



An Atmosphere for Children

Principal Yoji Hatano

Happy New Year's to everyone.

Only 4 months remain in the Heisei Era. What sort of impression does everyone have of the Heisei Era? I am sure there are many people with different ideas; like, it was an era without war, an era of peace, an era of many disasters, or an era of major lifestyle changes brought on by advances in technology. However, if someone were to be persistent enough, they could create an atmosphere that would convince others to think the same way that they do about the Heisei Era.

When I was a homeroom teacher, I experienced difficulty in creating such an atmosphere among people. It was when I was the homeroom teacher for grades 5 and 6. When they were in grades 3 and 4, they would try to skip class and play in the park next to the school. Because of this, the atmosphere, the mood, of the grade was that they were difficult and did not follow the rules.

There were two classes in that grade. Together with the other homeroom teacher and all the students, we tried to foster a common understanding about the importance of becoming upper graders, of participating in activities as a grade and not just a class, and experiencing successfully carrying out tasks together. The children were then able to calm down and participate in class. Their school performance and Sports Day were a success. However, carrying that effort on continuously, on to the next activity or the next step, was no easy task. That atmosphere from before, of being a problem class, still lingered among them. No matter how hard children and adults may try, even a class's mood cannot easily be changed.

Even so, when those children were giving their best, they heard people cheering them on, supporting them, and praising them. With that, their moods began to change and they made large strides in their maturity.

I believe that the atmosphere we adults create has a larger influence on children than we may think. We adults – at home, at school, in our communities – must refrain from creating an atmosphere of negativity, but instead foster an atmosphere of positivity.

January

| Date | Day | Event | After-school |
|------|-----|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Tu | New Year's Day | |
| 2 | W | | |
| 3 | Th | | |
| 4 | F | | |
| 5 | Sa | | |
| 6 | Su | | |
| 7 | M | End of winter holiday | |
| 8 | Tu | Opening ceremony, Safety lesson, 4 periods | x |
| 9 | W | Sekishokai (G1 – 3), School lunch begins | x |
| 10 | Th | Sekishokai (G4 – 6) | x |
| 11 | F | | 3 - 6 |
| 12 | Sa | | |
| 13 | Su | | |
| 14 | M | Coming of Age Day | |
| 15 | Tu | Kakizome Exhibition | x |
| 16 | W | 4 periods | x |
| 17 | Th | Measurements (G6), AED lesson (G6) | 4 - 6 |
| 18 | F | Music Appreciation (G3 – 6), Measurements (G5) | 3 - 6 |
| 19 | Sa | Family play, Japanese culture, Kakizome Exhibition ends | x |
| 20 | Su | | x |
| 21 | M | Emer. evac. drill, Measurements (G4), Committee | 5 - 6 |
| 22 | Tu | Measurements (G3) | 5 - 6 |
| 23 | W | Measurements (G2) | x |
| 24 | Th | Student assembly, Measurements (G1) | 4 - 6 |
| 25 | F | | 3 - 6 |
| 26 | Sa | Eigo Kentei | |
| 27 | Su | | |
| 28 | M | Club (G3 observes) | 3 - 6 |
| 29 | Tu | | 3 - 6 |
| 30 | W | Kanji Kentei (test) (5 th period) | x |
| 31 | Th | Music Assembly | 4 - 6 |

January Goals

Educational Counselor Kazuhiro Kawai

Let's be punctual!

Heisei 31, the final year of the Heisei Era, has begun. As the winter holiday ends and school begins, the children will make sure they leave their homes early enough to arrive at school on time. They will also be aware of when classes start and have a productive school life.

Sekishokai – Kakizome Exhibition

Japanese Department Yumi Mega

On January 9th (Wed) the *sekishokai* for grades 1, 2, and 3 will commence, and on January 10th (Thur) it will be held for grades 4, 5, and 6. The meaning of “*sekisho*” is “a gathering where one must write impromptu characters.” It also means, “In the Edo period a master had disciples and others gather for a calligraphy exhibition.” From then on many elementary schools “gather and conduct *kakizome* exhibitions” as “*seikishokai*.”

1st and 2nd graders will do *kakizome* with pencils writing in their classrooms. 3rd grade and older will gather in the gym and work on brush writing. All grades will do their best to demonstrate their accomplishments from the end of the 2nd term and during winter vacation in their writing. Their writings will be displayed in the “*Kakizome Exhibition*,” so please take a look when attending the parent-teacher meeting.

★*Kakizome Exhibition*

Time: Jan 15 (Tue)~19 (Sat)

Place: G1~5... In front of each classroom

G6 ... In front of each classroom in Annex



Grade 4 Memory Tanka (Poems)

4-1 Shuichi Yamasaki

4-2 Asuka Takahashi

During Japanese class and Japanese culture time, 4th graders have become familiar with the rhythm of *tankas*. Through various events they have made goals and grown, and this grade's solidarity has improved. We will now introduce the grade 4 memories *tankas*.

- They really enjoyed dancing for the Sports Day's excellent bubbly dance. (Sports Day)
- We learned the importance of 50 years left for landfill, so let's separate our garbage and cut our waste. (Social Studies Experience)
- At first we argued, but we discussed it and the balloon ballet went well. (Higashimachi Festival)
- When riding the boat, every one rocked it, stretched their legs, and in the end some of us fell in. (Excursion, Athletic Course)
- We learned about constellations and space, I want to go on a trip to outer space (Planetarium Field Trip)
- The gym was overflowing with people and my heart was pounding more than I expected. (Music Festival)

I Love School Lunch ♪

School Nutritionist Ayako Koide

Delicious smells waft through the halls, causing waves of grumbling stomachs. Curious faces peer into the kitchen from the schoolyard, many Higashimachi students love school lunch.

In a single year, we have 195 school lunches. We want to design the school menu so that it makes students excited about school lunch, gets them interested in their diet, and makes them think of meals as more than just a time to take in nutrition. I think “school lunch” should be another opportunity for students to learn many new things.

This year also every month we will deliver a variety of cuisines from across Japan, around the world, and even home-made bread from our very own ovens. All this serves to create school lunches with an abundance of flavors and a unique atmosphere.

Also, with the International Program at our school, there are students from many countries all sitting at the same dining table. Now that “Japanese food” has become a world heritage, in order to teach students about Japanese food culture, it is necessary to learn how to serve and arrange dishes, how to use chopsticks, and how to follow the correct manners during mealtimes. Please take a moment to review these lessons at home with your children during their meals.

The Smoke House

Smoke House Leader Hiroto Sasaki

There will be an emergency evacuation drill for a fire on January 21st (M). Afterwards, grades 2, 4, and 6 will participate in a “smoke house” simulation provided by the Azabu Fire Department. The “smoke house” is a tent filled with harmless smoke for children to experience what it is like to be immersed in blinding smoke and practice how to evacuate from a smoky area during a disaster.

Inside the tent, the smoke is so white that even walking a short distance takes time. Every year students tell us that they could not even see right in front of them and that they were scared to keep walking.

During a fire, you cannot check your surroundings. Because of that, we have to be careful of not only the flames but the smoke as well. It is said that smoke causes a significant amount of injuries during fires. From this quasi-smoke experience, we hope that the children will realize the importance of preparation and evacuation drills.

In order to move quickly and avoid being burned by smoke, and since we cannot practice every emergency evacuation drill like this, this experience will be a valuable lesson about the dangers of smoke.

UNICEF Donations

This year the students raised **¥66,627** in donations. Thank you for your support.