

# CAJ Chronicle

Christian Academy in Japan

Fall 2021

all things work  
**TOGETHER**







## CHRONICLE

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# Message from Head of School

Welcome to the Fall 2021 CAJ *Chronicle*! The theme uniting this issue is "All Things Work Together." Though our minds were reaching for the ways our core statements such as Student Objectives hold everything we do together, it is truly exciting and amazing to see the ways that God has brought so many things together to complete our building and renovation projects. We are extremely grateful for so many families in our CAJ community who have sacrificially given to this project that will enhance the education and opportunities for the students. We are thankful for the dedicated architects, designers, construction workers, and many other people who contributed to the completion of this. We are grateful for the vision of our Board and Leadership who caught a glimpse of what could be. We also rejoice with the students, who saved ¥500 coins toward completing the field, and who are now thoroughly enjoying running and playing on the turf, volleying and shooting on the multi-use courts; and climbing and swinging on the playground equipment. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

School is more than the facilities, but we celebrate the ways that our buildings and grounds support the larger vision of "equipping our students to serve" and enhance the learning that flourishes here on the CAJ campus.

Anda Foxwell  
HEAD OF SCHOOL



## CHANGES IN PTA membership

In May 2021, the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members voted and approved a change in the CAJ PTA Guiding Principles, regarding membership. PTA membership is now designated as "those who are parents/legal guardians of currently enrolled students, current staff and board members, and current SSS families." With this change, we strive to focus more on the currently enrolled students and the needs of the school to fulfill its mission.

We continue to recognize and value the relationship with the wider Christian and missionary community, and we hope to plan various events where we can connect and enjoy fellowship.







# IMPACT 75

## what a great impact!

BRYAN LEWIS | Business Manager

**I**t has been an exciting time of capital development at CAJ since the last update, and a time of great blessing as our students have begun to enjoy and benefit from new facilities. Our Building Committee began meeting more than 4 years ago to commence planning, both to replace aging infrastructure and provide new facilities to meet the growing needs of the school. This led to the launch of **IMPACT 75** in 2019 which outlined a goal of completing 3 significant projects by 2025, our 75th anniversary.

All our expectations of that time have been exceeded. We have recently completed not just Stage 1, our new multipurpose building, but also Stage 2, our new turf field and play areas, and all during a pandemic! This really is testimony to God's ongoing provision for the school and to the strong support of our community, for which we are so grateful. We are also thankful for the professionalism, skill and support of our builders, Koshin Construction, who have worked tirelessly to complete the projects.

Thank you to all who have supported us through donating to the Turf Field appeal. We have reached our initial target but

would highly value any further contributions through the giving section of our website [caj.ac.jp](http://caj.ac.jp). We will soon be designing the final acknowledgment grid and honoring those who gave, and this will be displayed on a prominent wall of the new building. A draft grid can also be seen on our website.

We will definitely now take appropriate time to celebrate and enjoy the new facilities and ensure we use them in ways to maximize our mission goals. Our attention will then soon turn to Stage 3 of **IMPACT 75** — but more about that next time.

Praise the Lord for his provision. 🙏



### Have you included JCAA in your Planned Giving arrangements?

For many years CAJ has been using an associated entity, Japan Christian Academy Association (JCAA), to assist supporters wishing to donate to the school, and we are so grateful for all who have given in this way. With increasing regulatory complexity in this area, we have decided it is now time use other specialist organizations for this important function. If you have mentioned JCAA as a beneficiary in any Planned Giving arrangements could you please contact the Business Manager on [blewis@caj.ac.jp](mailto:blewis@caj.ac.jp) to discuss how to make any required amendment. Thank you.







# prepared for the **JOURNEY**

ANDA FOXWELL  
Head of School

## **H**OW IS EDUCATING STUDENTS

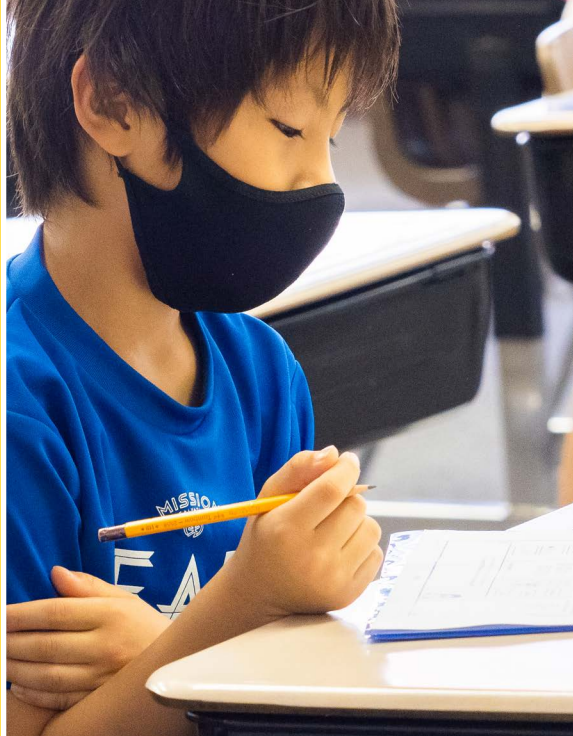
like preparing for a journey? To be successful at either endeavor, we need a clear destination and the right kind of preparation. Our vision, “Equipping students to serve Japan and the world for Christ” describes our destination of students prepared to serve others in diverse cultural settings. But when preparing for a journey, travelers need more than just the destination. What sort of maps will we need? What will be important to us as we travel? How will we know when we reach our destination? Other core statements help us with these.

