The News Bead

An e-newsletter from JAMS - Where success really adds up!

October 2009

Welcome to The News Bead!

Welcome to the October issue of The News Bead! It's great to be back in the classroom with all of our students. Seeing how our returning students have grown over the Summer and getting to know new students is always a highlight of the new school year. We're looking forward to a great year and looking forward to working on our Abacus skills and seeing our students progress. There's a lot going on this Fall so we want to make sure you know about some important dates, and we've even found a fun i-phone applet! Welcome back and enjoy this issue of The Bead!

美和子
Miwako

Sensei Miwako

The Importance of Homework

When your children attend JAMS, it's important to remember that they are students, and students have homework. Working on homework assignments is a very important aspect of mastering the art of the Abacus and mental problem solving. This can be a challenge when your children are also trying to manage their homework load from their day school. Please work with your child to help them manage their time so that they can complete all of their homework assignments - from both day school and JAMS. Time management skills learned at this stage of your child's development will be beneficial for them throughout their entire academic career and life.

In each book (Anazan and Abacus) you will find a sticky note with a red date stamp. This indicates the start of homework for that day. You will find the specific pages/exercises on each page which indicates homework for that day. The blue date stamp indicates the work that was completed in the classroom. Although some students want to do more work, please do not work further ahead.

Read the Abacus Cards every day. The goal is to be able to read 20 cards of each deck (red and black) per minute within a month. This exercise sharpens your child's skills in reading the numbers quickly.

Beginning soon, I will be providing a homework log sheet to help me monitor your child's progress both at school and at home. Parents will be asked to record the amount of time spent on abacus studies each day, sign the log and submit to Sensei on the last class of the week.

JAMS at Jacob Wismer Fall Carnival

Join JAMS at Jacob Wismer School for their Fall Carnival, ***this Friday, October 23rd from 5:30-8:00pm***. Jacob Wismer School is located at 5477 NW Skycrest Parkway, Portland, Oregon 97229.

Arrival / Departure Notice

Please arrive a few minutes early to take your child to the bathroom (code: 154) and get a drink of water. I am unable to accompany students to the bathroom during class and I want to ensure that he/she receives a full hour of instruction. Also, if one student asks to go to the bathroom it creates a domino effect. Suddenly every student needs to go to the bathroom!

As you may have noticed I have a very small work space and very tight schedule of classes. This is to maximize the teaching time that I have with your children. To ensure every child receives the full hour of instruction, please arrive on time and do not interrupt the class while in session. If you need to talk with me, please see the Communication with Sensei item below. Even if your child arrives late, the instruction will still end at the end of the class time.

It is critical that you pick your child up from class on time. Unfortunately, there is no space that your child can safely and securely wait after class has ended. In order for me to provide my full attention and focus for the next class, I am unable to allow your child to sit in the classroom to wait for parent pick-up. If you would like for your child to go downstairs to wait for you, please speak to me about signing a release form.

Classroom Greeting

When children arrive in class I would like for them to greet myself and others with "konnichiwah" which means "hello" in Japanese. When they leave the class room they should use "sayonara" which means "good-bye" in Japanese. Also, I would like for children to refer to me as "Sensei." Please help remind your children to use these greetings by using them yourselves.

Communication with Sensei

If you would like to discuss your child's performance or have any questions please email me at jamsportland@gmail.com to schedule an appointment from 1:30 – 3:30 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday.

I hope that you can all appreciate and respect my need for these classroom procedures. I sincerely want to do everything possible to make this a positive and effective learning experience for your child. I look forward to working with your during the year and seeing your child's math skills grow!

Classroom Materials

Students are responsible for bringing the following materials to every class:

- Abacus
- Abacus Cards
- Abacus Book
- Anzan Book
- 3 short pencils with no erasers please (if students write an incorrect answer I can learn from how they made their mistake)

Please note that I hold the students responsible for bringing the proper materials to class – not the parent. I believe this discipline will make for a more successful learning.

All of the materials must be labeled with the child's name. So many bags and abacuses look alike – it is easy to get confused.

Abacus i-phone App!

Now you can practice Abacus on your i-phone! Visit: http://www.3monk3ys.com/app_isoroban.php to download the app (it's only $0.99). We've played with this one ourselves and believe it's the best Abacus app available... and a great way to keep your children connected to their skills!

No Halloween Costumes Please

Many students may be allowed to wear Halloween costumes to their day schools on Friday, October 30. We want your children to enjoy the holiday activities at their schools, but request that no students wear Halloween costumes to JAMS classes on that day. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation.

November Holiday Closures

Please mark your calendars for the following November holiday closures... JAMS will be closed on November 11 in recognition of Veteran's Day, and from November 26-30 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Extra Make-Up Days

November 18th and 25th from 3:30-4:30 will be your opportunity to make up missed class sessions. Please mark your calendars!

Payment Installment Dates

If you are paying tuition in installments, please make note of the following dates:

- October 31 : Installment # 3 due
- November 30 : Installment #4 due

Payments received after the 5th of each month will be assessed a $25 late fee.

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