

The joint effort to promote community study in Mikasa Geopark

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Starting in 2005, elementary and middle schools in Mikasa City added ‘regional studies’ to the curriculum to educate local children about their city. This subject aims to nurture children’s physical and intellectual abilities and deepen their understanding of local history and culture. In conjunction, since its certification as an official Japan Geopark in 2014, Mikasa Geopark has made strides towards developing a sustainable city through the implementation of guided tours, educational programs, etc. The schools in Mikasa City and Mikasa Geopark share the same goal: to cultivate our country’s future by broadening children’s awareness and appreciation for their environment—cultural, historical, and physical.

To foster a connection between our schools and the geopark, and to promote ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) and geopark community outreach programs, we established the ‘Mikasa Geopark ESD Promotional Council’, consisting of people from internal and external associations. We made a ‘community study calendar’ to compile the subjects which relate to the geopark in the school curriculum.

The goals of this effort are (i)to organize regional materials, including geopark materials, so that teachers and students can use them for community study, (ii)to deepen mutual understanding and increase our relationships, and as a result, (iii)to establish a shared foundation of developing human resources.

In this presentation, we will discuss the background, progress, and achievements of our efforts. We will also discuss future issues.

Keywords: school education, geopark activities, cooperation, community study, ESD