



The First Day of Spring Is Just around the Corner

Principal Yuichi Hashimoto

It is February. Recently, when leaving my home to come to school, I walked along a dark street with the moon still shining; however, the sun is rising sooner and my morning commute has gradually become brighter. I can feel spring is coming soon. The first day of spring (*risshu*) is February 2. One of the 24 terms used to describe the changing of the seasons, *risshu* denotes the beginning of a new lunisolar year.

Despite the coming of the new year, the omicron variant of COVID19 has spread and cases of infection have quickly increased. I truly hope that this pandemic will soon come to an end.

As mentioned in previous emails from Minato City, please observe the following measures.

- If a family member will take or has taken a PCR test, please inform the school of the results of that test as soon as possible.
- If a family member is showing cold symptoms, such as fever or sore throat, please have your child stay home even if they feel okay.

The omicron variant can infect individuals without showing any symptoms. Please take any symptom seriously, even a minor sore throat or low fever, and have your child or children stay home from school. During this time of stricter preventative measures, students who take classes online will be recorded as present, so please take advantage of this system.

Furthermore, the International Assembly will be held on Tuesday, February 22. As of now, the children are busy preparing for their performances. Students will be able to watch each other's performances, but seating for parents and guardians will not be available. However, it is possible for parents and guardians to attend the assembly. Please understand that due to the state of the COVID19 at that time, it may not be possible for parents and guardians to attend the assembly. In that case, parents and guardians will be contacted again.

Just as we will overcome the cold days of winter and soon be in the warmth of spring, I believe the COVID19 pandemic will pass and we can return to our normal, everyday lives.

Please check Higashimachi's Twitter account for the latest happenings. Use the QR code on the right for quick access.



February

Date	Day	Event	After-school
1	Tu		
2	W	4 periods	
3	Th		
4	F	Kanji Kentei G3-G6 (5th period)	
5	Sa		
6	Su		
7	M	Club (G3 observes, 6 periods)	
8	Tu		
9	W	4 periods	
10	Th	2022-23 G1 Parent-Teacher Conf. (Reception: 14:45, Start: 15:00) (G1, G2 4 periods)	
11	F	National Foundation Day	
12	Sa		
13	Su		
14	M	Committee	
15	Tu		
16	W	4 periods	
17	Th	Music Assembly	
18	F		
19	Sa	Family Asobi (G1, G6)	
20	Su		
21	M		
22	Tu	International Assembly (1 st -5 th periods)	
23	W	Emperor's Birthday	
24	Th		
25	F		
26	Sa		
27	Su		
28	M	Club	

Notices

*The International Assembly

This year, the International Assembly will be held Tuesday, February 22. Grades will be divided into groups A, B, C, D, and E to watch other grades' performances. Grades that are not able to watch the performances live will watch them via video. Details will be provided at a later date.

*Kanji Kentei (Kanji Aptitude Test)

The Kanji Kentei will be held for all students in Grades 3 to 6 on Friday, February 4. Levels 10 to 8 will take 40 minutes and be dismissed at 14:20. Levels 7 to 2 will take 60 minutes and be dismissed at 14:40. Grades 1 and 2 will have 4 periods.

*Human Rights Day

Human Rights Day is Monday, the 28th. The lunch will be goulash from Hungary.

*After-School Play (*Hokago Asobi*)

As a measure to prevent further infection, there will be no after-school play time this month.

Educational Counselling

February's Goal

"Move Around to Beat the Cold!"

Naomi Naito
Educational Counsellor

We still must wash our hands and gargle without fail these days, and even though washing our hands with freezing cold water shocks us, we are doing our best to bear it for the sake of our health as well as the health of our friends and family.

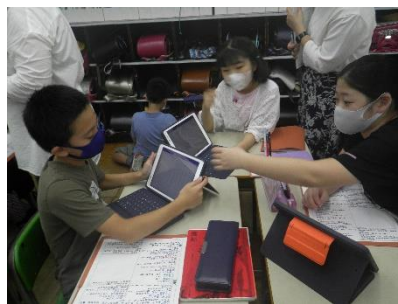
The cold can sometimes make us feel physically and emotionally drained. However, the children at Higashimachi are bright and energetic enough to brush off the cold. Surely it is because of the children's proactive "can-do" attitude that they are able to endure the cold.