We measure how we are progressing toward our destination by using statements that we call Student Objectives. These help us define what a student must do or be if they are truly equipped to serve. They give us snapshots of the qualities we want our students to have.

For years, we have used the qualities of: Responsible Learners, Discerning Thinkers, Productive Collaborators, Effective Communicators, and Faithful Caretakers to describe CAJ’s students and graduates. During the 2020-2021 school year, we took a long, hard look at these objectives. We were willing to completely scrap them and start all over if

Equipping  
students  
to serve  
Japan  
and the  
World  
for  
Christ





they were taking us in the wrong direction, but the more we examined them, the more we were convinced that they just needed some reordering and revising. The students graduating in the 2020's may need different skills than their predecessors did decades ago. We needed to apply the same qualities we wanted to see in our students with interpretations applicable in the 21st Century.

**Being Faithful Caretakers** is the quality that gives shape and purpose to all the other qualities we want to nurture. It had formerly felt a bit like an add-on, but we want to be clear that this is exactly what students who are equipped to serve “Japan and the world for Christ” must be. Though all our Student Objectives are important, Faithful Caretakers is the primary goal for our students, with all the other Student Objectives supporting it. In other words, we want our student to:

- Receive all God’s creation — self, others, and the environment — as gifts to be cherished and renewed.
- Care for all God’s creation — self, others, and the environment — and unfold its potential for the flourishing of all and the glory of God.
- Develop physical, social, emotional, moral, and spiritual health.
- Cultivate practices of forming and appreciating beauty.
- Seek God’s truth, goodness, and beauty in and through diverse cultures and languages.
- Serve God and others locally and globally.

We acknowledge that schools are focused on learning, and we want our students to be **Responsible Learners**. This means they will:

- Understand subject content.
- Develop and apply subject skills
- Use reliable sources to support conclusions.
- Integrate content and skills across subjects.
- Take initiative and persevere to deepen knowledge.

Beyond simply learning, we want our students to be **Discerning Thinkers**. From kindergarten through grade 12, in age appropriate ways, our students will:

- Analyze and synthesize diverse perspectives on an issue.
- Identify and evaluate multiple solutions to problems.
- Revise thinking and work in pursuit of excellence.
- Interpret all types of information.
- Apply a Christian perspective to all areas of life and learning.

One of our core values at CAJ is that God designed us for community. To function as significant contributors in society, students must be **Productive Collaborators** who:

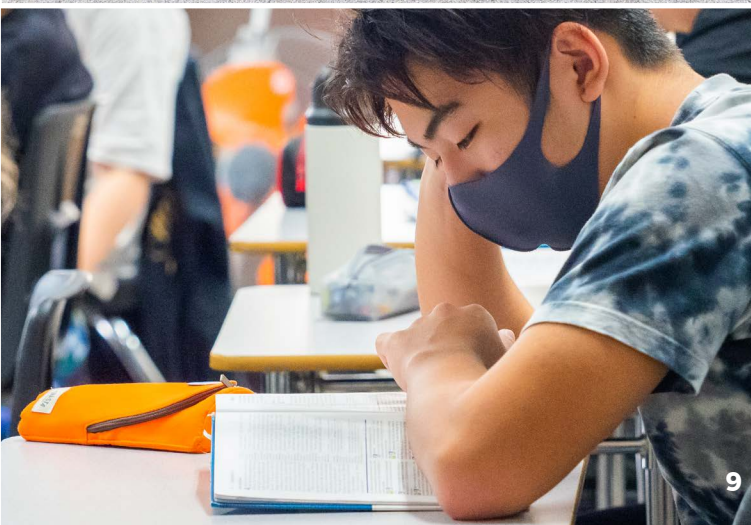
- Create a positive environment that encourages respect, creativity, and flexibility.
- Provide and receive constructive feedback.

We also want to guide our students to being **Effective Communicators**. We need people in our world today who are able to:

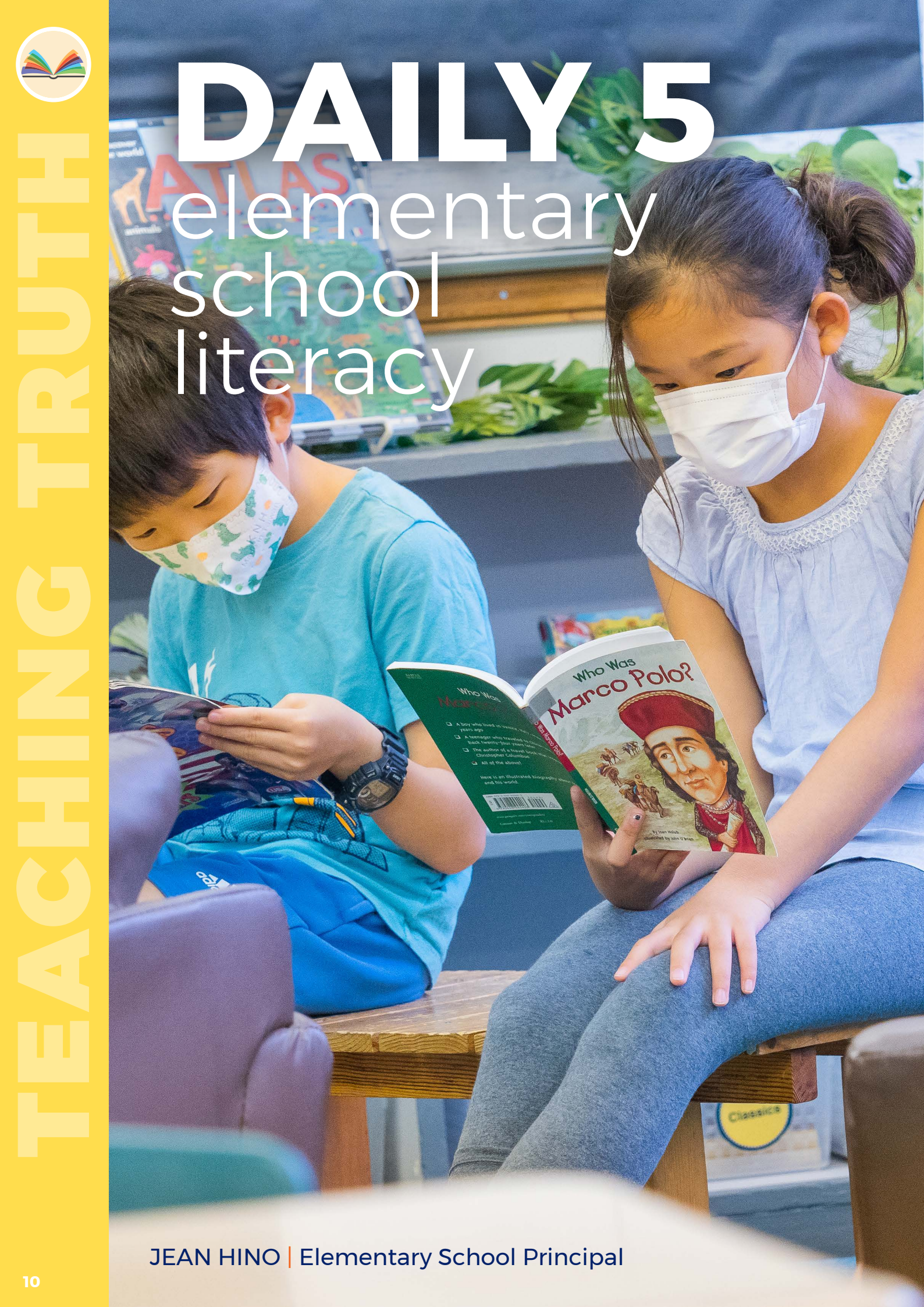
- Employ various forms of communication.
- Engage with and navigate between diverse cultures and languages.

These Student Objectives provide us with milestones to mark our journey of equipping students who will make a positive difference in the world they enter when they leave CAJ. They provide a picture of what equipped students look like at each stage of their development.

The journey of educating students is one filled with towering mountains, quiet valleys, dangerous waters...and also great joy. Having signposts along the way helps the journey be intentional, purposeful, and provides a way to reach the destination safely and with a sense of accomplishment. 🏆







# DAILY 5

elementary  
school  
literacy

JEAN HINO | Elementary School Principal



**In** today's fast-paced, easily distracted world, how do we equip students to be motivated and independent readers and writers? Research has shown that, when students have choices in their learning, they are more invested in that learning. In 2010, CAJ elementary adopted a language arts framework called Daily 5.

Daily 5 is based on six foundational elements:

- Routine periods during which students read and write on their own, practicing old and new skills
- Focused instruction that introduces new skills and guides student practice
- Structure that reinforces independence
- Student choice of activities and reading content
- Authentic reading and writing tasks
- Instruction and expectations that match brain development

Each classroom has adapted the basic elements to fit the teachers' and students' personalities and needs. The Daily 5, as its name suggests, consists of five choices for the students:

1. Read to Self
2. Read with Someone
3. Listen to Reading
4. Word Work
5. Work on Writing

At the beginning of the year, students learn various reading strategies and skills, and work on

building stamina in their independent reading and writing. Each language arts period consists of time for group instruction, student choice work times, small group or individual instruction, and check-ins.

Along with the choice of what students want to work on, they are also given the opportunity to choose their own books to read, and where they want to work. Students don't do every activity every day, but teachers track activities weekly to be sure that all students are practicing all of the necessary skills. CAJ is blessed to have classroom libraries that allow the students to choose books from a variety of genres and levels.

Reading strategies are taught by using the acronym **CAFE**. **C** for comprehension, **A** for accuracy, **F** for fluency and **E** for expanding vocabulary. Some lessons are repeated from year to year, adding what is developmentally appropriate. Teachers confer with students to encourage and monitor growth as a reader and writer.

