MAY 2026 | VOL. 15 | NO. 2

AATJ NEWSLETTER

全米日本語教育学会 American Association of Teachers of Japanese

全米日本語教育学会

In this issue...

OFFICER MESSAGES

click to access articles

SPRING CONFERENCE REPORT

SPRING OFFICERS' RETREAT

FALL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

JNHS SPOTLIGHT

NATIONAL JAPANESE EXAM

JUNIOR JAPAN BOWL REPORT

AND MORE

Message from the President

WILLIAM MATSUZAKI

Greetings! I hope everyone is enjoying the mild weather and all the beauty that spring brings. I trust that everyone's school year is wrapping up well with many end of the school year activities that highlight the hard work of the students as well as the educators. From all who participated in the National Japanese Exam (NJE) to the induction of high school and college students into the Japanese National Honor Society, AATJ is so proud of all of the Japanese educators and students for their hard work.

As a high school principal, this is one of the most exciting times to not only highlight the hard work of our seniors, but all students and teachers. It is never the work of a single person, but the effort of many people who make it happen. The same is true of the work of AATJ. I appreciate all of the hard work of the officers and directors who make each of the activities happen well. I also appreciate all of the members who advocate for not only their own Japanese program, but advocating for the sustainability of all Japanese programs and for each program to thrive. I would like to encourage each of you to think about being part of this organization in a leadership capacity whether it might be as a director or officer or as an informal leader who continues to voice the importance of having strong Japanese programs across the country.

In March, I was fortunate enough to be part of the Language Advocacy Days 2026 with Executive Director Katie Ross and Advocacy Co-Directors Patty Breun-sensei and Shinsuke Tsuchiya-sensei. We were able to meet with congressional and Senate offices in Washington, DC to voice our support for language education as a whole and in particular the importance of Japanese in language education.

Directly afterwards, we held our annual AATJ 2026 Spring Conference in Vancouver, Canada. Thank you to our Spring Conference co-directors, Mochizuki-sensei and Wei-sensei, for their hard work to make this conference so wonderful. We especially appreciated all of the members who presented and for Dr. Michael Emmerich for his wonderful keynote speech that highlighted his research as well as the value of language learning. It gave all of us great questions to explore and a sense of curiosity for all of us to continue our own work. On Friday, we were also able to participate in the Global Network Panel Discussion that included experts from different fields. Please find an article in this newsletter about the session. Thank you to the Japan Foundation for the wonderful reception and our members who led their SIG meetings. I would also like to congratulate our Oka Fund recipients for AATJ Spring Conference. Congratulations to Hanbeom Jung, Shunichi Maruyama, Moeno Hashiguchi, Natsumi Suzuki, and Ayami Morita. Thank you always to the Oka family for their generous support of the AATJ members.

On April 25th, we conducted an online Directors' and Officers' retreat to think big and boldly for AATJ. Please find an article in this issue about the retreat for more information. Thank you to the directors and officers for their hard work and the investment in AATJ.

I hope everyone has a wonderful end to the school year and a great summer.

Message from the Vice Presidents

KATE DAVIS
K-12

ATSUSHI HASEGAWA
POST-SECONDARY

AATJ会員の皆様、3月のバンクーバーでのAATJ春季大会を終え、あっという間に初夏の陽気となりました。学年度末を迎え、夏休みを心待ちにされている方も多いのではないでしょうか。さて、夏休みを前に、5月2日には今年度第2回目となるアフィリエイト・ミーティングを開催いたしました。リーダーの皆様にお会いできてうれしかったです。会員の皆様におかれましても、全米各地の地域教師会に参加する機会がございましたら、ぜひ積極的に足をお運びください。

今年も以下の賞の候補を全米から募集いたします。皆様の周りにふさわしいプログラムや先生がいらっしゃいましたら、ぜひご推薦ください。

● K-12 GROWING PROGRAM AWARD：小中高レベルの優れたプログラムを表彰するもので、教員1名体制、もしくはパートタイム1～2名体制のプログラムが対象となります。該当するプログラムのご推薦をお願いいたします。

● TEACHER AWARD：全米で活躍する優秀な先生を表彰します。他薦はもちろん、自薦でのご応募もお待ちしております。

募集の詳細はAATJのウェブサイトをご覧ください。

Following the AATJ Spring Conference in Vancouver this past March, the weather has quickly turned into the warmth of early summer. As the academic year is wrapping up, many of you are likely looking forward to the start of summer break. Before the summer hiatus begins, we held our second Affiliate Meeting of the fiscal year on May 2. It was great to connect with all our affiliate leaders. We also encourage our members to actively participate in local Japanese teachers' association events whenever the opportunity arises across the country.

Furthermore, we are now accepting nationwide nominations for the following awards. If you know of a deserving program or teacher, please consider submitting a nomination.

● K-12 Growing Program Award: This award recognizes outstanding programs at the K-12 level. Eligibility is limited to programs staffed by one full-time teacher or one to two part-time teachers. We ask for your help in nominating programs that fit these criteria.

● Teacher Award: These awards honor exceptional teachers active throughout the United States. We welcome both nominations of others and self-nominations from our members.

Please visit the AATJ **website** for details.

Greetings from the AATJ Office!

KATIE ROSS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Enjoying freshly made matcha donuts in Vancouver!

Spring has been a particularly busy season at AATJ! The Advocacy Directors, AATJ President, and I were privileged to attend JNCL-NCLIS Language Advocacy Day 2026. Later that week, AATJ also held its annual Spring Conference in Vancouver, Canada. It was an incredibly busy week, but well worth the effort!

This spring, more than 1,500 students across the United States participated in the National Japanese Exam! Thanks to generous grant funding from the Japan–U.S. Friendship Commission, AATJ was able to offer exam registration **free of charge** to all AATJ members. Our hope was that this support would encourage more teachers to try out this excellent instructional tool, developed by AATJ's own highly qualified and widely respected members.

Participation in 2026 increased **50%** compared to 2025. We are delighted by this growth and hope that those who took part this year will continue to use the NJE in the future.

And speaking of testing, AATJ has a few new offerings for members!

Log in to your AATJ member account at **https://members.aatj.org** and access the AATJ Store to see these new offerings:

Avant Language—AATJ members are now able to purchase their STAMP test as well as their other high-quality test-related tools at their lowest price point! This means that members are able to purchase the STAMP test for under $20/test.

ASK Online—AATJ members are now able to purchase ASK Online's JLPT ½ Mock Online Test, as well as other high-quality products, at a 20% discount! (Minimum order of 20 tests/order/institution.)

We hope that bringing high-quality teaching, learning, and testing tools at affordable prices will support AATJ members as we continue to fulfill AATJ's mission.

Here are some things that are happening at AATJ.

