

The Yuuyake Shimbun

Strengthening the Bonds of the Community

May 2009



Portland Children Pass Japanese Fluency Test

PORTLAND, OR. -

Four International School students and three International School graduates passed the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) administered by the Japan Foundation. Nehalem Kunkle-Read, Connor Onitsuka, Katie Yotsuuye, and Jack Malsin, all passed the JLPT and are currently fifth grade students at The International School. The International School graduates who passed the JLPT are Sara Onitsuka, currently in 6th grade; and Kento Murawski and Kindra Jones, both currently in 7th grade.

The JLPT is conducted to evaluate and certify the language proficiency of non-native speakers of Japanese. The test includes writing, listening, reading, and grammar components. Kento Murawski & Kindra Jones passed the Level 3 test, for which the examinee must master grammar to a limited level, know around 300 kanji and 1,500 words, and have the ability to take part in everyday conversation and read and write simple sentences, according to the Japan Foundation. The rest of the students passed the Level 4 test, for which the examinee must have mastered at least the basic elements of grammar, know around 100 kanji and 800 words, and have the ability to engage in simple conversation and read and write short, simple sentences.

The children are all native English speakers who have attended The International School's Japanese immersion program since preschool or kindergarten, according to Maria Abad, Principal. They

study an American curriculum with all of their subjects – math, science, social studies, etc - taught in Japanese by native Japanese speakers. As part of their fifth grade curriculum, the children spent two weeks in Japan, attending a Japanese school and visiting Japanese cultural and historical sites.

The International School provides a multicultural environment where children are fully immersed in Spanish, Japanese or Chinese language and culture. Children become bilingual as they learn a full American curriculum with native speaking teachers, small classes, and high expectations. The International School was founded in 1990, educates over 370 children, and was awarded the Oregon Consular Corps 2008 International Award. www.intlschool.org, 503-226-2496, 025 SW Sherman Street, Portland, Oregon 97201.