



### Nurturing Our Children's "Passions" and "Strengths" in Autumn

Principal Tetsuro Kawahara

When you think of "the season of \_\_\_\_," what comes to mind? In Japan, autumn is often associated with reading, sports, the arts, and food. The mild, pleasant weather makes autumn an ideal season for enjoying a wide range of activities, which is why it is often described in these ways.

At Higashimachi, we are taking part in "Higashimachi 30," an initiative that encourages students to read 30 recommended books from our school library. Some children already love reading, while others may not have had many opportunities to enjoy books until now. However, encountering a single book can sometimes open the door to a whole new world. As children become absorbed in stories and discover things they did not know before, they develop a desire to "read more" and "learn more." Reading not only broadens children's knowledge, but also gives each child an important opportunity to explore their interests and discover things they truly enjoy.

October will also bring our Sports Festival. As children practice their events and performances, they learn not only physical skills and fitness, but also the importance of working together with their classmates. Some children excel at sports, while others are good at encouraging those around them. Some demonstrate leadership, while others quietly support their teammates behind the scenes. Each child has different strengths and plays a different role, but when everyone works together toward a common goal, they can achieve something truly powerful. We hope that the Sports Festival will be an opportunity for children to strengthen their bonds with their classmates and experience their own personal growth.

As discussions continue regarding the next revision of Japan's national Course of Study, increasing importance is being placed on the idea of "nurturing what children love and developing what they are good at." In a rapidly changing society, children need to develop the ability to take the initiative in pursuing things that interest them and, through those experiences, further develop their strengths. Becoming deeply engaged in something they enjoy can help children develop the ability to continue learning independently. Developing their strengths can build confidence and a willingness to take on new challenges.

Whether it is the challenge of reading new books or participating in the Sports Festival, at the heart of these activities is our commitment to nurturing each child's "passions" and "strengths." We hope that this fruitful autumn will be a season in which our children discover new possibilities and experience growth in their own unique ways. All of us at school will continue working together to support them. We also hope that families will join us in watching over and encouraging your children, recognizing their efforts and celebrating even their small steps of growth.

| Date | Day | Events                                                                                                   |
|------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Th  | Tokyo Citizens' Day                                                                                      |
| 2    | F   | Special Sports Festival schedule begins<br>Safety lesson, Evacuation drill⑥                              |
| 3    | Sa  | Azabu Nursery School Sports Day                                                                          |
| 4    | Su  |                                                                                                          |
| 5    | M   | Committees⑥                                                                                              |
| 6    | Tu  |                                                                                                          |
| 7    | W   | B schedule 5 periods<br>Inter-city Sports Day (G6)                                                       |
| 8    | Th  |                                                                                                          |
| 9    | F   | Report cards distributed, Sports Festival<br>committee activities① (G6), Legal<br>Education Program (G6) |
| 10   | Sa  | Minato Citizens' Festival                                                                                |
| 11   | Su  | Minato Citizens' Festival                                                                                |
| 12   | M   | Sports Day (national holiday),<br>Minato Citizens' Sports and<br>Athletics Festival                      |
| 13   | Tu  |                                                                                                          |
| 14   | W   | B schedule 4 periods                                                                                     |
| 15   | Th  |                                                                                                          |
| 16   | F   | Class 6-1 TEFLEA Research Lesson (5 <sup>th</sup><br>period) and Feedback (6 <sup>th</sup> period)       |
| 17   | Sa  |                                                                                                          |
| 18   | Su  |                                                                                                          |
| 19   | M   | Morning Assembly                                                                                         |
| 20   | Tu  | Sports Festival school-wide practice                                                                     |
| 21   | W   | B schedule 5 periods, Sports Festival<br>school-wide practice substitute day                             |
| 22   | Th  |                                                                                                          |
| 23   | F   | Sports Festival committee activities②<br>(G6, 5 <sup>th</sup> period), Sports Festival prep<br>day       |
| 24   | Sa  | Saturday Classes③<br>Sports Festival                                                                     |
| 25   | Su  |                                                                                                          |
| 26   | M   | Substitute day off                                                                                       |
| 27   | Tu  |                                                                                                          |
| 28   | W   | B schedule 5 periods                                                                                     |
| 29   | Th  | Medical check for new G1 students                                                                        |
| 30   | F   | Assembly③, Clubs⑤                                                                                        |
| 31   | Sa  |                                                                                                          |

※Please check your grade newsletters for dismissal times. Grade newsletters are distributed via *Sughool*.