UPCOMING AATJ EVENTS	DATES (Subject to Change)
AATJ Nominations for President-Elect & Vice President	June 30th, 2026
2026 ACTFL/AATJ Fall Conference Grant Application Deadline **More info Here**	July 1st, 2026
Teacher Award Nominations due **Nomination Info Here**	July 31st, 2026
K-12 Growing Program Award Nominations due **More Info Here**	July 31st, 2026
ASK Online Instructional Webinar (more details to come)	July 2026 (TBA)
2026 **JLPT** Registration Period	August – September 2026, TBA
Webinar: Proposal Writing and Academic Publishing	September 5th, 2026 1:00 MDT
AATJ Election (President-Elect & Vice President)	October, 2026
2027 AATJ Conference Proposals Due	October 2026, TBA
AATJ 2027 Membership Renewals Begin	November, 2026
2026 AATJ/ACTFL Fall Conference (San Antonio, TX)	November 20-22, 2026
2026 **JLPT**	December, 2026
Japanese National Honor Society Applications **More Info Here**	Year-round
JNHS 応援 Grant Application Period **Apply Here**	January 1 – March 31, 2027
2027 AATJ Spring Conference Registration **Register Here**	January 1 – March 6, 2027
National Japanese Exam Testing Period	March 1 – April 14, 2027
JNCL-NCLIS Language Advocacy Day 2027	March, 2027 (TBA)
2027 AATJ Spring Conference in Boston, MA	March 17 – March 19, 2027
2027 AATJ Officers' and Directors' Retreat	April, 2027
JNHS 応援 Grant Recipients Notified	April, 2027
NJE Exam Results Released	Around April 29, 2027

Avant and AATJ Collaborate to Support Japanese Educators

Avant, The Language Proficiency Company, is proud to announce a new collaboration with the American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ). AATJ members in both K–12 and higher education will gain premier access to Avant's research-backed assessments and professional learning tools, supporting stronger instruction and expanded opportunities for students of Japanese.

As part of the partnership, AATJ members will receive:

- **Avant STAMP assessments available** for both AATJ member students and for teacher testing, supporting proficiency-driven instruction and credentialing.
- **Avant ADVANCE**, the online teacher training tool grounded in the proficiency standards, helping educators to easily identify student progress
- **Avant MORE Learning professional development** at a discount, for programs that want to deepen their understanding of the data and proficiency-based instruction
- **One free professional learning training each year**, offered collaboratively by Avant and AATJ to support the ongoing professional growth of AATJ members.

Avant STAMP is the only computer-adaptive proficiency assessment approved by the American Council on Education (ACE) and recommended for college credit, giving students of AATJ members valuable postsecondary advantages and a credible pathway to State and Global Seals of Biliteracy.

As part of its commitment to the Japanese language teaching community, Avant will also serve as an official sponsor of AATJ's annual fall meeting.

For more information, visit **www.avantassessment.com/aatj** or **https://members.aatj.org/products/avant-assessment**

About Avant

Avant, The Language Proficiency Company, transforms language proficiency from learning to certification. Avant Learn features Mira, with immersive AI practice and assessment tools, and Avant MORE Learning with customized data-driven training and support. Avant Assess delivers adaptive, standards-based tests like STAMP, the only ACE-approved, computer-adaptive proficiency assessment available in 150+ languages. Educators and employers gain key insights into real-world communication skills. Avant Certify offers recognition and certification, including the universally standard Global Seal of Biliteracy, accepted worldwide for all Avant languages. Whether in education, a workplace, or government, Avant's Language Proficiency Platform™ elevates language skills with clarity and confidence. avantlanguage.com

アスク出版 ASK Publishing ASK Online

AATJ会員の所属機関の方は特別割引価格で購入できるようになりました！

AATJ member institutions are eligible for special discounted pricing

スマホ・PC・タブレット対応
Compatible with smartphones, PCs, and tablets

いつでも試験
Test anytime

自動採点
Automatic scoring

解説付き
Answer explanations

教師用管理ページで学習者の進捗を確認・管理可能
Teacher dashboard for progress tracking

JLPTオンラインハーフ模試
JLPT Online Half Mock Test

✓実際の試験の半分の時間で気軽に受験！
Take the test in half the time of the JLPT!

✓N1〜N5・全6種類
6 types of questions (A to F) for each level from N1 to N5

✓オプションで復習問題が追加可能！
Optional review questionsavailabie for addition!

オンライン日本語プレースメントテスト
Online Japanese Placement Test

✓学習歴や学習目的についてのアンケート付き
Includes a survey on your learning history and goals!

✓クラス分けに最適
Perfect for class placement and sorting

✓一問ごとに制限時間あり
Each question is timed to prevent cheating and ensure fair testing!

詳細・お問い合わせ
For more details

Kinokuniya Book Stores of America Co. Ltd.
Email: somarketing@kinokuniya.com

全米日本語教育学会

AATJ Spring Conference Report

MARIKO MOROISHI WEI, YOSHIHIRO MOCHIZUKI
SPRING CONFERENCE CO-DIRECTORS

The 2026 AATJ Spring Conference, held in beautiful Vancouver, BC, brought together educators, researchers, and practitioners from across the field of Japanese language education for a vibrant and energizing exchange of ideas. With a rich program of panels, individual presentations, workshops, and special interest group (SIG) meetings, the conference highlighted both the diversity of our field and its exciting future directions.

We kicked things off with a welcome reception on Wednesday evening, March 11, where participants enjoyed reconnecting with colleagues and meeting new ones over light refreshments. The room was filled with lively conversation, laughter, and a shared sense of anticipation for the days ahead—a wonderful start to the conference!

The following morning, the conference officially began with opening remarks by our new AATJ President, William Matsuzaki-sensei, along with a land acknowledgment that set a thoughtful and reflective tone. From the very first session, attendees were immersed in a wide range of engaging topics, including linguistics, second language acquisition, curriculum design, language technology, and literature. Across four session blocks, the program featured 6 panels and 48 individual papers, offering something for everyone.

The conference also created space for more focused and interactive conversations through SIG meetings and workshops. These sessions fostered meaningful dialogue on topics such as translation and interpreting, study abroad, and graduate program networking, while also providing valuable opportunities for networking and collaboration.

A highlight of the day was the keynote address by Professor Michael Emmerich, Tadashi Yanai Professor of Japanese Literature at UCLA, titled “The View from Translationdom: Reflections on the Values of Language Learning.” His thought-provoking talk invited us to reflect on the broader significance of language study and the role of translation as both an intellectual practice and a way of engaging with the world. The keynote was followed by a lively Q&A session and closing remarks, bringing the main conference to an inspiring close.

But the conversations did not end there! On Friday, March 13, two AATJ-sponsored events—the Global Networking Discussion Meeting (see Yoshiko Mori-sensei’s report in this issue) and a Round Table Discussion chaired by Yukiko Hanawa-sensei (New York University), titled “Modes of Translation: Texts, Languages, Praxis”—drew enthusiastic participation and packed rooms, continuing the momentum of the conference.

One of the most exciting aspects of this year’s conference was the strong presence of graduate students and early-career scholars, whose presentations brought fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the field. The AATJ Spring Conference Scholarship once again supported five outstanding recipients with $1,000 each to help fund their participation. Congratulations to Hanbeom Jung-sensei (UCLA), Moeno Hashiguchi-sensei (College of William & Mary), Shunichi Maruyama-sensei (University of Pittsburgh), Ayami Morita-sensei (Purdue University), and Natsumi Suzuki-sensei (Purdue University) for their excellent presentations!

We are deeply grateful to our sponsors and corporate partners—the Japan Times, Avant, ALLEX Foundation, Hokkaido International Foundation, the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies, the Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies, and Princeton in Ishikawa—for their generous support. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to Naoko Takei-sensei of Simon Fraser University and CAJLE for their invaluable help with volunteers and for securing the keynote venue.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to Yoshihiro Mochizuki-sensei (University of Michigan), who has completed his term as Spring Conference Co-Director. Thank you for your outstanding leadership and dedication. At the same time, we are delighted to welcome Etsuyo Yuasa-sensei (The Ohio State University) as the new Co-Director.

