



HONOLULU
WALDORF
SCHOOL
KULA HO'OMOHALA PUA

Grades Program

Grade 1 - Grade 8



Early Childhood - Grade 8
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Honolulu Waldorf School

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Mission Statement

At Honolulu Waldorf School, we educate each child to find meaning, passion, and purpose in life and to contribute to the creation of a better world for all. Through a curriculum based on the developmental stages of the human being and on the integration of art and academics, our children learn to meet the world with clear and creative thinking, compassion and moral strength, and with the courage and freedom to act.



HWS circa 1961

Founded in 1961, Kula Ho'omohala Pua, known as the Honolulu Waldorf School, provides an extraordinary education for children beginning in pre-school (age 2) through Middle School.

Waldorf education is founded on the belief that each individual is a unique blend of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual qualities, with gifts to offer the world. Education becomes a journey for children to discover and cultivate these gifts. Across all grades, students engage in a rich, holistic curriculum, including Movement, Hula, Music, Handwork, Painting, Spanish, Japanese, and experiential lessons in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The day is rhythmically balanced between focused academic work (the in-breath) and active, physical movement (the out-breath), with social-emotional learning and the development of values seamlessly woven into every practice. Waldorf educates the whole child - head, heart, and hands.



HWS circa 1961

Grounded in the core values and principles of Waldorf education, children are immersed in a rich program that meets them at their unique developmental stages of growth, fosters creativity and imagination, ignites curiosity, and inspires deep, lifelong learning. At the Honolulu Waldorf School, children discover who they are and how they learn, and they acquire the essential skills to pursue their dreams and reach their potential. Students learn in a natural environment, with nurturing faculty and staff who love and understand each child.

Grade One: Awakening to the Wonders of Learning

Grade 1 is a time of transition, as your child moves from the dreamy world of early childhood into the beginnings of logical and abstract thought. At this stage, their learning is fueled by imaginative thinking, artistic expression, and active engagement. In the Waldorf approach, first graders are met exactly where they are developmentally, with a focus on nurturing imagination, rhythm, and memory while laying a strong foundation for intellectual and social growth. Learning is experiential and hands-on, allowing your child to actively engage in their education rather than passively absorbing information.



Grade 1 Lei Ceremony with Grade 8 Buddies

Community is central to grade one, where your child will learn social responsibility and class unity through cooperative games, shared tasks, and group projects. Waldorf classrooms are designed to offer the **rhythm, repetition, and structure** that all children need to feel secure and thrive. **Songs, verses, and rituals** are woven throughout the daily, weekly, and yearly **rhythms**, supporting memory and creating meaningful learning experiences.

Grade One, continued. . .

Language arts are introduced through ***fairy tales*** and ***nature stories*** that not only nurture moral sensibilities but also form the foundation for literacy. Through stories filled with ***rich imagery***, children's imaginations are awakened, helping them connect abstract symbols to meaningful, joyful experiences as they begin to learn to read. Alongside storytelling, ***daily phonics*** and literacy practice ensure your child will ***build essential skills in reading and writing.***

In mathematics, developing a ***strong number sense*** is key to long-term success. At HWS, your child will explore numbers daily through playful activities and the ***Singapore Math*** curriculum, providing a solid foundation for ***mathematical thinking and problem-solving.***

Seemingly playful activities like ***beeswax modeling***, ***painting***, ***knitting***, and ***playing instruments*** serve a ***deeper purpose***, helping children develop ***fine and gross motor skills, balance, spatial awareness, and self-expression.*** These activities not only foster creativity but also support cognitive development, laying the groundwork for future academic success in a way that is both ***gentle and purposeful.***



Grade 1 Letter Play

Grade Two: Awakening to Themselves in the World

In grade two, your child enters a pivotal stage where emotional life deepens, and curiosity about moral questions begins to emerge. The Waldorf curriculum meets them where they are, balancing their imaginative world with a growing sense of structure. Through fables, legends, art, and movement, second graders explore the contrasts of good and bad, right and wrong, while their sense of self and others is nurtured holistically.

At this stage, your child's fascination with opposites is met through hero stories that highlight **noble qualities** and fables that reflect **mischievous behavior**. These stories help them safely explore complex human emotions in a way that resonates with their growing awareness of the world. Animal studies further fuel their wonder, offering moral archetypes that align with their inner development.



