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JAPANFOUNDATION

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O F F I C E M A P



Driving Directions to The Japan Foundation:

Wells Fargo Center is located on South Grand Avenue at 3rd Street in Downtown Los Angeles. The parking entrance is located on Hope Street.

The closest freeway exits are as follows:
110 Freeway: 4 th St. exit (from both North and South)
101 Freeway: Temple St. exit (from West),
Grand Avenue exit (from East)

The 2nd Annual Symposium on Japanese Language Education in the US, by The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles November 20th, 2005 in Baltimore

In Preparation for the 2nd Annual Symposium on Japanese Language Education in the US, by The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles, "VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE: Don't Let Our Ship Sink," held on November 20th, 2005, JFLA distributed a series of 8 questions related to current issues in Japanese language education in the US to attending representatives of national and

state/regional Japanese teachers' organizations. These representatives then discussed the topics at the Symposium. Below are the responses to the questions the representatives were asked, listed first by national organizations, then by state/regional organizations.

NATIONAL

AATJ (Alliance of Associations of Teachers of Japanese - Susan Schmidt)

ATJ (Association of Teachers of Japanese - Naomi McGloin)

NCJLT (National Council of Japanese Language Teachers - Laura Koga)

1) How are Japanese language teachers in the US affected by NCLB, and what are the biggest obstacles for teachers to overcome in passing the NCLB's requirements?

AATJ

It appears to me that there has been something of a backlash against NCLB on the part of teachers, parents, and school districts in some parts of the country. In my view, this will continue, and the result will be to moderate some of the excesses in the program. Still, the looming requirement that all teachers become "highly qualified" poses challenges for teachers of foreign languages like Japanese, especially when National Board Certification (one way to demonstrate that one is "highly qualified") is not available to us. Some people in our field have been working very hard to persuade the National Board for Professional Standards to modify the procedure for teachers of less commonly taught foreign languages by using a common rubric for some of the testing, which would allow certification to be offered to smaller numbers of applicants each year. Perhaps this will happen in the near future. But our field should work to develop and publicize alternate ways of showing high qualifications -- for example, taking courses and workshops, developing materials, and completing mentoring programs.

ATJ

(no answer)

NCJLT

Depending upon the location and education level of the local community, schools are affected differently. Japanese programs in private schools seem to have little to no need to change for NCLB. Since they are not funded by the federal government, this regulation does not seem to affect them. Public schools on the

other hand, who wish to keep federal funding, are affected, but it depends on the local situation of the public school. Suburban public schools or schools in affluent areas tend to already be doing well on public mandated tests are not yet affected financially. However, needing to be taught by "highly-qualified" teachers has made an impact on the hiring practices of schools. No matter their experience, teachers without licensure or credentials in their field are almost always turned down for those with licensure or credentials. This is a problem for Japanese teachers because in most states there are few to no licensure/credentials programs for Japanese. The schools hit the hardest tend to be the inner city schools and schools that are already struggling to meet state requirements. They are put on lists and warned they will lose funding. If improvements are still not shown, these schools must provide supplemental services for their students, which come at a high cost to schools. All of this impacts Japanese programs in public schools around the US, because the already tightly squeezed school budgets are pulled even tighter and this often pushes out electives, such as foreign language. Schools are needing to focus more and more financial resources into helping students read and do math since that is what is tested to show "adequate yearly progress." NCLB expects 100% of all students to be proficient by 2013-2014. With the large number of immigrants and transient students in many areas, it is impossible for schools to reach that goal, putting all schools at risk of losing federal funding. Although the purpose to "close achievement gaps" and teach all students, is very valid, since foreign language is not on the list of subjects tested we may need to fight to keep our programs off the cutting block.

2) Do you think AP Japanese will boost Japanese language education in the US? If not, why?

AATJ

I think it will take some time to develop, but the AP program has the potential to boost Japanese language education in a major way, both in high school and at the college level. For high school teachers and programs, the rigor of the AP curriculum (especially in reading and kanji use) will be extremely beneficial in the long run, enabling high school program to produce students who, if

they continue in college, can advance to become highly proficient Japanese language users. For college programs, the availability of AP Japanese will mean a larger group of students who have the skills and motivation to continue studying at the advanced level; the pattern of large enrollments in first-year courses with steep drops in enrollment later may finally change as an effect of the AP program.

The fact that the AP test will be administered electronically will mean that more students -- and teachers -- will become proficient in mediating the Japanese online world and at producing Japanese on the computer -- important skills in today's world.

In addition, the professional training offered by the AP program will be very beneficial for teachers in our field. Our professional organizations, the Japan Foundation, and other institutions have been doing their best to promote and provide quality professional development; but more training is always needed, and now it will be available to a new group of teachers.

ATJ

It is difficult to assess whether AP Japanese will boost Japanese language education in the U.S. Nonetheless, AP Japanese is a concrete step toward better articulation between pre-college and college programs, and in this sense, it is a very important undertaking. While it is important to train and to educate pre-college teachers about AP Japanese, successful implementation of the AP program also depends on how it is received by college teach-

ers of Japanese. The ATJ is committed to disseminate information and educate college teachers of Japanese on the importance of the AP program, and we hope that the College Board and/or Japan Foundation cooperate with us in this outreach effort.

NCJLT

AP Japanese may boost Japanese programs of some schools. Schools where students take courses just so they can get AP credit and do well on the AP test may be helped. On the other hand, it may be harmful if students who do not wish to take AP and just wish to continue taking Japanese. These students may feel a need to drop out since they may not be able to keep up with a more rigorous curriculum. This seems to be the reason why many schools are choosing not to label the class AP, but instead in the class description state that students will have the opportunity to take the AP Japanese exam. Teachers need to talk with their local community to find what is best for their own school.

3) Is the US ready for AP Japanese? If not, which levels (primary, secondary, post-secondary, etc.) are not ready and why?

AATJ

(see answer for question #2)

ATJ

(see answer for question #2)

NCJLT

From what I have heard from high schools teachers around the

US, most programs are not yet ready to provide students with success on the AP test. However, with the arrival of the AP test, many Japanese programs are taking a new look at their curriculum and seeing how they can help students prepare better for it. I believe it is helping our programs get stronger and helps teachers push students even further. It may take several years before we reach the desired results we want with the AP test.

4) Do you feel Chinese language is getting more popular in the US? If yes, do you think students are more attracted to Chinese language than Japanese?

