

2022/2023 Academic Year (Spring Term)

Week 1 Observation

Teacher feedback from the first week shows that students were generally eager and motivated to participate. While some faced minor internet or device-related issues—especially those joining from temporary housing or rural areas—overall attendance was strong. In most classrooms, students were responsive, engaged in activities, and even encouraged their peers. Teachers noted gender-based differences in participation at first, with boys being more vocal, but girls gradually becoming more involved with support. Despite small **technical issues**, the general classroom atmosphere was positive and hopeful.

Week 2 Observation

In the second week, participation levels remained steady and engagement increased. Core topics were introduced through both lectures and interactive activities, including games and problem-solving. Some students joined late or missed sessions due to **internet problems**, but most were present and willing to learn. Teachers reported early signs of progress, and quieter students began contributing more actively. The learning environment continued to develop in a collaborative and encouraging direction.

Week 3 Observation

Week three reflected growing consistency in attendance and stronger comprehension of topics like exponents, equations, and algebraic expressions. Most students showed active involvement and were able to follow the material with growing independence. **Teachers observed greater peer interaction and noted improvements in student confidence.** While internet issues persisted in a few cases, they were not as disruptive. The overall mood across classrooms was described as positive, and teachers expressed satisfaction with students' academic and emotional progress.

Week 4 Observation

In the fourth week, student participation remained steady, though some absences were reported due to health issues or **technical problems** such as electricity cuts and limited internet access. Core topics like data interpretation, algebraic expressions, and percentages were taught, and multiple groups engaged in problem-solving sessions. Some students demonstrated growing confidence, while others needed individual support or reminders. Teachers also noted that peer interactions continued to improve, with group dynamics becoming stronger each week. Overall, the learning environment remained positive, with teachers observing increasing academic engagement and consistency.

Week 5 Observation

In the fifth week, **participation was slightly more irregular due to students' personal obligations, technical problems**, and overlapping school responsibilities. Despite this, students who attended were generally active and engaged. Key topics such as data analysis, angles, and percentages were covered across classrooms, and many students continued to show improvement in both understanding and motivation. In some cases, teachers had to adjust schedules or repeat content to ensure accessibility. Overall, while attendance varied, the commitment of both students and educators remained strong, and the learning environment was still positive and responsive.

Week 6 Observation

During the sixth week, **class participation was slightly affected by the national holiday and student workloads**, yet several lessons were held successfully. Core topics such as probability, angles, and review sessions were covered across different classrooms. Teachers reported that students who attended were generally engaged and willing to interact, although internet access and scheduling challenges continued to affect a few participants. **Some students required individual follow-ups due**

to repeated absences or low engagement. Overall, teachers maintained flexible lesson structures and encouraged students to stay connected, resulting in meaningful progress for most active participants.

Week 7 Observation

Teacher reports from the seventh week show that despite **occasional absences due to health issues or academic responsibilities**, several groups maintained consistent participation. Key topics such as area measurement, circles, and polygons were covered, along with problem-solving exercises. In some classes, students found the new topics slightly more challenging, yet those who attended were engaged and showed progress. Teachers noted improvements in student persistence and peer support, while also identifying a few learners in need of individual follow-up. The overall atmosphere remained positive, though exam-related stress was beginning to emerge in some students.

Week 8 Observation

During the eighth week, **participation varied across classrooms, with some absences due to personal or scheduling conflicts.** Despite this, students who joined the sessions showed strong engagement, especially in topics such as geometric shapes, area calculations, and circle properties. In several groups, teachers reported that new topics were challenging at first, but students' persistence and peer support helped maintain a positive learning atmosphere. **A few students discontinued participation during this period, and their situations were followed up with families when possible. Families explained that the main reasons were relocation to other cities, limited internet access in rural areas.**

Week 9 Observation

In the ninth week, participation remained steady in most groups, although **some students faced connection issues or schedule conflicts.** Teachers covered topics such as circles, area measurement units, and LGS (High School Entrance Examination in Türkiye) exam practice. In several cases, students required more time to grasp spatial and geometric concepts, yet active participants showed steady progress. **A few classes experienced low attendance, prompting one-on-one follow-ups and occasional parental contact.** Despite these challenges, students who joined continued to be engaged, and teachers emphasized interactive problem-solving to strengthen conceptual understanding.

Week 10 Observation

In week 10, the lessons focused on calculations, circle geometry, and review sessions based on sample questions from the LGS (High School Entrance Examination in Türkiye). While **attendance was inconsistent due to student fatigue and other commitments**, participants remained focused and responsive. Teachers observed that students demonstrated increased confidence in solving problems, even when encountering new concepts. Some groups engaged in comprehensive revision, while individual follow-ups were conducted for those who missed the sessions. The overall atmosphere reflected growing exam awareness and motivation to strengthen academic performance.

Week 11 Observation

In week 11, most groups completed the final curriculum topics, including volume, liquid measurement, and data analysis. **Teachers observed signs of fatigue among students, which impacted both participation and concentration.** Despite this, several students remained engaged and showed a consistent effort to follow lessons. Some sessions were shortened or adapted, and **plans were made to include more interactive or game-based activities in the following week to maintain motivation.** Teachers also incorporated quick review segments to reinforce previously learned material.

