



PRESS RELEASE

JASSW Receives Grant from the United States-Japan Foundation in International Competition

Seattle, WA – The Japan-America Society of the State of Washington (JASSW) has received a grant from the United States-Japan Foundation to fund a new educational program in Japanese elementary schools entitled “America in the Schools.” The United States-Japan Foundation is dedicated to promoting stronger ties between Americans and Japanese by “supporting projects that foster mutual knowledge and education, deepen understanding, create effective channels of communication, and address common concerns in an increasingly interdependent world.”¹

“America in the Schools” (AIS) is patterned after the “Japan in the Schools” (JIS) program that JASSW has been conducting in Washington State schools for over 20 years. JIS introduces Japanese culture to American K-12 students by following a day-in-the-life of a Japanese student of similar age so that American students can compare and contrast their own experience with that of their counterparts in Japan.

AIS will introduce American elementary school culture to approximately 7 million Japanese K-12 students through the collaborative efforts of English speakers (e.g. local English teachers, ALTs² or volunteers that have overseas English experience) and local Japanese educators. The curriculum will incorporate experiential learning, where students will learn how to greet and use simple English words with proper pronunciation.

Furthermore, through our presentation’s key message of diversity, Japanese students will come to understand and appreciate the strength of diversity. Some of our American participants will be, alumni from the Fulbright and Tomodachi programs who can provide unique career experience as well as English language expertise to the program.

Through this grassroots presentation of their American counterparts, we hope Japanese students will gain an understanding of American culture that goes beyond the headlines and blockbuster movies and leads to increase educational, political, economic and community ties. Even more importantly, through this program we hope to increase and encourage student interest in learning English at an earlier age.

JASSW will be conducting the first JIS pilot presentations in approximately 2 weeks in the following schools: Moriai Elementary School (Fukushima), Fukushima Minami High School (Fukushima), Meisen Academy (Sendai), and Shioiri Higashi Elementary School (Tokyo.) These pilot presentations will be conducted in coordination with local high school students participating in the TOMODACHI exchange program.

¹ Retrieved from the “About the Foundation” section on the United States-Japan Foundation website: <http://us-jf.org/about-the-foundation/mission-and-vision/>

² ALT – Assistant Language Teacher



JASSW is extremely grateful for the generous support of the United States-Japan Foundation in pursuing this program. We would also like to extend our sincerest thanks to the following organizations, without whose support we would have been unable to receive this award: Consulate General of Japan in Seattle, Hyogo Business and Cultural

Center, Kobe Trade Information Office – U.S. Branch Office for Kobe City (Japan), Costco Wholesale, Mitsubishi Corporation (Americas), The Laurasian Institution, and the Naha City Board of Education.