

School Newsletter 8

August
2020

Important information from the school.

Message from the Principal

How is the summer treating you?

As August passes by, I have been reflecting on the past few months. The student questionnaire implemented for the first term at the end of July revealed that 48.4% of students were "extremely uneasy" about the novel coronavirus, and 41.9% "uneasy." With more than 90% of students feeling ill at ease, it is clear how much this disaster has affected our mental states. Students are feeling the effects on health and daily life as well.

During the first term, we made various adjustments to the schedule and schooling methods in order to allow students to attend school in peace of mind; we also asked all students to conscientiously avoid spreading infection, as members of society. During schooling, we halved class sizes and had students attend in smaller groups. This enabled us to conduct schoolwork in a calmer atmosphere, with many students saying that they had been able to feel secure about commuting and studying. However, as a school which emphasizes face-to-face instruction and "interaction with each individual student," it was a painful decision to reduce schooling time and supplement it with assignments using media. I am grateful to the students for doing their best to cope with this new approach, untried as it was.

With regard to the second term:

- ① As the novel coronavirus continues to spread, we plan to continue measures to prevent infection and focus on enabling students to attend school in peace of mind.
- ② Based on requests from students as well, the number of schooling classes will be returned to its original status. Each class will be kept to no more than 18 students, increasing class hours as needed.
- ③ While an entering worship service was streamed as video for new and transfer students, on October 1st we will hold an online gathering of new students and transfer students coming to the school from April through October (details to follow).

As well, while some courses began online classes during the first term, we plan to make active use of EDTEC (educational technology) in classes (schooling) hereafter. With an eye to the coming era, we intend to conduct clear and interesting classes.

With the coronavirus in full flood, everyday life is threatened (we can't laugh out loud, we can't easily go out for a meal, we can't see the people we care about), and the connections among us are liable to wear thin (criticism of people not wearing masks, avoidance of regions with many essential workers such as medical personnel and cases of infection). In such a time as this, we need more than ever to treasure the connections among us and make the most of them.

As a trial given to us by God, it seems too harsh, but I hope each of us can think and act based on what we can do in the midst of this trial, and what we should do now to prepare for the day when God makes his purpose clear. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

"To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3-1)

How to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

The basics of infection prevention, for the novel coronavirus as for other infectious diseases, are hand-washing, gargling, and manners (such as wearing a mask) when coughing. It is extremely important for each of us to do our part to prevent the spread of infection. When going out (such as to school), be careful to avoid the three Cs (closed/crowds/close together), and otherwise behave in order to avoid getting sick or making anyone else sick.

Gathering for Students and Parents/Guardians with Concerns about Children's Health

- Date/Time: October 17 (Sat.) 14:00 to 16:00
 - Location: YMCA Gakuin High School 2nd Floor/Online
 - Target: Parents/guardians and students with health concerns, and other interested parents/guardians and students
 - Content:
 - Part 1 "Learning Time": Lecture by Dr. Yoshitoki Yanagimoto (pediatrician at Kansai Medical University Medical Center)
 - Part 2 "Sharing Time": Gathering of parents/guardians and students
- *Details on number of participants and how to apply will be provided later via SakuraNet, etc.
- *In charge: Ninomiya, Ikeda, Yokoyama

Academic Affairs

Written Tests

- The schedule for written tests, the testing method for receiving credit for the first semester of 2020, and the scope of questions on written tests have been mailed out as of July 14 (Tuesday). The second notice will be sent on August 25 (Tuesday). For details about the tests, see the Academic Guide as well.

Failing the Written Tests

- If you fail any of the written tests, you must take a retest on September 23 (Wednesday) (or, for some courses, hand in an assignment instead).
- **Retests and retest assignments cost 1,000 yen per course.**
- There will be no refunds under any circumstances of retest/retest assignment fees once paid.

Credits received due to exterior study such as high school equivalence exams

- **First semester application deadline: September 8 (Tuesday)**
- Certification fee: 2,000 yen (1 credit)
- Students who plan to receive credit for external academic work such as subjects passed on the High School Equivalence Exam or skill tests should fill in the required form and submit it to their homeroom teacher along with a copy of their certificate of passing, etc.


