

# JAPAN SCHOOL NEWS

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MONTHLY NEWS FROM INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN JAPAN

<http://www.japanschoolnews.com>

## Joy to the World at the National Museum of Nature and Science

On October 6th, the kindergarten classes at Joy to the World International American School visited the National Museum of Nature and Science.

The children were excited about the prospect of visiting the museum from the moment they got on the bus.

Students and staff visited the Global Gallery where they saw gigantic dinosaurs, cute animals, and ancient humankind. The children learned many things about dinosaurs, the wide variety of mammals and birds that have lived throughout history, and how human beings developed.

After visiting different sections of the museum, everybody went to the rooftop to enjoy a picnic lunch, with perfect weather, and a wonderful view of the Sky Tree!

On the way back to school, the children snacked on goodies they had brought from home, and examined the small dinosaur gifts that the museum had presented to them.

The children were thrilled with their day out, and couldn't wait to tell their parents what a wonderful day they'd had! — HANNAH MEISSNER



Joy to the World kindergarten K3 students and staff on last month's outing. JOY TO THE WORLD

## Foreign Schools Association of Hyogo Prefecture

"A Neighbourhood with Open Doors to the World" is Hyogo prefecture's motto, and the Foreign Schools Association (FSA) was founded in 1997, soon after the Great Hanshin earthquake, to promote internationalism and unity.

The group is very focused upon developing international education opportunities for its students. It has developed partnerships with Kobe City and Hyogo Prefecture and receives direct support from the prefecture. FSA encourages interaction between

schools, and promotes cultural and sporting events in order to broaden its students' education.

Current member schools include the German European School, St. Michael's, Ashiya, the Kobe Chinese Schools, the Korean Group of Schools, and Marist Brothers.

This year the association celebrates its 15th anniversary with a large arts event attended by many dignitaries from Japan as well as other countries. — PAUL GRISEWOOD

## Treehouse Montessori welcomes new teachers

Last month, Treehouse Montessori School welcomed two new staff members, to work with their children aged 12 months and upwards. The new teachers brought a breath of fresh air to the classroom as they enthusiastically set about getting to know their new students and their families in the Yokohama area.

Recently the school held a successful "Back To School Picnic Party" attended by children and parents from both classes. The picnic was followed by an afternoon orientation session for parents.

At the end of October, Treehouse held its annual Halloween party—an event famous within the local neighbourhood, as the children dress up in costumes to venture around the area for trick-or-treating. This year, special photographs were taken while the children ate plenty of delicious food provided by parents. The day ended with a Halloween parade in the school garden.

Treehouse Montessori is a Yokohama-based school for children up to six years old. For more information see <http://www.tms-school.com>. — JENNY VYVIAL



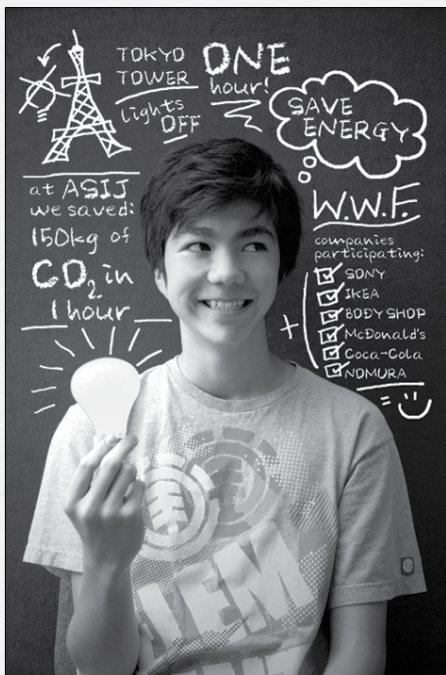
Karel and Alex taking a rest after digging for sweet potatoes. PAL INTERNATIONAL PRESCHOOL

## Sweet potato digging adventures with PAL International Preschool

Last month, PAL International Preschool's boys and girls went on a sweet potato digging field trip by bus to Kawagoe. This special event is one of the highlights of PAL's school year.

