

Japan ASCD

Winter 2006 Newsletter



Ms. Gail Clark Dickson, ASCD Regional Director of Constituent Partnerships, visited Japan for training in strategic planning and constitutional changes. The President, Immediate Past President, and President-Elect met to review details with Gail. (Photo by New Sanno restaurant staff)

Congratulatory News from ASCD

Japan ASCD did not give up even though the policies at ASCD had changed, which meant Japan ASCD would not be eligible as an affiliate in Japan but rather a “connected community” for not meeting the quota criteria for host-country members. With much reluctance, discussions and a final written appeal in June 2006, our case was presented at the ASCD Executive Board meeting held in India on November 4th. At that time, Japan ASCD was granted affiliate status based on the work done by our affiliate to follow our mission statement and for meeting all other criteria requirements as an affiliate. We have been given this special privilege and wish to share the good news with all our members. Thank you to ASCD for this recognition. —by *Marion Yanase*

From the President's Desk ...

Japan ASCD was fortunate to have a distinguished guest from ASCD join our November board meeting on November 4th. Ms. Gail Clark Dickson, a Regional Director of Constituent Partnerships, traveled from ASCD's office in Alexandria, Virginia to guide our strategic planning and work through several changes to our constitution mandated by ASCD.

Japan ASCD's last strategic plan covered the 2001-2006 period, so we reviewed our progress during that time and set goals for the future. With Gail's guidance, Japan ASCD reworded several goals and reduced them by one after combining overlapping areas. Our next step is to mark where we are on a continuum, making progress easy to document.

Recently, ASCD changed its Constitution/Bylaws, which means affiliates must align their Constitution/Bylaws to mirror that of ASCD. Leadership Council members must now serve a three-year term, rather than a two-year one, for greater continuity in leadership. Gail shared how two other affiliates changed their documents to illustrate our options. Japan ASCD will work on the wording of the change, and our membership will vote on the proposal.

Gail also shared a plethora of information about Affiliates' Best Practices, which was extremely helpful as we strive to bring our membership the best new practices in education. She also reviewed ASCD's positions, one of which addresses the whole child. As this year's Spring Conference theme is “Educating the Whole Child: Honoring the Power and the Passion of the Learner” Japan ASCD is in direct alignment with ASCD's goals.

It was not all business, however, as Gail accompanied several board members to Roppongi Hills for sightseeing Saturday night. She then wielded her chopsticks skillfully at a nearby sushi shop. To her own amazement, she enjoyed the eel and even ate the eyes on the shrimp. Unfortunately, Gail was off to an ASCD conference in Florida just after our board meeting, so her time in Tokyo was limited.

Gail reinforced the many successes Japan ASCD can celebrate. She was extremely impressed with our programs and services, and suggested we share our work with other affiliates. Gail's visit also left us inspired and eager to start working toward even greater heights. Again, a big thank you from Japan ASCD to Gail Dickson and ASCD for making her visit possible. —by *Susan Hagenson*

Tohoku “Koko” on the Gogo!

The test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children. -Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Nestled between the mountains and the sea, Sendai, Japan holds just about the best kept little secret in the land of the rising sun: a cozy international school where the students dream big and put their words into action. Tohoku International School (TIS) sent nine high school students to Vietnam in April 2006 as part of the school’s community service requirement. Although the group did take the opportunity to see the beauty of Vietnam, the primary purpose of the trip was to *serve*. Along with 2 teachers, Mark Wilson and Karina Escajeda, the TIS students raised funds and gathered donations of toys to be brought to Friendly Charity House of Hanoi, Thien Phuoc Foster Home for Disabled Children in HCMC, and the Loreto Vietnam-Australia Program in HCMC.



In Hanoi, Friendly Charity House serves over 60 children who have been either temporarily or permanently orphaned due to the legal infractions of their primary caregivers. TIS students spent several days cleaning and repairing the shared bathroom facilities and spent time with the children playing games, singing songs, and enjoying meals together. In the small library maintained by the orphanage, student Leona Matsumoto noticed a pleasant surprise. “This book is from Marist Brothers International School in Kobe (Japan). What a coincidence; now we have something in common!”

When the TIS students traveled south to HCMC, they were moved by the heartbreaking circumstances of the children in the Loreto Program. These boys are, quite literally, “lost children”. Due to the dense urban nature of HCMC, untold numbers of children are lost by their families each year as they wander off in crowds or lose their way home in confusing alleys. Local authorities use the services of Loreto House to temporarily house children until their families can be found, or until the family arrives. Recently, a boy was reunited with his family after 7 years! The harsh reality of the world as seen through the eyes of these boys reminded TIS students about their own global civic duties.