Future Study and Career Paths

With summer in full swing, most students are already taking measures toward their future career path. If you are struggling with what to do next, consult with your homeroom teacher or guidance counselor. Also, help yourself to the Future Paths areas on the 1st and 5th floors of the school.

Issuance of Reports and Recommendations

- **Reports issued by the high school are required when applying to universities, junior colleges, and vocational schools.** Confirm the required documents and the deadline for each school, and be sure to apply through your homeroom teacher in advance if you need a report (it takes about a week from application through issuance).
- You must notify the school of the content by two weeks in advance of the day you want the report issued. For details, see the SakuraNet notice sent on August 17 (Monday) or ask your homeroom teacher.
- Reports issued up through the end of September will contain grades through the second term of 2019. Reports including grades from the first term of 2020 will be issued from October 1 (Thursday) on.
- If you need a recommendation, ask your homeroom teacher with plenty of time to spare, as it may take up to a week to prepare.

Designated School Recommendation Exams (see "A Future for Everyone" p.4)

- Designated school recommendation is a system of exams in which a university, junior college, or vocational school designates specific high schools and takes recommendations from them on a priority basis. **Designated school recommendation applications require application within the school first: if you apply and are accepted you may not turn down your acceptance.**
 - Application Requirements
 - (1) Academic grades meeting the standard designated by the university, junior college, or vocational school.
 - (2) **60 credits or more completed** by the end of the first term of the year of graduation.
 - (3) **No more than one "warning" received** with regard to the Rules for School Life.
 - (4) If accepted, certain to matriculate.
 - Process for designated school recommendation application
Attend designated school recommendation briefing ⇒ Apply for designated school recommendation (1 student per school) ⇒ Interview including parent/guardian ⇒ In-school selection ⇒ Application
*Interviews accompanied by parents/guardians will begin from August 24 (Monday) on. Speak to your homeroom teacher promptly if interested.
 - Designated school recommendation briefing schedule
4th session: September 4 (Friday), 15:00 to 16:00
<https://forms.gle/SuRcY2VokA4BgEnF7>
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Application will be possible thereafter if not all the application slots are filled.

- A notice about this year's dedicated recommendation schools has been sent on August 7 via SakuraNet. If you cannot find it, ask your homeroom teacher.

Overall Selection (AO) Exams

- Application for the overall selection entrance exams (AO exams) is beginning at some schools. The actual applications will be submitted from September on, but applicants for some schools are required to send in documents or participate in open campus events before then, so make sure to check the information for the school you have in mind in advance. Also, we recommend that you get advice from your homeroom teacher before submitting your application.
- Anyone can apply for the AO exam, but many schools require the applicant not to apply elsewhere.

Open Recommendation Exams (see "A Future for Everyone" p.4)

- Open recommendation exams are those not restricted to specific high schools. This is a recommendation exam system open to anyone who meets the application requirements and whose high school meets the recommendation requirements.
- The criterion for recommendation at our school is to have **completed 54 credits or more by the end of the first term of the year of graduation.**
- The selection process varies by school, so make sure to check the exam requirements for your school.

College Entrance Common Test (see "A Future for Everyone" p.3)

- The University Common Entrance Test is the primary exam for national and public universities, and is also used by many private universities.
The exam is scheduled for January 16 and 17 (Saturday-Sunday) next year. Don't hesitate to take the test.
- The Exam Guide (application form) will be distributed at school on September 7 (Mon.). You can receive the necessary paperwork from the staffroom.
- **The deadline for submitting application forms to the school (YMCA Gakuin) is 17:00 on October 2 (Friday). For students currently enrolled in high school, the school will organize the applications. Individual applications are not possible.**

Employment <3rd-year students>

Because of the novel coronavirus recession this year, employment opportunities are expected to decrease in some industries, creating a very difficult environment. You will need to have a clearer motivation for employment than ever.

<Employment upon School Introduction>

- **Want ads are available for viewing from July 1st (Wednesday) on.** Ask your homeroom teacher or guidance counselor at the staffroom. They will distribute the necessary documents for job searching. If you are interested in a particular company, attend a pre-application tour of their premises.
- **Application will change from October 5 (Mon.) on.** You cannot apply to two or more companies at once.
- **Once you receive a formal notice of hiring, you cannot reject it.**

Special Activities

- Graduation requirements include **30 or more hours of participation in special activities**. However, in order to avoid the 3 Cs and prevent the spread of coronavirus, it is now extremely difficult to carry out special activities face to face in groups.

