

Speech at Seattle Japanese School Event

Good evening, everyone.



I. 40th Anniversary of Seattle Japanese School

Congratulations on the 40th anniversary of the Seattle Japanese School. It began with 52 pupils and only 4 teachers at the Nikkei Methodist Church on Beacon Hill in 1971. It has since grown to more than 600 students from kindergarten to high school and 60 teachers. The campus is now located here at Sammamish High School.

Mr. Takeuchi, the first principal of the Seattle Japanese School, became the principal of Fukiai High School in Kobe. Thanks to his suggestion, Sammamish and Fukiai High Schools have become sister schools. Last March, two Fukiai students came to Sammamish as the first student exchange between the two schools. May there be more in the years to come.

After the March 11th disasters this year, your Sammamish students wrote encouraging messages to the affected on a large board in the entryway of the school. They also printed t-shirts that said “Hope for Japan” and sold them for donations. This support is very touching. We are grateful for your warmth and friendship.



II. Educational Trip to Japan

Michelle, Joey and Mackenzie, welcome back from Japan. You had a busy trip visiting elementary and junior high schools in Yao, the sister city of Bellevue, and Fukiai Senior High School in Kobe the sister school of Sammamish High School. You have seen modern as well as traditional Japan and left messages of friendship with your counterparts there.

You have now seen the Japanese school system with your own eyes. We are looking forward to hearing your stories and impressions of your visit. I am sure you will bring your experiences in Japan into your classrooms, and promote cross-cultural cooperation, mutual understanding and friendship.



III. Two Hats and Final Words

I am the Consul General of Japan in Seattle, but I have 2 other hats as well. I am the Honorary Principal of Japanese School and the Honorary President of the JBA.

(hold up blue hat) As Honorary Principal, I express heartfelt appreciation to you, the JBA, for supporting my pupils at the Seattle Japanese School.

(hold up green hat) As Honorary President of the JBA, I am pleased to do it. You're welcome!

(hold up blue hat) I humbly ask that the JBA continues to lend your support to my school and the Bellevue School District Japan Visit Program in the coming years.

(hold up green hat) ☺ My answer is "Yes! Of course! We certainly will!"

(put down hats)

Now, as the ACTUAL Consul General of Japan, I will be happy to see cross-cultural exchange, cooperation and friendship flourish at Sammamish High School!

Thank you!

