

Peace Exchange Activity with Hiroshima Elementary School Students

1. Activity background and outline

Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School was built in 1937 and was one of the most modern reinforced concrete buildings of its time. On August 6, 1945, the Atomic Bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School was one of the closest schools to ground zero. The school lost about 160 students and teachers and the building suffered massive damage.

The devastating blast and intense heat created by the Atomic Bomb destroyed Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School turning it into ruins with only the shell of the school building left standing. In the days following the A-bomb blast, the school ruins became a first-aid station for survivors (called “Hibakusha” in Japanese) and its blacken charred walls acted as a message board for students, teachers and local residents to enquire about the safety of their families, friends and neighbors.

In the months and years to follow, Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School was rebuilt and revived. In April 2002 a section of the school’s original building that was destroyed by the A-bomb was converted into “Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School Museum.” Messages that were left by the Hibakusha on the charred walls, carbonized wooden blocks and a deformed steel basement school door are preserved here and on display.

The students of Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School took an oath to carefully preserve the museum, to communicate the realities of the A-bombing to future generations, to study peace and to spread their important message to the world.

This peace exchange activity will give PICES participants the opportunity to interact directly with the students of Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School and learn first hand about their important message of peace. A tour of Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School Museum by the students will be the main focus of the activity. **We strongly encourage PICES participants to take advantage of this rare opportunity.**

2. Date

14:40 ~ 15:10 Oct 18th ,2012

3. Venue

Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School Peace Museum

* About 15 minutes on foot from Hiroshima International Conference Center

4. Program

Welcome speech and tour of Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School Peace Museum by the students.

5. The number of participants

Up to 50 participants

6. Cooperating organization

Fukuromachi Municipal Elementary School

(Program after the Peace Museum tour)

15:10 ~ 16:30 Experience traditional Japanese culture with Japanese elementary school children. Activities will include making paper cranes and playing Kendama (wooden ball game) and Otedama (beanbag game) at Fukuromachi Children's Community Center .