

(Super Science High School)



Principal's Message



Shigekazu Morimoto

Self-introduction

Let me introduce myself. My name is Mr. Shigekazu Morimoto. I worked in public senior high schools in Osaka and Nara prefectures since I graduated from university in March, 1972.

I taught English at school. When I was 39 years old, I was transferred to the Nara Prefectural Board of Education as a teachers' consultant. I worked there for 16 years. Then in my 50's, I became the principal at three Prefectural senior high schools.

In March, 2011, I was asked to work at this school as principal. It is the first time in my life that I work for a private school.

My Policy

The school philosophy is Integrity and Endeavor. And, I would like to realize this idea. In other words, it is natural for students to study hard in order to educate themselves, and as a result then advance to a university or college. However, it is also essential for them to polish themselves as a member of the society where everyone helps each other and everyone depends on others. Integrity and Endeavor are equally necessary for them to grow as well-balanced individuals who will lead society in the near future.

A Typical School Day

8:25- 8:35	Staff Morning Meeting
8:40- 8:50	Class Morning Meeting
8:50- 9:40	1 st Period
9:50-10:40	2 nd Period
10:50-11:40	3 rd Period
11:50-12:40	4 th Period (Saturdays end here)
12:40-13:20	Lunch Time
13:20-14:10	5 th Period
14:20-15:10	6 th Period (From Monday to Thursday)
15:20-16:10	7 th Period (Fridays)

- After the last period every day, a final class meeting is held followed by students' cleaning.

School Address

Name : Naragakuen Junior & Senior High School

Address : 430 Yamada-cho, Yamato-Koriyama City,
Nara Prefecture, Japan 639-1093

Telephone : +81 743 54 0351

Fax : +81 743 54 0335



School Philosophy

Our school was founded in order to foster students who will lead society in the future both globally as well as domestically.

The following two words are the basis of our school philosophy which was decided by the founder, Toshio Ise.

Integrity

(*Shisei* in Japanese)

Endeavor

(*Ryokkou* in Japanese)

Grades and Students

Junior H.S.

	students	classes	age
1st Grade	151	4	13
2nd Grade	161	4	14
3rd Grade	165	4	15
Total	477	12	

Senior H.S.

	students	classes	age
1st Grade	202	5	16
2nd Grade	194	5	17
3rd Grade	177	5	18
Total	573	15	

★ Each age means the students become that age during the school year.

School History

-
- 1979** Founded as Naragakuen junior and senior high schools on the side of Yata-kyuryo Hill in Nara prefecture, Japan. It was then a high school for boys only.
-
- 1982** The first Graduation Ceremony was held for junior high school students.
-
- 1985** The school library was built.
-
- 1989** The second gymnasium was built.
-
- 1993** The football pitch /soccer field was built. It is now covered with artificial turf.
-
- 2000** The current co-educational system was introduced.
-
- 2006** The Medical Program was established in order to help students enter medical universities / colleges.
-
- 2009** School buildings were rebuilt with the support of a student project team that advised architects on a better design and new look for the school.
-
- 2011** The first gymnasium was rebuilt. It has two stories, heating & air-conditioning.
The smaller gym, originally for martial arts only, was also rebuilt. Students now practice Judo and Kendo on the first floor, and table tennis on the second floor.
Five students visited Vietnam as representatives of the school in order to have a scientific and friendship exchange. They were welcomed at Nguyen Sieu High School and Hanoi University of Science & Technology.
-
- 2012** The Ministry of Education and Science designated our school as one of our nation's select Super Science High Schools, which aim to foster high level students who will lead science technology in Japan and into the future.
-

School Events

April

(1st semester)

Entrance Ceremony

Junior H.S students (4 classes) and Senior H.S. students (1 class) enter our school on April 5.

Parents and Teachers meeting

At the beginning of the school year, teachers in charge of each class meet the parents to talk about the students and their families.

May

School Excursion

Students of each grade have a one day trip at the beginning of May. The first graders of the JHS lodge at Soni-Kogen Hill so that they can learn how to live and study at school. It is also an opportunity for them to make friends at their new school.

