



Stepping Up In April

Principal Yoji Hatano

Happy New Year to everyone. This year is the year of the mouse. The year of the mouse is the first year of the Chinese zodiac, it is supposed to be a year of new beginnings and the return of the cycle of good fortune. Because of the support of our readers, this issue of the school newsletter is the 600th issue and enters a new cycle. The 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games will be held in August. I was only 3 years old when the previous Olympics were held in Tokyo in 1964, I lived rather close to the National Stadium, and I vividly remember watching from my window as the Blue Impulse jets wrote the 5 rings of the Olympics in the sky. I look forward to seeing what memories the children will make at this year's Tokyo Olympic Games. Also, starting in April this year, something new will come to the world of Japanese education. The educational curriculum for Japan's public schools, generally revised every ten years, will take effect in April this year. In accordance with these revisions, criteria for the educational evaluation portion of the reports cards will also be revised.

The third term has begun. This is the shortest term with only 55 school days (including Graduation Day), but it is an important time to wrap up the current academic year and prepare for the next one. The following are ways for each grade to "step up" to the next year.

◆Grade 6 - You will look back on your 6 years at elementary school and prepare for junior high school. Also, you will hand over all leadership for clubs, committees, and family activities to the 5th graders.

◆Grade 5 - From April you will take over as 6th graders and become the face of Higashimachi. We will help you prepare to carry on Higashimachi's traditions and further your development.

◆Grade 4 - As you begin committee activities, you will be asked to think and work for the benefit of the entire school. You will become more aware of your roles as upper graders. From April, you will begin home economics class.

◆Grade 3 - You are reaching the halfway point of your time in elementary school. More independence and responsibility in your studies will be demanded from you. You will start club activities, and it will become necessary to broaden your outlook and think about others.

◆Grade 2 - You will step up from the lower grades to the middle grades. From April, life studies classes will change to science and social studies. You will need to study more independently than before. Also, you will have to study the most amount of kanji so far.

◆Grade 1 - In April, it will be your turn to take care of the new first graders. You will have to do more things on your own, including studying and other activities. You will have twice as many kanji to study than grade 1.

With support from the parents, guardians, and members of the community, the faculty hopes to make this year a year ripe with accomplishments for the children. We greatly appreciate your cooperation and support.

January

Date	Day	Event	After-school
1	W		
2	Th		
3	F		
4	Sa		
5	Su		
6	M		
7	Tu	Winter Holiday ends	
8	W	Opening Ceremony, Safety lesson	x
9	Th	<i>Sekishokai</i> (G1, 2, 4), School lunch begins	3 - 6
10	F	<i>Sekishokai</i> (G3, 5, 6)	4 - 6
11	Sa		
12	Su		
13	M		
14	Tu		3 - 6
15	W	PE Assembly (G1, 6)	x
16	Th	PE Assembly (G3, 5)	3 - 6
17	F	PE Assembly (G2, 4), <i>Kanji Kentei</i> (5 th pr.), Measurements (G5)	x
18	Sa	Saturday School, Family <i>Asobi</i> , Japanese Culture	x
19	Su		
20	M	Kakizome Exhibition begins, Committee, Measurements (G4)	5 - 6
21	Tu	Evac. Drill., Measurements (G3)	3 - 6
22	W	Measurements (G2)	x
23	Th	Student assembly, Measurements (G1)	3 - 6
24	F	Kakizome Exhibition ends	4 - 6
25	Sa		
26	Su		
27	M	Club (G3 observes)	4 - 6
28	Tu	Visit from Manabinomori and Ai Preschool (G1)	3 - 6
29	W		x
30	Th	Music assembly, Minato City and Suntory Hall's "Enjoy Music Project" (G4)	3 - 6
31	F		4 - 6

Notices

○January's Evacuation Drill

On the 21st (Tues), the students will practice evacuating in the event of a fire from the lunch room that prevents the students from using their usual evacuation route.

○Human Rights Day

January's Human Rights Day is the 23rd (Thurs.). The lunch that day will be paella and Spanish omelet. Enjoy!

○Open Playground

January's open playground is as follows.

18th (Sat) 13:00 - 16:00
 25th (Sat) 10:00 - 12:00
 13:00 - 16:00

○Charity Donations

Thank you for your participation in the charity drive. This year we collected ¥46,973. This money will be sent to Japan Red Cross to support the victims of Hurricane Hagibis (2019 Typhoon No. 19).

○Changes in Faculty

Ms. Reina Mizutani, who has been assisting the second grade, will be on maternity leave from February 1st (Sat).

Student teacher Yazawa Masahiro has joined grade 5 on Wednesdays as a school volunteer, starting December 11th (Wed).