Grade 2 Michaelmas Gnomes

Social dynamics are becoming more important as friendships blossom and competition arises. Teachers guide students in resolving conflicts, and the curriculum emphasizes cooperation through group activities. Stories also provide indirect lessons in empathy and understanding, supporting the development of a strong classroom community.

In language arts, **stories continue to form the foundation of learning**. Retellings will captivate your child's imagination while introducing grammar and sentence structure. Drawing evolves into cursive writing, and artistic activities like painting and beeswax modeling deepen their connection to the lessons.

Grade Two, continued. . .

Mathematics is brought to life through **rhythmic exercises** and personified characters for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. This approach, combined with the concrete practice of Singapore Math, ties emotional meaning to their work, making math both **engaging and meaningful**.



Grade 2 Movement and Math

Physical activity remains essential, with games and outdoor play building coordination and cooperation. Fine motor skills are further developed through crochet, flute-playing, and artwork. These activities foster **patience, self-reliance, and a sense of accomplishment**, helping your child develop a clearer sense of self as they continue to grow academically and socially.

Grade Three: Grounding in the Real World Through Practical Work

In grade three, your child embarks on a significant year of growth and transformation, both inwardly and outwardly. Waldorf education supports this journey with hands-on, real-world experiences that nurture their sense of individuality and belonging. Practical tasks such as farming, gardening, and house-building will give your child the opportunity to explore how and why things work, helping them develop confidence and self-reliance during this pivotal phase.

This year marks the “**nine-year change**,” when children begin to see themselves as distinct individuals, separate from the world around them. To support this deeper self-awareness, the curriculum provides grounding activities, allowing them to **connect their growing independence with real-world skills and the natural world.**



Grade 3 Students Weaving

Stories of the Hebrew people, filled with themes of **separation and self-discovery**, mirror the inner journey that your child is experiencing, providing meaningful lessons through the narrative.

In language arts, your child will take steps toward **greater independence** in reading, writing, and grammar. Practical writing skills are emphasized, with grammar and sentence structure taught through **engaging stories, artistic work, and hands-on activities.**

Mathematics continues to build upon their understanding of the four processes, with rhythmic chants and games reinforcing multiplication and division tables.

Grade Three, continued. . .

Practical math skills, such as measurement, weight, and volume, are woven into hands-on projects and integrated into the Singapore Math curriculum, ensuring that learning is both practical and meaningful.



Grade 3 Gardening

Third graders are also exploring social dynamics more deeply, participating in group projects that foster cooperation, responsibility, and empathy. Through activities like **gardening, cooking, and building shelters** based on historical studies, your child will gain a sense of accomplishment and connection to their peers. Projects, such as a craft marketplace to raise funds for charity, teach valuable lessons in collaboration and purpose, while games and physical activities help develop **coordination, teamwork, and balance**.

Artistic activities such as handwork, form drawing, painting, and crafts continue to meet their developing fine-motor skills, offering an **outlet for creativity and emotional expression**. Together, these experiences foster a growing sense of **self-reliance, empathy, and independence** as they navigate this transformative year.

Grade Four: Discovering Independence and Self-Awareness

In grade four, your child's growing confidence and thirst for knowledge are met with a curriculum that blends imaginative exploration and intellectual challenge. Around age ten, children begin to step out of the dreamy world of early childhood, developing a stronger sense of identity and a deeper curiosity about the world around them. The Waldorf curriculum supports this transition by offering a balance of creative learning and concrete skills that help them understand their place in the bigger picture.

Geography is introduced, starting with local surroundings and expanding outward, giving your child a hands-on experience with mapmaking that enhances their **spatial awareness and connection to their environment**. **Zoology**, a key subject this year, allows them to explore the animal kingdom, observing how creatures adapt to their surroundings. This mirrors their **growing self-awareness** and helps them **appreciate their unique qualities** and role in the world.



Fractions

Socially, fourth graders are navigating **more complex group dynamics and friendships**. Through group projects and discussions, your child will develop skills in empathy, fairness, and conflict resolution. In Movement class, competition is introduced for the first time, teaching students to **balance personal achievement with teamwork**.

Grade Four, continued. . .

Mythology plays a central role in fourth grade, with rich stories from Hawaiian and Norse traditions. These **tales of bravery, transformation, and moral dilemmas** resonate deeply as they face their own social challenges, helping them navigate their growing independence and self-awareness.