※Please see the Higashimachi website for the school newsletter, and lunch menu. If you need a paper copy of the newsletter, please let your child's homeroom teacher know.

**October's Goal**  
**Let's work together until the end.**

### **\*Evacuation Drill\***

In October there will be an evacuation drill to practice what to do in the event of an earthquake during recess and how to respond to aftershocks.

### **\*Sports Festival\***

Our Sports Festival will be held on Saturday, October 24. For important information and precautions, please read the letter for parents regarding the Sports Festival that was distributed recently. Parents and guardians attending the event will need to wear a name tag around their neck and the wristband in their child's grade color that was distributed recently. We hope this will be a memorable day when you can see how much your children have grown through activities such as the short-distance races, where they challenge themselves to do their best, and the group performances, where they work together to create something as a team. We look forward to seeing you there.

Whether the Sports Festival will be held as scheduled will be announced on the morning of the event through *Sughool* and the school website. Monday, October 26 will be a substitute day off for all students in connection with the Sports Festival. If the event needs to be postponed due to rain, we will provide details about the new date and schedule as soon as they have been decided.

### **\*Human Rights Day\***

This month's Human Rights Day is Tuesday, October 20. Lunch for that day will be fish and chips from England.

### **\*Open Schoolyard for October\***

October 31 (Sat) 12:00-15:00

### **Committee Activities**

#### **Special Activities**

This year, our student committees are made up of seven groups: Health, Broadcasting, Environment, Assemblies, Library, School Bulletin Board, and Steering Committee.

During the monthly committee activity sessions, students reflect on their activities and discuss ways to make their work even more meaningful and effective. It is wonderful to see them learning how to reach compromises and work together, even when their opinions differ.

As part of their committee activities, students also collect slogan ideas from all classes for events such as the Sports Festival and the Learning Presentation, which will be held for the first time this school year. They discuss the ideas and work together to select the final slogans. Grades 5 and 6 students are actively contributing in many different ways, including at school events and assemblies as well as through their everyday activities. We hope you will continue to support and cheer them on.

### **Music**

Music Specialist Teacher

In the music room, students in Grades 3 through 6 take part in music lessons. This year, our Learning Presentation will be held in November, with students in Grades 3 and 6 giving musical performances.

Third graders will perform songs and instrumental pieces. Since beginning to learn the recorder in June, they have been practicing their fingerings and learning to control their breath so that they can produce a beautiful tone.

Sixth graders will perform choral and instrumental pieces. They are working hard to sing with a rich, resonant sound while listening carefully to one another. They are also practicing how to play their instruments in time and in harmony with each other, paying attention to proper playing techniques and keeping the beat together.

Through choral singing and ensemble playing, we will continue to help students discover the joy of creating music together and working cooperatively with their classmates.

### **Educational Counseling**

The Counseling Room is located on the second floor, in front of the library. It is a place where children can talk about things that are worrying or troubling them, and where we can think together about what might help. Sometimes, simply talking about their feelings can help them feel more at ease. Children do not have to talk if they do not want to. They can also spend time drawing pictures, doing origami, or taking part in other activities that help them feel a little more relaxed and comfortable. We would be very happy for children to feel comfortable using the Counseling Room whenever they need it.

We also welcome consultations from parents and guardians. If you are concerned about your child's emotions or behavior, or if you are having difficulty understanding how your child is feeling, please feel free to talk to us. Even if you are wondering, "Is this really something I should ask about?", you are very welcome to come and speak with us. If you would like to make an appointment, please contact us through your child's homeroom teacher, the school nurse, or the vice principal.

#### **Counselor's Working Days**

Tuesday: School Social Worker (SSW)

Thursday: School Counselor (SC)

Friday: School Counselor (SC)