AATJ

With the importance of China in the world economy and on the political scene in Asia, and with the availability of AP Chinese in the near future, there will certainly be growth in Chinese language programs all over the U.S., especially at the K-12 level, just as there was growth in Japanese language programs during the 1980s and 1990s. I very strongly believe that we in the Japanese field should not see this as a danger or a threat, but rather as an opportunity. Although there may be some changes in some locations in which languages are offered, and in which language is more "popular" with students, education and language study are not a "zero-sum games" (in which, when one sector gains, it is at the expense of another sector). There is room for growth in all languages, and we should be delighted to see interest in Asian languages, in difficult languages, in challenging languages. It will benefit us all in the long run.

I believe Japanese language study will continue to be popular with students. Interest among students of all ages in Japan's popular culture, society, literature, and history has never been higher, and shows no signs of decreasing. Increased interest in Chinese language study can, in the long run, only help us, by making more young Americans aware of Asia and its importance in the world.

ATJ

Japanese language enrollment still seems very strong. In the Midwest, the region I am familiar with, major universities are reporting record enrollment in their Japanese language classes. However, given the current economic and political climate, it is likely that Chinese language enrollment will continue to grow and could surpass Japanese. The ATJ, NCJLT, and The Japan Foundation have to think strategically about the future of Japanese language education in the U.S. In this regard, more aggressive and meaningful integration of Japanese popular culture seems essential. It would also be good to have a wider world perspective on these issues.

In this regard, the 2006 International Conference on Japanese Language Education that the ATJ and NCJLT are hosting might be able to offer a place where such worldwide discussions could take place. The conference will be held at Columbia University, August 5-6, 2006. The conference will feature two keynote speakers, one invited speaker, ten invited panels and more than 100 paper/panel/poster presentations. There will also be a panel discussion by representatives of many of the world associations of Japanese language teachers. This might prove to be a good opportunity to discuss issues and challenges related to the future of Japanese language education in the world. The ATJ is very pleased to be able to contribute to the field in this way, and we hope that this summer's conference will be well attended.

NCJLT

It seems that the interest in Chinese language is growing around the US. Yet at which levels? Many teachers around the US have heard a colleague, parent or administrator mention Chinese with a hint of wanting it to be one of the languages offered at their schools. However, few have heard students make the same request. It may be a different type of students who takes Chinese than Japanese and because of this, even if a Chinese program opens at your school, it may not harm our Japanese programs.

The problem occurs when the administration will only support one Asian language program. I am sure some of us will be directly affected by those decisions as well. Personally, I believe that even if a Chinese program opens at our school, it may not hurt our programs as long as they are strong. It is the time now more than ever to solidify our programs and remind the public why teaching Japanese is so important in today's society.

5) Are there any problems with Japanese language education in the US? What are the biggest issues?

AATJ

(no answer)

ATJ

(no answer)

NCJLT

It seems that one of the challenges in many areas of the country is leadership. How to be a good leader and pull in the cooperation of your local affiliate members? With more efficiently run organizations we can be stronger, more powerful and more effective at reaching our goals.

6) Has there been an increase in enrollment in Japanese programs in your state/region due to the recent hurricanes, Katrina and Rita? (This question is not applicable nationally)

7) Have programs throughout the US been affected (directly or indirectly) by the recent hurricanes, Katrina and Rita?

AATJ

I would like to say a word about our field's response to the students and teachers in the Gulf Coast area who were affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Our national organizations appealed for support for them, and many students, teachers, and scholars responded. Not only was money donated and sent to schools and victims in New Orleans and elsewhere in the region; a number of institutions and individuals sent teaching materials, textbooks, and equipment to replace those that had been lost. We stand ready to help the Japanese language programs in the region in whatever way we can.

ATJ

(no answer)

NCJLT

As you may know our New Orleans Japanese programs were devastated by Katrina. Many schools around the US have worked to provide financial support for teachers and their programs. It will take years before they have enough textbooks and supplies to reach their pre-Katrina level.

8) What kind of support do you think is needed for Japanese language education in the US?

AATJ

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(no answer)

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STATE / REGIONAL

AFTJ (Association of Florida Teachers of Japanese - William Collazo)

AKATJ (Alaska Association of Teachers of Japanese - Yoko Collier)

ATJO (Association of Teachers of Japanese in Oregon - Sandra Garcia)

CAJLT (California Association of Japanese Language Teachers - Akiko Soda)

CJLEA (Colorado Japanese Language Education Association - Kathleen Ajsaka)

DVTJ (Delaware Valley Teachers of Japanese - Yukino Tanaka)

GATJ (Georgia Assoc. of Teachers of Japanese - Chiaki Johnson)

IATJ (Illinois Association of Teachers of Japanese - Shingo Satsutani)

IMATJ (Inter-Mountain Association of Teachers of Japanese - Atsuko Neely)

LATJ (Louisiana Association of Teachers of Japanese - Akiko Kamo)

MAATJ (Mid-Atlantic Association of Teachers of Japanese - Mamiya Worland)

NECTJ (Northeast Council of Teachers of Japanese - Kazuo Tsuda)

OATJ (Ohio Association of Teachers of Japanese - Mari Noda)

WATJ (Washington Association of Teachers of Japanese - Anita Bieker)

1) How are Japanese language teachers in your area affected by NCLB, and what are the biggest obstacles for teachers to overcome in passing the NCLB's requirements in your area?

AFTJ

For Florida Teachers of Japanese, NCLB is not perceived as having a direct impact on what we are doing. We are more directly affected by and concerned with school-specific or district-specific endeavors to improve scores on the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT). In most cases, we are directed to incorporate Reading, Math, and Writing benchmark-oriented practices & assessments in our courses in preparation for the FCAT.

AKATJ

The biggest obstacle is to ensure financial and human resources to tutor students in need. As most high schools have only one Japanese language teacher who often has to teach multiple levels together in one class, it is difficult to accommodate the needs of students. This problem is not specific to NCLB, however it intensifies the needs. In the case of K-12 immersion programs, NCLB affects mostly elementary school teachers. As the students at higher levels have already studied Japanese for many years, those who have survived have achieved a high level of competence and are not likely to be affected by NCLB. However, the differences among students are greater at elementary schools, especially at upper levels, and some students require individualized tutoring to meet NCLB requirements. As there are no or little funds available to hire tutors, elementary-school teachers need to volunteer more time than before to tutor their students outside of class hours. To reduce their teachers' burden, schools have come to accept increasing numbers of private "interns" from Japan and depend more heavily on their help.

ATJO

Many Teachers in Oregon have had to go back to school full time to be able to renew their teaching certificate. The certificate that they had been using was called an "accomplishment," but now

they have to have a new kind of certificate. If a teacher already had a basic or standard (the new ones in Oregon are initial and continuing) one, then they just need to remain certified.