The students had a great time in the autumn breeze as they dug up sweet potatoes as well as carrots. They also collected acorns and chestnuts as they enjoyed their experience with nature. — MAKIKO KOIDE

## The American School in Japan's carbon footprint audit



**Middle school student Mark McNeill, who was instrumental in getting ASIJ, and several major corporations, to participate in Earth Hour last year.**  
THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN JAPAN

Two years ago, students and employees from The American School in Japan set a long-term goal of reducing the school's carbon footprint by 30% by 2012.

In the 2008–09 school year, they used 10% less energy with the help of several initiatives, including the installation of solar panels and the implementation of “No Heat, No Cool” months each fall and spring. Last school year, they were close to their goal of reducing energy usage another 8%—helped in part by their participation in Earth Hour and special reflective paint on the roofs—but an unusually cold winter allowed them to cut only 5% of the energy they use.

ASIJ is now halfway to their overall goal, but knowing that achieving another 15% in savings isn't going to be easy, the school has contracted environmental design professionals, Eco<sup>3</sup> Design, to do a Carbon Footprint Audit covering energy, water, waste, resources, food, and transport. They visited the campus last spring to meet school facilities maintenance staff, inspect building systems, and talk with students. They are currently doing an online survey of ASIJ students (from grades 3–12) and staff, and will visit again this fall to complete an energy analysis and prepare a final report. This will

allow ASIJ to see how it compares to other schools and to receive recommendations for further reducing their impact on the environment and using metrics that track their CO<sub>2</sub>, energy, water and waste online.

The audit will also give ASIJ a good idea at what level (silver, gold or platinum) it can become LEED certified.

LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design and was started in 1993 in the United States to give institutions better strategies to improve their energy efficiencies and working environments. Often the goals are to use 25–30% less carbon and improve productivity.

A similar organization in Japan is CASBEE, the Comprehensive Assessment System for Built Environment Efficiencies. ASIJ will be able to get credit for all the steps they have taken to date, and they will be learning additional energy and waste reduction steps to improve the school's long-term sustainability.

Taking a leadership role in cutting CO<sub>2</sub> is one way that the school can model environmental stewardship to its students and live its mission of “developing compassionate, inquisitive learners prepared for global responsibility.” — MARTIN TROMBURG

## Wild animals at RLC

RLC Preschool students had heaps of fun in the summer, visiting the Epon aquarium in Shinagawa as part of their water-themed summer school.

Students and staff are hoping to have just as much fun during their November excursion to the zoo, as part of this term's wild animals theme.

This month's artwork, book study, and other activities cover tigers, snakes, pandas, peacocks, and monkeys—everyone is hoping to see them during the zoo trip!

RLC also has a wonderfully colourful window banner that features all those wild animals, and will be hung up from the beginning of this month! — ALIY LICKFOLD

## Nagoya IS high school students out in the pond

As part of their biosphere unit for biology, the grade 10 students of Nagoya International School went on a field trip to Yasuda-ike to study, observe, and collect samples for research in and around this local pond.

Students tested water samples gathered from various locations in the pond (to gather data on nitrates, iron, alkalinity, copper, chlorine, and hardness), took quadratic measurements, collected insects, and documented their results and discoveries.

Once back in the lab, they discussed their collections and recorded life within the water samples brought back on the day. Some micro-organisms including indicator species were found in the water and witnessed under the microscope.

Getting out into the environment around us is



**Nagoya students taking samples.** ERIK OLSON-KIKUCHI

an important part of the NIS curriculum, and the students hope to return to make further tests! — ERIK OLSON-KIKUCHI

## Open days for ESIK's immersion program



**ESIK's students at a local park.** ENGLISH STUDIO

Although English Studio International Kindergarten (ESIK) students just recently celebrated the 100th day of school, the school is already accepting enrolments for the next school year (starting April 2011).

ESIK is a three-year immersion and inquiry-based learning course that runs in conjunction with the Japanese school calendar. Students attend class for five hours per day from Monday to Friday. The first year is an English immersion class. Although many students begin with a very limited grasp of the language, they soon become comfortable in communicating with their teacher and classmates in English.

In the second year, ESIK's inquiry-based learning approach is introduced, aiming to develop creativity,

imagination, logical thinking, reasoning, and decision-making skills.

The final year of ESIK is a consolidation year. Students take the lead in choosing what and how they learn, building on their knowledge and language skills from the previous year. The students are able to explore new themes as well as familiar and favourite topics more independently, and articulate their thoughts and opinions more expressively.