We are excited to adapt the Daily 5 structure into our Japanese program as well, encouraging students to read and write at their own level. Encouraging students to make choices in their learning and be responsible will help them as lifelong learners. 📖

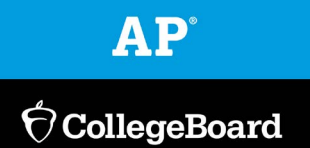


# AP CLASSES

## and the christian perspective

NATE GIBSON | High School Teacher

Each May, more than two million high school students take Advanced Placement (AP) exams. These exams, offered by the College Board, are notable for their intensity and difficulty, intended to replicate college-level rigor. After all, College Board's mission is to "connect students to college success and opportunity", and a high-achieving score of 4 or 5 on the 5-point scale AP exam could result in college credit in that subject at many U.S. colleges. In the process, students have an opportunity to challenge themselves in subjects that they enjoy, or which may afford a head-start on their intended college major. While the College Board's goals of college success and opportunity may sound admirable, how does this play out in practice at CAJ, given our unique situation compared to many other schools that offer AP courses?



CAJ is distinct not only as a Christian school, but as an international school. As a Christian school, our vision statement, which drives every aspect of our program, is "equipping students to serve Japan and the world for Christ". As a diverse international school in Japan, we send our graduates to an expanding list of colleges and universities around the world. So the question, then, is to what extent do College Board's goals align with CAJ's goals? And what is the value of taking AP courses when a student is planning to attend university outside of the U.S. and college credit for a certain AP score is not a possibility?

### *To what extent do College Board's goals align with CAJ's goals?*

Philosophically, there are fundamental differences, to be sure. As a Humanities teacher, I strive for a pedagogy of grace in which my students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and skills, and just as importantly, to demonstrate their growth from lesson to lesson, unit to unit. This is perhaps nowhere more clear than in my philosophy of teaching writing. I allow the students time to peer-edit, seek feedback from me, and revise each writing assignment. Writing is not a zero-sum game, but rather an ongoing process of refinement.





By contrast, the AP English: Language exam asks students to write three separate essays in 2 hours and 15 minutes, which prioritizes speed over deliberation, and product over process. One mark of a good assessment is its authenticity; its real-world importance, or connection to real-world skills. Standardized tests and timed essays may be rigorous, but they are not particularly authentic, as the skill of test-taking more or less begins and ends with itself.



All the same, I do not believe this difference renders AP English incompatible with CAJ's vision, or my values as a Christian teacher. For my AP English students, I try to frame the three timed essays on the exam as more of a game than a final judgment of their writing ability - a bonus challenge or a puzzle rush. I am far more interested in how my AP students grew from the start of the year to the end of the year, and how they performed on multiple essays over time than what their final exam score was.

To balance a focus on growth and process with the need to perform under a time limit on the exam, I allow multiple draft rewrites and revision on all writing assignments first semester, and select assignments second semester, while also assigning somewhere between 15 and 20 timed essays as opportunities for students to work on speed and efficiency. And indeed, some students thrive when performing tasks of speed, and achieve high scores on the final exam. Other students, including some exemplary writers, struggle when forced to rush, and do not score well on the exam. While these latter students are unable to pick up credit based on their exam score, I do offer to write a college recommendation in which I defend their skills of writing and analysis, if they would like.

However, there is more to AP courses than the final exam. The content is also worth considering in light of our vision as a school. AP English:



Language holds up much better by this metric, with its focus on the skills of rhetorical analysis and argumentation. As students learn to identify and analyze a speaker's choices in light of the rhetorical situation, they develop a tremendous capacity for critical reading and thought. This naturally extends into an ability to craft a thoughtful, compelling argument of their own. Analyzing other speakers' awareness of their audience and context, their use of logic, and their stylistic choices expands the students' personal toolkit as they prepare their own arguments. It helps them to recognize their own underlying assumptions and biases more readily, to respond to counter-arguments, questions, and concerns more effectively, to select the best evidence and arrange it logically, and to qualify their claim in helpful, defensible (non-reactionary, non-inflammatory) ways. As a Christian, I sincerely desire for my students to leave my class with not only a deeper ability to analyze arguments that they encounter in the world, but a deeper ability to respond to those arguments with grace, winsomeness, and insight, and to adroitly

stand up for what is good, true, and just. Taught properly, I believe that the AP English curriculum can further this goal.



Likewise, Megan LaPoint, who teaches AP Physics and AP Calculus noted that her AP Physics students "must learn to approach and analyze problems from a variety of perspectives, which challenges their methods of thinking and instills perseverance." These skills and traits do not simply begin and end with physics--LaPoint believes that they will empower students to face and respond to the challenges that inevitably arise in a life of Christian service. Similarly, LaPoint has noticed that the rigor of AP Calculus helps students to "work through their fear of making mistakes and build confidence." Providing a space to learn to embrace failure as part of the learning process, and to demonstrate resilience in the face of failure is part of a pedagogy of grace, just like



providing opportunities to revise or rewrite an essay. LaPoint is confident that getting past a fear of failure will make students more “willing to work on difficult problems that seem insurmountable.”