CAJLT

I don't think the impact from NCLB is big in California because most teachers who are currently teaching in Public High Schools already have the teaching credential. But some teachers who don't have the teaching credential, but majored in Japanese may need to pass the NCLB requirements.

CJLEA

We, as an organization, have not addressed the affects of the NCLB law to Japanese language teaching in our area. This may be due to the fact that most of our members teach at the post-secondary level.

DVTJ

Not particularly, although some teachers who teach with emergency certification commented that they are feeling more pressure to complete the certification program more quickly.

GATJ

The biggest obstacle would be the teacher's workload increased by NCLB. NCLB requires a frequent attendance in workshops and observations of classes in GA in order to fulfill the requirement for the certification. It is hard to complete the requirements on top of the workload we have as a full-time teacher at K-12 level. There is no influence in post-secondary level caused by NCLB.

IATJ

The biggest obstacle for teachers here seems to be passing the basic skill test for teachers since it was re-written after NCLB.

Illinois has just begun state certification for Japanese language teaching. Therefore, in order to be qualified under this new licensure, existing teachers have been asked to fulfill new requirement which seems to be a burden.

IMATJ

Since foreign languages are NOT core subjects and most of the Japanese language teachers are hired to teach some other subjects as well, many of the Japanese teachers are facing the decision of their program being cut as the result of NCLB. No apparent effort has been made to help teachers meet the NCLB's requirements from school districts' part.

LATJ

We have very few Japanese programs in our area. NCLB does not seem to affect Japanese programs in Louisiana.

MAATJ

I am not affected by NCLB and don't know anyone in my area who is affected by this. They may be asked to obtain an advanced degree, but most teachers already have it. Most Japanese language teachers teach more than three levels daily and do not have extra time for additional work, whereas other teachers only need to teach one or two lesson plans a day. I enrolled in the workshop to prepare for NCLB three years ago but I found out on the fourth day that Japanese is not available. The biggest obstacle is having no mentor around this area in Japanese. This process may take time to prepare but it will definitely help me to improve my teaching skills and it may make my

teaching more productive.

NECTJ

Some of schools are affected in the Northeast area by NCLB. However, most of Japanese teachers at public schools have already been certified by the board of education in the Northeast.

OATJ

At least two Japanese programs in Ohio were either canceled or had their staff reduced.

WATJ

The biggest challenge for Japanese teachers in Washington with NCLB is the strong emphasis on core subjects. Many schools have changed to a house system to get students' 4 subjects taught together with the same peer group. This creates problems

matching electives against each other, and languages have to compete with music programs. Also, language programs have been getting cut back due to an increased need for low-level math and reading specialists in the schools (this requires extra funding). Language teachers already have four levels of Japanese to teach, which requires a lot of planning. We are also being required to take on more responsibility to follow extra students to meet graduation requirements through homeroom concepts. Not to mention all the meetings that go along with the added work load.

2) Do you think AP Japanese will boost Japanese language education in your area? If not, why?

AFTJ

We believe the answer to this question is a resounding YES! Many of us teach at schools where AP classes are par for the course for the curriculum of our high-achieving students. AP Japanese gives the top students one more option for foreign language study. We also believe that the AP exam will encourage greater use of technology in Japanese language study generally, even beyond preparation for the test itself.

AKATJ

We do not expect much change in enrollment as Japanese has already attracted many students, especially since anime has become popular. However, AP may help motivate K-12 students or allow their teachers to encourage them for further study. AP will have little effect at the university level as high-school students in Alaska are allowed to take university Japanese courses for both high-school and university credits at the same time. In addition, university students will be given "bonus" credits for preceding courses without actually taking them if they successfully complete higher level courses. Therefore, credits that students achieve through AP will have little meaning as far as university credits are concerned.

ATJO

Many Oregon teachers stated, "yes," as it will hopefully help keep the high level students in class. Currently, many students opt out of 4th or 5th year to take a different subject that does offer AP.

CAJLT

Schools where students have high motivation to continue on to higher education will gain benefits from the AP Japanese program.

CJLEA

We have not addressed the AP Japanese program as an organization. There are a couple of high school teachers in our area that are interested in training for the AP program, but because instructors have to have a full-time position before even approaching the possibility of an AP program this is a difficult proposition. Most of the K-12 Japanese language teachers in our area teach Japanese on a part-time basis.

DVTJ

Yes, it will in the future. However, high schools in our area do need strong support from the government level to pursue school districts to extend the Japanese language program. Five high schools currently offer Japanese language courses in the Philadelphia area, but only one school has a 4-year course. In the other schools, there are only two-level courses for honor students. For the high schools to be prepared for AP Japanese, they must have a solid 4-year language course and curriculum. All high school teachers are hoping that the implementation of AP Japanese will help them to talk to school board for support of the development of the Japanese programs in their districts.

GATJ

The answer is probably, "yes," but there may not be many high schools in GA that would actually consider setting up AP classes for Japanese. It is probably because they do not offer advanced level Japanese courses at the high school level, which discourages them from considering the AP course, which requires advanced skills/knowledge.

IATJ

There may be some schools beginning Japanese language as one of foreign language classes. To boost Japanese language education in general, IT support is indispensable. Most high schools are facing not only software problems but also hardware problems. In order for students to be ready to take AP Japanese, they must be familiar with IT before entering high school. So there is a long way to go before really boosting it.

IMATJ

At the moment in Utah, no Japanese program is considering starting AP Japanese.

LATJ

Episcopal High School is the only high school in our area which will start AP Japanese next year. Students in the Episcopal Japanese program started Japanese either in lower or middle school. They have been waiting for AP Japanese to start. The administrators of Episcopal School are enthusiastic and very supportive. Episcopal School expects more students take Japanese IV (AP Japanese) class next year than this year. All other high school Japanese programs in the area are based on Irasshai - the satellite program. The proficiency level of students learning with Irasshai doesn't reach the AP Japanese level.

MAATJ

Yes, in the secondary school level. Some students will benefit and the enrollment may increase slightly, but not big enough to boost the Japanese language program because small enrollment makes AP Japanese very difficult to establish considering the combination classes of upper levels. For the teacher, it means more work with the same salary. There is very little incentive for teachers to increase their work volume for AP Japanese.

3) Is your area ready for AP Japanese? If not, which levels (primary, secondary, post-secondary, etc.) are not ready and why?

AFTJ

For AFTJ, it depends on the teacher at each school & the school's facilities as to whether or not we are ready for AP Japanese in the coming year. To support our members, AFTJ hosted the Japan Foundation Summer Institute at Florida International University, and we additionally sponsored a workshop on AP Japanese at the Florida Foreign Language Association Conference in October 2005.