On the 2nd and 3rd of December, ESIK will be holding two open days. Anyone interested in observing classes is invited to come along and see the students and faculty in action. For more information, please call 03-3712-3313 or email michiko@jiec.org. — SHANE THOMPSON

## Katoh's fall bazaar a big success for IB students

International Baccalaureate (IB) students ask themselves questions like, "How can I help others?" and "How can I contribute to the community?"

Classes in the Bilingual Program at Katoh Gakuen Gyoshu believed that one answer to both these questions was to organize stalls and activities in their recent school bazaar. The proceeds would be donated to Free the Children, an organization that helps underprivileged children, and ARK, a group that rescues and cares for abandoned animals.

The hallways and classrooms of Gyoshu were full of laughter, festivity, and excitement as junior and senior high students in the IB program ran a range of fun stalls and activities raising money to help these different community groups.

The grade 8 class had a great time running

a competition where their customers had to answer quizzes and grab snacks from a container. Meanwhile, the grade 9 class entertained their customers by enveloping them in huge soap bubbles and dazzling them with optical illusions.

A bustling stall selling postcards, hair ties, and friendship bracelets was run by the grade 10 class. And the grade 11 class sold a range of delicious cakes, collecting donations and supporting the other grades with great enthusiasm and energy.

Afterwards, students spoke warmly about the fun they had had working together to entertain and provide products for their local community while at the same time helping to raise money for communities on a national and international scale.

— DAVID ALGIE



Students from Katoh Gakuen's Bilingual Program staffing their class stall. KATOH GAKUEN

## International Baccalaureate school heads meet at Tokyo International School



Heads of schools running the International Baccalaureate Programmes meeting at TIS. DES HURST

Tokyo International School (TIS) was proudly on show last month when local IB school heads descended on Tokyo for their annual fall meeting.

TIS was honoured to have its first chance to host this meeting of 15 heads from schools all over Japan that also offer the IB curriculum.

TIS has been authorized to offer the International Baccalaureate's Middle Years Programme and the Primary Years Programme for over six years now. Both programmes are world-renowned and the TIS community is very satisfied with the way these curriculum frameworks support their school-wide inquiry approach to learning. The IB philosophy and objectives also match the TIS mission, making it a perfect fit for the school. — DES HURST

## Enhancing Japanese language instruction at Aoba-Japan International

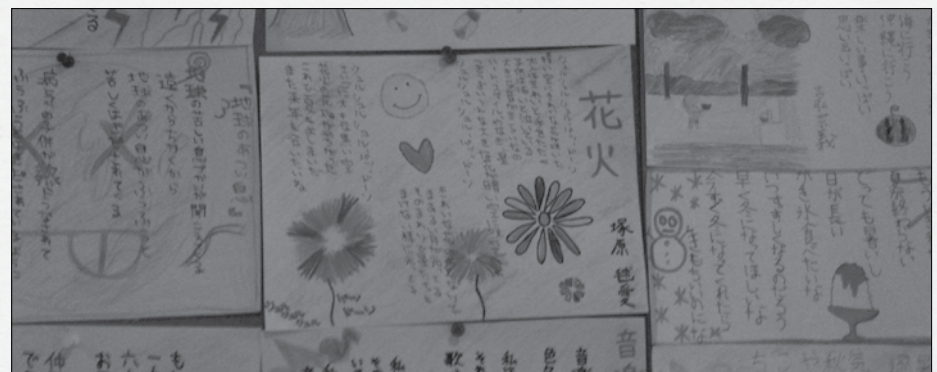
The Japanese department at Aoba-Japan International School (A-JIS) is nearing completion of a full curriculum review. Program review and revisions have occurred primarily at the Japanese as a Second Language (JSL) and Transition Class (T-Class) levels.

The Japanese program at A-JIS consists of three levels of instruction for each grade level: JSL classes for students who are learning to speak Japanese, or have some conversational Japanese language ability; T-Classes for students who have a moderate to proficient level of Japanese, or have experienced some formal Japanese language instruction; and Kokugo classes for students who have experienced formal Japanese language instruction and are able to handle a grade level, Monbukagakushou-mandated Kokugo curriculum.

