

First of all, I would like to express my sympathies to the families of those who died and are still missing because of the floods and avalanche of earth, rocks, and driftwood caused by the heaviest rain in the past fifty years on Kyushu island on the fifth of July. I feel very sorry for people on Kyushu island, especially people in Kumamoto and Oita Prefectures since they suffered much by the huge earthquakes last year. It is not easy for us to go there and help people in need. It is not easy for us to make a lot of donation to them. But we should think about them. Let's pray for their recovery.

Boys and girls, I would like to talk about three things today, at the end

of the first trimester, 2017.

First,

I told you three things at the beginning of this trimester in April. I hope you might remember them.

One of them was about how we should treat one another. I asked you to remember to be careful with the words that you use with your friends.

And I asked you to talk to teachers, especially when you are in low spirits or when it is hard striving to solve your problems all by yourselves.

However, I have heard that, during this trimester, a few students were

offended by some things that teachers said. On their behalf, I would like to say that the teachers never meant to offend anyone. But we should be even more considerate toward our students. I sincerely apologize to you that we made some of you feel uncomfortable. I do hope it won't discourage you from talking to us. I promise you again that we will do whatever we can to help out, and we will always be at your side.

Second,

twelfth graders, since the government has lowered the voting age, 94 of you had a chance to vote in the Metropolitan Assembly election on the

second of this month. I hope all of you who had the right to vote went to the polls. The Metropolitan Assembly election was a very good chance for you to think about some of the political issues we face in our society today, such as the large number of children who have been on waiting lists for kindergartens and nursery schools, the challenges our social security system has been facing in this aging society, the fact that the move to the new market in Toyosu has been deferred because of its polluted soil, and the preparations for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020, which have been behind schedule. What is it that you are most concerned about? What problems do you want politicians to solve? You should all take an interest in political issues in

order to try to help make our society better. It is you, boys and girls, who can change the world.

Third, and last,

As you know, every morning I say hello to you at the entrance to our school. I feel very sad when some of you pass right in front of me without saying anything, not making eye contact with me, or sometimes even hiding your faces with umbrellas. Maybe some of you make it a rule not to exchange morning greetings with anybody. Maybe some of you dislike me personally, even though you don't know me personally.

Still, I do hope you might say ‘Good morning, sir.’ or ‘How are you, Principal?’ with a big smile on your face. I believe morning greetings make us *genki* and so make our daily lives more comfortable. Let’s exchange morning greetings.

I have told you three things today; first, not to be discouraged from talking to us when you are in low spirits, second, to take an interest in political issues, and, finally, to say hello to me with a smile.

Boys and girls, during the summer vacation, and as you look forward toward the School Festival, accept as many new challenges as you can, and pass the proud traditions of the *Gaien-sai* on to your *kouhai*. And,

of course, study hard.

In closing my speech, I will tell you some things that I often tell you at the beginning and the end of each trimester: Do what you can do today for the sake of your future self. Where there is a will, there is a way.

Work toward realizing your dreams.

Thank you very much.

738 words