

E-Mail Newsletter from Mayor of Okayama City "Challenge of Legendary Okayama" (9)
February 4th Issue

Hi there. This is Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

I visited Kuwata junior high school in the city center and Kousai elementary school in former Seto city yesterday,.

First, my schedule in Kousai elementary school was that classroom visitations (sixth grade → third grade → a special classroom), a talk with teachers, and school lunch with the first graders.

I had the following impressions there.

- (1) Children are healthy and innocent.
- (2) Classes are taught interactively, not unilaterally.
- (3) In order to detect "bullying" early, the teachers are striving.

Then, at Kuwata junior high school, I visited a school infirmary, guidance counselor prior to private college entrance exam for the third graders, school counselor's room, and classroom visitations (the first grade, a special classroom, and the second grade).

I had the following impressions there.

- (1) There were some students escaping from classes and wandering in the school. Also, I felt that the students who were attending classes were at their puberty.
- (2) Parents do not know how to interact with their children. They need to wait for more than a month to consult with the school counselor.
- (3) English teachers' pronunciation was great and there were foreign supporters, too. It was very different from the time I used to go there. (I'm envious!)

All in all, I felt that the teachers were exhausted. I think there are issues on parents' anxiety and the way of guidance in the background. I don't think those problems will be solved overnight but I would like to work on the improvement of children's knowledge, virtue, and physical.

(Postscript)

Kuwata junior high school is my old school, but classrooms and the gymnasium have not been changed at all. It was quite simply a "sentimental journey" for me. In addition, I bumped into my old classmates at the counselor room which brought me a temporary nostalgia.

At the lunch time at Kousai elementary school, I faced a barrage of questions from the first graders, such as "why did you become a Mayor" and "what is your favorite food?", etc. Some questions made me come out in a cold sweat and I was almost lost by their straightforward questions.