That said, not all subjects’ content aligns quite so well with our vision. Keith Kelleth, AP Economics teacher, pointed out a two-fold problem: First, “There is so much content in AP Economics, and it is so specific, that it is hard to identify and spend time discussing overarching themes.” Comparing AP Economics to his other subjects, World History and Comparative Government, Kelleth commented that it was more challenging to think of a driving storyline for AP Economics that could serve as the basis for integrating a Christian perspective. At the same time, he observed that AP Economics “lacks the focus on order that the maths and sciences have.”

Secondly, Kelleth questioned the perspective at the forefront of AP Economics: “The test assumes that peoples’ only motivation is personal gain. When students are working on a problem for Economics, they can’t think of altruism or charity; they have to think from the perspective of what maximizes personal benefit.” So what can teachers do in the face of content that seems to stand at odds with a Christian understanding of the world? Kelleth acknowledged “it requires a bit of dancing to teach it, balancing what the AP content says with what we can observe in the world around us as Christians.” All of this speaks to the need for thought and care in the way AP courses are taught, recognizing that on their own and at face value, the AP philosophy of assessment, and even the content itself may not align neatly with our Christian vision. Keeping that vision central while faithfully preparing students for a difficult and potentially consequential exam requires the very delicate balancing act that Kelleth suggests, a reality that the AP teachers at CAJ know well.

### *What is the value of taking ap courses when a student is planning to attend university outside of the U.S?*



Another factor that plays into the role of AP courses at CAJ is the fact that we are an international school, and over the past decade, a growing number of students are attending university in countries other than the United States. Because College Board’s relationship is with U.S. colleges and universities, universities in other countries do not award credit for a high score on the AP exam. Does this remove the external incentive for taking AP courses? Not necessarily. Tom McGlothlin, Academic Counselor, observes that admission for students from an American-curriculum school into a number of Commonwealth universities, in particular in the UK, Australia and New Zealand, is dependent upon achieving a specific AP score in certain subjects. McGlothlin explained, “they do not know how to interpret an American GPA, and they are accustomed to admissions based on high-stakes testing, such as A-levels in the UK. So, they simply replace their domestic tests with the AP tests, as well as the SAT, in most cases.”

Yukiko Howard, Japanese University Academic Counselor, anticipates a similar trend in Japanese university admissions for students coming from American-curriculum schools, especially given the fact that the College Board has stopped administering SAT subject tests as of this year: “These subject exams were a weighty variable for those applying to

Japanese universities, especially for those interested in STEM programs. What I and other counselors are expecting is that in place of these subject exams, universities are going to start looking more at the AP courses.” So, although the practical benefits of AP courses may look different for many of our students who choose to attend university outside of the United States, they may still play an important role.

Like any tool or trend in education, the AP program is imperfect, replete with both benefits and flaws. In our context, it may not consistently live up to College Board’s goal of “connecting students to college success and opportunity” in the same way that it might for many students in the U.S. More importantly, there may even be cases in which the form and content of the AP program clash outright

with CAJ’s values and our understanding of how the world works, presenting unique challenges for teachers. Yet, these challenges are not insurmountable, and our teachers have the creativity and flexibility to meet these challenges head-on. As we utilize this imperfect tool, we can help students to put the content and exams in their proper context, and seize teachable moments to discuss the shortcomings of high-stakes testing as an academic measure, as well as the power of a particular viewpoint or narrative to shape education, for better or worse. CAJ certainly has a unique environment compared to many other AP schools; perhaps, in the end, the question is not whether or not AP classes have a role to play, but rather how we as teachers can frame and teach our AP classes to work toward CAJ’s goals and values. 🙏







# light bulb moments

TAMARA HERSHBERGER | Grade 7 EAL Co-Teacher

**TEACHERS LOVE “A-HA” MOMENTS.** The moment when a learner puts all the information together and the proverbial light bulb turns on is a joy to see. During professional development training in February 2019, I had one of those moments. We were doing a book study about improving our co-teaching skills and, recalling the teachings of Virginia Rojas about supporting our EAL (English as an Additional Language) students in all academic subjects, I thought to myself, “Why don’t I co-teach more subjects other than just English?”

Co-teaching is two teachers collaborating and sharing responsibilities for instruction and assessment. In the current middle school EAL program, only the English class had co-teachers. However, this meant that some non-native English speaking students might not have been getting enough academic vocabulary instruction in all of their classes. As discussions continued, together with the principal, we created a new EAL program to pilot for the 2020-2021 school year.

In addition to English, we decided to implement co-teaching in the science and social studies classrooms. We wanted to create a classroom environment that would become language rich. This means that we nurture a love for learning and sharing ideas while developing the learner’s language skills. Confidence to use language grows as students gain more positive experiences.

Students then use higher level skills and make connections across the curriculum.

Last fall during social studies class, we were studying about different circumstances that affect a country’s population growth and decline. We learned the verb migrate and analyzed the difference between emigration and immigration. Then we made memory devices to explain the definitions. To make personal connections, we discussed travel, passports, and customs and immigration at the airport. Since all of our travel is restricted due to covid-19, we enjoyed daydreaming about where we’d like to go once travel opens up again. It was an effective lesson and the students were prepared for the assessment. The richness of this learning experience was further enhanced when a few months later in science class we were learning about the environment and animal

habitats. As the unit progressed, we learned about a species’ population and what factors impact population growth and decline. What an impactful association we made as we recalled our previous lessons from social studies class. It was exciting for the students to introduce the science teacher to our memory devices for the vocabulary words. Because of our new co-teaching commitment, I was able to guide the class to make the connections and create a richer learning experience.