AKATJ

Alaska has K-12 Japanese Immersion programs and dedicated teachers. Therefore, the quality of Japanese teaching in general is quite high, and most of the schools are ready for AP. On the other hand, AP might encourage schools to reorganize their cur-

NECTJ

In the Northeast area:

- ✓ Some Japanese programs in public schools in the Northeast are impacted seriously. They have already taken Advanced Placement of other subjects.
- ✓ Some Japanese programs in public schools in the Northeast have not been boosted seriously. They do not have more than 3 levels.
- ✓ Some of Japanese programs in private schools in the Northeast have been boosted seriously. They have already taken Advanced Placement in other subjects.
- ✓ Some of Japanese programs in private schools in the Northeast are not affected seriously. They have already taken other honor programs.
- ✓ Some of Japanese programs in Japanese heritage schools in the Northeast are boosted seriously. They are looking for real AP Exams.

OATJ

Yes and No. AP Japanese will encourage schools to provide a more stable Japanese program. At the same time, on the face of fiscal needs placed by NCLB, few schools can afford to put more into Japanese than before. The AP possibilities may in fact frighten some administrators of keeping the Japanese program, much less create any anew.

WATJ

In some schools it will help validate the Japanese program as being college prep. This will prevent it from being cut back. Some students may take Japanese because of the AP status. Although in Washington we have a program that works with the University of Washington that helps the students earn 5 college quarter credits for 3 years of Japanese study. The students are also allowed to enter college at second year Japanese level.

ricula around it to achieve better AP results. The down side of this, if it happens, is that passing AP becomes a goal of instruction and study, limiting the freedom and creativity in teaching and learning.

ATJO

It is hard to say as there is not enough out there about the level of AP or what the test will look like. The teachers had heard some information at their state conference, but still had questions. Several teachers thought they would be ready as they are currently working with IB and thought there would not be a lot of change. Most teachers teach all levels but where there are multiple teachers, vertical training might be necessary.

CAJLT

I don't think our area is ready for AP Japanese at any level yet.

CJLEA

What do we mean by "ready?" Since most high school teachers are not teaching Japanese full-time, this is very difficult to ascertain.

DVTJ

We are not ready yet.

GATJ

It seems primary and secondary level schools are not quite ready for AP Japanese in GA. It is hard to develop schools' and/or students' interest in AP Japanese without the advanced level Japanese courses offered in school.

At college level, there should not be a problem to accept students from AP Japanese courses. The only matter would be the policy of placing those students in the appropriate classes (how to/where to place those students in the college curriculum)

In Georgia State University in the past, it has been the issue of placing those who studied Japanese in high school. Because college uses different materials and goal settings (more focused on grammatical accuracy) from high school, those students are usually to be placed in the beginning level courses despite of their experience in high school. However, academic advisers tend to recommend them to take advanced level Japanese courses only by the names of the courses they have taken in the past without consulting the requirements at college. Besides, students themselves also tend to take the advanced level courses based on the learning experience in high school, which does not necessarily meet the requirements in college. In the result, they are struggling in those courses without possessing enough skills to follow the course requirements.

For college level, they need to create a concrete placement policy, and for high school level, they need to create the standards that should meet the requirements in college.

IATJ

Most schools are NOT ready because of IT requirements for AP. Nevertheless, several schools will teach Japanese aiming at AP down the road.

IMATJ

There are no primary or middle school level Japanese programs currently existing in Utah. Even at the high school level, instructors' proficiency level is not yet high enough to teach AP Japanese classes.

LATJ

(see answer for question #2)

MAATJ

Yes, in some or most secondary levels. I'm not sure in the post secondary level if they have plans for how to accommodate those AP students. I think we are okay. The teachers are planning to attend the AP workshop. Our county does not have a Japanese language program at the primary school level. For the secondary school, we have four schools offering Japanese language programs taught by four teachers and only one will start AP Japanese. The University of Maryland does not show any interest in the secondary level Japanese language programs. We have been ready for a while. AP Japanese will promote more Japanese language enrollment at the high school level as well as maintain enrollment numbers at the middle school level of Immersion students from elementary school.

NECTJ

Some Japanese programs in Japanese heritage schools in the Northeast are ready for real AP Exams. They have established one research group at New York and developed reading materials for heritage learners including AP level.

Some of the Japanese programs in high schools in the Northeast are not ready for real AP exams. They have established two study groups, one in Boston and one in New York, and studied new AP projects.

Some of Japanese programs in high schools in the Northeast are ready for other honor programs like AP. They have established a materials development educational group, and developed materials (e.g. "Kisetsu" series) and curriculums (International Baccalaureate Japanese) for advanced learners, including AP Japanese students.

OATJ

Most secondary schools that offer multiple levels of Japanese appear to be ready and are eager to get any information they can get. Not much action can be seen in the primary level, or the post-secondary level.

WATJ

I believe some high schools will be ready to start AP Japanese in the high schools as soon as teachers are trained. I am not sure how many will be involved in the beginning. Schools may not want to do both University of Washington Japanese and AP. Students probably will not want to do both or have the funds for both programs. I don't know of any primary or post-secondary schools interested in AP.

4) Do you feel Chinese language is getting more popular in your area? If yes, do you think students are more attracted to Chinese language than Japanese?

AFTJ

As a group, we do not believe Chinese is more popular than Japanese in our region. Interest in pop culture has been the force that has sustained interest in Japanese, and we believe this will continue to be so, especially at the high school level. We are concerned though, as there is increasing interest in the possibility of offering Chinese as an alternative to Japanese in schools and colleges looking to expand their language programs.

AKATJ

Yes, Chinese has become more popular. However, there is no competition between Chinese and Japanese. Rather, many students try to learn both languages as they share the kanji characters. Currently, the primary language that seems to be drawing students away from Japanese is Arabic, which has become quite popular in recent years. Since Arabic, like Japanese, is quite a difficult language to learn for American students, many quit Japanese to concentrate on Arabic.

ATJO

Yes, Chinese seems to be getting more popular in Oregon. Portland Public schools also just received a large grant. A lot of students are attracted to Chinese because of their heritage, and also because it is something new. Are they attracted to Chinese over Japanese? It is hard to answer this question. A lot of students take Japanese because of the culture and especially Anime and Manga.

CAJLT

Yes, because of big Chinese population in California, I feel a big impact from Chinese language programs. Some schools had to close their Japanese programs after opening a Chinese program.

CJLEA

Chinese language is getting popular, but not necessarily more than Japanese. This trend is seen in some universities, but not many offer both Chinese and Japanese. Almost all of the high schools in our area do not teach both Chinese and Japanese, only one or the other.

