For Immediate Release

Joe Michell K-8 Students Share Expertise in Fifth Grade Exhibition

June 4, 2019 - Livermore, CA - “Would you like to learn about women’s rights?” “Can we tell you what we learned about plastic pollution in our oceans?” Joe Michell K-8’s multipurpose room and several classrooms buzzed with questions and calls to action as students eagerly presented their Fifth Grade Exhibition on the topic, “Sharing the Planet” – a capstone project that serves as the culmination of three months of work. The projects reflect the mission of the International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, to develop thoughtful and caring young people who have a stake in creating a better and more peaceful world.

In groups of three to five, students developed a central idea and lines of inquiry into the rights and responsibilities of everyone in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and living things. Groups determined their central ideas based on what they were passionate about, what they were interested in seeing change, and what they had learned about so far in their education. The central idea Women’s Rights Affect Communities Around the World was close to the hearts of those students while they developed an action plan and discussed the topic with experts. “This was something we were all passionate about before,” said one student, speaking for her group. “Working on our project gave us more information about our topic and how we could act to make changes.”

The research, source gathering, and organization of information reflected the rigor of the IB program. With the latitude to explore ideas important to them, students explored a wide variety of topics such as human impact on marine ecosystems and specific animal populations, plastic consumption, mining, poaching, non-renewable resources, air quality, and human rights. Students were tasked with pursuing background information and interviewing experts for their idea, allowing them to expand the scope of their understanding and develop strategies that would address the issue at the core of their idea. These experts served as representatives of local and global resources. They helped students determine an approach to their ideas, and actions that could be taken to address the problems students discovered during their research. These interactions helped students clarify their thoughts, provided insight, and served as a model for how to communicate the issues surrounding their ideas.

When it came time to present their findings on May 23rd, the 5th grade students were experts in their own right. In the evening, they would present to parents and the community during Joe Michell’s Open House. During the day, students from other grade levels walked through the exhibitions while the 5th graders presented their central ideas and detailed their lines of inquiry, answering questions and recommending actions to their audience. Some issues called for an increase in awareness and advocacy, while others recommended adjustments to behavior such as plastic reduction for the sake of oceans or cleaning hiking gear to mitigate the spread of invasive species.
The Fifth Grade Exhibition served to showcase the students’ outstanding ability to organize information and communicate it to an audience spanning from kindergarteners to parents. In sharing carefully researched ideas, students demonstrated their mastery of inquiry, encouraged action, and broadened perspectives both for themselves and their audience. Younger students saw examples of how they could start to apply their own IB World School education to global issues, seeing how they would continue to build on the foundation of their education. The project encapsulated the IB model in its global focus, collaborative process, and the strengthening of knowledge for all.

Photos of exhibitions courtesy of LVJUSD

Photo 1: Human actions impact marine environment - presented to younger students
Photo 2: Women’s rights affect communities around the world - presentation
Photo 3: Human actions influence climate change – answering questions

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**ABOUT LIVERMORE VALLEY JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

LVJUSD is an award-winning district that serves more than 13,900 students in transitional kindergarten through 12th grade at nine elementary campuses, two K-8 schools, three middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, and two alternative schools. The LVJUSD features International Baccalaureate Programmes and a STEM pathway, TK-12. The mission of the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District is to ensure each student will graduate with the skills needed to contribute and thrive in a changing world. For more information about the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District, please visit [www.livermoreschools.org](http://www.livermoreschools.org)

**ADDITIONAL CONTACTS:**

School Board President Craig Bueno, cbuenotrustee@lvjusd.org (925) 918-7345
Superintendent of Schools Kelly Bowers, Ed.D. kbowers@lvjusd.k12.ca.us (925) 606-3281
Director of Community Engagement Philomena Rambo, prambo@lvjusd.org (925) 960-2917