



Learning Through the School Performance

Principal Yoji Hatano

We have reached the halfway point of the second term, and the students are preparing for the school performances in November. At Higashimachi Elementary, each grade puts on special performances and plays, and this year has no shortage of either. This year will be a first for the 1st and 2nd grades, and the last for the 5th and 6th grades at Higashimachi Elementary. I hope this to be a memorable time for all grades.

My own memory from school performances is of a movie we made called "For a Few Dollars More." Movies back then were shown on a 16 mm projector (with no sound) and then matched with vocals that were recorded on a tape recorder. We thought the vocals did not match the movie, and sure enough, on the day of the performance there were people who could not understand the story. I still remember the night before the shoot when I was trying all night to memorize my lines after the roles had changed. Even so, it is a very precious childhood memory.

School performances are a combination of education and the arts. The Japanese term for school play, *gakugeikai*, is an amalgamation of the words "learning" and "art," (*gakumon* and *geijitsu*, respectively), and is an opportunity for students to express the fruits of their studies via music and performance. The children are taught to focus on the following three points:

- ① Cooperate to create something together
- ② Practice with all your heart and enjoy role playing
- ③ Obey the rules and quietly watch.

By "role playing" I hope all students will try their best in the following:

- Understand the story and characters
- To speak in a loud and clear voice
- Behave appropriately.

Furthermore, we are leading the lower, middle, and upper classmen to exercise these skills:

- [Lower] • Minding your places
- [Middle] • Effective Pausing
- [Upper] • Overlapping dialog
- Thinking beyond the script

As we move ahead towards the school performances, I hope this will be a chance for us to encourage the children to work towards completing a goal while cooperating with their peers and put on a performance on their own.

November

Date	Day	Event	After-school
1	W	Safety lesson, 4-pr. day, Teacher development class (3-1, pr. 5)	X
2	Th	Health check for new G1, 4-pr. day	X
3	F	Culture Day	
4	Sa		
5	Su		
6	M	Committee, Soc. Stud. Trip (G6)	4 – 6
7	Tu	PTA Story time	3 – 6
8	W	4-pr. day	X
9	Th		4 – 6
10	F	4-pr. day, Roppongi Academy teacher development	X
11	Sa	Japanese culture, PTA Standing Committee	X
12	Su	School Opening Anniversary	
13	M	Club, Emerg. evac. drill	4 – 6
14	Tu	School Anniversary (w/assembly)	3 – 6
15	W		X
16	Th	Music assembly	4 – 6
17	F	School Performance (for students)	2 – 6
18	Sa	School Performance (for parents and guardians)	X
19	Su		
20	M	School Evaluation Committee	4 – 6
21	Tu		3 – 6
22	W	Seeing dog caravan (G4), Individual parent-teacher meeting (IPTM) ①	X
23	Th	Labor Thanksgiving Day	
24	F	IPTM ②	X
25	Sa		
26	Su		
27	M	IPTM ③	X
28	Tu	Music Appreciation Class (G5) IPTM ④	X
29	W	Speech Assembly ②	X
30	Th	Speech Assembly ③, IPTM ⑤	X

November's Goal

Educational Guidance Counsellor Hiroki Mine

Let's Join Efforts and Carry Things Out to the End

Psychologist Angela Lee Duckworth says in her book that one characteristic of success is "grit," which is passion and perseverance to accomplish long term goals. But, how do we learn "grit?"

① Gain self-confidence with simple accomplishments. Self-confidence can be gained by persevering repeatedly in the small tasks around you. ② Discover its appeal. You can accomplish your tasks if you understand what makes them interesting: its true nature, its history, its purpose. ③ Set your goals. Your motivation will change when you set clear goals. Picturing yourself achieving your goals will increase your motivation.

By getting over small difficulties every day and focusing on your goal, you can discover the appeal of your tasks. Soon you will find interest in all tasks and achieve them with little effort. Perhaps this is the key to success.