DVTJ

Yes, in some school districts. In fact, one school district has conducted a survey among parents about the options of foreign language courses last year and found out that many parents showed strong interest in Chinese. While many students are still more interested in Japanese than Chinese because of anime, parents seem to have different perspectives and desires. According to some high school teachers, tight budgets in school districts make it hard for schools to offer both Chinese and Japanese, and many schools are now leaning toward the Chinese program. The chance of starting a new Japanese program or developing an existing program will get harder and harder in our area, unless we can get strong support from the government.

GATJ

At the K-12 level, no. K-12 students in GA may have been more influenced by Chinese culture, such as people...restaurants, school-related events, etc., instead of the language itself. It's not that they are more attracted to Chinese than Japanese, but they don't know much about Asian cultures including Chinese and Japanese.

At the college level, it is obvious that the enrollment in Chinese courses has rapidly increased in recent years. It has not yet reached the size of Japanese, but it is possible that the size of Chinese enrollment will become similar or the same as that of Japanese in the near future.

Since China gets more attention with rapid economic growth now, it is natural that students at the college level are attracted to Chinese. However, it is not reasonable to try to be competitive with each other. Instead, the two languages should complement each other (hokan teki) to draw attention toward East Asia. I think that language study is a part of the area studies. This means if the students are interested in Chinese, they cannot ignore Japan. If students want to understand Japan and Japanese, they need to study China. The most important thing here is that language study should be tied to the area studies. Language cannot be taught independently away from other academic disciplines.

IATJ

Chinese language is getting more popular in our area. Yet Japanese continues to be popular as well. There are more schools beginning Chinese classes in our area but it will boost other languages like Japanese. Students seem to be attracted more to Japanese despite the political, economical attractiveness of Chinese in general.

IMATJ

Not yet. However, our Governor expressed his interests in promoting Chinese language education at the press conference.

LATJ

We haven't seen any increase in Chinese programs in both secondary and post secondary programs in Louisiana.

MAATJ

At my school, Chinese is the new course this year. At my school, there are many Chinese descendent students. Chinese language promoters have the advantage of using its big market to appeal Chinese language's marketability. There is a huge, rich and organized Chinese community in the US to promote the language in the public schools for educating Chinese heritage speakers. With public money, Chinese heritage learners are taught not only to speak, but to read and write as well; just like Spanish heritage students are getting an education in Spanish for reading and writing and passing AP Spanish. Chinese parents want the same/equal treatment for their children. It will gain more popularity. I don't think regular students will be more attracted to Chinese

than to Japanese, especially at the beginning levels.

At the elementary school level in Fairfax County, VA, Chinese FLES was implemented in two schools for the 2005-2006 school year. I happened to meet with the teachers last summer to develop the curriculum and work as a mentor, but I know it is going to be a long way for students to acquire and develop Chinese language learning abilities. I strongly feel that Japanese language in our area is far more popular than Chinese language.

NECTJ

Yes, Chinese language is getting more popular in our area. Each school has very different enrollment situation between Japanese and Chinese.

Educators in America should recognize that Japanese language is not any more/less a commonly taught language and right now one of commonly taught language like Spanish, French and German. Right now Chinese Language is one of the major critical languages for the American government. The Japan Foundation should announce this as a major change for the Japanese language situation in America.

5) Are there any problems with Japanese language education in your area? What are the biggest issues?

AFTJ

The biggest problem in our area is getting teachers to join and keep them active in AFTJ. There is a lack of professional development opportunities in our immediate area. Hosting the Japan Foundation Summer Institute this year was a huge help to us this year. For non-native teachers of Japanese, there is a lack of opportunities in our area to maintain or improve language ability.

AKATJ

Our biggest concern is the lack and high cost of resources. It is much more expensive to have items shipped to Alaska, and there are few Japanese in town to allow teachers to arrange, for example, a day home stay with a Japanese family. There are no Japanese restaurants run by Japanese outside of Anchorage, and few Japanese items are available in town.

ATJO

Some programs stop if a teacher quits teaching. Sometimes it is hard to find a replacement other times the school thinks just teaching one language would be easier. It is hard for some teachers to keep up to date, lots of teachers are the only Japanese teacher in the district and thus it takes effort to meet with other Japanese teachers.

CAJLT

The biggest issue in our area is that the number of schools where Japanese programs are offered is not stable. In some areas the number of programs is increasing but in some areas it is decreasing due to a lack of enrollment, or lack of support from the district and school.

CJLEA

There is no particular problem per se, but because of the increasing Hispanic population in our region more students tend

OATJ

Yes, Chinese is getting huge media attention. With President Bush's announcement of 114 million dollars in part to enhance certain critical languages that includes Chinese, Chinese is sure to become very popular in our state. However, the adverse effect of NCLB remains quite strong, and unless new money is funneled into public school districts, it will be difficult to start up new Chinese programs or enhance the existing ones.

WATJ

There are still few Chinese programs opening up in Washington. There are few qualified, certified Chinese teachers to fill positions. The Japanese anime and J-pop keeps our students interested in Japanese. Many of my students are Chinese and like to study an Asian language.

to take Spanish as a foreign language over any other language. This is one of the main reasons that Japanese teachers have a difficult time finding full-time positions teaching Japanese in our region.

DVTJ

The competition with Chinese language programs and the budget issues in the school districts are the biggest issues.

GATJ

- ✓ Budget cuts...especially trying to cut the early education programs in my county (Fulton)
- ✓ Lack of the number of teachers compared to the number of students in a class (large class with only one teacher)
- ✓ Lack of skills/knowledge/workshops for computer technology (it is unavoidable to use computer technology, but there is a huge gap between what you can do and what you do)

IATJ

N/A

IMATJ

There are no state-supported teacher education programs to produce Japanese language teachers. Brigham Young University has discontinued their Japanese teaching program last year.

LATJ

(no answer)

MAATJ

Not especially. There is a lack of interest among administrators who make decisions on the program in the school system. The Japan Foundation should invite as many school administrators to Japan every year just like the YFU program has been doing for

students. There are generally too many courses for a single teacher (nothing new). In a Japanese immersion program, one of three schools is facing being phased out starting in the 2006-2007 school year due to budget cuts.

NECTJ

International Conference on Japanese Language Education, AP Japanese, Japan Bowl, Spring Festival, Japanese Speech Contest, Exchange program and material developments for Japanese as Foreign Language and Japanese as Heritage Language learners

On August 3rd through 8th, 2006 at New York City International Conference on Japanese Language Education will be held. The pre-, main- and post- (ICJLE) conference will be hosted by the Association of Teachers of Japanese (ATJ), in cooperation with the National Council of Japanese Language Teachers (NCJLT) at Columbia University United Nations International School and Japan Society of New York in New York City. This will be the first

such major international conference to be held outside of East Asia. The main theme of the conference will be "Japanese Language Education: Entering a New Age." The conference aims to provide a forum for Japanese language educators from around the world to share and discuss new challenges they are facing as well as to propose solutions. The conference will highlight issues that will be of interest across levels (college and pre-college) and disciplines (language, literature, and culture). It will provide a forum where researchers and practitioners alike can present their research findings and new pedagogical ideas.