The most striking and poignant experience was had through the gracious involvement of the Thien Phuoc Home. This foundation serves children who suffer from the ongoing effects of dioxin poisoning in Vietnam. Dioxin, a byproduct of Agent Orange, was introduced into the fragile ecosystem during

the American-Vietnam War. Contaminated plants and animals enter the food chain and are consumed, causing congenital defects in offspring.



The Vietnamese government struggles to care for the large percentage of the population affected by such disabilities as profound retardation, disfigurement, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and many other disorders of the central nervous system as well as dozens of forms of cancer. After donating 3 feeding chairs, the group spent their days feeding, cleaning, exercising, and entertaining the partially and completely paralyzed children. Tears flowed as students witnessed firsthand the struggle of life and death that the nurses face daily: one epileptic and feverish boy was rushed to the hospital when he stopped breathing. When the scooter sped away, he was never seen again.

“We weren’t doing much physical activity with them, or even talking. We were sitting there, holding their hands, and just comforting them through touch. I learned a lot about comforting someone through just touching them, and I think that I am going to try to use that,” recalled student Peter Dorrell as he reflected on the experience.

This has begun a new chapter in the chronicles of TIS. History teacher, Ron Connors, (recently arrived from the United Nations International School of HCMC) plans to continue the students’ efforts in Vietnam over the next years with a partnership between TIS students and the Direct Actions Committee at the United Nations International School in HCMC.

Joan Larsen, Head of TIS, enthusiastically supports these ongoing service learning experiences: **“In addition to the compassionate care provided by our students to others in real need, the life-long impact of these service learning experiences is immeasurable. Our students’ realization that they can indeed make a difference in the world in concrete ways is part of developing their global, socially responsible citizenship. Is this not one of our most important standards and values of international education?”**

by Karina Escajeda, ELD Coordinator, Tohoku International School, Sendai, Japan

Finally, I would like to add on a personal note that I was honored to accompany such a diverse and caring group of students on this journey to Vietnam. The memories of the persistent economic and health consequences of war will last a lifetime, and we hope to continue building our partnerships with the Vietnamese service community so that we leave MORE than memories: We strive to leave a legacy. For more information (including contact information for the charity organizations), please contact kescajeda@tisweb.net.

Japan ASCD Happenings



The 50/50 Early-bird Raffle: Ms. Gail Clark Dickson drew the lucky names. \$50.00 book voucher for the Japan ASCD Book Table goes to Ms. Gina Friedhoff, MC Perry ES and the 50% discount off the conference fee to Doug Jansen from Seisen Int’l School. Congratulations!



At Educator’s Day for DoDDs, Japan ASCD passed out information and answered questions about events and about our affiliate.

Annual Spring Conference on March 2/3



Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs will be a featured keynote speaker at the 2007 Japan ASCD Annual Spring Conference. In her keynote address, she will update participants on the best practices, newest technologies, and latest research on curriculum mapping. In a recent communication about Curriculum Mapping, Dr. Jacobs writes, "Curriculum Mapping has reached a new level of practice as an integrating hub for all levels of classroom and systems practice." At the 2007 Japan ASCD Spring Conference, Dr. Jacobs will focus on the latest Curriculum Mapping review procedures and technologies which allow school systems and individual teachers to merge assessment; to merge literacy in each classroom;

to house differentiated lesson plans; to develop professional development maps; and to immediately produce detailed reports regarding standards. A critical point of Dr. Jacobs' presentation will be the current focus on developing Consensus Maps, which have replaced old style guidelines. New directions will be shared with student curriculum mapping, curriculum mapping in higher education, and global mapping networks. In addition to her keynote address, Dr. Jacobs will present a two-day workshop focusing on developing essential questions and active literacy in curriculum mapping. Be sure to sign up soon for your spot at the 2007 Japan ASCD Annual Spring Conference. More information can be found at www.jascd.org. Spaces are limited!

Inspired by Karen Boyes

Earlier this year I attended the "Dimensions of Learning" conference in Melbourne, Australia. There were several well known educators presenting at the conference including Art Costa, Jay McTighe and Robert Marzano. However, it was **Karen Boyes** who captured my attention and inspired me as a teacher. Karen is an enthusiastic and charismatic presenter. There were many people attending each of her sessions and Karen still managed to make her seminars personal and useful.



This year I moved to a new classroom and

with the move I have implemented several ideas from Karen's "Creating an effective learning environment" session.

I have splashes of colour brightening the room, music to start and end the day, lots of plants, less lighting when possible and laughter. Karen's sessions flew by quickly and I always think that is a good sign!

