



**From Accepting Diversification to a World Without Bullying**

Principal Yōji Hatano

These spring-like days, as cold and warm days alternate and gradually become warmer, we welcome the final month of the 2016-17 academic year.

The 6<sup>th</sup> graders graduating this month entered the 2011 Entrance Ceremony with only 15 members. Now they are welcoming the day they can leave the nest with their 38 friends. As of now, from the increase in student numbers, including those students who only attended Higashimachi for a short while, they have been able to study with many more classmates. The 6<sup>th</sup> graders this year readily accepted our new students, whether they are quiet transfer students or lively new students, and treated them as if they had been at Higashimachi the whole time. Because of that, the new students could also act as if they belonged in their new class. That is the kind of environment I want all current grades from 1 to 5 to inherit.

At Higashimachi, for the past two years, 6<sup>th</sup> graders work on a song for graduation. This year's song is called "Birdfly," and the lyrics from one verse are as you see below:

♪ *Whenever I hummed a song on my own  
You always hummed along beside me  
Then I noticed many voices singing  
Before I realized it, everyone was singing  
That was a joyous time* ♪ [unofficial translation]

This song's imagery captures perfectly the 6<sup>th</sup> graders' ability to accept all types of friends into their classroom.

By nature, people are individually different. Bullying stems from not recognizing or accepting those differences. Therefore, accepting diversity is indispensable to eradicating bullying.

On March 2<sup>nd</sup> (Th), grades 1 to 5 will put their hearts into the Grade 6 Farewell Assembly. On that day, "Birdfly" will debut. At the graduation ceremony on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, the 5<sup>th</sup> graders will attend as representatives of the student body. I hope they will experience firsthand the good qualities of these 6<sup>th</sup> graders who can accept diversity so well.

Lastly, thank you for your cooperation and understanding throughout the past year.

On Thursday, February 23, at 8:40 pm, our beloved Choco passed away. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, during 5<sup>th</sup> period, a memorial service was held with the entire student body.

I hope Choco will always keep watch over us from heaven.

**March**

Date	Day	Events	After-school
1	W	Safety Lesson, 4-pr. class, Club Presentations (Illustration, Handmade, Table Tennis)	X
2	Th	Club Presentation (PC, Science, Badminton), G6 Farewell Assembly	4 – 6
3	F		2 – 6
4	Sa	Japanese Culture, PTA Monthly Committee Meeting, half way to adult ceremony(G4), About Me presentation(G2)	X
5	Su		
6	M	Parent-Teacher Conference (G4,5,6)	X
7	Tu	Speech Assembly (G1, 4), Parent-Teacher Conference (G1,2,3)	X
8	W	G6 Appreciation Party	X
9	Th	Student Assembly, Area Cleaning (G1,2,3)	4 – 6
10	F	Speech Assembly (G2,5) Emergency Evacuation Drill	2 – 6
11	Sa		
12	Su		
13	M	Club	4 – 6
14	Tu	Speech Assembly (G3,6)	3 – 6
15	W		X
16	Th	Music Assembly	4 – 6
17	F		2 – 6
18	Sa	Japanese Culture(only G3)	X
19	Su		
20	M	Vernal Equinox	
21	Tu	Visit from Library Volunteers	3 – 6
22	W	Graduation Ceremony Rehearsal, School Lunch Ends, Cleaning	X
23	Th	Graduation Ceremony	X
24	F	Closing Ceremony	X
25	Sa		
26	Su		
27	M	Spring Vacation Begins	
28	Tu		
29	W		
30	Th		
31	F		

**March's Goals**

Life Counselor Hiroki Mine

**Reflect on the Year**

"The greatest happiness is feeling that you are a better person at the end of the year than you were at the beginning of the year." - Tolstoy

One month remains in this school year. Feeling one's own growth, for kids, and even for adults, is a joyous thing. Rather than comparing yourself to others, is it not more important to compare yourself to who you were before and think about how you have grown up? If one does not look back carefully on the past year, and instead thinks of it in passing, then their next goals will have nothing to do with growing up. For the sake of next year's goals, let's reflect carefully on the past year.