Grade 4 Students Visit the Honolulu Zoo

In language arts, your child will deepen their understanding of grammar and syntax while continuing to engage in creative writing. Retelling myths and historical stories, they **blend structure with creativity**, sharpening their language skills in a way that keeps them captivated.

Math takes on new dimensions with the introduction of **fractions**. Using Singapore Math and **hands-on activities**, students **make abstract concepts more concrete**. This mirrors the way fourth graders are developing individually, yet learning to piece things back together—both socially and intellectually.

Artistic expression remains a central part of the curriculum. Drawing, painting, embroidery, and handcrafts continue to nurture creativity and fine motor skills. Music also plays a significant role, with students learning more complex pieces, while form drawing introduces intricate patterns inspired by nature, **encouraging focus and precision**—skills that are becoming increasingly important as your child steps into greater independence.

Grade Five: Exploring Harmony and Balance Through Ancient Cultures

Grade five is often called the “golden age of childhood, “a time when children around ages 10 to 11 experience harmony and balance in their development. At this stage, your child shows physical grace, emotional stability, and intellectual curiosity, maintaining a connection to their imaginative and artistic side while embracing more complex challenges. At Honolulu Waldorf School, we meet fifth graders at this stage of balance and growing curiosity, holistically nurturing their development.

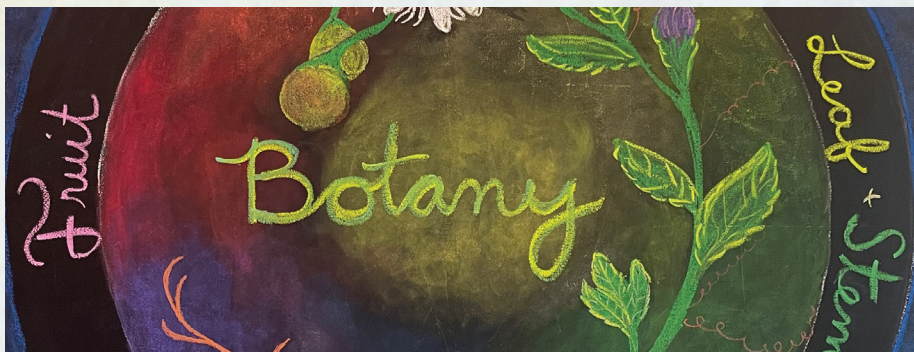


Maui Pentathlon with Neighboring Island Waldorf Schools

Fifth graders display **coordination and energy**, balanced by an **inner calm**, which fosters **confidence** in their abilities. They are beginning to **think more abstractly and reason logically**, showing a strong interest in subjects like history, culture, and geography. The curriculum responds by exploring ancient civilizations, starting with India and moving through Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece. These cultural journeys mirror your child's inner development, **from the spiritual to the practical**, aligning with their growing sense of morality. The year culminates in the inter-school **Pentathlon on Maui**, celebrating their learning through physical activity, teamwork, and grace.

Grade Five, continued. . .

In science, **Botany** offers a natural extension of their growing awareness, as they study the evolution of plants and fungi. This reflects their own journey toward greater self-integration and harmony. **Geography** lessons focus on North America, engaging students through storytelling, art, and hands-on map-making, helping them **connect to the broader world**.



Studying Botany helps Children Understand Changes in their own Bodies

Language Arts expands to more advanced grammar and writing skills, allowing students to **express their thoughts and emotions** in structured essays. In math, problem-solving abilities flourish, as they apply Singapore Math skills learned from previous years to **solve real-world problems**, including work with decimals, fractions, geometry, and drawing.

The arts remain central to the curriculum. Fifth graders compose original music, learn to play more complex pieces on instruments, and engage in artistic activities tied to their studies. Advanced knitting helps **refine motor skills**, providing a **sense of accomplishment and focus**. Movement and social dynamics also become more intricate, as your child will **strategize** in games and navigate friendships, supported by group projects and cooperative activities. This balance of intellectual, physical, and social learning **prepares your child to thrive** as they continue their educational journey.

Grade Six: Embracing Order, Structure, and Growing Intellect

The grade six curriculum at Honolulu Waldorf School is designed to meet the unique developmental needs of children as they transition into early adolescence. Around age 12, your child will experience significant physical and emotional changes, alongside a growing desire for independence and intellectual engagement. Our curriculum offers the structure, clarity, and hands-on experiences they need to navigate this transformative phase, helping them develop a strong sense of individuality while staying connected to the world around them.



