



Washington Japanese Heritage Center (Keisho Center)

ワシントン日本語継承センター

keisho.org / P.O. Box 142 Cabin John, MD 20818

June 1, 2024

Dear Keisho Center Families:

Each year, the Board of Directors of the Washington Japanese Heritage Center (Keisho Center) reports on our organization's status, operations, and future plans. We are sincerely grateful for the continuous support from Keisho Center family members, our donors, our partnership organizations, and the education community in the DMV area. We would appreciate any feedback or suggestions you may have.

1. **Enrollment and Staffing:** During the 2023-24 school year, Keisho Center enrolled 135 pre-K-12 students and 16 family members in the adult program. The General Manager worked with the Education Team, which included the Curriculum Coordinator, eight teachers, and six teaching assistants (TAs). We also employed a Treasurer, Webmaster, and Admissions Assistant.
2. **Curriculum and Learning Methods:** Youth classes were divided into nine homerooms and most of the activities followed a project-based, student-centered curriculum. With a good balance of hands-on activities and linguistic lessons, students learned Japanese language and culture while discovering their multicultural identities. Teachers mixing younger and older students for class activities deepened the students' sense of belonging to the Keisho Center community. Keisho Center continued to offer an adult program for family members and alumni to involve the entire family in studying Japanese, which is one of the Center's roles as a heritage language program.
3. **Cultural Workshops and External Events:** Keisho Center held various activities throughout the year to learn Japanese culture and traditions, such as *undoukai*,



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mochitsuki, setsubun, sakura-mochi making, *ikebana*, *koinobori* crafts, kite-flying, *shogi*-games, tea ceremony sessions, as well as an all-school field trip to the National Zoo. A group of Keisho Center students had the opportunity to attend Japanese Prime Minister Kishida's state visit to the White House. During Sakura Matsuri, Keisho Center students and families performed onstage and staffed a popular arts and culture booth. We hosted five guest lecturers at our Center in 2023-24: Masanori Murakami, the first Japanese player to play for a Major League team; Takuma Matsubayashi and Naoki Okai of JR Central; acclaimed violinist Kenneth Naito from Yale University; Nobel laureate Dr. Syukuro Manabe and his wife Mrs. Nobuko Manabe from Princeton; and Mr. Tatsuki Honda from Toyota Corporation.

4. **Academic Competitions:** Keisho Center students continue to join in competitions that enrich their learning of Japanese. During the 2023-24 academic year:
- 18 students and one teacher took the Kanji Kentei
 - Two students took the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)
 - 30 took the National Japanese Exam (NJE)
 - 37 Keisho Center students competed against hundreds of students from across the country in the virtual Junior Japan Bowl.
 - Three students were selected as finalists in the J.LIVE Talk Japanese language competition: Shima Harrison won the gold award, Kyla Austin won the silver award, and Chloe Shafran won the bronze award.
 - Eighty-one students entered the United Nations International Student Haiku Contest, and nine were selected as finalists.
 - Students entered 474 New Year's cards in the American Association of Teachers of Japanese Nengajo Contest: Umi Hines won 2nd place in the



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Lower Elementary Artistic division, and Momoka Kitahara won 2nd place in the Upper Elementary Comical division.

5. **Family Involvement:** We are sincerely grateful for the help from our family members. With your support, Keisho Center can provide our students with many rich learning experiences. In 2023-24, families dedicated hundreds of volunteer hours in the classroom and for many other activities. Parent volunteers taught calligraphy, tea ceremony, *ikebana*, *sashiko* (a traditional Japanese embroidery technique), sashimi-slicing and sushi-making experiences, and cooking lessons; created the yearbook; organized the all-school potluck; and managed the library. Families also joined Onigiri Action, an annual campaign against world hunger.

6. **Partnerships:** Keisho Center maintained strong partnerships with the Embassy of Japan, the Japanese Commerce Association of Washington (JCAW), the Japan Foundation Los Angeles, the Japanese American Citizens League, O-en Network, Japanese Americans' Care Fund, Hub Park, and the Japan America Society of Washington, D.C. We are deeply grateful for the precious donations made from our partners: Sumitomo Corporation of Americas, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries America, Keita Seafood and Harmonious Kitchen. In October, Keisho Center held our first Japanese Heritage Language Education Conference at Norwood School to share best practices and learn from each other. Over thirty teachers, professors, advocates, and parents attended the conference, and it served as a platform for building strong partnerships among heritage education practitioners.

7. **Financial Aid:** The Board of Directors wants to ensure that financial concerns are not a barrier to enrollment for any family. The Board recognizes that some



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families may be experiencing economic hardship and would like to make financial assistance available based on need. Feel free to contact any Board member, the Treasurer, or General Manager for additional information on financial aid. All requests are kept strictly confidential.

- 8. Financial Management:** Since our founding in 2004, Keisho Center's goal has been to provide an affordable, equitable, and quality education to all families. Keisho Center has remained fiscally strong, which resulted in an accumulated surplus. The Board will not increase tuition for the 2024-25 school year. To attract and retain talented staff and adequately compensate them, we intend to provide a relief grant to help offset cost-of-living increase to the education team. We will continue to offer discounts for siblings and those who pay the entire amount at the start of the school year and incentives for parents taking the adult program. The Board of Directors will monitor the financial status closely and take action as needed. The summary of Keisho Center's operating budget for the 2023-24 school year is at the end of this letter. We are committed to continue offering valuable learning activities to all our families while serving as good financial stewards.

As Keisho Center continues to grow and change, we remain firmly committed to our mission: to inspire a lifelong love for Japanese language and culture in our students. As we celebrate our 20th anniversary in 2024, the Keisho Center Board of Directors is proud of all that Keisho Center has accomplished and how our organization is evolving. We look forward to serving our community, working with our students, families, and partners, and growing as a community. If at any time you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, we encourage you to present them to a Board member.



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Sincerely,

Keisho Center Board of Directors

Tomomi Miyajima, President

Anne Crescini

Margaret Ghobadi

Peter Farrell

Donald Harrison

Marc Hitzig

Ken Knight

Mitsue Steiner

Shigeo Yoshikawa



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	2023-2024 Actual (Sep-April)+ Projected (May-August)
REVENUE (in US \$)	Budget
Grant	498
Tuition	205,953
Donations	2,222
Fundraising	450
Interest	2,988
Miscellaneous Revenue	344
Subtotal	212,455
EXPENSE (in US \$)	
Payroll	121,111
Rent	40,540
Supplies including t-shirts	11,291
Insurance	5,132
General operating expenses/fees	7,407
Professional Development	250
Financial Aid and reimbursed tuition	8,919
Gifts, gift cards, and donations	1,600
Subtotal	196,249
Surplus	16,206