The revisions to the program at A-JIS have primarily addressed approaches to JSL instruction

and T-Class instruction. T-Class instruction makes use of the Monbukagakushou-mandated curriculum, but with modified outcomes appropriate for learners at this level. The JSL program is an in-house, A-JIS-developed curriculum that focuses on conversational skills

and introduces students to a formal Japanese learning environment. Revisions to both the JSL and T-Classes have been geared towards easing students into a smoother academic transition as they move through the various levels in the program. — NEAL DILK



T-Class Poems at Aoba-Japan International School. NEAL DILK

## Aichi International's flat Orcas roam the world



**A student with her flat Orca.** AICHI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

As the weather gets cooler each year, excitement levels reach fever pitch in the Orca class at Aichi International School, for this is the time when students wait with baited breath for their "flat Orcas" to return by mail from around the world,

and they get to see what adventures their creations had during summer vacation.

Before summer each year, the Orca class studies a unit on global cultures, and reads *Flat Stanley* by Jeff Brown, a story about a poor boy who wants to travel to see his friend in California but can't, until he is flattened in an accident and his father sends him on his travels by mail.

In homage to Brown's character Stanley, AIS students trace themselves on paper, and are sent with friends, family, or classmates on summer adventures travelling the world.

This year saw the flat Orcas travel to places such as Korea, the United States, the Philippines, India, Australia, Germany, and Belgium; to the pyramids in Egypt; and even to the Mount Everest base camp in Nepal.

Once all the flat Orcas arrive home, the school holds a big welcome party so each student has a chance to see the photos of where their classmates' flat Orcas have been.

Students relish the educational opportunities created by this rich task. Who knows what interests may be sparked in the imaginations of Aichi International School students, and where this will lead the "real" Orcas in their future travels? — TIM DALY

## TAIP's November events

Tokyo Association of International Preschools' (TAIP) November events include a presentation by Sandra Stone on the 20th and another by Sherry Miller on the 29th.

Ms Stone's presentation will be from 9am to 3pm at New International School; the topic is to be announced. This event costs ¥12,000 for TAIP members and ¥15,000 for non-members, and includes lunch and drinks.

Ms Miller's presentation is on leadership in the preschool/kindergarten sector, and will be held from 4pm until 7pm at Willowbrook. ¥2,500 for TAIP members; ¥3,500 for non-members.

See <http://www.tokyopreschools.org>.

## 57 children's parties

Lounge bar and restaurant Fifty Seven has recently started working with Let's Party Tokyo <http://www.letspartytokyo.com> for its children's parties.

Starting from ¥30,000 for a 60-minute clown show that includes face painting and other entertainment, this is a great place to have a party for your kids.

Fifty Seven is getting booked up for Christmas, so do contact them as soon as possible! <http://www.fiftyseven.co.jp> — NICK DEMPSEY

## Book Week at NewIS



**Young child giving a SmartBoard presentation to her classmates during Book Week at New International School.** NEW INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

## What's cooking at J's International School?

Students at J's International School certainly didn't go hungry in October, as they explored a food and health theme, focused on nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.

Parents were invited along to a preschool class picnic, where they sampled cookies the children had made for them beforehand. Baking the cookies in class was a great opportunity for the children to learn about health and hygiene, because they talked about bacteria and how to prepare food safely.

Throughout the month, there was lots of comparison of lunches and snacks—the children talked about food pyramids, and became able to identify power foods and junk foods.

Parents are very involved with activities at J's, and often come in for a "show and tell" about their country, teaching the children how to count and sing in their native language, as well as how to speak a few basic phrases. October's "country of the month" was Italy, and the children really enjoyed learning how to cook lasagna during their monthly cooking class.



**Shuntaro playing at J's home centre with radiatori and penne.** J'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

To find out more about J's, please go to <http://js-international-school.com>.

## Teaching position

Makuhari International School is looking to hire a dynamic, professional kindergarten teacher from January 2011. Excellent remuneration package available to the right candidate.

Successful applicants will be teachers who

are well trained, well qualified, committed, and career oriented; who love children and educating children; are flexible team-players who wish to continue learning as well as teaching; constantly want to improve what we offer the children as well as their own skills; can "think outside the box"; can emphasize the skills that "international

children" need to acquire; and are positive and flexible in nature and always see the glass as half full!

Please send a CV and letter of application including details for at least two references to Paul Rogers, Head of School. See <http://www.mis.ed.jp>.