



Welcoming 2016

♪ Sekai-wa Hitotsu ♪

Principal Yōji Hatano

I wish a happy new year to you and yours.

I hope you had a pleasant winter vacation and the children enjoyed many extraordinary experiences.

This year is the Year of the Monkey, which is *saru* in Japanese. Interestingly, *saru* as a verb also means to leave or go away. So, it is said that this year "the monkey goes away" (*Saru ga saru*), meaning that bad things will go away, or illnesses will go away. Therefore, the year of the monkey is considered a year of happiness and good fortune. With the support of parents and community members, all the faculty members are working together so that the children too at Higashimachi will be visited by happiness and good fortune. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

On November 4 (Fri), 20 teachers and faculty members from Korean elementary schools visited Higashimachi. The purpose was to promote mutual understanding and interest between Korea and Japan while visiting Japanese schools and observing the classrooms.

The 6th graders were absent that day because of their Nikko Excursion (more about this is mentioned on the back side of this newsletter), but the fifth graders' help and cooperation was something to be seen. After first welcoming the visitors in the entrance, waving small Korean and Japanese flags, they held a welcoming ceremony in the gym with grades 1 to 5. The official welcome from two 5th grade class representatives, given in both Korean and Japanese, impressed the Korean teachers too. For the gift exchange, we received from the Korean faculty members two lacquered plates decorated with the symbol for Korea. They have been placed in the entrance for the next time you visit the school. Our visitors received from us a *furoshiki* commemorating the 100-year anniversary of the school's opening.

What impressed me even more about that day was the student body singing "It's a Small World." The first verse was in Japanese and the second verse was in English, but it warmed my heart to see all of the children singing the lyric "*sekai-wa hitotsu*" ("The world is one). It gave me a moment to think, "I hope, no, I know these children will grow up to understand and get along with anyone no matter what country they are from."

Touched by the children's performance, I expressed to our visitors my sincerest wish that the children they teach in Korea and the children here at Higashimachi will become a bridge connecting our two nations.

January

date	day	Event	after school
1	F	New Year's	
2	Sa		
3	Su		
4	M		
5	Tu		
6	W		
7	Th	End of Winter Vacation	
8	F	Opening Ceremony, Cleaning, School Lunch, 4-pr. day	x
9	Sa		
10	Su		
11	M	Coming of Age Day	
12	Tu	Sekisho, Safety Lesson	3
13	W	4-pr. day	x
14	Th	Music Assembly, Parent-Teacher Meeting (gr. 123), <i>Kakizome</i> (till 1/18)	4
15	F	Evacuation Drill (no announcement)	5
16	Sa	Japanese Culture	x
17	Su		
18	M	Parent-Teacher Meeting (gr. 456), End <i>Kakizome</i>	6
19	Tu	Local History Museum Field Trip (gr. 3)	3
20	W	Measurements (gr. 36), AED Training (gr. 6)	x
21	Th	Student Assembly, Measurements (gr. 25)	4
22	F	Measurements (gr. 14), Tax Class (gr. 6)	5
23	Sa	Student Eiken and Eiken (sponsored by the PTA)	
24	Su		
25	M	Committee	6
26	Tu		3
27	W	International Assembly (pr. 1-2)	x
28	Th	P.E. Assembly	4
29	F		2
30	Sa		
31	Su		



January's Goals

School Guidance, Hiroki Mine

Greet the People You Meet

A new year has begun. Let's welcome the new year with sincere greetings.

Sekishokai

Head of Sekishokai Naoko Kashima

In Japan, there has been a long tradition in the imperial court of writing "the first calligraphy of the new year" since times of antiquity. Early in the morning on the first day of the New Year, water would be drawn and mixed with ink. The calligrapher would then sit facing a favorable direction and write a message of celebration or poetry.

Here at Higashimachi, we follow that tradition with our *Sekishokai* in January. This year, it will be held on Tuesday, January 12th. The 1st and 2nd graders will do the assignment in their classroom using pens and pencils. 3rd grade and above will be in the gym and use their calligraphy brushes.

At our school, we have students from many different countries, and naturally there are many that have no experience with this kind of calligraphy. This is a chance to experience traditional Japanese culture and to integrate the skills acquired during their regular calligraphy practice to create something unique to them. We hope that everyone will be able to observe each other's works and learn from them, while also finding confidence in their own works as well. This will help to set the tone for the year to come. All of the works will be displayed in the classrooms and hallways. At the time of the next parent-teacher meeting, we hope you will have a chance to observe what the students have made.

◆ **Calligraphy Display January 14th (Thurs)~ January 22nd (Fri)**

Nikko Excursion

6th Grade Teacher Miyuki Kadano

Earlier this year in June the planned excursion to Hakone was postponed due to volcanic activity, and instead, the 6th grade students visited Nikko from Tuesday, December 2nd.

Nikko in December was undeniably cold, but despite that, the students visited Lake Chuzenji, Kegon Falls, Mount Ashio, and had a chance to observe where *yuba-tofu* is made.

Among the many places visited and things observed, *Toshōgu*, a world heritage site, left the strongest impressions on the minds of the students. Looking at the *Nemurineko* from many angles, listening to the call of the *Nakiryū*, these experiences and others gave the students a sense of the long and storied history of the place.

Graduation is almost here. Memories of their trip to Nikko will be held in their hearts day after day.



Kanji Kentei

Head of Japanese Studies Ayana Kuroe

Every year here at Higashimachi, the students have a chance to take the *Kanji Kentei* (kanji test) at no extra charge.

As the day of the test approaches, students are preparing by choosing the test that is most appropriate to their own ability level and practicing the kanji that will appear on the exam. Last year, a number of students were honored with the "Perfect Score Award" and the school celebrated their accomplishments altogether.

To help students prepare for and feel confident about passing the test, we ask that you support your children in practicing the necessary *kanji* regularly at home.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Test Date: Friday February 5th, 2016 5th period
Levels 10~8 40 minutes
Levels 7~Semi-2 60 minutes
Location: Higashimachi Elementary School
(in classrooms) *ESC: separate room
Charge: Paid for by the Board of Education

Good Listening

Head of Music Keiichi Hatanaka

With the beginning of the 3rd term, the time to reflect upon and wrap up the year has arrived.

"Good listening" is an important point that has been emphasized for the students in their music classes throughout the year. "Before you can sing and play music well, first you must become a good listener" is their most important lesson.

It is said that the root of the word *manabu* (to learn) comes from *maneru* (to mimic). By observing and paying close attention to those who excel at something, we can also positively incorporate the good things that we see and find the path to improvement. This is especially true when studying a practical skill like music.

We hope to impress upon the students that it is very important to focus and pay close attention not only when they are performing, but also when others are performing, so that they can learn from one another and improve their skills. This will be the focus of instruction for the remaining three months of the music lessons.