

南山だより



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There is No Skill Greater than Passion ~ Raising Children to be Independent! ~

Vice Principal Yumi Yasukawa

Perhaps many of you heard the phrase "*Jonetsu ni masaru noryoku nashi*" (There is no skill greater than passion) over the New Year's holidays. These were the words of coach Ooyagi, who led the Komazawa University running team to victory in this year's Hakone Ekiden race. Upon hearing those words, the question that filled my thoughts was, "Well, how can we nurture passion as a skill?" The announcer's explanation had a hint for closing in on an answer to this question. It was a change in coach Ooyagi's instruction methods. When he first became coach, he tried to rebuild the team by disciplining his runners by imposing a "whatever the coach says is absolute" approach to practice. It worked well enough at first, but it was followed by a period of slow growth. Since then he has changed his approach to be more involved with the team members by saying to them, "These are your choices, so what do YOU want to do?" Not everything can be left up to the inexperienced athletes, but in this way their ideas could be heard. I can only imagine, but I am sure that the runners felt the joy of being "respected" by their coach from being asked their opinions, as well as the "responsibility of "having to think for themselves" when asked what they wanted to do, and the desire to "follow through with it" since they had made their own decisions. Perhaps these are some of the things that the team members thought or felt. I thought that perhaps by extension, this idea means "passion = the ability to push forward." I also realized that a great coach is someone who, when stuck, does not blame the team members, but looks back at their self and has the courage to change.

So, are the students developing in line with "passion = the power to push forward?" Some of the things mentioned by parents about their children during the individual parent-teacher meetings have given me pause.

- Parents telling their children to "Do their studies" always leads to arguments. (From parents)
- I don't have time to relax because of all the extracurricular activities. I'm tired of always doing what I'm supposed to do. (From students)
- Even though I try to do things properly, I am told that I am not taking it seriously. (From students)

Children are still growing, and therefore need good mentors. However, if a child feels stuck on something, their leaders need to look back on themselves and see if there is something they can change about themselves. Some abilities can be measured in terms of test scores, but the foundation of these abilities is a stable emotional state, persistence to finish a task, and kindness to care for others. Abilities such as these that cannot be inferred from scores are sometimes referred to as "non-cognitive abilities." It is also said that improving "non-cognitive abilities" at a young age has a positive effect on "cognitive abilities (abilities that can be measured by scores)."

If you feel like your child is stuck on something, please replace "coach" with "parent," and "runner" with "child" in the story about coach Ooyagi's above and read it again. It may contain hints to further improve the relationship between parents and children as well as nurture children to grow independently with their own "passion."

Professor Ken Hatta, the lecturer from the Open Morals Lesson and Lecture in January, also spoke about the importance of relationships between people. Being able to communicate comfortably with others is also an important foundation for growth.

In February, we will be holding an art exhibition that is intended to refine one's sensibilities. In Scandinavian countries, which are known for their high academic standards, not only do they specialize in subjects like math and science, but also they emphasize education in the arts, and these two approaches form the pillars of their education. This shows how they understand the importance of "non-cognitive skills" that cannot be measured by scores. At Nanzan, we also value this "non-cognitive ability," and hope to nurture students who are willing to grow independently. We hope that you can take time to appreciate each student's artworks and find each individual's brilliance within.

Quiet Minds Take on the Challenge of the *Sekishokai*

Japanese Language Division

Before the start of the *Sekishokai*, one representative student from each grade presented their goals for the calligraphy based on what they had practiced since before the winter break.

The 1st and 2nd graders wrote carefully using their pencils, paying attention to the stops, sweeps, and hooks of their strokes. Grades 3 and above wrote using all their skill to write with broad brushes, paying attention to the stroke order and brush strokes.

It is a good feeling to quiet one's mind and write with a sense of refreshment at the beginning of the year. In a solemn atmosphere, everyone concentrated on their work and completed fine pieces of calligraphy.

It is said, "[Written] characters represent the person who wrote them." It is my hope that everyone will carefully and legibly on a regular basis.



Thinking About How to Create Better Relationships with People Around Us

Moral Education Division

The goal of the Open Morals Lesson and Lecture is to deepen mutual understanding about the mental growth of children and the role of moral education at home, in the school, and in the community.

This year's theme is "One's role in relationships with others." The students learned about being kind and considerate towards others, as well as ideas of friendship and trust. Through the use of pair and group discussions as per Nanzan Style, every student was able to consider and deepen their ideas.

Additionally, Professor Ken Hatta gave a lecture on the topic of "the importance of interpersonal relationships." His talk focused on 5 major points which covered the importance of the speech patterns and attitude of how parents interact with their children to ensure their healthy growth. In order to encourage the healthy growth of children, adults need to acquire skills like "praising the process and not the results," and "focusing on the positives and not the negatives" when engaging in their development.

Going forward, we will continue engaging in moral education in cooperation with families and community members.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support.

February Calendar

6 (Mon)	Committee Activities	17 (Fri)	Art Exhibition (observation, recital)
8 (Wed)	Club Activities (G3 club observation)	18 (Sat)	Art Exhibition (observation, Art Festa, recital)
10 (Fri)	Kanji Level Test (applicant only)	21 (Tue)	New Grade 1 Explanatory Meeting

※The February evacuation drill will be conducted without prior notice.

February Goal

Find Good Qualities in Everyone