Another significant experience was making connections with the Bible. While studying the Old Testament, the students learned the word oppression and how God’s chosen people were being oppressed by other nations around them and eventually taken into captivity. Later in social studies class, the students learned about ancient civilizations like Babylon and Assyria. They used their Bible and social studies textbook to compare timelines

and important events. One student declared “they both happened at the same time--they’re the same people!” The room lit up as other students made the same connection and the truth of the Bible was realized.

Collaborating with others is rooted in the New Testament teaching of being one body, but many parts. As teachers, when we work together cooperatively, we use our different gifts and personalities while we strive for the same objective. The classroom becomes an encouraging environment where students can build confidence and make connections. Our EAL students are benefiting from having more time with teachers who can guide and support their learning. m.

As you can see, it’s not only students that have light bulb moments. Teachers can too. Co-teaching is a bright idea! 🌟





# STUDENT destinations

**TOM MCGLOTHLIN**  
Bible Department Head and Academic Counselor

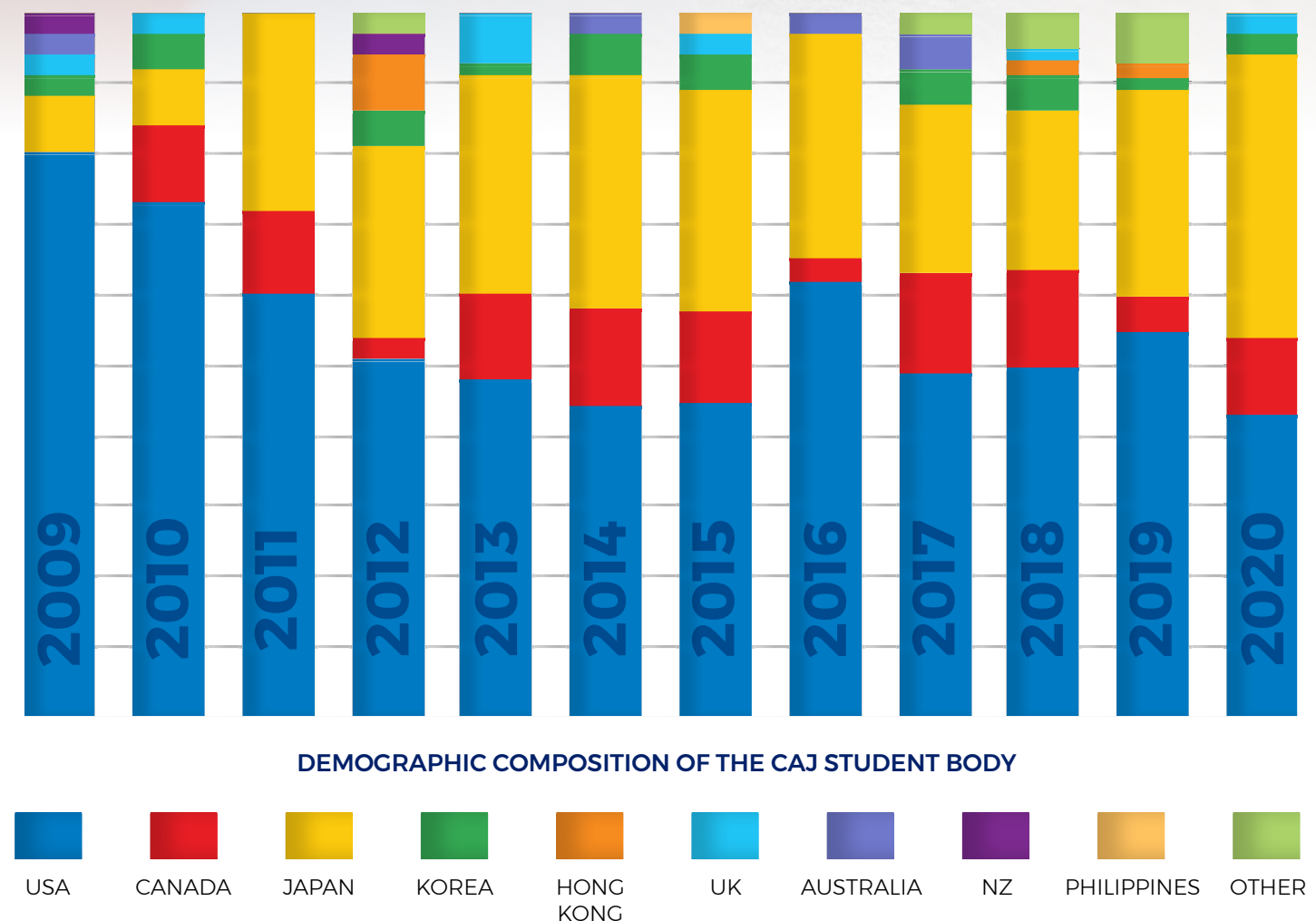
**S**ince its founding, the majority of CAJ students have continued on to higher education. This remains true today. Roughly 80% of graduating seniors enroll in colleges or universities within a year of graduation, and many others enroll after taking a gap year.