Negligence is one of our biggest enemies. We will continue to instruct the students to wash their hands and gargle. Please have your children keep a handkerchief with them. We will guide the students to stay healthy for the coming spring.

In-School Research and Development (Teacher Development)

Nozomi Yamamoto
Research and Development

At Higashimachi, teachers are researching and developing skills in educating students to be independent and supportive learners via the reading lessons in *kokugo* class. By reading a literary text, teachers aim to deepen their students' understanding by expanding their ideas and sharing them with others. This year, each grade will conduct a teacher development class where students are eager to think and do on their own as well as complete tasks in pairs or groups. We hope to use the results of this year's research in subsequent years to improve learning in other subjects and to embetter each student's learning.



School Families

Yurie Suzuki
Special Activities

School Family ("Family") activities aim to foster in students the ability to be proactive and independent in improving their experience at school by integrating with other grades and age groups and utilizing each other's imagination and creativity.

In accordance with preventative measures, this year's Families are divided into pairs (G1 and G6, G2 and G4, G3 and G5) with the upper grades handling the planning, preparation, and implementation of various activities. This is our first attempt at doing Family activities in pairs.

Students in Grades 4, 5, and 6 put in a lot of creativity and imagination so that the lower grades can enjoy their activities. For example: Grade 4 prepared an activity that was interesting enough for Grade 2 students; Grade 5 used their iPads to make sure Grade 3 could understand how to do the activity smoothly. Grade 6 made plans with illustrations and diagrams along with specific roles and tasks. One particular thing we noticed among the three grades was how they acted as lower-grade students in simulations to practice giving instructions and managing time as well as correct or improve certain aspects in their activities. Because of the efforts of the Grade 4, 5, and 6 students, Grades 1, 2, and 3 were able to participate in the activities with peace of mind.

After these activities, the students were able to form irreplaceable bonds among each other. We look forward to seeing the students utilize this experience along with the skills they acquired in different situations at school. Please visit the school's website to learn more about Family activities for each grade.

Educational Counselling and Advice

Nobuko Arai
School Counsellor

This year, the school counsellors are available every Tuesday (Counsellor Arai) and Thursday (Counsellor Ikeda). We are happy to have students visit us whenever they want to.

Children can have many concerns, including concerns about friendships, families, and what they learned.

School Counsellors at all Minato City elementary schools conduct individual interviews with all Grade 4 and Grade 5 students from May to July. Because of this, many students feel close to their school's counsellor. Just by putting their feelings into words, students feel better about going back to class because they now have an idea on how to resolve issues with their classmates. To that effect, in the case of bullying, the counsellors can talk with the children involved as well as work with the classroom teachers and deal with the issue accordingly.

We also offer counselling to parents and guardians. Parents who are concerned about their child's behavior are welcome to contact the school counsellors. Those who wish to speak with a counsellor can first contact their child's classroom teacher, the school nurse, or the Vice Principal.



Classroom Window

Grade 5

5-1 Naomi Naito
5-2 Yuto Nihei

The cold continues, but Grade 5 students are still running around full-force in the school yard and in the gym. In this issue, we would like to share what the students are doing during P.E.

In January, the students are playing a game called tee-ball in the schoolyard. The ball is placed on a tee and a player hits the ball with a bat. There are different ways to play using points and outs. Between the moment when the batter hits the ball and then gets out, the other team members have to run back and forth between cones to collect points. The children can be seen working as a team to get a lot of points or quickly get the other team out. They are improving themselves while enjoying the hitting, running, throwing and catching aspects of tee-ball.

In the gym, students do mat exercises. Mat exercises included doing maneuvers that stem from the basic forward and backward rolls. They check for the key points of each maneuver and then choose a specialized area for them to focus on techniques related to their own improvement. They also share advice and observe each other in order to improve together.

As they participate in P.E., students are becoming more and more aware of others' abilities and helping each other progress together. We will continue to instruct them to get along and cooperate to become students who will do their part to support the school in two months' time.