Overall, the 2026 AATJ Spring Conference was marked by dynamic discussions, emerging research directions, and a strong sense of community. We look forward to continuing these conversations in the years to come.

The 2027 AATJ Spring Conference will be held in Boston, MA, on Thursday, March 18, 2027. We hope to see you there!

2026 AATJ Spring Conference Co-Directors
Yoshihiro Mochizuki (University of Michigan)
Mariko M. Wei (Purdue University)

JLL Spring 2026 Issue Published!

Current and past issues are available here.

Submissions guidelines are here.

List of editors is here.

Please consider submitting to the journal.

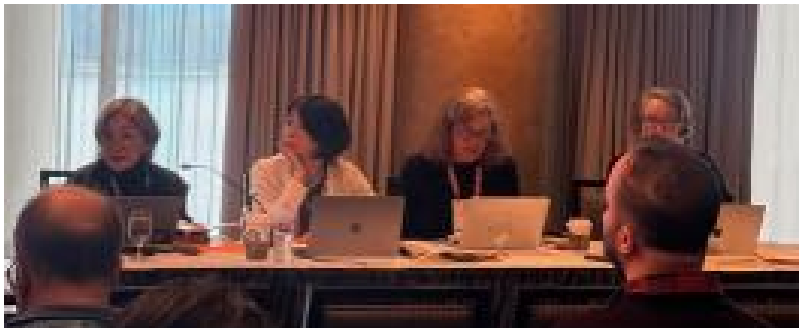
AAS 2026 in Vancouver

NOBUKO CHIKAMATSU
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Following the American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) 2026 Spring Conference Thursday, March 12 (with a pre-conference reception and Global Network Meeting on March 13), I had the opportunity to attend the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference in Vancouver from March 13 to 15, 2026. Participating in AAS immediately after the AATJ conference proved to be an enriching and intellectually stimulating experience, and I strongly encourage AATJ members to consider extending their stay for future meetings.

On Friday morning, I attended a panel sponsored by the Japan Foundation Toronto titled "*A Sustainable Future of Japanese Studies: Canada's Perspective and Direction.*" Chaired by Professor James Tiessen, the session brought together specialists in literature, political science, history, digital cultural studies, anthropology, and language education. A central theme was the future of Japanese Studies programs amid declining enrollments, with a strong emphasis on the critical role of language education in revitalization. Professor Mika Kimura, President of the Canadian Association of Japanese Language Education (CALJE), highlighted language programs as both a foundation and a collaborative force within Japanese Studies. The panel also discussed AI in language education, echoing conversations from the AATJ conference the previous day—particularly its potential when thoughtfully integrated into language and area studies curricula. Despite ongoing challenges, scholars reaffirmed the centrality of language education, prompting AATJ to begin conversations with the Japan Foundation Los Angeles and New York offices about a potential collaborative panel for AAS 2027.

I also attended the AATJ-sponsored panel "*Modes of Translation: Texts, Languages, Praxis*," chaired by Professor Yukiko Hanawa, AATJ's Translation and Interpretation SIG coordinator. This roundtable explored what happens in translation—and what we make happen through translation—particularly in the context of humanities texts, and emphasized translation as an engaged intellectual practice involving close reading, interpretive decision-making, and participation in broader scholarly conversations. AATJ member Professor Yuri Kumagai highlighted praxis in language pedagogy by framing reading as both a social practice and an act of translation that mediates meaning across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Although I was unable to stay for the entire session due to an overlap with the Global Network meeting, its themes resonated strongly with Professor Michael Emmerich's keynote at the AATJ conference. The renewed interest in translation as a pedagogical tool suggests continued development in this area.



On Saturday, I attended the panel “Corpus-based Approaches to Japanese Language Teaching: What We Do Is Not What We Think We Do,” chaired by Professor Tsuyoshi Ono, with Professor Noriko Iwasaki serving as discussant. Presenters, including AATJ members Professor Michiko Kaneyasu and Professor Miyabi Ozawa, shared innovative applications of corpus-based approaches to Japanese language teaching. Their work offered compelling insights into how empirical language data can inform pedagogy, and I found their approaches particularly inspiring for my future classroom practice.

Katie Ross, AATJ’s Executive Director, and I also attended the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission/JUFSC meeting, a long-time ally of AATJ that has generously provided grants on multiple occasions. We had the opportunity to thank JUFSC’s Executive Director, Paige Cottingham-Streater, for the Commission’s support and to discuss challenges and potential strategies with colleagues from other universities.

The conference also provided valuable opportunities for networking and exchange. The Japan Foundation reception on Friday evening brought together colleagues and stakeholders from both Canada and the United States, allowing for meaningful conversations about ongoing collaborations and future initiatives. Engaging with scholars across disciplines within Japanese Studies was intellectually invigorating and underscored the broader relevance of our work.

Overall, attending AAS alongside the AATJ Spring Conference was an extremely rewarding experience. I encourage AATJ members to consider extending their participation to include AAS in future years. It may also be worth exploring ways in which AATJ can support member participation in AAS, further strengthening connections between language pedagogy and area studies.

世界の仲間と考える日本語教育の協働戦略
AATJ-CAJLE 世界ネットワーキング会議報告

YOSHIKO MORI
ACTING GN REPRESENTATIVE, AATJ

2026年3月13日（金）、カナダ・バンクーバーで開催された全米日本語教師会（AATJ）春季大会の一環として、AATJはカナダ日本語教育振興会（CAJLE）との協賛およびグローバル・ネットワーク（GN）の協力のもと、「AATJ–CAJLE 世界ネットワーキング会議」を開催しました。

本会議は、近年厳しさを増す言語文化教育の状況を踏まえ、世界の日本語教育・日本研究関係者がどのように協働し、どのような方策を講じていくべきかを検討することを目的としたものです。

会場は Vancouver Convention Centre West Meeting Room 223で、カナダ／米国西海岸時間の午後12時から1時30分までの予定で実施されました。当日は満席となり、議論が非常に活発であったため、終了時刻を30分延長する盛況となりました。

本会議は三部構成で実施されました。まず、世界各地を代表する10団体から現状報告と提言が行われ、続いて参加者全員によるグループ・ディスカッションが行われました。最後に、各グループの議論の成果が共有され、全体のまとめが行われました。

まず、第一部では、世界各地を代表する8つの日本語教育・日本研究関連団体に加え、在カナダおよび在米国日本国大使館より、言語文化教育を取り巻く現状と課題、ならびにそれらを乗り越え、日本語教育を維持・発展させるための取り組みや支援のあり方について、報告と提言が行われました。
各団体および登壇者は以下の通りです。各報告の概要はAATJウェブサイトの報告書をご覧ください。<報告書>

森純子（GN）、近松暢子（AATJ）、木村美香（カナダ日本語教育振興会）、守時なぎさ（ヨーロッパ日本語教師会）、荻野雅由（ニュージーランド日本研究学会）、吉田真樹・小島卓也（豪州日本研究学会）、羅暁勤（台湾日本語教育学会）、吉原信之（在カナダ日本国大使館）、安藤博（在米国日本国大使館）、ウォーカー泉（シンガポール日本語教師の会）

第二部では、次の二つのディスカッション・クエスチョンを提示し、参加者全員が少人数のグループに分かれて議論を行いました。
教育機関という枠組みの中で何ができるか
日本語教育のアウトリーチという観点から何ができるか
対面参加者は計9グループに分かれ、オンライン登壇者は1つのブレイクアウトルームで議論を行いました。いずれのグループでも活発な意見交換が行われ、予定の15分では足りないほど、熱心な議論が展開されました。