OATJ

The dwindling fiscal support in each district is a salient problem.

WATJ

WATJ is a great association, but I think there are still few opportunities to work with other Japanese teachers and collaborate on materials and professional development.

6) Has there been an increase in enrollment in Japanese programs in your state/region due to the recent hurricanes, Katrina and Rita?

AFTJ

No, not even the recent Hurricane Wilma had an effect on our enrollments. Actually, enrollment in college and high school programs has steadily increased over the last few years.

AKATJ

No.

ATJO

Not that anyone reported. It was reported that there were several new students in the school but not in the Japanese program.

CAJLT

N/A

CJLEA

There has been no effect in enrollment in Japanese programs due to the recent hurricanes.

DVTJ

No.

GATJ

In the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels, the hurricanes did not affect much in the way of enrollment in Japanese programs. However, it seems students are struggling to adjust themselves (life and academic performance) in the new environment. Although they are trying, it is hard to reach the expected performance in college level.

IATJ

N/A

IMATJ

No.

LATJ

(N/A - see question #7)

MAATJ

Not in my area

NECTJ

N/A

OATJ

OSU accepted one student from Dillard after Katrina who enrolled in our Japanese program.

WATJ

We have not noticed any increase in the Japanese departments. The students that arrived in our school would have been too late to enroll in the first year classes. There may have been some Japanese students accepted at the universities.

7) Have programs in your state/region been affected (directly or indirectly) by the recent hurricanes, Katrina and Rita?

AFTJ

They have forced interruptions in instruction. Hurricane Wilma forced the closing of schools for two weeks in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties.

For this reason, we are generally behind in our curriculum pacing. Student motivation has been affected, since students are concerned with problems related to storm damage.

AKATJ

There was little effect to Alaska as only a small number of students came to the University of Alaska as an alternative to their original plan to study in Louisiana and Texas. Those who registered from the affected areas were waived their non-resident tuition, if applicable, and late registration fees.

ATJO

Not that anyone reported.

CAJLT

N/A

CJLEA

We have not been affected by the recent hurricanes.

DVTJ

No.

GATJ

(see question #6)

IATJ

N/A

IMATJ

No.

LATJ

Hurricane Katrina, which hit New Orleans and the Mississippi coast in August 2005, left immeasurable damages in our area. All universities and schools in New Orleans area were forced to close for the rest of 2005. Japanese programs at Tulane

University, Loyola University, Dillard University, and University of New Orleans were all affected. Dillard University, in particular, was devastated with enormous physical damage. Some Japanese instructors of those universities lost their jobs or were forced to take salary cuts. These universities have just resumed their classes in January 2006. All Japanese classes are resumed but it will take a long time to recover the number of students we had prior to Katrina.

For secondary Japanese programs, McCain Magnet High School in New Orleans is still closed. All public schools in New Orleans were said to be closed until next summer. Moss Point High School in MS received minor physical damages and resumed the classes in a few weeks after Hurricane Katrina, but many students and teachers in Moss Point had hurricane damages at their homes.

It's been very long and stressful months for these Japanese teachers and students. The members of LATJ are very grateful for much support from the fellow Japanese language teachers of other states.

As Vice-President of Katrina/Rita Aid for Japanese, I also want to express my profound gratitude for those who gave generous donations to Katrina/Rita Aid for Japanese. Before Christmas, we delivered the checks to around 100 families who applied for the assistance. The operation of Katrina/Rita Aid for Japanese will continue until May 2006. (See www.katrinajapan.org)

MAATJ

No

NECTJ

None

OATJ

Not directly.

WATJ

(see question #6)

8) What kind of support do you think is needed for Japanese language education in your area?

AFTJ

Better networking and communication among teachers in our state is essential. We would like to establish more professional development workshops, as well as to increase opportunities for non-native teachers of Japanese to maintain or improve their language ability.

AKATJ

Due to its isolation from the contiguous 48 states, it is costly and time consuming to travel to/from Alaska. Therefore, it is much more difficult for teachers in Alaska to participate in workshops

and conferences outside of the state as well as to invite lecturers to Alaska. In addition, the population in Alaska is sparse and widespread, and it is difficult and costly for Japanese teachers in Alaska to gather together. Therefore, financial support for organizing workshops and conferences in Alaska as well as travel support to participate in workshops and conferences in other areas are crucial.

ATJO

Technology is always changing and it is difficult to keep up with all the new changes and to learn how to use the technology in

class. Also, many Oregon teachers teach combined classes such as Japanese 3 and 4. They wonder if there is some training to help learn how to teach these multiple level classes. Training for teaching AP is also needed, as well as support for teaching assistants from Japan such as was the JALEX program.

CAJLT

The biggest support we need is always money contributions so that we can have workshops, computer updates, material updates etc.

CJLEA

We need budgets and students for more full-time positions. Because of budget cuts in our education, fewer full-time positions are offered and fewer students are exposed to less commonly taught languages such as Japanese.

DVTJ

- ✓ Support from outside of school districts
- ✓ More opportunities of internships and short-term exchange programs in Japan for college students
- ✓ Job/internship forums for students who study Japanese

GATJ

- ✓ More materials and resources
- ✓ Training/workshops for Japanese teachers in my area
- ✓ Better communications and stronger working relationship with The Japan Foundation

IATJ

Teacher training on various aspects including AP, New Methodology, Assessment, Child Development, Curriculum Development.

IMATJ

Before Japanese language education can be improved in the state, the governmental and institutional support towards foreign language education in general must be improved. We are told that the State World Language Specialist position will be eliminated this year. Even at the college level, small programs such as Japanese are constantly facing the threats of class cancellation in the name of productivity.

LATJ

(no answer)

MAATJ

More chances for teachers to collaborate and exchange ideas concerns and opinions. The Japanese government should demonstrate their strong interest in the public school system to offer support for Japanese language programs for the feeding elementary and middle schools for the area's high schools that offer a Japanese language program (just like the Italian and Spanish governments have been promoting their language program to their feeding schools).

Our immersion program students feed into middle schools and high schools, but there seems to be little constructive articulation, especially from elementary school immersion to middle school Japanese language transition. We would like to have more support at the middle school and from this year, a REX teacher is helping the class since the 7th and 8th grade class is combined. He can actually help both elementary and middle school teachers since he can see both levels' students' ability of Japanese and their progress.