We will keep you posted via SakuraNet about online and small-group special activities, which you can choose to take part in. University/junior college/vocational school open campuses and companies' hiring briefings also count as special activities (including online versions). Application forms are available in the staffroom.

- High Schoolers Speak Out Essay Contest for International Understanding and Cooperation
Topic: "Where the Self Meets the World: What We Think, What We Can Do" (sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA))
 - Deadline: September 9 (Wednesday), 2020
 - Submit to: YMCA Gakuin High School (Shibahara/Yokoyama)
 - Length: Within 1600 characters
 - Official time: 3 hours for 1200 to 1400 characters, 4 hours for 1400 to 1600 charactersFor details of the contest, see Shibahara or Yokoyama.
- "Time for Film and Art: Off-Campus Art and Cinema Appreciation" (two credit hours for each movie or exhibit, up to 18 hours): View the movies and exhibits listed under "Special Activities (Off-campus art and cinema appreciation)" on the school website, and go through the procedure to receive credit for special activities. Movies seen in the past will also be accepted. Application forms are available in the staffroom.

★ August Special Activities (Off-campus art and cinema appreciation) are here

<https://www.ymcagakuin.ac.jp/upload/39ddb4c2302db84c34c24ebd4a9f0c2af3e1de90.pdf>

★ July Special Activities (Off-campus art and cinema appreciation) are here

<https://www.ymcagakuin.ac.jp/upload/51f5a0377721118a9f7af72639dc2a656f622a54.pdf>

★ June Special Activities (Off-campus art and cinema appreciation) are here

<https://www.ymcagakuin.ac.jp/upload/4adcb692d3db3ae8f0bc918dd3407210a137a9f7.pdf>

Student Affairs

Counseling

Counseling is available on the following days during the exam period. For urgent issues while the school is closed, telephone counseling is available; contact Ishikura. Parents and guardians are also welcome to make appointments for themselves as needed.

○ Dates: September 4, 7, 9 (Friday, Monday, Wednesday)

○ Time: 14:00 to 16:50 (50-minute sessions)

○ Supervisor: 石倉篤 (ISHIKURA, Atsushi)

○ Counselors: Monday: 川野敬子 (KAWANO, Keiko)

Wednesday: 小野真由子 (ONO, Mayuko)

Friday: 道嶋公子 (MICHIJIMA, Satoko)

Administrative Matters

2020 Osaka Prefecture Private High School Tuition Support Aid System <Eligible students only>

- Students resident in Osaka Prefecture and receiving academic support aid will receive a notice about this system by mail.

If you are eligible for the system, be sure to apply by the **submission deadline, September 15 (Tuesday).**

*Even if you are not eligible, you must submit an application form with that fact indicated.

Be sure **not to miss the deadline**, as you will not be able to receive aid if you do not apply.

All four conditions below must be the case for eligibility.

[Conditions for eligibility]

- (1) The student receives national academic support aid
 - (2) The student is enrolled in this school as of October 1, 2020
 - (3) The student and their parents/guardians (all persons with custody) are resident in Osaka Prefecture
 - (4) The parents/guardians' (father and mother's) taxable amount must meet the income conditions
- (For details, see the pamphlet.)

Address Change Procedures

- For any changes to the address or telephone number currently on file with the school, **immediately fill in a Change Form, add your seal, and submit it to the office.** The following submission and reissuance are also required.
 - (1) Submit a notice of change of address to the post office
 - (2) (for address changes) Submit your student ID for reissuance
 - (3) (for commuting route changes) Submit your student discount request card for reissuance*Issuance on the same day is not possible for (2) and (3).
- Change Forms are available in the office and at the back of the 2020 Academic Guide. Make a copy for use.

Issuance of Student IDs

- **You must have your student ID when taking tests for credit for the first semester.** If you have lost your ID or otherwise don't have it to hand, prepare as below and apply at the office. It takes three days for a new ID to be issued.
 - A. ID Issuance Request (available in the office and at the back of the 2020 Academic Guide.
Make a copy for use.)
 - B. Photo (H3.0 cm x W2.5 cm)
 - C. 500 yen in issuance fees (for reissuance this academic year only)