ディスカッション後、各グループの代表者が議論の成果を共有し、その後、質疑応答を含む全体討議が行われました。共有された主な課題および提言は以下の通りです。

- 政治状況と政策の影響：米国における教育政策、カナダにおける留学生受け入れ制限、ニュージーランドでの国家言語政策の不在、台湾での少子化に伴う学科統廃合など、日本語教育は各国の政策や社会構造の変化から大きな影響を受けている。
- 日本語教育および教員の必要性：日本国内では外国人労働者や留学生の増加に伴い、日本語教育の重要性が高まっており、2019年制定の「日本語教育推進法」に伴う法的整備も進められている。さらに日本語教育学会や台湾日本語教育学会の試みも報告された。
- 日本語教員の疲弊：日本語教育が多様な分野にわたり高い専門性を求められることに加え、教育現場と研究活動の両立が難しいことから、多くの教員が負担を抱えている現状が共有され、教員への支援の必要性が強調された。
- 学習動機の変化と多様化：従来の日本研究や専攻としての長期学習から、ポップカルチャーへの関心や他専攻の選択科目としての短期履修へと動機が変化しており、中上級レベルのクラス維持が課題となっている。
- 「つながり」とアドボカシーの重要性：個々の教育実践にとどまらず、学会・大使館・企業などが連携し、日本語学習のキャリア価値を可視化するアドボカシー活動の推進と、ネットワーキングを通じたコミュニティ形成の重要性が指摘された。
- グローバルな協働戦略の構築：日本語教育の意義を言語習得にとどめず、キャリア形成や共生社会の実現と結びつけて捉え、グローバル・ネットワーク（GN）などの国際的枠組みを通じた知見共有と政策提言の必要性が再確認された。

最後に、グローバルレベルでの連携強化と協働、ならびに政策立案者への働きかけの重要性を改めて確認し、本会議は締めくくられました。

On Friday, March 13, 2026, as part of the Spring Conference of the American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) held in Vancouver, Canada, AATJ organized the "**AATJ–CAJLE Global Networking Meeting**" in collaboration with the Canadian Association for Japanese Language Education (CAJLE) and with the cooperation of the Global Network (GN).

This conference was organized in response to the increasingly challenging circumstances surrounding language and culture education in recent years. Its purpose was to examine how professionals in Japanese language education and Japanese studies worldwide can collaborate and identify strategies to move the field forward.

The conference took place in Meeting Room 223 at the Vancouver Convention Centre West from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., Pacific Time. The room reached full capacity, and due to the highly active discussions, the session was extended by an additional 30 minutes.

The conference was structured in three parts. First, representatives from ten organizations worldwide delivered status reports and recommendations. This was followed by group discussions involving all participants. Finally, the outcomes of each group were shared, and an overall summary was presented.

In Part I, representatives from eight organizations related to Japanese language education and Japanese studies across various regions of the world, along with representatives from the Embassies of Japan in Canada and the United States, presented reports and recommendations on the current state of language and culture education, the challenges facing the field, and strategies to address these challenges in order to sustain and further develop Japanese language education.

The organizations and presenters are listed below. For an overview of each report, please see the report available on the AATJ website <Report>.

Junko Mori (GN), Nobuko Chikamatsu (AATJ), Mika Kimura (Canadian Association for Japanese Language Education), Nagisa Moritoki (Association of Japanese Language Teachers in Europe), Masayoshi Ogino (Japanese Studies Aotearoa New Zealand), Masaki Yoshida & Takuya Kojima (Japanese Studies Association of Australia), Hsiao-Chin Lo (Association of Japanese Language Education in Taiwan), Nobuyuki Yoshihara (Embassy of Japan in Canada), Hiroshi Ando (Embassy of Japan in the United States), Izumi Walker (Japanese Language Teachers' Association in Singapore)

In Part II, the following two discussion questions were presented, and all participants were divided into small groups for discussion:

1. What can be done within the framework of educational institutions?
2. What can be done from the perspective of Japanese language education outreach?

In-person participants were divided into nine groups, while online presenters discussed in a single breakout room. All groups engaged in active exchanges of ideas, and the scheduled 15 minutes proved insufficient for the depth of discussion.

After the discussions, each group's representative shared the outcomes, followed by a plenary discussion including Q&A. The shared challenges and recommendations are summarized as follows:

- Impact of political context and policies: Japanese language education is strongly influenced by national policies and societal changes, including U.S. education policies, restrictions on international students in Canada, the absence of a national language policy in New Zealand, and department consolidations in Taiwan due to declining birthrates.
- Demand for Japanese language education and teachers: In Japan, the increasing number of foreign workers and international students has highlighted the importance of Japanese language education. Legal frameworks established under the 2019 "Act on Promotion of Japanese Language Education" support these efforts. Initiatives by professional associations, including the Association for Japanese Language Education and the Association of Japanese Language Education in Taiwan, were also reported.
- Teacher burnout: Many Japanese language instructors face significant burdens due to the high specialization required across diverse fields and the difficulty of balancing teaching with research. The need for greater support for educators was emphasized.
- Changes and diversification in learner motivation: Learner motivation has shifted from long-term study in Japanese studies programs to short-term courses driven by interest in pop culture or as electives in other majors. Maintaining intermediate and advanced-level classes has become a challenge.
- Importance of connection and advocacy: Beyond individual teaching practices, collaboration among professional associations, embassies, and businesses is needed to promote the career value of Japanese learning and foster community-building through networking.
- Developing global collaboration strategies: Japanese language education should extend beyond language acquisition to support career development and inclusive societies. Sharing insights and providing policy recommendations through international frameworks, such as Global Networks (GN), was reaffirmed as essential.

Finally, the conference concluded with a renewed recognition of the importance of strengthening global collaboration and coordination, as well as engaging with policymakers.

Looking Ahead to the 2027 AATJ Spring Conference!

MARIKO WEI & ETSUYO YUASA
2027 SPRING CONFERENCE CO-DIRECTORS

We're excited to announce that the 2027 AATJ Annual Spring Conference will take place on **Thursday, March 18, 2027**, in **Boston, Massachusetts**, in conjunction with the **2027 Association for Asian Studies (AAS) Annual Conference**.

While many details are still being finalized, we hope to host a reception on the evening of **Wednesday, March 17**, and there will be additional AATJ events on **Friday, March 19,** during AAS.

So please mark your calendars for March 17–19, 2027, and plan to join us for another inspiring gathering of Japanese language educators. Stay tuned for more details in the coming months—we look forward to seeing you in Boston in 2027!

FALL 2026 AATJ OFFICER ELECTION

This October, AATJ will hold the election for the following two positions:

- President-elect: Higher Ed or K-12 teacher
- Vice-president: K-12 teacher

The Nomination Committee is seeking recommendations of AATJ members to be considered as candidates for either position. Please email your suggestions to **aatj@aatj.org** by June 30, 2026, including the following information:

- Name, institution, and email address of the person you are recommending
- Office for which you are recommending this person (President-elect or Vice-president)
- Brief statement explaining why this person would be a good candidate (very brief is fine)

For description of duties, please refer to Article IV of the **AATJ Bylaws.**

AATJ Directors and Officers' Retreat

WILLIAM MATSUZAKI
PRESIDENT

On April 25th, AATJ held a retreat for directors and officers to discuss and plan various aspects of the organization. It was important for us to start the retreat with a review of the Bylaws and discuss what are the key components and think about our next iteration of the organization to target the needs of our members while honoring the core values of the organization. Some of the key topics that we discussed included: 1) how do we continue to work on mentoring and identifying the future leaders of AATJ, 2) how do we capture Japanese educators who are currently not members of AATJ, 3) how do we continue to be financially stable, and 4) how do we continue to center the needs of our members and create more opportunities for the human connections.