Students' Meeting

The Student Council has a meeting to decide various matters concerning their school life, especially the Culture Festival in September.

School Excursion

It is popular in Japan for students to have a memorial trip in the last year at each school they attend.

The third year students at our JHS have a school excursion to Shikoku (this year) or other places for three days. The second year students at our SHS also have an excursion to Hokkaido where they stay over for three nights.

June

Foundation Day

June 6 is the Foundation Day of our school.

July

1th Term Finals

At the start of July students have term examinations for this semester.

Summer Holidays

Summer Holidays usually begin on July 21 and last until the end of August.

At our school, however, students have classes after the exams until July 31 so that they can learn even more.



Summer Holidays

Students enjoy holidays in various ways. Students who belong to a club are mostly absorbed in their activities. Some have family trips. Others, especially the SHS third year students, study hard at home, at school or at preparatory schools so that they can pass the entrance examinations of prestigious universities.



(2nd semester)

Opening Ceremony

We have the opening ceremony of the second semester on September 1.

Culture Festival

Usually on the second Sunday, the Culture Festival is held at our school. This is the biggest event of the year for the students. They prepare for the festival from as early as April. We can encounter dramas, music, dance, art, calligraphy, literature, cartoons, statues, rooms for amusement and so on. Many people visit our school to enjoy the festival together.



Athletic meet/Sports Day

JHS students have an athletic competition on the soccer field. They do their best in each race or event. Many parents attend as spectators around the field.



Ball games

SHS students, instead of a Sports Day, enjoy ball games such as basketball, volleyball, soccer and softball in a fun and competitive atmosphere.



2nd Term Finals

At the start of December, students have term examinations for this semester.

Winter Holidays

This semester ends on December 24 and then winter vacation starts. The third semester usually begins on January 8. During the vacation students enjoy Shogatsu (New Year's events) at home or other places.

January

(3rd semester)

Center Examination

Most of the third year students have to take the Center Examination which is the first and standard examination to help them enter a national or municipal university or college. These days private universities also tend to make use of the examination.

Commencement

Our SHS has commencement on January 30, which is earlier than other schools that usually have the ceremony in March.

February

Yatayama Hill Cross-country Run

In the middle of February, all the students at the JHS and SHS run through the hills of *Yatayama*. The course is about 12 km long. It is fairly rough running along the narrow, winding, and rocky paths in the hills and forests behind the school. The fastest students make it back to the school grounds in about 1 hour.

March

3rd Term Finals

At the beginning of March, students have term examinations for this semester. On March 20, we have the closing ceremony for this school year. Students have spring holidays until April 3.

Entrance Ceremony (April)

The entrance ceremony was held on April 5, 2013. 151 students were admitted into our JHS and 38 students to our SHS.

In the Principal's address to the students he emphasized 3 important matters in their school life. One is to have an ambition which will drive them forward. Another is to learn hard and to educate themselves so that they can become well-balanced students. The third one is to do their best in their everyday life. If they are too comfortable or satisfied with their daily situation, it will be difficult for them to grow mentally or intellectually.



School Festival (September)



Club Activities

Here is an introduction to our club activities. Most of the students belong to one or two clubs and practice hard after school and sometimes even on Sunday. Two to several teachers are in charge of each club, training the members and taking care of them.

Sports Clubs

Archery
Badminton
Baseball
Basketball
Judo
Kendo (Japanese fencing with a bamboo sword)
Soccer
Table
Tennis Tennis
Track and Field
Volleyball

Cultural Clubs

Art
Astronomy
Chamber Music
Dance & Vocal
English / E.S.S.
Go and *Shogi* (Japanese chess)
Gardening History
Literature (Writing)
Modern Music
Science
SF & Animation (Cartoons & Comics)
Tea Ceremony and Flower Arrangement
Train Transportation



Archery Club



Kendo Club

Super Science High School

Designation

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Science & Technology designated our school in March 2012 as one of our nation's select Super Science High Schools which aim to foster high level students who will lead science technology in Japan and into the future.