Roman History Chalk Drawing

As sixth graders become more aware of their changing bodies, they may feel physically awkward. To support this, we introduce more **complex physical activities** in sports, which help them develop **coordination, balance, and grace**. In history, the study of ancient Rome provides lessons in order and discipline, while the fall of the **Roman Empire** speaks to the emotional intensity they may be experiencing, offering important insights into human behavior and morality.

Grade Six, continued. . .

With their expanding capacity for abstract thinking, your child will be eager to explore how the world works. Subjects like **physics, geometry, and astronomy** feed this curiosity by introducing natural laws, mathematical precision, and the movements of the stars. **Hands-on experiments** in physics and geometry allow them to experience these concepts firsthand. Sixth graders continue to move through the Singapore Math curriculum, while participating in practical topics like **business math** (including percentages and interest). These real-world applications fulfill their need for **structure and relevance**.

Emotionally, sixth graders are navigating heightened feelings, and the study of medieval history, knighthood, and **chivalry** resonates with their emerging sense of **individuality and moral responsibility**. The ideals of **courage, loyalty, and justice** offer them models for personal growth, culminating in a meaningful **knighting ceremony** at the end of the



Grade 6 Knighting Ceremony

year. Artistic activities like woodworking, metalworking, sewing, perspective drawing, and music provide creative **outlets for their emotions**, helping them express and process their inner experiences productively.

In subjects like **geology and mineralogy**, students explore the physical forces that shape the Earth, reflecting their own **internal transformations**. This grounding in the natural world, combined with social and emotional learning, helps them build resilience and gain a deeper understanding of their relationships with others.

Grade Seven: Searching for Independence and Personal Identity

Grade seven is a pivotal time in your child's development, marked by emotional intensity, a strong desire for independence, and an increasing capacity for abstract thought. The Waldorf curriculum is designed to meet these shifts, providing both intellectual challenge and emotional support as students navigate early adolescence with confidence and self-awareness.



Physics, Meteorology, and the Industrial Revolution Chalk Drawing

As your child is **seeking greater autonomy and questioning authority**, the curriculum reflects their journey through the study of explorers, **Renaissance** figures, and the **Reformation**—offering models of individuals like Leonardo da Vinci and Galileo who broke boundaries and inspired change. They study explorers who **ventured off into the great unknown**, reflecting their transition into the unknown of adulthood. These studies encourage your child's growing sense of **individuality and innovation**, while stories of **struggle and rebellion** resonate with their inner experiences.

Grade Seven, continued. . .

Through creative writing, drama, and music, students find outlets for expressing complex emotions, processing their feelings of **personal growth**, and engaging in class plays. **Geography** lessons expand their understanding of the world, introducing Africa, South America, and Europe, while encouraging them to reflect on their role in the **global community**.



Organic Chemistry Chalk Drawing

Seventh graders' readiness for abstract thinking is met through subjects like **physics, chemistry**, and **human physiology**, which satisfy their curiosity about how the world works. The introduction of **algebra** and **advanced geometry** with Singapore Math also nurtures their developing **problem-solving abilities and logical thinking**.

Artistic activities, including perspective drawing and handwork, provide a **balance between intellectual and practical learning**. Perspective drawing sharpens their **conceptual thinking**, while handwork projects like sewing and woodworking offer tangible accomplishments that ground them in the physical world. Physical movement and sports continue to play an important role, helping your child stay connected to their changing body and **develop coordination and self-confidence**.

Grade Eight: Preparing for the Future Through Mastery and Synthesis

In grade eight, Waldorf education supports students during a key transition from childhood to adolescence. At ages 13-14, your child will experience significant intellectual, emotional, and social growth. They will seek greater independence and a stronger sense of personal identity, and begin to critically examine the world around them. The eighth-grade curriculum is designed to challenge their growing capacity for abstract thinking while nurturing their emotional development and preparing them for high school.



Graduates of Waldorf Continue on to Great Accomplishments

At this stage, students often **question authority and societal norms**. The **study of revolutions**, such as the American, French, and Industrial revolutions, mirrors their inner **drive for justice and change**. These pivotal moments in history provide a framework for discussions about **freedom, leadership, and social responsibility**, helping your child develop a sense of purpose and identity.

