

BI-WEEKLY NEWS



July 9, 2023 ~ July 19, 2023

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Project SEED

Project SEED (Research on Social Justice, Education Equity and Diversity through the Lens of Taiwan’s National Civic Literacy and Efficacy Initiative) is a multicultural collaborative effort focused on generating knowledge on the development of civic knowledge/skills, attitude toward civic literacy and efficacy in Taiwan for research and development of civic engagement in language, social science and science learning.

Panel Discussion with Guang Sing Elementary School: ‘Indigo Imprints: A Curriculum Journey From Hakka Heritage to Hands-on Horticulture and Handcrafted Artistry’

On July 10th, we had panel discussions with the principal, two directors, a teacher, and a parent from Guang Sing Elementary School. Guang Sing is located in Meinong District of Kaohsiung City, where the community is mostly farming and influenced heavily by Hakka culture. Through our discussions, the most notable impact of the new curriculum is diversity through the community, which provides “funds



Panel Discussion with Guang Sing

of knowledge” on Hakka lifestyle and culture. One of the school’s curriculum (influence of Hakka culture) that involves students from all grades and members of the community is indigo dyeing. Students learn how to plant, how many plants are needed, to what kind of products they can make with the dye, and eventually how to promote the product that they made.

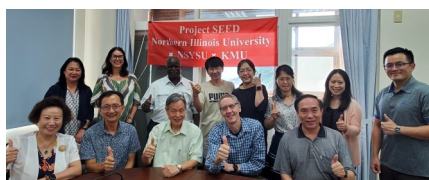


Panel Discussion with Guang Rong

Panel Discussion with Guang Rong Elementary School: ‘Sailing to Bridges: A Curriculum of Equitable Access, Diverse Interactions, and Lifelong Learning Through Sailing and Strategic Play’

In the afternoon of July 10th, we had panel discussions with the principal, 2 directors, and a teacher from Guang Rong Elementary School. On equity, because Guang Rong is well-known for their sailing program, but have limited number of seats for their sailing class, a “lucky straw” method is used to select students for this class. From our discussions, we learned that the school’s Bridge classes and club promotes diversity and lifelong

learning. Through competitions in Bridge (a card game played in teams), students meet new people, build communication skills, gain lifelong skills in reasoning and logical thinking. Also involved in Bridge is the aspect of probability and students’ ability to predict opponents’ moves and determining their next steps. The skills and experiences from Bridge increases students’ attitudes for the math and sciences, with more students pursuing those subjects in the future.



Group Picture with Guang Rong

Panel Discussion with San Min Junior High: 'Reflective Recycling: Designing Change Through School-based ESL Curriculum, Conscious Consumerism, and Community Engagement'

On July 13th, we participated in panel discussions with 2 principals, 4 directors, 1 teacher, and 1 parent from San Min Junior High. As part of the school-based English as the Second Language's (ESL) curriculum, the design is focused on designing for change by finding a problem, reflecting on it, and developing an action plan. For example, in 6th grade, teachers engage students in a 'Goods Exchange' market, where they bring unused items from their homes to the school-sponsored marketplace. This hands-on project



Panel Discussion with San Min

not only engages their English language (speaking and reading) skills through real-world interactions and negotiations, but also promotes their vocabulary expansion and practical uses of the language in diverse contexts. Overall, this project is not only about recycling of goods but also fosters critical thinking, as students are encouraged to reflect on why these items are unused and why they were initially purchased. Students are further required to develop an action plan to address these issues and promote more conscious consumerism in the future.



Panel Discussion with Hwa Gang

Panel Discussion at Hwa Gang Junior High: 'Cultivating Connections: Promoting Cultural Awareness, Community Engagement, and Environmental Consciousness Through Maker-based STEM'



Dr. Hung speaking at Hwa Gang

On July 14th, we participated in panel discussions with the principal, 1 director, 2 teachers, and 2 parents from Hwa Gang Junior High. As part of Hwa Gang's school-based STEM programs, the design is focused on STEM integrated Maker curriculum through hands-on and immersive activities about cultural awareness, community engagement, and horticultural. For example, "Happy Farmer" farm, which is a part of the school's integrated STEM curriculum in teaching students about farming and issues related to the environment (e.g., impact of pesticides). In this unit, the three topics that the students learn about are related to soil sensors, watering system, and temperature/weather factors inside the greenhouse farm. Students grow plants and vegetables that are unique to the local's diverse

cultural and ethnicities, share the harvested goods with local communities; through sharing, engage local senior residents in scientific literacy such as design thinking, 3D maker activities.



Visiting "Happy Farmer" Farm



3D Maker Activities with Senior Citizens

Cultural Tour (Hualien)

On July 15th, in Hualien, we visited cultural and scenic areas around Taroko National Park. We first walked on the Shakadang Trail; along the trail, we observed unique cliff formations and water so pristine and clear.

Our next stop was the Shanyue Suspension Bridge (renamed to Buluowan Suspension Bridge in May 2022). This is the 4th variation of the bridge and is 196 meters long, 2.5 meters wide, and 152 meters above the Liwu River. Its earliest version was built in 1914 during the Truku War by the Japanese for the purpose of accessing and gaining control over the aboriginal communities along the Liwu River.

While walking back from the bridge, we saw the Truku Tribe Cultural Exhibit, which displayed their typical dwelling, clothing, rattan weaving, and hunting tools.

We then walked along the Swallow Grotto (Yanzikou) Trail to “Chief Rock,” where the rock formations can be viewed by some as a chief wearing headdress.

Our last stop was Tianxiang Old Station (from there, one can walk to the Xiangde Temple, Baiyang Trail, etc.). This old bus station, built in the 1960s, served as a rest stop for visitors crossing the Central Cross-Island Highway.



Day at Taroko National Park



On the Shakadang Trail



Buluowan Suspension Bridge



Truku Tribe Cultural Exhibit



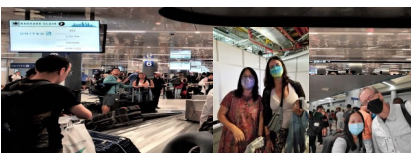
Swallow Grotto



Tianxiang Old Station



Departure Day



Arrival Day

Return to the U.S.

On July 18th, we took the high speed rail to Taipei, then headed to the airport for our flight back to the U.S. (with layover in Japan). We arrived in the U.S. later in the evening on July 19th.

Closing

In the 6 weeks that we were in Taiwan, we interacted with 9 schools and 2 universities; participated and engaged in 20 sessions (consisting of keynotes, workshops, presentations) at the international conference; hosted 27 panel discussions (as follow-up data collections) with 7 principals, 18 directors, 17 teachers, and 8 parents. In addition, we collected new data on assessment to learn about how schools measure and respond to student outcomes throughout the school year (using quality assessments and tiered levels), as well as how they determine if the core curriculum (what is designed for all students in a particular subject area, classroom, grade level) is meeting the needs of most students. We also went on cultural tours in 6 cities, consisting of 2 museums and 5 cultural centers.

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