What has changed significantly in recent years is where those graduates choose to pursue their higher education. In the past, the United States was by far the most popular destination for our graduates. As the chart accompanying this article clearly shows, though, the proportion of graduates choosing the US for college has dropped significantly in the past decade. As recently as 2009, 80% chose the US for college. Yet that number dropped to 45% by 2014 and has remained between 45% and 55% since then. During that period, the number of students choosing Canada has risen to around 10%. The largest increase, however, is in students choosing to remain in Japan for university: that number has increased from 8% in 2009 to an average of around 30% in recent years.

Shifts in the demographic composition of the CAJ student body only partially account for these changes. Comparing two graduating classes, one decade apart, will be helpful here. In the class of 2009, roughly 45% of students

were US citizens; in 2019, that number was 35% — a real decrease, but not large enough to account for the drop in students going to the US for university. In 2009, 30% were citizens of Japan; in 2019, that number was still 30% — providing no clear explanation for the large increase in students remaining in Japan for university.

What other factors, then, might explain these shifts? One is cost. The “sticker price” (cost before financial aid) of universities in the US continues to rise steeply. Scholarships and need-based financial aid can often bring these costs back down significantly, but much of this financial aid is difficult to obtain for non-US citizens. As a result, while US citizens can often find university options that are affordable after financial aid, non-US citizen CAJ graduates have a much more difficult time. The same is increasingly true in other countries. Many universities in Canada and Australia, for example, charge non-citizens dramatically more than citizens – often with even fewer opportunities





for financial aid than in the US. Universities in Japan, however, remain relatively affordable for all applicants, no matter their citizenship.

Another factor is job prospects. Non-Americans graduating from US universities face strict requirements for obtaining a work visa. If they are unable to meet these requirements – quite difficult in all but a few sectors – they must seek work elsewhere. Many Japanese students, for example, worry that they will receive a good but expensive education in the US, only to have to return to Japan and compete on the Japanese job market with a degree from a university that carries little or no name-brand recognition in Japan. By contrast, the most popular Japanese universities offering English-language degree tracks – schools like Waseda, Sophia, Keio, and International Christian University – have very strong brands here in Japan.

A final factor is options. Over the last decade, the Japanese universities with long-established English-taught degrees have increased their program offerings to include areas like engineering. As more and more students have applied to these programs – including from other international schools, many of which have seen similar trends among their graduates – admission has become very competitive. At the same time, the number of Japanese universities offering English-taught degrees has increased dramatically (now well over 30).



CAJ is working to equip students for success in these new contexts through curriculum and advising. CAJ's US-based accreditation and high school curriculum, including AP program, are widely recognized by universities around the world, making applications relatively straightforward even for universities outside the United States. Recognizing the advanced Japanese language skills that many of our students already have and the value those skills will continue to have for them in career and ministry, CAJ has significantly strengthened its course offerings in Japanese language for students with native-level skills. CAJ has also hired an academic counselor to focus on universities in Japan in order to help students navigate the ever-increasing program options and their myriad application procedures. As our graduates pursue their futures in Japan and in so many other places around the world, these recent shifts in their destinations are an opportunity to see CAJ's vision in action: **equipping students to serve Japan and the world for Christ.** 🙌



# Alumni Updates

CAJ Alumni Updates is a forum for updates from alumni, provided as a community service. The inclusion of any piece of alumni updates is not necessarily an endorsement by CAJ.

## Jonathan McCune | CLASS OF 1957

In 1948, the McCune family left the US as missionaries to China — Jonathan was nine years old. The children studied at an English school in China for just one year, as the Communist army moved south to take control of the country. They then went to Hong Kong and took up residence in a farming village for two years — once again leaving because of the Communist threat in Hong Kong.

In 1951 the family moved to another farming village, this time in Ogawa Japan. Jonathan started in the sixth grade at Japan Evangelical Christian School — CAJ's original name when it began in 1950. Younger brother, Daniel, and older sister, Grace, also attended. In 1954 the McCunes established a church in Ogawa that is still operating under a second-generation pastor.

Following his ninth grade year in the Spring of 1954, the family returned to the US, settling in Salem, Oregon. Jonathan married shortly after graduation from South Salem High School in 1957 and then raised five children with his wife. He worked as a newspaper printer at the *Salem Statesman-Journal* for over 32 years.

After the children were grown, Jonathan moved to Stockton, California, where he lived for many years. He served on the pastoral staff of Christian Life Center for about seven years. During this time, the church sent Jonathan to several countries as a short-term missionary to teach in Bible schools. Jonathan has taught in India, the Marshall Islands and with his current wife, Deniece, in Scotland.



Jonathan (now 82) would love to reconnect with any former classmates. He believes there were fewer than 100 students total at that time. He can be contacted at [jlmccune@gmail.com](mailto:jlmccune@gmail.com).



**Mark Joseph | Class of 1986**  
**Kimi Evans | Class of 1990**  
**Matthew Little | Class of 2010**

Matthew Little, Kimi Evans and Mark Joseph had a mini-reunion moment during Summer 2021 when they met on the set of *Reagan*, a biopic produced by Joseph.