Finally, I would like to end this recommendation on the same note as I walked out of Karen Boyes' session, "**We are the champions of the world!**"

You will have to attend her session at the Japan ASCD Spring Conference to find out.

*by Kate Ridoutt, First grade teacher,
St. Mary's Int'l School, Tokyo.*

Kay Taylor and Son, Major David Taylor, Jr. —by Thomas Amend

Some families and their communities are blessed to have living heroes among them. Others carry the painful honor of having heroes whose gift to humanity cost them their lives. But we have both in the family of Kay Taylor, friend and former board member of Japan ASCD, beloved career teacher of DoDDS middle school kids and the proud mother of a deeply respected and highly accomplished U.S. Army Major who recently gave his life in Iraq.

I have known and worked with Kay Taylor (now in Europe) for many years and it was Kay who first told me about Japan ASCD. Kay is legendary for her enthusiasm, her dedication to kids and their education, her boundless energy, her optimism, her faith and her love of life. Hundreds of people on three continents immediately began to pour forth their love, sympathy and support for Kay's family as soon as they learned that her son, Major David Taylor, had

been killed in Iraq by a roadside bomb while on patrol, just a few days before his scheduled return home after a full tour of duty.

Major Taylor was to the U.S. Army, its soldiers and its mission, very much what his mother, Kay Taylor, has always been in the lives and education of the children. He was respected, trusted, and in constant demand. He will be dearly missed but never forgotten and his sacrifice has already inspired deeper devotion to life and learning in all of us who know and love Kay Taylor and her entire family including Kay's other son, John, who teaches at Kinnick High School in Japan.

Thoughts, prayers and gratitude will never stop on behalf of Kay Taylor and her family.

Japan ASCD has contributed to two charities in memory of Major David Taylor, Jr.

BOOK REVIEWS by Katie

Is There Really a Human Race?

Written by Jamie Lee Curtis
Illustrated by Laura Cornell

In this simple and rhythmic text by Jamie Lee Curtis a young boy asks his mother, Is there really a human race? Is it going on now all over the place? When did it start? Who said, 'Ready, Set, Go'? Did it start on my birthday? Soon the boy realizes that if we don't help each other, we're all going to "crash." The boy's mother helps him understand the importance of taking one's time, trying one's best, and making the world a better place "for the whole human race."

The simple premise of this book allows children and adults alike to understand that people should do their best and help one another, instead of an "every man for himself" attitude.

Laura Cornell's illustrations are outstanding. The details in the pictures expand the understanding of the text. Each time I look at a page anew I see something I haven't seen before.

This picture book can be used in any age classroom for discussions on competitiveness, doing

what is right, issues of self esteem, diversity, uniqueness, and much more. This book is a definite plus to your classroom library.

Alice The Fairy

by David Shannon

Many of you know David Shannon as the author of the "No David!" series of books about a naughty young boy. In this irresistible and hilarious book David Shannon takes a look at the other side, an imaginative and angelic (almost) little girl, named Alice. Alice tells her story as a temporary fairy, who in her fairy costume can do all sorts of magic. She changed her dad into a horse so she could ride on his back. She changed oatmeal into cake by adding fairy dust (sugar). Sometimes the magic doesn't work so well because you have to go to a special school to be a permanent fairy. For instance her clothes wouldn't pick themselves up off the floor and her dog wouldn't float on the ceiling. Alice the Fairy is great for 3 to 6 year olds, well.... and adults too! This book had me laughing, remembering when my own daughter was a little "fairy".

Did You Try It On Monday?



On Saturday, October 21st, 2006, teachers from eight different international schools around Tokyo gathered at the International School of the Sacred Heart to take advantage of workshops in Technology Integration, CPR Certification, Playing and Standards, Developmental Reading Assessments, and Social Justice with Emerging Reading.



Japan ASCD members and non-members alike enjoyed the opportunity to professionally develop an area of personal interest. The presenters brought a great deal of knowledge and expertise to share with their colleagues, and participants enjoyed the specialized attention offered at this TIOM. If you missed the first TIOM of the 2006-2007 school year, do not despair. The next TIOM will be on Saturday, January 20th. — by Jamie Green



If you know someone who might be a good TIOM presenter, please let us know. Or if you'd like to do one, please contact us at info@jascd.org



Japan ASCD serves a diverse educational community enriching teaching, learning and cross-cultural communication.

— Japan ASCD Mission Statement

The Japan ASCD Board of Directors will strive to do its utmost to serve the educational community in Japan. We would appreciate any suggestions/comments or articles from you. Write to info@jascd.org. Thank you.

The 2006-2007 Japan ASCD Board

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