Directly afterwards, we had an officers' retreat where we discussed 1) how do we increase the Japanese educator pipeline, 2) what might be some future needs of AATJ including new director positions, 3) how do we increase member engagement, 4) what are some of the guidelines that we need to continue to create to have a shared list that we can follow, and 5) what are some alternative ways to fund AATJ in the future.

I truly appreciate all of the hard work of the directors, officers, and Katie, our Executive Director. As with any organization, we have to be flexible enough to meet the demands of the time, while honoring the core values of the organization. As we continue to work on various areas of the organization, we will continue to update you on any changes.

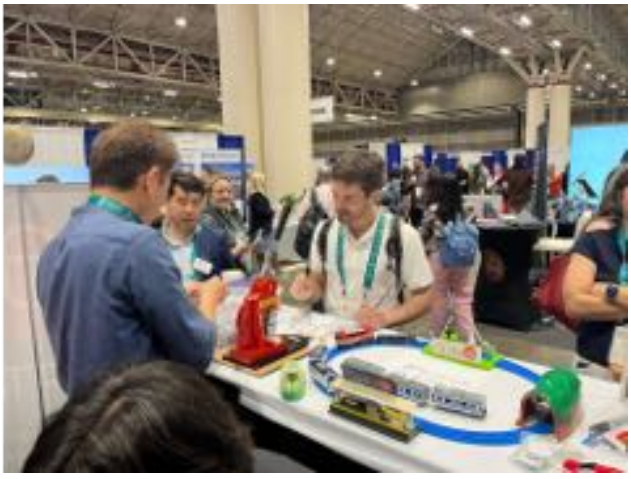
Annual Fall Conference, ACTFL 2026 in San Antonio

JAIMELYNN TATEYAMA, MAKIKO FUKUDA AND JUN TAKAHASHI
FALL CONFERENCE CO-DIRECTORS

The AATJ Fall Conference will be held during the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Annual Convention and World Languages Expo from Friday, November 20th through Sunday, November 22nd 2026 in San Antonio. On the ACTFL website, you will find the schedule at a glance for the ACTFL convention and expo. **https://www.actfl.org/convention-and-expo**.

The goal of the ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo is to provide a comprehensive professional development experience that will have an impact on language educators at all levels of teaching and in turn enable their students to succeed in their language learning process. The ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo is where language educators from around the world come to meet! This global event can bring language educators from distinct languages, levels, and assignments together, and learn from each other!

AATJ Affiliate Culture Activity Booth (2025)



Conference Attendees at the AATJ Booth (2025)

During the 2026 ACTFL Annual Convention, AATJ will be having their Affiliate Meeting, Award Luncheon (tickets must be purchased at the time of registration), AATJ General Meeting (free for all for AATJ members and guests) where you can connect with other teachers and have a chance to receive door prizes. Meetings of AATJ's directors and of the affiliate representatives will also be held, so we encourage directors and affiliate officers to attend.

In the exhibition area, AATJ will also be in the Japan Pavilion with other vendor booths where you can participate in cultural activities provided by various AATJ teachers and AATJ Affiliate groups. Vendors such as Kinokuniya, JPT America and The Japan Foundation Los Angeles are a few that will be in the Japan Pavilion. Please come to the conference to learn, bond and experience all that the ACTFL Convention and AATJ has to offer.

Award Luncheon (2025)

2025 ACTFL Conference Scholarship Awardees (Oka Professional Development Scholarship)

Registration

Registration is already open! Please check the ACTFL site for further details. AATJ is a Convention Partner Organization and you can register at a member rate.
https://www.actfl.org/convention-and-expo

Registration Rates

Join ACTFL and Save $200 on #ACTFL2026 Registration!

FULL CONVENTION:	EARLY BIRD (7/29/26)	ADVANCE (10/28/26)	LATE (after 10/28/26)
Member	$395	$425	$525
Non-member	$595	$625	$725
Student	$200	$230	$330

ONE DAY ONSITE ONLY:	EARLY BIRD (7/29/26)	ADVANCE (10/28/26)	LATE (after 10/28/26)
One Day Member	$380	$410	$510
One Day Non-member	$515	$545	$645

To register for the ACTFL Convention, please go to this website: **https://www.actfl.org/convention-and-expo** and click on the "Register Now" button. **If you are a current AATJ member, be sure to scroll down the ACTFL 2026 Registration page and use "Convention Partner Organization Registration" under Option 2 in order to register at the lower member rate.**

AATJ 2025 General Meeting in New Orleans

Stipend Award Program, Oka Professional Development Scholarship and other funding ideas:

*ACTFL has a First-time Attendee Stipend (Opening Spring 2026): First time attendees are invited to apply for a stipend to help offset the costs of attendance.
(*Funding options for professional development are subject to change due to evolving federal regulations, please continue to check and stay updated and informed through ACTFL website and other media platforms as they may impact eligibility and program terms)

Oka Professional Development Scholarship: Last year 5 AATJ members received 1,000 to help pay for their ACTFL conference expenses. Updates on the application process will be posted soon.
Please check this website for more information.
https://aatj.org/grants-scholarships/oka-professional-development-fund/

More ways to help fund your 2026 ACTFL attendance are here:
https://www.actfl.org/attend-2026/funding-options-ideas

Housing
For details regarding hotel reservations, please go to **https://www.actfl.org/attend-2026/housing-instructions**
When you are ready to reserve your rooms, please click on this website: **https://registration.experientevent.com/ShowAFL261**

Official Hotels:

Grand Hyatt San Antonio (Headquarter Hotel)
Rates start from $239.00 a night

La Quinta Inn& Suites Riverwalk
Rates start at $220.00 a night

Marriott Rivercenter
Rates start at $249.00 a night

Marriott Riverwalk
Rates start at $259.00 a night

For best availability and immediate confirmation, make your reservation online. Requests received via fax or mail may take longer to process. All hotel requests are processed on an availability basis. Please note that the Maritz is ACTFL's official housing company. Also, please note that no one will contact you directly via phone/email to book your hotel room(s) or offer you a "special discounted conference rate." There are multiple scamming companies that call and/or email exhibitors claiming to represent ACTFL housing. To be clear, these companies are in no way affiliated with ACTFL. Please disregard any calls or emails you may receive.

AATJ Presentation Sessions for the 2026 AATJ Fall Conference will be announced in the next AATJ newsletter. Please stay tuned and come and join us in San Antonio for a wonderful experience of connecting and learning!

AATJ
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF JAPANESE

5 AATJ members will receive scholarships of

$ 1,000 to use toward ACTFL Convention expenses

Application Deadline:
Wednesday July 1, 2026, 11:59 MDT

2026 ACTFL CONVENTION & AATJ FALL CONFERENCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Sponsored by the AATJ Oka Professional Development Fund

Five AATJ members will receive **$1,000 scholarships** to help cover their ACTFL Convention-related expenses.
Current AATJ Members may apply for this Grant.

https://aatj.org/grants-scholarships/actfl-scholarships/

Affiliate Members Gather for the Second Meeting of the Year

KATE DAVIS
VICE PRESIDENT

AATJ Affiliate Officers Discuss Bylaws and One-Pagers

AATJアフィリエイト役員が規約とワン・ページャーを協議

On May 2nd, 2026, AATJ Vice-President Kate Davis held the second affiliate officer meeting of the calendar year. President William Matsuzaki greeted the roughly 30 members who attended. Davis shared information about upcoming affiliate member list updates and revenue sharing, along with many AATJ-related reminders: upcoming **award** and **grant** deadlines, **officer nomination** and **webinar** information, and more.

