

## Solidarity

6-1 Muromatsu Shizuka

6-2 Hiroshi Kurokawa

When they were 5<sup>th</sup> graders I remember talking a lot about what is important in order to be "upper graders." The thing I remember telling them the most was to "think about what they should do in order to make a good class for others."

The place where the students grew the most was during the summer trip. It was their first time to stay overnight together with their classmates. There were many fun times but they realized the importance of "being considerate" and were able to practice what they learned. Last year's first graduation ceremony practice was not worth mentioning. However, by changing their awareness one by one they became such an impressive group that they were almost unrecognizable. Their appearance and words during the 6<sup>th</sup> graders' graduation ceremony showed that they really learned well.

Becoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders in April, they started their daily lives as the "highest grade," taking care of the 1<sup>st</sup> graders, doing committee and club activities, and family activities. Each one has their responsibility. It was a time that each of them thought a lot about what they should do as the highest grade in the school. Next came Sports Day and the School Performance. They worked on group gymnastics for Sports Day. They challenged themselves in various skills such as: single, in threes, in sixes, as a class, and as a grade. Even as the big day came closer they could not escape "their feeling of somehow doing it" and we the homeroom teachers talked about how they "don't look organized." There were many students who felt "We are doing our best, so why?" However, they did not give up there. They discussed what they should do in order to reach their goal. I feel that when they were thinking about what each of them can do individually, as a class, and as a grade, they were connecting with their present growth. On Sports Day, they were able to say that this group gymnastic activity was "the best one they did since they started!" For the school performance, while discussing each scene, they gave each other advice on how to say their lines and practiced their actions when there were no lines. There were many things that were not going well up to the day before the performance, but this grade's strength was their ability to endeavor without giving up on the day of the performance and I believe it connected with their success on the day of the performance. They participated as the school representatives for the Swim Meet Competition. The appearance of the 6<sup>th</sup> graders cheering for one another regardless of gender or class was the best in Minato City!

The word that this class has held very dearly for the past two years, "solidarity," came to mind when watching them play their hearts out and help each other, regardless of gender and regardless of their class.

On March 22<sup>nd</sup> at the graduation ceremony, 54 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will be leaving the nest to take their first step into a new world. I am looking forward to what kind of day it will be.



## Kindly Helping Out

1-1 Naoko Kashima

1-2 Yumi Mega

The children's first meeting was on April 6<sup>th</sup> at the entrance ceremony. The cherry blossoms on the playground were in bloom, a fitting start to elementary school life. Seeing the children in the classroom sitting in their seats excited for the start of their school life, I decided that it is our responsibility to "make school a fun place for the children."

After entering the school, school lunch began. At first they practiced with only milk, but little by little they understood the amount they could eat and challenged themselves to eat foods they did not like. During cleaning time, the 6<sup>th</sup> graders taught them how to use a broom and carry desks, now they can clean every nook and cranny very quickly.

There were many events. Watching the children work hard to remember each event, I felt that they grew up during spring's Sports Day by participating in events such as running, ball tossing, and dancing. Surely the parents also were very proud and felt that the children had really grown up from seeing them at the school performance, standing on stage and with big voices giving a splendid performance.

Looking back on the year, there were many things the children were able to do. They have become able to hold a pencil the correct way. They are able to write big letters neatly. They are able to challenge themselves to do things they are not good at. They have become able to water the plants without forgetting. These may seem to be just little things but to 1<sup>st</sup> graders they are very big steps. I hope that the 73 1<sup>st</sup> graders will kindly help each other to grow in mind and body.