In Japan and Nara

There are 178 Super Science High Schools in Japan, including 5 high schools in Nara Prefecture. In this Prefecture, among the 5 high schools, one school is national, two are public and the other two are private.

Outline of Our Projects

Our school has three projects in our SSH plan. One is a project which aims to enhance students' scientific interests and abilities. In this program it is planned that students have various experiments in science classes, study in the field, learn from scientists outside and will be active in the science club.

Another endeavor is to foster those special individuals who will be able to lead our globalized society. In this program, we plan to have a student exchange with a private high school and college in Vietnam.

The third one is to establish a wider network with universities, research institutes and so on in order to support the scientific programs at our school.



Growing Mushrooms

Our school is located on the hillside of *Yata-kyuryo* and is spread over a wide part of the hill. Junior High students have classes on the hill which is covered with broadleaf trees like *Konara* and so on.

Konara trees are cut down and sawed into short logs which students then use in order to grow mushrooms on them called *Shiitake*.

Students can learn how and when mushrooms grow on the logs and how the logs change year by year.

These classes are held for 1st grade students at the JHS every year.



Growing Rice

The hills around our school were once used both as a place where neighbors could get necessary logs and other forest products, as well as for having small terraced paddy fields.

The school recovered the paddies on our grounds and began to grow rice there in the spring of 2012.

First year students from the SHS plant rice seedlings there in the spring, take care of the fields throughout the summer and then harvest them in autumn.

Students can learn how to grow rice as well as how human beings relate to the natural environment. This is an important agricultural experience for them and helps lead them to even greater insights into modern life, society and nature.



Firefly Paradise

In the hills around our school there are a few small streams that flow by the gymnasium and along the grounds finally emptying into a neighboring pond.

In summer we can enjoy many fireflies flying around the waterways where students worked hard putting down sand bags to make the water move more slowly so that firefly larvae can feed more easily on *Kawanina*, a kind of freshwater snail.

Weekday Seminars

Our school requested a few universities to dispatch researchers to our school for a series of weekday seminars. In 2012, Osaka University of Education, Kyoto University and Nara Women's University kindly accepted our requests.

We had 7 lectures after school during the year. Students who were interested in the lectures gathered and then listened intently to the current topics discussed.

Titles of the lectures were as follows:

- 1 From perfume to liquid crystal display television (June 21)
- 2 When pollen meets pistil at a rape blossom (July 25)
- 3 Bone density (October 24)
- 4 Water and the environment (November 19)
- 5 What is happening in the earth? Exploring technology (December 14)
- 6 Washing and science (January 24)
- 7 Life stages of stars in the winter sky (February 9)

These seminars are beneficial for the students because they don't have to visit any universities to learn about first-rate research in each field. Our students can learn as if they were university students.



Weekend Open Seminars



We planned three open seminars on Saturdays during the school year in 2012.

The first one was titled The Science of Music where Ms. Yamano who is a singer and Mr. Ueshiba who arranges music showed how human emotions are affected by subtle changes in sound or music.

It was a very pleasant and instructive lecture from an artistic point of view. Students could definitely broaden their understanding about music and sound.

The second lecture was scheduled in October inviting Mr. Masukawa who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics. He, however, became ill at that time and the lecture was unfortunately postponed.