Their intellectual growth is supported through modern history, where they explore significant **social movements** of the 20th century, fostering a critical understanding of how the past shapes the present. In science, your child will dive into advanced studies of **physics** (electricity and magnetism), **chemistry**, and **human anatomy**, subjects that engage their logical thinking and resonate with their own physical changes.

Grade Eight, continued. . .

Using the Singapore Math curriculum, students focus on algebra and geometry, which offers them the chance to apply their growing cognitive skills to solve complex problems. In **creative writing** and **literature**, they explore themes of personal growth and social change, deepening their understanding of human experiences. Geography expands to **global issues** such as resource distribution and environmental challenges, encouraging discussions about their **place in the world**.



Grade 8 Student Main Lesson Drawing

Artistic expression remains central, with **perspective drawing, sculpture, music, and drama** helping students channel their creativity while developing patience and precision. The class play provides an opportunity for **emotional expression and collaboration**, while handwork projects like woodworking or metalworking **balance intellectual work with hands-on achievement**.

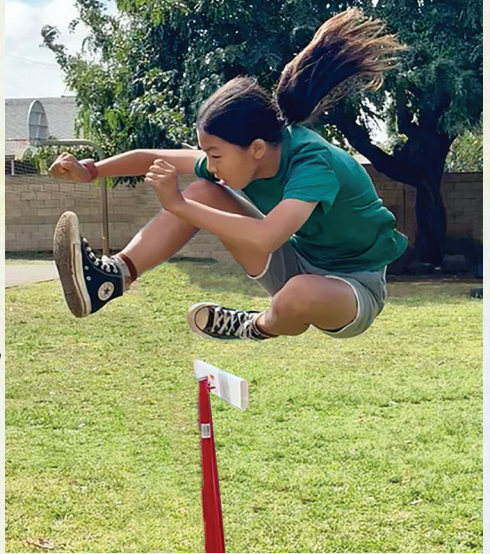
As they prepare for high school, students engage in discussions around **civics and ethics**, exploring their roles as responsible citizens. A **capstone project** allows your child to independently research and showcase a subject of personal interest, marking the **culmination of their grade school journey**.

Eighth grade at Waldorf offers a balanced curriculum that nurtures intellectual curiosity, emotional expression, and social engagement, ensuring students are well-prepared for the transition to high school and the challenges of adulthood.

AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIALTY CLASSES IN GRADES 1-8

Movement

In **first and second grade**, the focus is on **harmonizing movement and social skills** through activities like skipping, balancing, and rhythmic games that support brain development and sensory integration. By **third grade**, your child will begin more **individualized work**, building body awareness and coordination.



Grade Student Clearing a Hurdle with Ease



Student Building Balance and Coordination on a Unicycle

From **fourth to eighth grade**, the goal shifts to fostering a lifelong love for movement, developing **athletic skills**, promoting **sportspersonship**, and strengthening cardiovascular health through **endurance** activities. In fourth and fifth grade, they will focus on teamwork and hand-eye coordination, while sixth to eighth graders dive into team sports, **striving for personal growth in alignment with their emotional and physical development**.

AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIALTY CLASSES IN GRADES 1-8

Hula/Hawaiian Studies

Hula at HWS *integrates language, movement, history, and current events*. Storytelling, a key aspect of Waldorf education, aligns with hula (dance) and oli (chant), traditional Hawaiian methods of passing down knowledge. Through simple rhythms and the structure of 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language), your child will develop body awareness, vocabulary, and grammar.



Students Dancing Hula in our Annual Lei Day Festival

Stillness and body control are nurtured through games in younger years and challenges as students grow.

Observation and silent listening help students learn about native flora from the Native Hawaiian Courtyard and campus trees. As May Day approaches, classrooms fill with Hawaiian mele (songs), and students practice hula during recess. This joyful celebration unites all grades, developing a shared connection to culture. Younger students are **inspired** by the more advanced hula they aspire to perform.

By deepening their connection to Hawai'i, students gain a **sense of place** and the tools to engage with the world. They carry the **knowledge and aloha of Hawai'i** with them, becoming ambassadors of both Waldorf education and Hawaiian culture. (Plus, their **'ōlelo Hawai'i pronunciation** is something we can all be proud of!)

AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIALTY CLASSES IN GRADES 1-8

Handwork

Through the grades, handwork weaves seamlessly into the rhythms of child development, nurturing both skill and spirit. In **first grade**, your child will learn to **knit**, building fine motor coordination and confidence as their hands bring simple creations to life—laying the foundation for writing, play, and creative exploration. In **second grade**, they **follow knitting patterns** like maps, discovering the beauty of staying on course, just as they journey through stories of noble characters. In **grade three**, they'll leap into self-trust by **crocheting hats without formal patterns**, learning to rely on their instincts and embrace the unknown.



Crochet Gnomes, Knitted Lions, and other Handwork Projects await!

By **fourth grade**, they will work with **embroidery and cross-stitch**, where precision and patience teach them to trust the process, even when the final picture is yet unseen. In **fifth grade**, **Sashiko embroidery** deepens this practice, blending beauty with function and introducing the idea that strength can be artful. In **sixth grade**, your child will be able to **design and sew stuffed animals**, transforming their own visions into three-dimensional forms—a powerful lesson in creation and follow-through. **Seventh grade** brings the art of **storytelling through quilt blocks**, as they stitch their personal narratives into something both meaningful and tactile. By **grade eight**, they **master the sewing machine**, crafting garments that require focus and precision while discovering the subtle art of expressing their individuality through what they make and wear.

AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIALTY CLASSES IN GRADES 1-8

Music

Music is an integral part of students' daily lives, not just as a subject but as a **living art fostering self-expression and innovation**. From the earliest grades, your child will explore music through improvisation, composing melodies, experimenting with rhythms, nurturing creativity, and **developing skills like listening, coordination, and musical intuition**.



Strings, Flutes, Percussion, Guitar . . . the Possibilities are Endless!

As your child progresses, they will deepen their musical experience by writing songs, composing in groups, and performing in ensembles using instruments such as marimbas, xylophones, drums, kalimbas, and ukuleles. Through these activities, they learn both the **technical aspects** of music and **how to express their unique voices**. This blend of **creativity and structured skill-building** makes the music program at Honolulu Waldorf School truly transformative.



Middle School Students Enjoying a Jam Session

AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIALTY CLASSES IN GRADES 1-8

Spanish

In Spanish classes, the goal is to nurture a deep connection to language through **joyful exploration, cultural appreciation, and personal expression**. At every stage, Spanish class is about more than mastering words - it's about opening doors to new ways of thinking and seeing the world, **fostering empathy, curiosity, and the joy of communication**. In the early grades, your child will immerse themselves in the rhythm and sound of Spanish through songs, poems, games, and storytelling, cultivating an intuitive relationship with the language. As they grow, their learning expands organically - what begins as playful imitation transforms into **meaningful conversations, reading, and writing**.



Grades Students bring El Día de los Muertos to Life

By the middle grades, your child will delve deeper into **grammar, vocabulary, and cultural traditions**, gaining tools to express themselves with increasing clarity and confidence. Through folk tales, songs, celebrations, and creative projects, they experience **language as a bridge to other cultures and perspectives**. In the upper grades, they take on more independent work, engaging in **dialogues, written compositions, and presentations** that reflect both their language skills and individuality.

AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIALTY CLASSES IN GRADES 1-8

Japanese

In Waldorf Japanese classes, the journey begins with an invitation to ***experience the language through sound, movement, and story***. In these early years, they absorb Japanese much like they would their native tongue - through playful songs, rhythmic chants, and interactive activities that ***awaken a natural ear for the language***. This gentle immersion builds confidence and joy, creating a foundation for future learning.



Students work on Japanese writing

As students progress, they engage with ***writing systems such as hiragana, katakana, and basic kanji***, developing focus and precision through calligraphy and written practice. ***Cultural traditions, seasonal celebrations, and folktales*** enrich the learning experience, allowing your child to connect with Japanese values and customs on a meaningful level. By the upper grades, students take on more independent work—***reading, writing, and holding conversations*** that reflect both their growing language abilities and individual creativity.

Through each phase, Japanese class offers more than language acquisition—it provides a path to ***mindfulness, respect, and wonder***, inviting your child to see the world through ***new cultural lenses*** and communicate with care and intention.



Grades 1 & 2 share their Handwork



Grades Students participate in the Annual Spelling Bee



Grade 1 Class Play



Grades Movement really gets you Moving



Welcome Back to School Lei Ceremony



Middle School Students showcase their carved Wood Spoons



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