During an open discussion, affiliate officers were able to share and discuss bylaws. Upon taking office, Davis started gathering bylaws from the various affiliates. She recently created a Google Drive folder for officers to upload their own and view other affiliate bylaws. The officers present expressed gratitude for this resource, as it seems affiliate bylaws vary greatly from one to the other. For affiliates looking to revise their bylaws, AATJ officers hope this will be a helpful resource! (Here is a link to **AATJ's bylaws**.)

The discussion then turned to the 'one-pagers' that Ann Jordan-sensei has encouraged affiliates to create. One-pagers are documents that highlight a regions' Japanese language program. In a special session in October 2025, Jordan-sensei introduced 'one-pagers' and discussed and how they can be used to "persuade people who matter to care about your issue." A few affiliate officers shared one-pagers they had developed since the fall meeting and got valuable feedback. Members who did not share or have a one-pager ready were able to see some examples and many felt inspired to redesign or start their own one-pager. Jordan-sensei continues to offer her support in the process. Affiliate members are welcome to email her for advice or feedback at **teiann@gmail.com**. Davis also shared a Google Drive folder with affiliate officers, to share and view our one-pager documents.
The AATJ officers look forward to continuing this important conversation and hope that all local affiliate members will be inspired to create their own one-pagers. The officers also hope to be a source of "strategies, opportunities, and support" as AATJ members work to advocate for their Japanese language programs.

From Every State, For Every Student: AATJ at Language Advocacy Days 2026

SHINSUKE TSUCHIYA & PATTY BREUN
ADVOCACY CO-DIRECTORS

The Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS) held their annual Language Advocacy Days (LAD) on March 9-10, 2026, in Washington, D.C. AATJ President William Matsuzaki, AATJ Executive Director Katie Ross, AATJ Advocacy Co-Directors Shinsuke Tsuchiya and Patty Breun attended the two day event.

The theme of this year's Advocacy Days was "From Every State, For Every Student." About 150 delegates from across the nation attended. On the first day we received training on how to hold our congressional meetings with our Senators and Representatives. The following day we went with our state groups to advocate for a variety of 'asks' including The World Language Advancement And Readiness Grants Program (WLARA) and World Language Education Assistance Program (World LEAP). This proposed legislation provides critical support to establish and enhance K-12 world language programs. We also asked for the restoration of funding for the Fulbright/Hays programs and for our lawmakers to join the World Language Caucus.

We are thrilled to share that Katie Ross is now serving on the JNCL-NCLIS board. Her position provides AATJ with a direct line to national advocacy strategies, offering a wealth of knowledge on how to protect programs in jeopardy and keep language education on the legislative radar.

2026 LANGUAGE ADVOCACY DAYS #LAD26 Mar.9&10 JNCL-NCLIS

AATJ AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF JAPANESE

In preparation for LAD, AATJ developed a "one-pager" to communicate our goals. Previous AATJ webinars have highlighted how these documents can be powerful assets when speaking with administrators.

We encourage you to visit the **JNCL-NCLIS website** and check out their **state one-pagers** to find state-specific resources and templates to use for your own programs.

Please feel free to reach out to your Advocacy Co-Directors if you have any questions or need support in your local advocacy efforts.

Shinsuke Tsuchiya
Brigham Young University
s.tsuchiya@byu.edu

Patty Breun
Madison Country Day School
pbreun@madisoncountryday.org

An example of AATJ one-pager

An example of a state one-pager

NATIONAL JAPANESE EXAM

JUNKO TOKUDA SIMPSON
NATIONAL JAPANESE EXAM DIRECTOR

2026 NJE took place between March 2 through April 14, 2026.

Approximately 1,500 students from across the USA who study Japanese at middle schools, high schools, and colleges participated in the exam!
This year, thanks to the exam fee exemption provided by AATJ, many students were able to participate and gain valuable experience. The NJE team truly appreciate the support!

A New Opportunity for Our Japanese Students: First NJE at Morton Ranch

初めての NJE!

This year at Morton Ranch High School in Katy ISD, Texas, we administered the National Japanese Exam (NJE) for the first time. We decided to take part in order to give our students a meaningful opportunity to challenge themselves and to recognize the effort they put into their Japanese studies every day.

As first-time coordinators, we definitely had our share of questions along the way. Fortunately, the year-end online workshop and the generous guidance from NJE Director Tokuda sensei helped us navigate the process smoothly and with confidence. In preparation for the exam, we also held after-school study sessions using the official NJE practice materials. It was really encouraging to see students from grades 9 through 12 working together, supporting one another, and taking the preparation seriously.

In the post-exam survey, many students reported that the experience increased their motivation to study Japanese. When asked whether they would recommend the test to other students, one student noted that it is a good way to assess how much Japanese they know and to reflect on the effort they put in over the year. Most students also reported that the exam fee waiver was helpful. We hope that this support will continue in the coming years.

One of the most meaningful takeaways for us was how strongly supported a small Japanese program can feel within a school and district community. Our colleagues and campus staff were incredibly helpful, whether it was discussing funding options, helping coordinate schedules, or assisting with equipment setup. On exam day, students also received warm encouragement from the district, which made a real difference.

I would like to sincerely thank all of you who supported the implementation of the NJE at our campus.

Tomoko Baker sensei
Morton Ranch High School, Texas

NJE に参加して
受験者の声

I had always enjoyed learning Japanese and testing myself. I knew it was a challenge and I was willing to try it! It helped me realize that I have so much more to learn, and I will be looking forward to the next time I take the exam!

Charlotte P (Middle school, Level 1)

I feel it is good to get a head start and the NJE served as a good way to begin. It served as a valuable learning experience to me about my future in world language. I wanted to challenge myself with a new opportunity on the things that I have learned so far, and to get a sample of what I will learn.

Robert K (Middle school, Level 1)

As a Japanese speaker who has never been to Japan nor has any Japanese speaking family, this test not only sets my level but motivates me to progress further. With its modern-day subjects such as touring, schooling, and safety, I can expect what Japan can seem like without having to travel there. This is not just an objective test but a preview of what to look forward to in Japan. With that, it encourages nonnative speakers to visit and interact with its modern culture. Zeyda B (High school, Level 3)

Taking the National Japanese Exam was not only an examination to see how proficient I am in the Japanese language, but also an examination to see what still needs to be improved on. Going into a university in Japan, this exam has shown me that I still have a long way to go to improve my foreign language skills. I hope to grow further in my proficiency to help me with future endeavors. Noah G (High school, Level 3)

I liked that many of the questions for both the listening and reading portions involved aspects of Japanese culture in a very realistic manner, since that is an important part of learning Japanese. I also enjoyed that the questions were creatively phrased such that I had to do some thinking and reasoning to answer them. Instead of just giving a straightforward answer directly from the audio or text, I was able to interact more with the content, which also meant a deeper understanding was needed to answer correctly. Overall, it was a unique experience to see just how much I have learned and progressed in Japanese without the pressure of grades! Doris Z (College, Level 2)