NECTJ

- ✓ The Japanese government and private sectors should help Japanese language education flourish in United States of America.
- ✓ The Japanese government should develop a long term strategic goal and also a short term effective and useful goal.
- ✓ Educators in America should recognize that Japanese Language is no longer a less commonly taught language, and right now is one of the commonly taught languages like Spanish French and German. Right now Chinese language is one of the major critical languages for American government. The Japan Foundation has to announce that major changes in the Japanese language situation in America.

OATJ

Close connection with Chinese programs so that we can work together to strengthen both Chinese and Japanese. There is going to be a Chinese boom, with a shortage of qualified teachers, much like the teacher shortage that Japanese programs experienced in the bubble economy. There are some lessons that could be shared from that experience.

WATJ

Seminars to help us prove Japanese is a valid "Core Curriculum". We need to prove that our work improves students' reading skills, math skills, world issues, problem solving, communication, and writing skills. We do these things, but administrators don't see how the language activities translate to skills used in other classes.

Awards in the US for Fiscal Year 2005/06: Japanese-Language Education Grants



1. Grant Program for Japanese-Language Courses Abroad <Salary Assistance>

1 award went to:
University of Cincinnati (OH)

2. Grant Program for Japanese-Language Courses Abroad <Support for Courses>

1 award went to:
Murray State University (KY)

3. Japanese Speech Contest Support Program

15 awards went to:
Alaska Association of Teachers of Japanese (AK)
Arizona Association of Teachers of Japanese (AZ)
Association of Florida Teachers of Japanese (FL)
Brigham Young University (UT)
California Association of Japanese Language Teachers (CA)
California State University, Los Angeles (CA)
Hokka Nichibei Kai (CA)
Hyogo Business & Cultural Center (WA)
Japanese Language Teachers Association of Guam (GU)
Louisiana Association of Teachers of Japanese (LA)
The Japan America Society of Central Ohio (OH)
The Japan America Society of Georgia (GA)
The Japan America Society in Texas (TX)
United Japanese Society of Hawaii (HI)
University of Colorado, Boulder (CO)

4. Grant Program for Developing Networks of Japanese-Language Teachers and Institutions

1 award went to:
AATJ - Alliance of Associations of Teachers of Japanese (CO)

5. Training Programs for Japanese-Language Teachers Abroad

Short-Term Training Program

1 award went to:
Wasilla High School (AK) for Carla Williams

Advanced Training Program

Long-Term Training Program

Training Program for Japanese Abroad

No grants were awarded in Fiscal 2005/06

Intensive Training Program for Teachers from the U.S./Canada/the U.K.

Not implemented in Fiscal 2005/06

6. Japanese-Language Program for Specialists <Researchers and Postgraduate Students>

2 awards went to:
Chad Douglas Nilep, University of Colorado, Boulder (CO)

Hyojung Kim, New York University, Steinhardt Schools of Education (NY)

7. Japanese-Language Education Fellowship Program

No grants of this category were awarded in Fiscal 2005/06

8. Grant Program for Japanese-Language Teaching Materials

1 award went to:
Columbia University Press (NY) for Haruo Shirane

9. Program for the Donation of Japanese-Language Teaching Materials

A total of 55 awards went to:

<Pre-Collegiate>

Ballard High School (KY)
Bella Vista High School (CA)
Bothell High School (WA)
Burr Elementary School (IL)
Davis Senior High School (CA)
Deer Valley High School (CA)
Dodea - Guam High School (GU)
Eden Prairie High School (MN)
Elk Grove High School (CA)
Elkhart Memorial High School (IN)
Felix Varela Sr. High School (FL)
Florin High School (CA)
Katy Independent School District (TX)
Marcus Whitman Middle School (WA)
Menlo School (CA)
Monterey Trail High School (CA)
Moss Point High School (MS)
Odyssey Middle School (CA)
Phillip and Sala Burton Academic High School (CA)
Puyallup High School (WA)
Rutgers Preparatory School (NJ)
Simon Sanchez High School (GU)
Sunset High School (OR)
The Harvey School (NY)
Valley High School (CA)
Westchester Magnet Academy (NY)
William G. Enloe High School (NC)

<Collegiate Level>

American University (DC)
Asheville - Buncombe Technical Community College (NC)
Brookhaven College (Dallas County Community College) (TX)
Carnegie Mellon University (PA)
Diablo Valley College (CA)
Florida International University (FL)
Georgia Institute of Technology (GA)

Johnson County Community College (KS)
Hollins University (VA)
Indiana University - Purdue University at Indianapolis (IN)
Lehman College of the City University of New York (NY)
Macalester College (MN)
Portland State University (OR)
Rochester Institute of Technology (NY)
Southern Methodist University (TX)
Southwestern College (CA)
Texas A & M International University (TX)
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (NC)
The University of Oklahoma (OK)
The University of Texas at Austin (TX)

University of Alaska Fairbanks (AK)
University of Montana (MT)
Vanderbilt University (TN)
Western Washington University (WA)
Wichita State University (KS)

<Other Public Organizations >

Orenji Gun Nihongo Gakko (CA)
Princeton Community Japanese Language School (NJ)
Sakura Gakuen Japanese Language School (CA)

Fiscal Year 2006/07: Japanese-Language Education Grants

The application period for Fiscal Year 2006/07 grant programs closed on December 1, 2005 (Grant Results will be given in April 2006). Only the "Donation of Japanese-Language Teaching Materials (for the U.S.);" program offers different deadlines of 2/1/2006, 6/1/2006, and 11/1/2006. Please visit our website

(<http://www.jflalc.org/?act=tpt&id=243>) for the details. Please feel free to contact our Program Associate, Mamiko Nakai (mamiko_nakai@jflalc.org) anytime if you have any questions or comments regarding the Japanese-language grant programs.

Fiscal Year 2007/08: Japanese-Language Education Grants

Application materials for the next fiscal year (2007-08) will become available on our website (<http://www.jflalc.org/?act=tpt&id=229>) in Mid-September 2006.

Application Deadline: December 1, 2006 (Arrival Deadline)

Meanwhile, please refer to the following program guidelines as examples.

1. Promotion of Japanese-Language Education

(1) Grant Programs for Japanese-Language Courses Abroad

<Salary Assistance>

This program is designed to assist in the creation of full-time teaching positions (excluding part-time positions and those that involve the teaching of other subjects) at universities, colleges, or other educational institutions offering instruction in the Japanese-language. The Program provides salary assistance for up to an initial three-year period for the purpose of establishing local Japanese-language instructors and expanding Japanese-language courses. The aim is that the recipient organization will be able to maintain positions / courses without assistance after the initial assistance period is completed.

