promotion of ESD will directly and indirectly lead to the attainment of SDGs. Accordingly, the Tohoku ESD/SDGs Forum is held with the aim of attracting interested people from various backgrounds and creating opportunities for interactions and mutual learning.

On February 9, 2020, a forum was held in Sendai and attended by 147 participants from all over Tohoku. A keynote speech based on the theme of *perspectives for making SDGs your own personal goals* was given. During the second half of this event, ESD case studies involving universities, organs of public administration, NPOs, high schools, and various other players from across the prefecture were introduced. Participants indicated that they felt that SDGs and ESD were enjoying an increasingly higher profile and that they personally found it to be incredibly rewarding to see, hear, and learn about the diversity of initiatives being undertaken.



Tohoku ESD/SDGs Forum



Presentation in ESD/SDGs Forum

Supporting ESD activities in the Tohoku region

With the aim of expanding and mobilizing ESD activities in each area, we work with local ESD activity promotion centers, organize local ESD workshops, and help hold study sessions with a focus on ESD and SDGs.



Workshop in Hachinohe Technology Uni., high school



Workshop in Tougakkan high school

Conclusion

This booklet introduces Satellite district and collaborative school practices of the ESD/UNESCO-Associated School Tohoku Consortium. We have prepared another report which describes concrete curriculums and programs of four main district. We recommend accessing website, homepages and contacting each board of education and schools.

The purpose of this booklet is to announce Tohoku Consortium's districts and schools' practices which tackle to the SDGs 17 goals and promote human resources for creating sustainable society (ESD). We have added two activities to the last version of this booklet.

This year, each member has a lot of limitation for promoting activities under the COVID-19 situation. In the next version of this booklet, we will show you each members' effort for tackling COVI-19 situation.

26th February 2021
Takaaki KOGANEZAWA

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**ESD/SDGs in
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