The National Japanese Exam (NJE) acts both as a milestone to gauge your current understanding of Japanese as well as an encouragement to continue studying. As there are three levels to the exam, beginners can choose Level One as a marker for cultural and language basics, while more experienced students are able to test more difficult Kanji readings and grammar at Level Three. For example, last year I took Level Two and afterwards moved on to Level Three this year. For anyone interested in seeing their progress in their studies, the NJE is a great assessment tool where you can receive a certificate to demonstrate your accomplishments. Kyle B (College, Level 3)

Japanese National Honor Society

YAYOI TAKEUCHI
JNHS CO-DIRECTOR

新緑の美しい季節を迎え、皆様の大学での優秀な学生の皆さんを称えるＪＮＨＳ授章式も様々な形で行われていることと存じます。

今回は、テネシー大学ノックスビル校の武内和秀先生より、新しいチャプターの活動や授章式の様子のお便りをいただきました。フレッシュなエネルギー溢れる様子は、これからチャプターを設立するお考えの先生方、またすでに活動をなさっている先生方にも参考にしていただけるのではと思います。
今後のテネシー大学ノックスビル校のチャプターの発展を楽しみにしています。

テネシー大学ノックスビル校
武内和秀先生

テネシー大学ノックスビルの日本語プログラムは、長い歴史がありますが日本語専攻ができたのはほんの数年前です。まだまだ「日本文化が好き」という興味で3年以上日本語を続けてくれる学生が多くいます。そんな学生達の頑張りを何らかの形で残し、プログラム全体で祝いたいと思い、去年からJNHSを始めることにしました。初回の25年春学期は5名、25年秋学期は2名が授章し、そして今学期は3名の学生が授章をします。

授章式ではおにぎり・手巻き寿司パーティーをし、和やかな雰囲気で行っています。イベントの後に「どうすれば私もJNHSに入れますか」と聞いてくる学生もちらほらみられます。毎年スピーチコンテストも行っていますが、できる学生でも人前で話すのはやはり苦手なようで。そんな学生達にも頑張った成果を見せられる機会になればと思います。その一つとして、1・2年生に司会をしてもらうことによって、彼らのモチベーション向上にもなればと思っています。今年から地元中学校や日本の姉妹都市の高校との交流も始めました。そのイベントにJNHS候補の学生が参加し、教室外での活躍のきっかけになるよう講師陣も頑張っていこうと思っています。

JNHS応援グラント

2026年1月より3月までＪＮＨＳ応援グラントの募集があり、22のPre-College, Collegeのチャプターからの応募がありました。今回は、昨年初めてＪＮＨＳミニグラントとして始まったグラントの第2弾として、今年から名称がＪＮＨＳ応援グラントとしての募集になりました。多くの先生方からお申し込みをいただきありがとうございました。今回の受賞のチャプター10校について今後のニュースレターにて活動を詳しくご紹介していく予定ですので、乞うご期待ください。

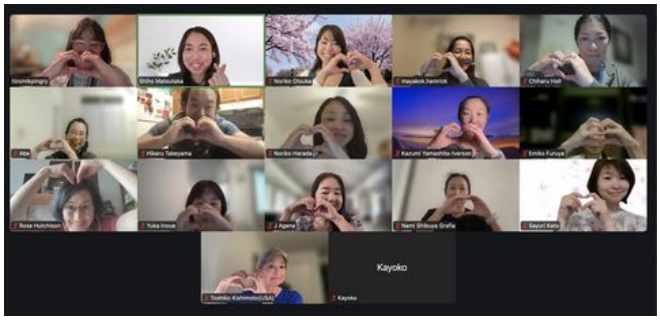
AATJ Elementary School Japanese SIG

小学校日本語教育SIG

小学校日本語教育SIG 第４回「情報交換会」レポート

HATJ 松鷹姿帆・CAJLT 藤江千絵・白子久美子
MAATJ 大塚紀子・SEATJハムリック麻也子・WATJ ピングリー浩美

AATJ Elementary School Japanese SIGでは、2026年5月2日（土）に「しめくくりお話会」をオンラインで開催し、22名が参加しました。



今回のお話会では、2025～2026年度のしめくくりとして、参加者同士が一年間の実践を振り返り、各校でのハイライトや児童が楽しんだ活動について共有しました。ブレイクアウトルームでは、「今年のハイライト」をテーマに、授業で成功したプロジェクト、児童の成長が見られた活動、学校行事や文化体験などについて情報交換が行われました。

また、2つ目のブレイクアウトルームでは、今後のSIG共同プロジェクトの参考にするため、「お勧めの曲・歌」をテーマに話し合いました。児童が楽しく参加できる歌や踊り、学年や日本語レベルに合わせて取り入れやすい曲、文化紹介につながる活動案などが共有されました。

会の中では、SIGの目標である「幼い学習者が日本語や日本文化に意味のある形で触れる機会を提供すること」や、「カリキュラムのアイデア、授業案、指導法を共有すること」も再確認されました。参加者同士が実践や課題を共有することで、小学校日本語教育に携わる教師のネットワークをさらに深める有意義な時間となりました。

6月・7月は夏季休会期間とし、次回は2026年8月29日（土）に「新年度お話会」を開催予定です。テーマは「クラス運営」とし、新年度に向けて、小学校日本語教育に関わる先生方が学び合い、支え合える場を作っていきたいと思います。

【小学校日本語教育SIG登録校】

CA Dunsmore Elementary School	IL Chicago World Language Academy	SC SC Nihongo Club
CA Rosa Parks Elem School JBBP program	IL College of DuPage	TN E Tennessee St University
CA Verdugo Woodlands Elementary	IL Jane Addams Jr. High School	TX Austin Japanese School
CT Maloney Interdistrict Magnet School	IL Oakton College	TX Sumo Japanese Lang School
GA Intl Charter Academy of Georgia	IL Univ of IL Laboratory High School	UT Brigham Young University
HI Āina Haina Elementary School	NC South Academy of Intl Languages	VA Fox Mill Elementary School
HI Ala Wai Elementary School	NC Wiley Intl Studies Magnet Elem School	WA Bennett Elementary School
HI Hahaione Elementary School	NY Alto Japanese School.	WA John Stanford Elem School
HI Iolani School	NY Bard High School Early College Bronx	
HI Kainalu Elementary School	NY Hunter College	
HI Le Jardin Academy	NY Japan ICU Foundation	
HI Kainal Elementary School	NY The City University of New York	
HI Sacred Hearts Academy	OH Academy of World Languages	
HI Wilson Elementary School	OR Cedarwood Waldorf School	
IA Musubi継承日本語教室	PA The American School in Japan	

MAY 2026

2026 JUNIOR JAPAN BOWL REPORT

OVERVIEW

The 10th Junior Japan Bowl (J2B), a competition for Japanese language and culture for elementary and middle school students across the United States, was held online via Zoom on Friday, April 24, 2026, and was also livestreamed on YouTube. Approximately 600 students from 27 schools in 11 states participated, with the support of 53 Japanese language teachers. The event concluded with great success.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

J2B is organized by volunteers from J-LEARN, a Japanese language education advocacy organization made up mainly of K–16 Japanese teachers and parents in the MAATJ region. The event aims to provide young Japanese learners with a safe, enjoyable learning opportunity, broaden the base of Japanese language learners, and deepen students' interest in Japan beyond the regular school curriculum.

