



Kansai SOKA Senior High School



Learning Cluster

2017-2018

# SGH Learning Cluster Program

## 【Program Overview】

Learning Cluster Program (LC) is part of Kansai Soka High School's Super Global High School (SGH) program to study global issues in English. The foundation of this program is created upon our school founder Dr. Daisaku Ikeda's Annual Peace Proposal, which called upon education to foster global citizens through exploration of the four fields of development, environment, human rights and peace. In the course of one year, students develop their language and research skills to deepen their understanding of global issues related to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) proposed by the United Nations from these four perspectives.

The purpose of this program is to provide students with the opportunity to deepen their understanding about current global issues that humanity faces and to nourish a sense of responsibility and hope through their research and autonomous learning. Through this program we hope that students will discover passion in their learning which will be carried out through their university studies, future career and lifework, which will lead to fostering the next generation of global leaders who will live contribute lives for the betterment of humanity.



Picture: Students during LC final presentation session

## 【High School Peace Proposal (HSPP)】

As a yearly final research project of the Learning Cluster Program, students are divided into groups of four-five students to conduct their own research on one global issues topic. This project includes detailed analysis of one global issue from each group provided with a concrete action for solution based on student's research, discussion, presentations and fieldwork throughout the year.

## 【History of Learning Cluster】

### 1<sup>st</sup> Class (2014-2015, SGHA)

- 15 students selected from grades 10-12
  - Group Research Topics (4 Fields)
    - Development: Renewable Energy
    - Environment: Water
    - Peace: Collective Self-Defense Act
    - Human Rights: Refugees in Japan
  - Tokyo Fieldwork



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Class (2015-2016, SGH 1<sup>st</sup> Year)

- 16 students selected from grades 11-12
  - Group Research Topics (4 Fields)
    - Development: Bullying in An Education
    - Environment: Peace Proposal for Environmental Education for the Future
    - Peace: Actions for High School Students Towards the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons
    - Human Rights: Suggesting Concrete Actions to Provide Basic Human Rights to Syrian Refugees
  - Tokyo Fieldwork, Overseas Fieldwork

Picture: Students during LC class

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Class (2016-2017, SGH 2<sup>nd</sup> Year)

- 24 students and 2 student advisers selected from grades 11-12
  - Group Research Topics (SDGs)
    - No Poverty (SDG 1): Child Poverty in Japan
    - Zero Hunger (SDG 2): Equalizing Food Distribution to Achieve Zero Hunger
    - Quality Education (SDG 4): Education for Nuclear Abolition
    - Gender Equality (SDG 5): Gender Equality through Education
    - Decent Work (SDG 8): An Educational Program for Japanese High School Students against Child Labor
    - Peace and Justice (SDG 16): Using Dialogue to Counter Terrorism and Create Inclusive Communities
  - Tokyo Fieldwork, Overseas Fieldwork

### 4<sup>th</sup> Class (2017-2018, SGH 3<sup>rd</sup> Year)

- 25 students selected from grades 11-12
  - Climate Change Research Group:
    - Adaptation to Climate Change in Maize Production in the Sahel
    - Peace-Building and Climate Change
    - Sustainable Tourism to Combat Climate Change
  - Nuclear Abolition Research Group:
    - Environmental Damage of Dismantling Nuclear Weapons
    - Protecting Human Rights from the Fear of Nuclear Weapons
    - The Role of Religion for Nuclear Abolition
  - Tokyo Fieldwork, Overseas Fieldwork

### 5<sup>th</sup> Class (2018-2019, SGH 4<sup>th</sup> Year)

- 22 students selected from grades 11-12

# Learning Cluster 2017-2018: Yearly Course Outline

## 【Aim】

This course is designed for students to deepen their understanding of global issues by thoroughly conducting academic researching SDGs topics throughout the year. All classes, discussions, and presentations were conducted in English.

## 【Context】

- School Day Saturdays, 1 Year
- 25 students from grades 11 and 12

## 【Selection Process of LC Students】

All students from grades 11-12 are eligible to apply for Learning Cluster. Students are expected to have an English fluency level of Eiken 2 or above with a strong interest in global issues research. Completion of SP during grade 10 is also required. The selection process includes the following tests:

- **Paper Test:**
  - Assess: Basic English ability
  - Reading, listening, and essay writing questions (Pre-1 Eiken / TOEFL)
- **Group Interview Test:**
  - Assess: English speaking, discussion, creativity, and leadership skills
  - Students discuss together in English to solve a prompt question related to global issues.
- **Individual Interview Test:**
  - Assess: students commitment and responsibility
  - Students are asked questions about their reasons for joining LC, study habits, club activities, etc.

## 【LC Teachers】

- Ramon Paras (USA/ Philippines, MA: TESOL)
- Swati Raj (India, MA: TESOL)
- Louis Butto (USA, MA: TESOL; PhD Candidate in Applied Linguistics)
- Ritsuko Rita (Japan, MA: TESOL)
- Kazuhiro Iguchi (Canada/ Japan, MA: TESOL)
- Kazunori Yamagishi (MA: TESOL)

## 【Materials】

- 2017 Peace Proposal
- A Forum for Peace
- Newspaper Articles
- TED Talks
- Library Books and Online Resources



Picture: Students during LC class



## 【2017-2018 Yearly Course Plan】

**1<sup>st</sup> Semester:** Students acquired a broad understanding of current global issues through discussions, presentations and lectures on founder Ikeda's Peace Proposal, global news, and SDGs. Students then were divided into two global issue themes: climate change and nuclear abolition. Students were further divided into three groups of 4-5 students and explored the theme from the perspectives of development, human rights, environment and peace. Students were then taught how to write the literature review and research questions section for their own High School Peace Proposal. With a general understanding of various global issues, literature review of one research topic, and questions for further research, students participated in a fieldwork to Tokyo to present and discuss their research topics with experts.



Picture: SDG workshop by UNDP Japan Director  
Tetsuo Kondo during Tokyo Fieldwork



Picture: Global citizenship workshop by Soka University Deputy-Vice President Maria Guajardo during Tokyo Fieldwork

**2<sup>nd</sup> Semester:** After gaining professional feedback from professors and experts during Tokyo fieldwork, students continued to complete their High School Peace Proposal by learning how to write the methodology and results sections. Based on the acquired knowledge, experience, and data collection, students create a proposal on climate change and nuclear abolition issues the perspective of high school students.



Picture: Students in front of United Nations University during Tokyo Fieldwork

**3<sup>rd</sup> Semester:** Several students were selected to participate in our third overseas fieldwork to California where they presented their completed High School Peace Proposal to local high school students, university professors, and experts. After coming back from fieldwork, students shared their learning experience from fieldwork and their completed High School Peace Proposal at the SGH final presentation session, presentation session for juniors, open campus and more.



Picture: Students presenting their High School Peace Proposal research at SGH Final Presentation Session