



南山小学校 School Newsletter

February Edition

February 1, 2018
Minato City, Nanzan ES
Principal Terumi Aketagawa



Creating a Rich Learning Environment for Children



Principal Terumi Aketagawa

During the time of dismissal on January 22nd, steadily falling snow has turned the ground into white in the blink of an eye and the children's shouts of joy rose up loudly. The following morning, the children played in the snow with all their hearts while feeling the sensation of snow on their skin as they lay down on the soft white bed of snow and had snowball fights. The greatness of this act of nature has a magical power to turn every child's face into a smile.

By the calendar, February 3rd is the Japanese holiday *Setsubun* (end of winter accompanied by a bean scattering ceremony) and the 4th is the first day to welcome spring. I hope that the students will be able to feel and experience the changing four seasons of Japan.



Nanzan Elementary School, the 2018-2019 school year pilot school for the research in Minato City, has been engaging in research with Nanzan Kindergarten for 2 years and will present the results of this research on February 9th (Fri).

Our school has formulated a curriculum that links kindergarten and elementary school together with the goal of smoothing out the transition from kindergarten into the start of elementary school life. Additionally, the goal is to nurture students who will use their experiences in their studies by having them think independently in various situations, and also through proactive interactions with students of different ages and not just their peers.

During the research lesson (nursery) of the 2nd term, to better communicate when reading aloud to the kindergarteners the 5th grade students engaged in the activity by thinking about and adjusting the way they read as well as the tone and volume of their voice. Also, when grade 1 taught the kindergarteners about folding and throwing paper airplanes, the 1st graders thought about it in their own way and tried different things through repetition. The kindergarten and elementary faculty strive for mutual understanding, and are engaged in devising academic activities that encourage students to think independently, deepen connections, and create rich learning environments.

Our school thinks of "rich learning environments" as the compilation and coordination of each and every study (experience), and bringing forth new meaning and value from within these studies. The students at our school are naturally adept at using what they have learned through their experiences and kindly passing it on to lower grades. Depending on whom they are teaching, and in order to communicate more easily, the students will think independently, make use of materials, and change their manner of expression, thus teaching as well becomes a form of rich learning. Moving forward, the faculty will strive together to devise ways for students to mutually engage in joint learning, and connect it with rich learning environments.

Thinking on their own while trying different things, the 1st graders teach the kindergarteners how to fold and throw paper airplanes.



The 5th graders think about and devise ways to communicate while reading aloud to the kindergarteners.



February Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Club experience
4	5 Morning assembly Committee School counselor	6 Safety instruction Art field t	7 School counselor	8	9 Special schedule Pilot school presentation	10
11 National Foundation Day	12 Substitute holiday	13 Forestry instructor visit	14	15	16	17 Club Math Level Test (for applicants only)
18	19 Morning assembly New G1 P-T conference (3:00~ p.m.) School counselor	20 Tatewari assembly Graffiti clean-up	21 Azabu nursery interaction	22 Wednesday schedule	23	24
25	26 Morning assembly School counselor	27 Music assembly Nanzan kindergarten lunch interaction	28			

※The February evacuation drill will be done without prior notification.

February Goal

「Greet others in a friendly manner」

- Look at the person you are greeting.
- Use polite language.

Sekishokai

Japanese Language Department

The *Sekishokai* was held in the frigid ambience of the 3rd day after the beginning of the 3rd term on January 11 (Thu).

At the beginning ceremony, representatives from each grade presented their goals for the *Sekishokai*. While grades 1 and 2 wrote with pencils in their classrooms, grade 3~6 wrote with their calligraphy brushes in the gym. The students earnestly wrote each and every stroke very carefully while checking the writing samples.

Every student demonstrated the results of the practices they did at school during the 2nd term and during the winter break.

Many have come to view the calligraphy display at school. Perhaps you can imagine the expressions of the students as they wrote their calligraphy from looking at their various works.



Hyakunin Isshu

G5 Teacher

The students have been learning and playing *Hyakunin Isshu* as part of their traditional culture experiences at school. At the much anticipated *Hyakunin Isshu* assembly, the students divided into their *tatewari* groups and competed in groups of 4 in the gym. While they enjoyed playing with members of different grades, many students could be seen seriously engaging in the game. Every grade demonstrated the results of having practiced *Hyakunin Isshu* at school and home. In the auditorium room, a "Champion Course" was arranged, and students who are skilled at *Hyakunin Isshu* gathered to compete against each other. Facing off against each other and playing the game in earnest, it was an intensely close match.

Through *Hyakunin Isshu*, the students have experienced the beauty of classical Japanese poems and sensed the different seasons. Moving forward, I want make traditional Japanese culture into something more familiar for the students, and to create enjoyable educational opportunities.



Enjoying Traditional Japanese Culture. 「Traditional Games Assembly」

Special Activities Department

Nanzan ES has held various experiential educational activities as a "school promoting traditional culture in the 2016-2018 school years." Through these various activities the students have developed an interest in the traditional culture of Japan and they are enjoying it very much. Students have been seen telling their families and students from other grades about what they have learned as well. Not only have they learned about respecting the culture of Japan, I also want it to connect with taking an interest in and having a respectful attitude towards the cultures other countries as well.

The "Traditional Game Assembly" was held on January 20 (Sat). All of the students enjoyed playing the games that have been handed down through the generations, and through this they became more familiar with Japanese culture.

<p>Origami, Ohajiki</p>	<p>Spinning tops</p>	<p>Stilts, Bamboo clogs</p>
<p>Kendama, Tonton Zumo</p>	<p>Nanzan karuta (made by the Traditional Culture club)</p>	<p>Bunbungoma</p>
<p>Gomutobi, Battledore, Menko</p>	<p>Flower arrangement</p>	<p>Kabuto, Kamideppo</p>

This year, the G6 students took a special role by helping out at each station by teaching the other grades and running their respective areas. This was carried out as a part of the Olympic • Paralympic Education that Tokyo City is engaged in. This experience will tie in with "Supporting" the Olympic Games. The students could be seen fulfilling their roles reliably for everyone that visited their stations.

Also, the Roppongi High School English teacher, Ms. Jessa, visited our school on this day. Ms. Jessa has joined us for experiencing the traditional culture studies over the past two years. The goal is not only for the students to learn about Japanese culture, but to also try expressing their impressions and thoughts in English. By having a shared experience together, the students can exchange these things naturally, which was a good experience for them.

On the day of the assembly, many parents, guardians, and others as well visited to participate. This was also a meaningful experience in that it was not just about traditional culture, but also it was about connections with many people. Thank you very much.