

# WonderED K-12 Academy Students Give Life to New Planet in Groundbreaking Project-Based Learning Experience

*WonderED K-12 students gave life to Planet Ecliptis in a project blending science, art & storytelling—showcasing real learning beyond the classroom.*

NEW PORT RICHEY, FL, UNITED STATES, June 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Students at

“

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*Jason Malone, Chief Learning Officer*

WonderED K-12, a fully online school using project-based learning as one of its five elements of their educational approach, have boldly gone where no classroom has gone before: creating their very own planet: Ecliptis.

As part of WonderED’s immersive, interdisciplinary curriculum, students in grades 6–12 participated in a project titled “Build a World”, where they imagined, designed, and presented an entirely original planet—including ecosystems, cultures, governments, terrain and even its ethics. “This wasn’t just about science or art or writing,” said Alyse Benjamin, WonderED’s Director of Learning Development, project creator and

leader for high school students. “It was about connecting skills across subjects—critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, writing, math and science, all supported by human connection of caring adults—and making learning deeply meaningful, driven by their own interests,” she noted.

The student-favorite project for grades 5-8 was advised by Daniel Jackson, Director of Curriculum and Instruction. “What made this project so powerful is that it started, progressed, and finished organically. Students weren’t just completing tasks, they were discovering themselves,” said Jackson. “They figured out what they were curious about, what they enjoyed, and even what didn’t resonate with them. That freedom to explore made learning real,” he remarked. Each student was asked to play a leadership role in Ecliptis, creating goals for how they would impact it, including these examples:

Terrain Architect: Design land masses and oceans, create unique formation and biomes.

Cultural Curator: Develop a rich history for the four main cultures; showing how they evolved and influenced each other; establish unique traditions, rituals, and festivals that define each

culture's identity; Explore how technological advancements impact societal values and cultural conflicts.

Ecosystem Engineer: Create the plants and animals that live on Ecliptis; determine the roles that they play and how they interact with each other; figure out how these species impact the cultures.

Keeper of Lore: Construct a deep mythological framework; record Ecliptis' major historical events; integrate lore into society and daily life

Student Maliah Taylor chose the role of Ecliptis Oceanographer. "Exploring the Ecliptis Ocean has not only been an extraordinary scientific journey but also a profound personal one. As the Ecliptis oceanographer, I've come to understand that true exploration is not just about charts, measurements, or discoveries, it's about seeking connections, unraveling mysteries, and embracing the unknown," said Taylor. "This experience has made me realize that science is not just about facts—it's about telling the stories of the unseen, the forgotten, and the mystical forces that shape our world. Every new discovery feels like a thread in a greater tapestry, one that connects us not only to this alien planet but to the deeper truth that all life, no matter how different, is worthy of our respect and care."

Other Ecliptis leadership roles included Ecosystem Conservationist; Ethics Commissioner; Cybersecurity Architect; Cultural Curator; Composer of Stories; Ecosystem Engineer, Sustainable Fashion Designer; Psychology Developer; and Sculpture Artist. The leadership roles were chosen by each student, based upon their interests.

Students created and gave live digital presentations on their planetary goals, and how they would execute them. One student, Talein Mohammed, wrote a 75 page novel about Ecliptis, and is currently seeking a publisher.

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The "Build a World" project exemplifies WonderED's mission to reimagine online education through flexible, engaging, and student-led experiences, with human connection of caring adults, that prepare learners for the future, wherever in the universe it takes them. WonderED, a private online school, is considered among the [best online schools](#) for project-based learning, and is available in all US states and throughout the world. WonderED empowers students to take ownership of their learning in a supportive and innovative online environment, with the human connection of caring adults. In addition to project-based learning, WonderED's four other educational elements are: core courses; daily human advisory; book study; and community learning. For additional information, visit [www.WonderEDK12.com](http://www.WonderEDK12.com)

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