<Support for Courses>

This program is intended to assist the maintenance or expansion of teaching staff in institutions abroad that offer instruction in the Japanese-language but lack funds. Grant assistance is provided in the form of instructional salaries paid on an hourly scale for the purpose of strengthening the establishment of overseas Japanese-language courses. It is

expected that teaching programs supported with these grants will demonstrate the ability and commitment to become self-supporting in the near future.

(2) Japanese Speech Contest Support Program

The purpose of this program is to develop a network of Japanese-language learners, teachers, and institutions through speech contests as well as to advance the level of Japanese-language learning. Partial support for prizes and expenses is provided to organizations holding Japanese-language speech contests overseas.

(3) Grant Program for Developing Networks of Japanese Language Teachers and Institutions

This program provides partial assistance for seminars, workshops, training courses, and academic meetings concerning Japanese-language education carried out by overseas teachers' associations, academic societies, and higher educational and research institutions, for the purpose of developing networks of Japanese-language teachers and institutions abroad.

2. Japanese-Language Teacher Training Programs

(1) Training Program for Leading Teachers of the Japanese Language

· Advanced Training Program

After completing training at the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa, a further two-month period of training is available. The Advanced Program is designed for individuals who:

- require more advanced expertise and skills as teachers of Japanese, and
- have specific challenges they wish to address, or
- have issues they want to resolve in the teaching of the Japanese language.

Applications for this course can be accepted either from native or non-native speakers of Japanese.

(2) Training Programs for Teachers of the Japanese-Language

· Long-Term Training Program

This program is intended for foreign teachers who are early in their career in teaching the Japanese language. A training course in the Japanese-language and basic teaching methods will be conducted.

· Short-Term Training Program

An intensive two-month course in the Japanese-language and teaching methods will be conducted for foreign teachers of the Japanese-language who have at least two years of experience in teaching the Japanese-language.

· Training Program for Japanese Abroad

This is a program intended for teachers who are Japanese nationals and have been residing overseas for extended periods of time. Curriculum emphasis is on consolidating and expanding knowledge of Japanese-language teaching methods through lectures and workshops. The course also provides the participants with an opportunity to exchange ideas and information, discuss issues they confront and to explore the role of native-speaking Japanese-language teachers.

· Intensive Training Program

An intensive four-week course in the Japanese-language, Japanese-language teaching methods and Japanese culture will be conducted for non-native teachers of the Japanese-language at primary and secondary schools in the U.S., Canada, and the U.K.

Note: This program will not be implemented in FY 2007. It is scheduled for implementation in FY 2008 (implemented bi-yearly).

3. Japanese-Language Program for Specialists

· Japanese-Language Program for Researchers and Postgraduate Students

This program is an intensive training course in Japanese-language for scholars, researchers and postgraduate students who

major in the fields of the social sciences or humanities, who wish to be engaged in jobs related to Japanese-studies in future, and need to learn Japanese-language for their academic research activities.

4. Support for Production and Donation of Japanese-Language Teaching Materials

(1) Japanese-Language Education Fellowship Program

Fellowship grants are extended to overseas educational institutions and publishers who wish to send Japanese-language specialists to conduct a survey or research in Japan for the development of Japanese-language teaching materials, teaching methods, or curriculums based upon well defined themes and teaching materials.

(2) Grant Program for Japanese-Language Teaching Materials

This program is designed to encourage the production of resource materials for Japanese-language education in various media (e.g. textbooks, dictionaries, tapes, discs, etc) by finan-

cially assisting publishers and educational institutions interested in launching such material onto the market. The production of new original materials is encouraged.

(3) Program for the Donation of Japanese-Language Teaching Materials (for the U.S.)

This program donates a variety of teaching materials to educational institutions in the U.S. offering regular Japanese language courses. The donations are to become the property of the recipient institutions, and are not to be owned privately by teachers or students.

The Japanese Language Proficiency Test

JLPT Overview and Contents

The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) is an internationally accredited language examination, offered in four different levels, designed to measure a person's Japanese skills. The number of applicants is closing in on 400,000 in 39 countries around the world. Those who pass the JLPT receive a Certificate of Proficiency and, as a result, are better able to market their Japanese skills in order to further their careers and educational pursuits. Additionally, taking on the JLPT challenges students of Japanese to strive for excellence. The test has four different skill levels; the examinee should choose the level that best corresponds to his or her ability and training. Each test is comprised of three sections: Writing & Vocabulary; Listening; Reading and Grammar.

2005 JLPT and Test Results

The 2005 JLPT was held on December 4th at 8 test sites around the US:

Atlanta - Georgia Institute of Technology

Chicago - De Paul University

Honolulu - University of Hawaii at Manoa

New York - Columbia University

Los Angeles - University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

San Francisco - San Francisco State University

Seattle - University of Washington

Washington DC - Georgetown University

The test results were sent to the test takers in late February, 2006, ahead of schedule.

The 2006 JLPT

The 2006 JLPT will be held on December 3rd in the same 8 cities in the US (note that actual testing sites may vary). The registration period will span August and September (exact dates are TBA), at which time applicants can register by paper or online, quickly and easily.

More Information

More information is available on the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles website at <http://www.jflalc.org/?act=tpt&id=8>. Details on the JLPT will be posted as they become available, starting summer, 2006. For further inquiries, please contact the JLPT Administration Committee at:

JLPT Administration Committee

The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles

333 S. Grand Ave., Ste 2250

Los Angeles, CA 90071

Phone: (213) 621-2267 (M-F 9:30-5:30 PT)

Fax: (213) 621-2590

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131 Bloor Street West, Suite 213

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Phone: (416) 966-1600

Fax: (416) 966-9773

E-mail: nsaito@jftor.org

Web: <http://www.jftor.org/language/proficiency.php>

New to the Japan Foundation

Three new faces have appeared at the Japan Foundation over the past year. In April, 2005 we received our new Director, Mr. Masao Ito. Director Ito has served in many branches of the Japan Foundation, including holding executive positions in both the Sydney and New York offices. Most recently he was the Deputy Executive Director for the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership in Tokyo. The new Program Coordinator for Arts & Culture is Mr. Yoshihiro Nihei. Mr. Nihei previously worked as an executive producer for Japan America Television in Los Angeles. Etsuko Yamada is the new Librarian for the Nihongo Library. She worked at several libraries in Japan and has taken over librarian duties for Meiko Kanazuka. Meiko Kanazuka is now the JLPT Coordinator.



Yoshihiro Nihei & Etsuko Yamada
(L to R)



Masao Ito, Director