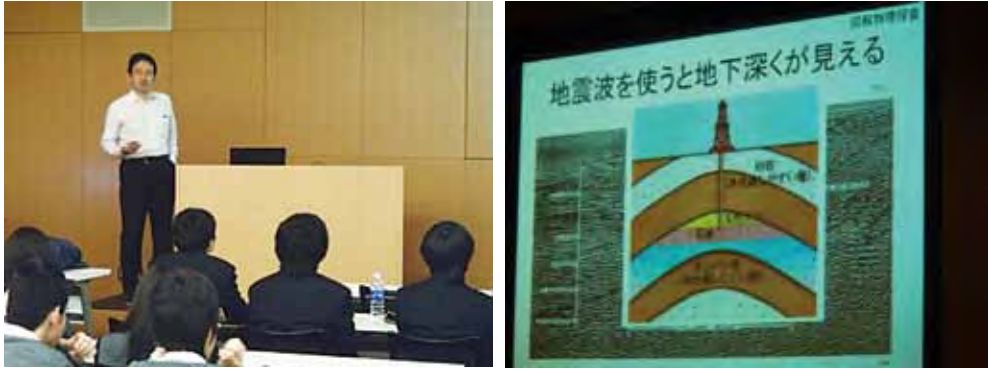
Science Field Trip

It is very fortunate for the 1st grade students at the SHS to visit universities, research institutes, historical sites and so on, where they have lectures from researchers and can observe laboratories and other facilities, too.

Students are stimulated by fascinating lectures and become even more interested in science than before.



Let me present one example. When students visited the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, they had lectures about scientific dating techniques, X-ray analyses, laser beam testing and so on. They were surprised to find out that modern technology is utilized even in the field of archaeology. Students' experience will broaden their interests and deepen their understanding about modern science and technology.



Students also visited Kyoto University and had a lecture about the earth, earthquakes and so on. It must be a wonderful and exciting chance for the students to have lectures at prestigious Kyoto University, where one day they may even become a student in the near future..

First Visit to Vietnam

In 2011, our school sent five students to Vietnam from December 17 to 22 in order to encourage scientific and friendship exchanges. They visited Nguyen Sieu High School and Hanoi University of Science and Technology. At the high school, our students explained in English about the huge earthquake and following disasters that occurred on March 11 in Eastern Japan.

At the University, they enjoyed lectures in English from the professors there on topics such as the weather, culture, traditions, and plants & animals of Vietnam.

They had lectures about preserving the environment in Vietnam by a Japanese engineer working there for the Kajima Construction Company. They also visited a village where people grow rice in terraced fields and learned how natural environments are preserved in harmony with human activities.

Vietnam Science Study Tour

Our school sent five students to Vietnam from December 16 to 21, 2012, in order to encourage friendship and scientific exchanges. They visited a village in Hoa Binh, the construction site of a bridge over the Hong River, Hanoi University of Science and Technology, Nguyen Sieu High School and several other places.

At a village in Hoa Binh, students walked around the village with young local people looking for plants that are medically useful and so on. They also had a meal in a wooden building whose floor is elevated by pillars. Students also had valuable experiences trying to communicate with the local youth without the help of any language.



At the construction site of a big suspension bridge over the Hong River, students were allowed to go up the pier, where they received explanations about the bridge.

The bridge is being built by a Japanese construction company, Kajima Kensetsu.



At Hanoi University of Science and Technology, students had lectures about water purification in Vietnam and Agent Orange which was used during the Vietnam War.



At Nguyen Sieu High School, Chairman Nguyen Trong Vinh and our Principal Morimoto signed a friendship agreement which promises everlasting friendly exchanges between the two schools.

Students had a nice time talking with each other, presenting cultural or scientific aspects of each country (see photos), and having lunch together.



Signing a long-term friendship agreement

International Exchange

Homestay Program in Australia

23 students in the first grade (Gr. 10) at Naragakuen Senior High School visited Adelaide, Australia this past summer. They applied for this Homestay program where they would learn English at local schools and have various experiences through staying with host families.

They left Japan on August 2nd, stayed with host families for 14 days and returned to Japan on the 18th.

The schools where they learned English were Southern Vales Christian College and Investigator College. They were divided into two groups and learned English at each school. They also had outdoor classes such as cycling, horse-back riding, aboriginal painting and so on.

According to the Japanese teachers who led our group to Australia, the students were all very pleased to have such wonderful experiences with the local students and their host families. The host families were all extremely kind and took care of our students with complete sincerity.



Our Prefecture

Nara Prefecture

Our prefecture is located almost at the center of the Japanese archipelago. The area of this prefecture is about 3,700 square kilometers. Its population is about 1 million 400 thousand.

This area was where our ancient capitals were in the 7th and 8th centuries. We can visit many famous temples and shrines which remain from those days in Nara Prefecture. Horyuji temple and Todaiji temple are among those that are well-known.

