



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY

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## Daegu students impact community through inquiry-based learning

Fifth grade students at Daegu Elementary School have a drive to make a difference in their community – a quality their teachers, Ms. Brandi Peden and Ms. Rachel Guilfoyle, recently encouraged through inquiry-based learning (IBL).

The educators developed an IBL project to allow students to address their biggest concerns about their community and the world around them. In alignment with the DoDEA Pacific West District’s goals, Ms. Peden and Ms. Guilfoyle embraced interdisciplinary instruction and 21st Century Learning competencies, to create “voice and choice” opportunities for students to engage in authentic experiences that will have a lasting impact on their community and their learning. Ms. Magoon, the Information Specialist, helped provide scaffolded literacy skills, which the students needed to engage in and successfully complete a cross-curricular IBL project.

“Fifth graders often believe that they are ‘just kids’ and do not have a say in the world around them,” Ms. Guilfoyle said. “Facilitating students to understand that their thoughts can transform into actions that can have an impact beyond the curriculum, standards, and classroom transcends their purpose for learning beyond a letter grade. Inquiry-based learning tailors to the whole-child, and through this learning process, marked social-emotional growth is observed.”

Students were asked three questions to develop ideas on a larger scale and address their true passions:

1. What breaks your heart about the world?
2. What does the world expect of you?
3. If there was one thing you could change about the world, what would it be?

The educators categorized student responses into the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Goals 2030. Students expressed concern about world governments, global warming, and equitable and quality education.

Four students concerned about equitable and quality education decided to participate in *Stars and Stripes’* “Stars and Stripes Little Free Library” (SSLFL) project, an effort to transform retired newspaper stands into free libraries in the Daegu/Area IV community.

The students wrote a pitch about how they, as young people, were already change agents, student-leaders, and global citizens. Then, they presented their pitch to a panel consisting of school administration, staff, fellow students, and the parent-teacher organization (PTO). The pitch was an amazing success, and students were approved to continue to work on the project.

“My friends and I had fun,” said Sarah Dickerson, a Daegu student who participated in the project. “We loved interacting with each other, presenting our proposal to the panel, and painting the little book house! We hope the children who use it will love it too!”

The original SSLFL structure was provided by *Stars and Stripes*; however, the final SSLFL structure was designed by the students. The structure is currently placed in front of Daegu Elementary School at Camp George, with plans to move the SSLFL to a community-based area on Camp Walker. The SSLFL is ready for use and patrons can donate their books to the Little Free Library or trade old books for new ones.

The students and teachers at Daegu Elementary school appreciate the partnership with *Stars and Stripes*.

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Daegu Middle High School students Sarah Dickerson, Miyana Sander, Michael Pak and Joshua Choi pose with the Stars and Stripes Little Free Library they created as an inquiry-based learning project while fifth grade students at Daegu Elementary School.



Daegu Middle High School students Miyana Sander, Sarah Dickerson, Michael Pak and Joshua Choi pose with the Stars and Stripes Little Free Library they created as an inquiry-based learning project while fifth grade students at Daegu Elementary School.

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Printed on Friday, April 4, 2025 - 22:19. For the latest version of this content please visit <https://daegumhs.dodea.edu/print/pdf/node/124101>.