

# **Hiroshima Innovative School**

## **Partnership for Youth (P4Y) :Shaping Vision 2030**

### **Joint Declaration**

#### **1. Preamble**

We are a group of 110 high school students who have gathered from Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, and the United States to form the Hiroshima Innovative School: Partnership for Youth (P4Y) Vision 2030.

We met for the first time in Hawaii, summer of 2016. Though we come from a range of cultures and backgrounds, we became united under the common goal of establishing a brighter future. Our differences became respected as strengths, and we found ourselves passionate about the same issues. Through a variety of means such as research, discussion, and workshops, we developed our own comprehensive plans to address the concerns identified in our own communities. The recommendations were created with sustainability in mind. The issues we identified as local mostly address three universal challenges: education, the environment, and global awareness.

We then returned to our own communities to apply the plans of action discussed in Hawaii. However, we encountered resistance as we fought to bring change. It was difficult to communicate our ideas in environments that were not always receptive. As a result, we learned how to listen more openly and to make use of constructive criticisms.

Despite our struggles, we felt empowered by our fellow young participants and recognized the importance of taking action. We realized the effectiveness of direct communication, collaboration and compromise, and the necessity of understanding one another. To create an environment open to change, we realized the significance of strengthening the sense of community by bridging divisions between generations.

In the summer of 2017, we have gathered once again here in Hiroshima, Japan, a resilient and hopeful community. Our experience here has inspired us to think about the significance, complexity, and consequences of history and how it affects the present and the way we work for change. Indeed, we share the responsibility of caring for our planet for those who inhabit it now and those who will in the future. We are making a sincere collaborative commitment to transcend divisions as we strive for peace, global change, and innovation. We are hopeful that our voices can help bring a better future. We respectfully submit this joint declaration.

#### **Section 1: Education**

##### *What We See and Wish to Change*

Education and knowledge are powerful tools that should be made available to everyone, accessible regardless of economic status, ability (i.e. physical and mental), gender, and race. Many societies have a minimum education requirement, but it is not always effectively and equitably provided. Furthermore, a variety of circumstances (examples include: low socioeconomic status, disabilities, discrimination, and access to adequate health care and nutrition) restrict people's access to education or ability to sustain it.

The quality of education is another matter that needs addressing. Children must receive an education that will allow them to make wise decisions about their lives, their communities, and the future. A well-rounded education must reflect the pressing issues that affect the world and motivate students and schools to connect with their communities. Education should enable students to take on the challenges of the modern world, and provide a safe environment for discussion. Equitable funding must support this. Transformation in institutions and priorities is necessary to take care of these needs.

#### *How It Can Be Changed*

- Establish a required minimum education and offer it equally to all. This must be promoted by government officials with appropriate funds.
- Adapt a more inclusive curriculum that recognizes a more diverse range of cultural backgrounds.
- Run educational programs that empower the youth to connect with their communities to bring about change.
- Make cultural and language immersion experiences available.

### **Section 2: The Environment**

#### *What We See and Wish to Change*

The worsening state of our environment is a very serious problem. Solutions are often pushed aside for the sake of making profit. Some have even tried to deny the reality of global warming. Others do not take the depletion of natural resources seriously. In the past, proper waste disposal was often the responsibility of businesses. However, some companies have stopped managing this effectively or at all. Due to lack of education or negligence, many people fail to dispose of their trash properly, which increases pollution of essential resources such as water. Although there are governments making an effort to lessen pollution, regulations are often poorly enforced. Solutions must be applied as quickly as possible. A firm commitment must be made to bring and support change. We hope to inspire and empower the youth to take similar initiatives.

#### *How It Can Be Changed*

- Educate the public to better protect our environment. Topics may include, but are not limited to: proper waste segregation and disposal, water and energy conservation, composting, and other related actions
- Persuade the government to create and enforce efficient waste disposal systems and emission/conservation laws. For example: proper sorting of trash, composting, limiting the production/use of non-biodegradable packaging, among other measures.

### **Section 3: Global Awareness**

#### *What We See and Wish to Change*

We live in an increasingly interdependent world. Though technology has made information very accessible, it is becoming more difficult to tell what is reliable and trustworthy information, especially in the presence of “fake news”. It is important to learn how to evaluate resources to take an informed stance and carry out appropriate actions. Selectivity in what the

media choose to cover and how it is presented is another concern; widespread ignorance is a dangerous repercussion.

Global awareness starts at home. We also find it important for young people to have opportunities to learn about, appreciate, and accept cultural and religious diversity within their own homes as well as in other countries and places. However, we all must avoid making assumptions about others. We understand that identity is an important aspect of taking a stance on universal issues, particularly for those who find it challenging to define themselves. Being aware of connections between human beings can enable us to overcome borders.

### *How It Can Be Changed*

- Encourage schools to deepen their study of local and global history and its repercussions.
- Create student clubs to get young people to discuss world news and current events.
- Encourage student volunteer work to increase civic engagement and create stronger bonds between schools and their communities.
- Emphasize and teach critical thinking skills
- Participate in and raise awareness about global youth forums such as P4Y and Model U.N. that allow students from all over the world to have intercultural discussions over similar important concerns.
- Share knowledge and promote local culture, with attention to indigenous ethnicities, and encourage appreciation and respect for diversity.

### **Conclusion**

We are grateful for the privilege to participate in the Hiroshima Innovative School: Partnership for Youth (P4Y) Program Vision 2030. We have been given opportunities to grow by collaborating with fellow participants from diverse backgrounds. We have come to understand that these large issues are intertwined and that sustainable solutions require time and effort. We will not be deterred from taking action ourselves. We believe that together, we are stronger than any of us are on our own. We are hopeful that all of us gathered here today and the people around the world we have yet to meet can collaborate in the spirit of bringing a better tomorrow.