January's Goal

Motoki Takahashi
Educational Counsellor

“Let's be punctual!”

At last we will start a new year in the Reiwa Era. To help the children transition back to school, we want them to make sure they can leave their homes and arrive at school on time. The students will be able to start class on time and actively participate in their class activities.



One for All and All for One

4-1 Erika Kobayashi
4-2 Asako Kobayashi
4-3 Reo Okajima

Grade 4 is the largest grade at Higashimachi with 101 students this term. By considering this as their strong point, we have been doing our best to make “cooperation” our goal since April. The first attempt was for Sports Day. Their slogan was “101 people, let’s go for a sparkling Sports Day!!!” (unofficial translation), and they danced to “*Kimi no Ume ha Boku no Ume*” in matching light-blue t-shirts. It was very special seeing them practice during their free time as well as during PE time and feel the sense of accomplishment from dancing their best. Then, the moment their sense of cooperation solidified was for the School Performance. Like the phrase, “One for all and all for one,” the 4th graders practiced doing their duties and contributing their skills for the better of the group. The 4th graders discussed delivering their lines in a loud voice with feeling, using gestures, and singing their songs well. For the sake of the class, they waited quietly backstage and memorized their classmates’ lines in case they have to stand in for any absentees. Because of everyone’s effort, the grade 4 performance was a huge success. Audience members smiled and praised the performance, calling it exciting and interesting. We will do our best to utilize this experience for their International Assembly performance.

Sekishokai and Kakizome

Risa Nojima

Sekishokai and Kakizome Coordinator

Sekishokai will be held on Thursday, January 9th for grades 1, 2, and 4, and on Friday the 10th for grades 3, 5, and 6. The term “*sekisho*” refers to gathering together and doing an impromptu calligraphy session as well as the practice of calligraphy masters in the Edo Period showcasing the disciples’ works to other people. Because of that, many elementary schools host a *sekishokai* event as an event for doing *kakizome* together in order to have a *kakizome*.

Grades 1 and 2 will do their *kakizome* in the classroom with pencils, while grades 3 and above will gather in the gym and participate in their own *kakizome*. All students in all grades will do their best to show the results of their practice over the winter holiday.

Their work will be displayed at the *Kakizome* Exhibition. This year there will be no events like open school or parent-teacher conferences during the exhibition, but we invite parents and guardians to visit the school and observe the children’s works.

★Kakizome Exhibition★

Dates: Jan. 20th (Tues) – 24th (Fri)

Place: Grades 1 – 5 ... In the hallways outside the classroom

Grade 6 ... Outside the Art Room and Home Economics Room



Educational Counselling

Yuka Tamura
Counsellor

This year, the school counsellors are Counsellor Arai on Tuesdays and myself, Counsellor Tamura, on Thursdays. Students visit us during recess time or after school, by themselves or with a friend, to talk about various things like trouble with friends, matters at home, or issues about their lessons.

Every year in Minato City elementary schools, individual interviews with 4th and 5th graders are held from May to July. Perhaps it is because they have experienced talking with someone who will listen to them, but, the students are very comfortable talking with the counsellors. There are students who can return to their classroom just by having someone listen to them. There are other students who finally discover a clue as to how to solve their issues after visiting and talking several times. Everyone has their own way of dealing with troubles.

We do our best in our interviews to help think of solutions while getting in touch with our feelings. Supporting the children's growth and maturity, understanding their feelings, and helping them smile everyday makes this job truly worth the effort.

We also counsel parents and guardians. We invite everyone to come and talk with us about any concerns you may have about your child's behavior at school or at home. Before visiting, please contact your child's homeroom teacher, Nurse Shimozato, or the Vice Principal.

ESC (English Support Course)

Miyoko Furukawa
EST

The ESC is a support course that helps foreign students study in English. In the English Support Course (ESC), English-speaking students study math and language arts in separate rooms, using English; other subjects are studied with the Japanese students in the classroom.

The goal of the International Studies Program is to offer an opportunity for students to learn from each other and improve each other, and there is plenty of time and activities for the Japanese students to learn and use English communication. The Sports Day, School Performance, and the morning assembly are conducted in both English and Japanese. Also, the lunch broadcast is done in English and Japanese by the student committee members. Every day for the morning meeting, the class leaders say, "Stand up. Let's start the morning meeting. Next, the health check. Next, today's word," in English. The class leader changes each day, so every student has a chance to lead the class in English. "Today's Word" allows students to learn vocabulary taken from calendar. Higashimachi students are accepting of foreign students, so they feel comfortable and enjoy their time at school. Because of the language barrier, the foreign children tend to play exclusively amongst themselves, so I hope to teach them to play together.