Yamato-Koriyama City

Our school is located in the western part of Yamato-Koriyama City. This city is famous for goldfish and is first in Japan when it comes to the total number of cultured goldfish.

Matsuo-dera Temple

There is a famous temple near our school called Matsuo-dera. This temple was also built in the 8th century. People visit and pray here in hopes of driving out evil spirits.



Horyu-ji Temple

To the south of our school there stands Horyu-ji Temple which was designated as World Cultural Heritage site in Japan. We can get there in about 40 minutes on foot from our school. The temple was first built in the year 607 and rebuilt around 711. It is the oldest wooden building in the world among all existing wooden structures. A lot of tourists visit there not only from around Japan but many foreign countries.



Houki-ji Temple



Nandaimon Gate (Main Gate)



Buddhist Statues at the Middle Gate

To the east of Horyu-ji Temple we can find Houki-ji Temple. It is said that the temple was first built in the year 606 by Prince Shotoku who encouraged the teaching of Buddhist scripture there. At this temple the wooden pagoda is designated as a national treasure because it was built in 706 and is the oldest three-story pagoda in Japan. It is 23.9 meters high on a stone foundation.

Yatadera Temple

To the north of our school stands *Yatadera* Temple which is famous for its many hydrangeas. In June a lot of tourists visit there to enjoy the relaxing ambience of the temple with so many hydrangeas.

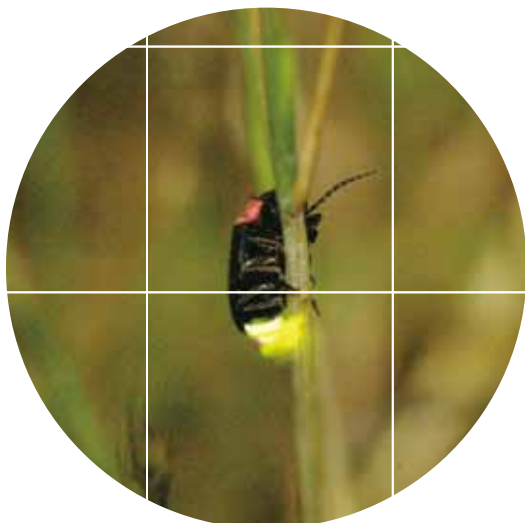
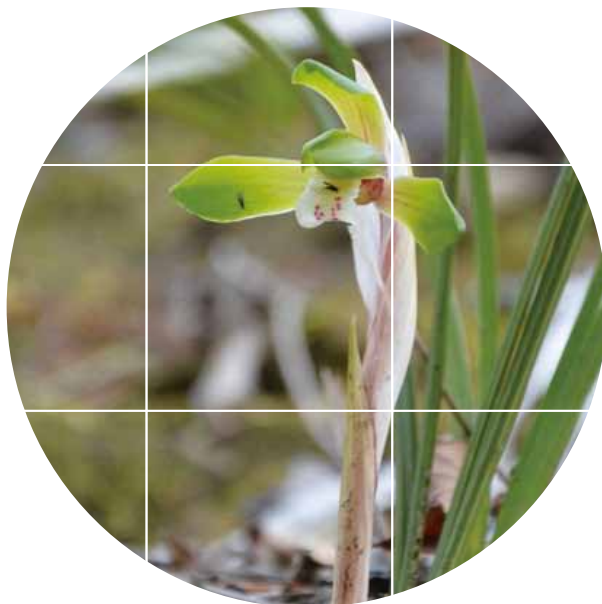
The temple is originally well-known for *Jizo*-san, a kind of stone statue of Buddha. The oldest *Jizo* called *Miso-name Jizo* (*Jizo*-tasting *miso*) was made about 1,000 years ago.



Miso-name Jizo



The grounds of *Yatadera* Temple



Naragakuen Junior & Senior High School

430 Yamada-cho, Yamato-Koriyama City, Nara Prefecture, Japan 639-1093

Telephone : +81 743 54 0351 Fax : +81 743 54 0335 <http://www.naragakuen.ed.jp/>