## Eiko Narita | CLASS OF 1994

Dr. Eiko Narita attended CAJ from 1981 - 1989. She came from a "standard Japanese family" and originally went to a "normal Japanese school," where she says everything felt limiting and restrictive. Her family "bumped into CAJ by chance", though later they feel that they were drawn here. She had almost no English when she began, but she believes she was given a chance to succeed.

After attending CAJ for 8 years, she graduated from The American School in Japan (ASIJ) and went on to Cornell University and then to Harvard University for her Masters Degree. She later earned her PhD at National University of Chiba, doing research on local governance in Tajikistan. Dr. Narita now works with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as a Deputy Representative in Bangladesh. She says, "I get excited when I'm able to really connect with someone who has a different perspective or views than mine at work and help birth a new cooperation that wasn't possible in the past by creating common values with her/him. I also get excited about integrating new technology into the development work



*Eiko Narita with Anda Foxwell during Dr. Narita's recent visit to CAJ.*

I manage. It's amazing to see how technology can help vulnerable people!"

Dr. Narita believes one of the ways CAJ prepared her for the career she has pursued, was building compassion in her. She says, "In my role with the UN, I often face complex development problems that require human relationships that 'work'.

Without compassion, it's not possible to build trust and/or form a team that's enthusiastic about the work we do. CAJ, as a Christian school, provides students with the foundational understanding of Christianity; and that's important when we start to think about the kind of human being we would like to become. When I reflect on how Jesus lived, he's the kind of person I would want to have as a friend and a helper." She still has fond memories of Thrift Shop, of the Essenburgs teaching her in 8th grade, and still remembers the early experiences of kindergarten, especially as this year, her niece, Haruho, has started at CAJ in that same grade.



*Denise Owen, Eiko Narita and Rie Martin with Dr. Narita's Nieces*

Narita summed up her reflections saying, "I think all young people, especially girls, need to be heard and given a chance and space as they go through a bumpy life. I often think 'what if CAJ admissions wasn't compassionate to give me a chance because I didn't speak English? What if my parents didn't support me attending CAJ (it's not a cheap school to attend!)?' I don't know how many people would have thought that a young girl who didn't speak English and had no real qualifications to attend an international school like CAJ would end up at Harvard, work for the United Nations and sit in a senior management post, speaking not only English but also French on occasion for work. My life's achievement, thus far, isn't so much about what I have accomplished, but is an evidence of how much support and understanding by family, good friends and schools can change a person's life and thereby equip that person to give more to others."

## Jonmarc Bennett | SSS PARTICIPANT

Jonmarc Bennett married Angela Ku, June 7, 2020, in Santa Ana, California. ▼





***We would love to hear from you!***

Take a few minutes right now — email your update to [alumni@caj.ac.jp](mailto:alumni@caj.ac.jp)

**Caitlin Willson | CLASS OF 2016**

Caitlin Willson and Reuben Kikkert were married on September 27, 2021 at Camp Yukon, Atlin Lake, Yukon in Canada. Many of their family and friends were in attendance. ▼



**Jonathan Bennett | CLASS OF 2017**

Jonathan Bennett and his wife Makiah Josephson, married May 21, 2021 in Cappadocia Turkey. ▲

# ALUMNI REUNION

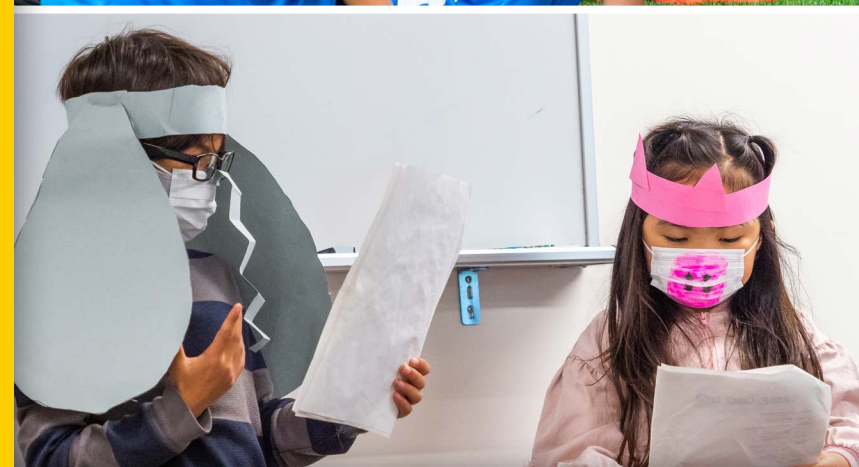
Save the Dates February 24-27, 2023

Inviting all alumni and CAJ staffers to attend this event at the beautiful Best Western Island Palms hotel property in San Diego, CA. It will be a wonderful opportunity to reconnect. There were over 135 attendees at the 2016 reunion and we expect the 2023 reunion will surpass this attendance.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

Bobby Howe, Ken Nielsen, Jennifer Plesman, Dan Sims, Tracey Davies, Margaret (Bower) Smith, Rick Seely

More information coming soon. Hope to see you in 2023!





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JAPAN  
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Thank you for your ongoing prayers and support making our mission possible.

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