Week 12 Observation

In the final week, sessions were lighter and more flexible. Some groups opted for games and informal reviews instead of structured lessons, reflecting both a sense of closure and **student fatigue**. Participation varied due to travel and **internet limitations**, particularly among students staying in rural areas. Despite these challenges, those who attended were engaged and enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere. **A graduation meeting marked the completion of the program, providing a space for appreciation, reflection, and emotional connection among students, teachers, and families.**

The graduation session marked a powerful emotional closure for the program. For the first time, students, parents, and volunteer teachers came together in one virtual space. Although attendance was not mandatory, more than 100 participants joined voluntarily. Many took the opportunity to express their gratitude—some through heartfelt words, others by reading poems or simply sharing their reflections. **Several parents highlighted how meaningful the project had been for their families**, especially in the aftermath of the earthquake. One student shared, “Everything was dark... You became our stars and illuminated our path.” **The strong emotional connection and community spirit demonstrated during the ceremony reflected the broader impact of the initiative, beyond academic outcomes.**

2023/2024 Academic Year Summary

This year, activities continued with a smaller group of returning students from the previous term. The 6th graders had moved on to 7th grade, 7th graders to 8th, and the 8th graders had transitioned to high school. Since there was no new student enrollment, the program proceeded only with 7th and 8th graders, which naturally reduced the number of classes and volunteer tutors. Despite this, the program remained impactful and was strengthened through several special activities. **One highlight of the year was a motivational meeting organized with two successful high school students who had recently gained admission to top-tier schools.** For the 8th graders preparing to enter high school, this interaction served as a major source of inspiration. **Participants had the chance to speak one-on-one with their peers about study habits, exam strategies, and their curiosities about high school life. These types of sessions once again demonstrated that the program supports not only academic progress, but also students’ social and emotional development.**

By year’s end, the idea of making this impactful learning environment more sustainable began to emerge. This marked the initial steps toward developing a dedicated P2P education platform—an initiative that goes beyond a short-term solidarity effort and focuses on peer-to-peer knowledge sharing among youth.

2024/2025 Academic Year Summary

During this period, only 8th grade students participated in the program. Since no new student admissions were made, the number of participants naturally declined compared to previous years. **The reduced number of students relative to the available tutors led to even smaller groups, enhancing personalized attention and allowing for faster responses to students’ needs. Motivation remained high, and students built strong relationships with their tutors. Volunteer educators supported not only academic progress but also students’ emotional and social development.**

Fieldnote – April 2024

The Earthquake Solidarity Project initially emerged as a short-term solution focused on supporting 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade students through a volunteer-based structure. However, over time, the limitations of this model have become evident—volunteers have had limited availability, have lacked financial support, and the demand for educational help has continued to grow. This has sparked the realization that a more sustainable, long-term approach is needed. That’s when the idea of building a dedicated P2P education platform has been born—a fully digital, accessible, and independent space tailored to the diverse needs of youth aged 10–18. University students (at the undergraduate, master’s, and PhD levels) would be able to create social impact while gaining both experience and income. Meanwhile, young learners would receive support in the areas they most need, learning from near peers. The result: a mutually beneficial, inspiring, and empowering learning community driven by shared growth and purpose.

Fieldnote – April 2024

Using Zoom allowed us to quickly reach students in the aftermath of the earthquake. Throughout this process, it has become increasingly clear that beyond academic instruction, young people deeply need connection, shared learning, and a sense of belonging. Limited interaction and challenges in sustaining volunteer engagement have highlighted the limitations of the model. These experiences have revealed the urgent need for a dedicated P2P education platform—one where students can learn from one another and where educators’ contributions are visible, meaningful, and sustainable. The platform is envisioned not only as a tool for learning, but as a space for solidarity, growth, and social impact.

Fieldnote – May 2024

After witnessing the success of the Earthquake Solidarity Project during its initial phase, I have started to realize that what we have built could serve a much greater purpose. The strong interest from students, the dedication of peer educators, and the richness of interaction make it clear that this model isn’t only effective in times of crisis—it could also address broader educational inequalities across Türkiye.

Although the project was originally designed as a 12-week initiative, it has organically continued for almost 1 year more without the addition of new volunteers. What has struck me most is the consistent positive feedback and the heartfelt requests from students and families to keep the program going. These moments have shifted my mindset. I find myself asking: What if this isn’t meant to be a one-time intervention?

I envision something more permanent, inclusive, and youth-driven. I imagine a space that transcends geographic or crisis-based limitations—a sustainable peer-to-peer learning system where young people can continuously learn from one another, and where the efforts of volunteer educators are both visible and lasting.

Fieldnote – February 2025

On February 6, 2025, the second anniversary of the earthquake, the project team shared a post on its social media page to commemorate the losses and reaffirm its ongoing solidarity with affected students. Shortly after, we received an emotional and heartfelt message from a mother who had been involved with the platform since its earliest days. She wrote: “You were there when no one else held our children’s hands. My older daughter graduated with your help, and my younger one is still learning with you. This meant everything to us.” Her message, filled with gratitude and reflection, conveyed a deep awareness of the shared

journey. Sometimes, a single message can renew our sense of purpose and remind us why this work matters. It also reinforced that the peer-to-peer learning model adopted by the project is not limited to knowledge transfer; it creates long-term social impact through trust, continuity, and meaningful relationships.