



The Importance of Evacuation Drills

Principal Yuichi Hashimoto

The Noto Peninsula earthquake struck early in the New Year, and as the situation became clearer, the damage was beyond imagination. With the land upheaved, roads cut off, and the Self-Defense Forces and volunteers unable to enter some areas, elementary schools in the affected areas did not open until late January. Surely when school lunch resumed service the students were happy to be able to eat their favorite meals again.

The day after the earthquake, there was also a fire accident at Haneda Airport. It is very fortunate that all the passengers on the plane were able to evacuate.

I would like to express my condolences to those who lost their lives and offer my heartfelt prayers for their departed souls. I would also like to express my sincere wishes for the earliest possible restoration of the area.

At the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, I was vice principal of an elementary school in Shibuya City. I remember spending the night at the school, taking care of priorities like sheltering people and reporting the situation to different agencies, all while looking after the children evacuated to the schoolyard terrified to see the school building literally shaking during the aftershocks.

These earthquakes, both past and present, remind us of the importance of monthly evacuation drills at the school. During the drills, we prepare for earthquakes, fires, disasters, suspicious persons, J-alerts, and any other situations that may occur at the school. In this context, with the cooperation of the Higashimachi Elementary School District Disaster Prevention Council, we also learn about disaster mitigation and prevention by recreating an evacuation shelter in the gymnasium. Once again, we will continue to conduct drills with a sense of urgency so that all students and faculty members can evacuate the school promptly and safely.

February's Goal
"Beat the cold and keep exercising!"

Date	Day	Events	After-school
1	Th	Student assembly	—
2	F		—
3	Sa	Saturday school, Japanese Culture (G5)	—
4	Su		—
5	M	Morning assembly, Safety lessons, Clubs (G3 observing, 6 periods)	—
6	Tu		—
7	W	4 periods, UNICEF drive ①	—
8	Th	Music Assembly, UNICEF drive ②, New G1 Parent-Teacher Conf. (G1/2 - 4 periods)	—
9	F	4 periods, UNICEF drive ③	—
10	Sa	Open Schoolyard	—
11	Su	National Foundation Day	—
12	M	National Foundation Day observed	—
13	Tu	Social studies field trip (G5)	—
14	W	5 periods, Measurements (G6), Tokyo Metro. Art Exhibition begins	—
15	Th	International Assembly rehearsal	—
16	F	International Assembly	—
17	Sa	Open Schoolyard	—
18	Su	Tokyo Metro. Art Exhibition ends	—
19	M	Morning assembly, Committees, Lesson from Court Judges (G6)	—
20	Tu	Family Asobi	G5/6
21	W	4 periods	—
22	Th	Student assembly, Chaoyang Exhibition begins, Local history museum field trip (G3)	—
23	F	Emperor's Birthday	—
24	Sa		—
25	Su		—
26	M	Morning assembly	—
27	Tu	Student assembly	—
28	W	5 periods	—
29	Th	Student assembly, Board of Trustees meeting	—

This month's evacuation drill will be unannounced.

Notices

International Assembly

Individual classes will perform on Friday, February 16. There will not be special seating for parents and guardians, but families are welcome to come watch. Please allow families of the students performing to stand at the front of the viewing area.

Human Rights Day

This month's Human Rights day is Thursday, February 29. The lunch for that day will be handmade meat buns from China.

Club Activities

Head of Club Activities

Ten clubs have been established this year: art, sports, home economics, science, badminton, table tennis, music, indoor games, computers, and handicrafts.

The club activities are designed to nurture the students' ability to work independently and practically, and are offered to students in grades 4 and above. They are designed to bring together students from different classes and grades who share the same interests.

At the beginning of the school year, they make a year-long plan and periodically discuss what and how they want to do. The teachers in charge of each club are there to offer support when needed.

Grade 3 students have begun to visit clubs. We hope that they will learn about the each club's activities and decide which club they would like to join for the following academic year.

We hope that the club activities will give the children the opportunity to broaden their perspectives and increase their knowledge.

Grade 3

Grade 3 Teachers

Grade 3 is now able to follow school rules, think about other people's feelings, and exchange ideas and opinions with their classmates.

In integrated studies, they are working on making community safety maps. They surveyed parks and school routes to identify dangerous places that are hard to see or easy to access. On the day of the survey, the students listened to instructions and followed the rules. We could also see students discussing amongst themselves as they continued their observation.

After the fieldwork, the students discussed their observations and the pictures they took and summarized their findings in a presentation. When using their tablets, they are able to utilize what they learned in typing lessons to further their learning.



Japanese Culture

Head of Japanese Cultural Activities

The promotion of Japanese cultural understanding at school is conducted within the framework of the International Studies Program. The International Studies Program includes international studies classes, international understanding education, cross-cultural understanding education, as well as support for children of foreign nationalities, and is implemented in conjunction with these programs.

Japanese culture lessons include *shado* (tea ceremony), *taiko* drumming, and *shogi* (Japanese chess) played by local guest teachers, as well as *karuta*, *kendama*, *koma*, *hyakunin isshu*, calligraphy, and other activities taught by homeroom teachers.

This year, guest teachers from the local community taught classes to 5th and 6th graders. *Shado* was taught by Otsuka Sensei and Kaneko Sensei. *Taiko* was taught by Noda Sensei and Komine Sensei. *Shogi* was taught by Sugahara Sensei and Ueyama Sensei.

The students enjoy participating in the cultural events.