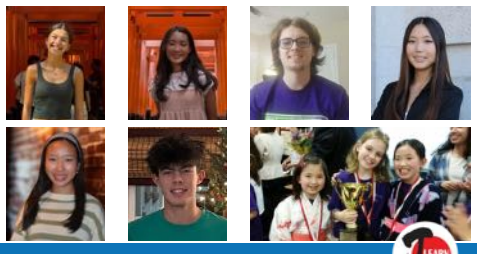
This year's topics included greetings, expressions, proverbs, kanji, Japanese history from the Jomon through Heian periods, and Japanese food culture, with a special focus on Natural Disasters & Prevention. Students were introduced to the proverb Sonae areba urei nashi — "If you are prepared, you have nothing to worry about" — as well as the concept of Tsunami tendenko, which emphasizes taking immediate individual action to evacuate in the event of a tsunami. In the culture and industry category, students also explored rice cultivation, which began in the Yayoi period, and learned about Japanese rice and rice-based products to deepen their understanding of Japan's food culture.

The event was made possible through the generous support of the Embassy of Japan in the United States, the Japan Commerce Association of Washington, D.C., the Japan-America Society of Washington, D.C., the Japan Foundation Los Angeles, and many other organizations, companies, and individual supporters. Special thanks also go to the teachers who supported student participation.

As this year marked the 10th anniversary of J2B, alumni from the first competition shared encouraging messages with current participants. Their words inspired students and highlighted the lasting value of Japanese language learning. J2B will continue to grow as a meaningful learning opportunity that connects young learners with Japan and strengthens ties between Japan and the United States.

SCHOOLS

- Dunsmore Elementary School, CA
- Presidio Middle School, CA
- Rosa Parks Elementary School, CA
- Verdugo Woodlands Elementary School, CA
- Rosemont Middle School, CA
- Brown Barge Middle School, FL
- Elkins Pointe Middle School, GA
- International Charter Academy of Georgia, GA
- Omni International School, GA
- Wilson Elementary School, HI
- Jane Addams Junior High School, IL
- Washington Japanese Heritage Center, MD
- Washington Japanese Language School, MD
- South Academy of International Languages, NC
- Arts Impact Middle School, OH
- Bunsold Middle School, OH
- Kelly Middle School, OR
- International School of Portland, OR
- Richmond Elementary School, OR
- Fox Mill Elementary School, VA
- Great Falls Elementary School, VA
- Hayfield Secondary School, VA
- James Cooper Middle School, VA
- Langston Hughes Middle School, VA
- Rachel Carson Middle School, VA
- South County Middle School, VA
- Milwaukee Doyokai Japanese Saturday School, WI



1st J2B Students

MAY 2026

ACCESS 2026 Program

TEAM WINNERS

	LEVEL 1 (GR.1-3)	LEVEL 2 (GR.4-6)	LEVEL3 (GR.7-8)
1	REESE FURUSAWA, GRIFFIN HNATIW, ELISE DURAN FOX MILL ES, VA	KAI YAMAZAKI, KEITA TOHO, KAI THORNE DUNSMORE ES, CA	CHRISTOPHER KIM, VIVIENNE SUNG, RINA POTLURI, JAMES COOPER MS, VA
2	HUGO OGAKI, ARTHUR RIDGE, OLIVER BLOOMFIELD, FOX MILL ES, VA	NOAH DELMANZO, LESZLO MARTON GREAT FALLS ES, VA	EMMA CARSON, ERIKA ONO ROSEMONT MS, CA
3	MIA SANO, HANA FURGUSON, SORA FERGUSON, KEISHO CENTER, MD	EMMA HOFMAN, AUDREY WATERS, ELSA SANDNESS, FOX MILL ES, VA	LEON BACHER, KONA ZULETA, SOMA HASEGAWA, ROSEMONT MS, CA
4	KHAN NAKANO, NOAH FIALKOWSKI DUNSMORE ES, CA	EMI LEE, MAI HAGIWARA, KALIZE MUNAKATA VERDUGO WOODLANDS ES, VA	ERIK SANDNESS, DREW ATKINS, GRACESON CHAN, RACHEL CARSON MS, VA
5	OZU REN AYROSO-WHERLEY, ZAIDEN MUNAKATA, HIROKO LIN, VERDUGO WOODLAND ES, CA	DOROTHY HO, NOLAN HO, KAYLEE LOVELL FOX MILL ES, VA	ARIA DE LA JARA-BURKE, ZIENG SITU, OLIVER SHIN-CZEPIEL, PRESIDIO MS, CA

INDIVIDUAL WINNERS

	LEVEL 1 (GR.1-3)	LEVEL 2 (GR.4-6)	LEVEL3 (GR.7-8)
1	MIA SANO WASHINGTON KEISHO CENTER, MD	NOAH DELMANZO GREAT FALLS ES, VA	CHRISTOPHER KIM JAMES COOPER MS, VA
2	REESE FURUSAWA FOX MILL ES, VA	KAI YAMAZAKI DUNSMORE ES, CA	VIVIENNE SUNG JAMES COOPER MS, VA
3	HUGO OGAKI FOX MILL ES, VA	KAI THORNE DUNSMORE ES, CA	RINA POTLURI JAMES COOPER MS, VA
4	GRIFFIN HNATIW FOX MILL ES, VA	KEITA TOHO DUNSMORE ES, CA	EMMA CARSON ROSEMONT MS, CA
5	ELISE DURAN FOX MILL ES, VA	EMMA HOFMAN FOX MILL ES, VA	REIJI OGAWA JANE ADDAMS JUNIOR HS, IL

VOICES

The Jr. Japan Bowl provides valuable additional learning opportunities for students who are eager to deepen their understanding of the Japanese language and culture. They feel more confident about themselves and their knowledge about Japan because they learned things that their parents or non-participant peers do not know.(Tanaka sensei, PMS, CA)

Through this wonderful opportunity, my Japanese heritage students were able to build closer relationships with one another, and I also had the opportunity to strengthen my relationships with them as we shared a common purpose and experience to look forward to. This will be an unforgettable experience for both my students and I. (Mastutaka sensei, WES, HI)

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS!

JAPANESE LANGUAGE EUCATION ADVOCACY & RESOURCE NETWORK J-LEARN

AATJ Webinar Announcement

YOSHIKO SAITO-ABBOTT AND KAZUE MASUYAMA
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CO-DIRECTORS

ＡＡＴＪ学会発表からＪＬＬ掲載へ
プロポーザル作成および学術出版の指針
From AATJ Conference Proposals to JLL Publications
Guidelines for Proposal Writing and Academic Publishing

DATE: 9/5 (SAT)
PDT: 1:00 PM; MDT: 2:00 PM; CDT: 3:00 PM; EDT: 4:00 PM

Speakers:
Mariko M. Wei, Ph.D., Purdue University, Co-director of AATJ Spring Conference
Suwako Watanabe, Ph.D., Portland State University, AATJ Coordinating Editor, Journal of Japanese Language and Literature

Facilitators:
AATJ, PD Co-Directors:
Yoshiko Saito-Abbott, Ph. D., California State University Monterey Bay
Kazue Masuyama, Ph.D., California State University, Sacramento

要旨：本ウェビナーは、学会発表のプロポーザル作成および学術論文の出版力を高めたい方を対象とする。前半では、AATJ Spring Conferenceの共同ディレクターとしての経験をもとに、採択につながる効果的な発表プロポーザルの作成方法について実践的なアドバイスを行う。特に、評価の基準やよく見られる問題点、そして明確で説得力のあるプロポーザルを作成するための実践的な戦略を紹介する。後半では、AATJのJournal of Japanese Language and Literature（JLL）の編集統括者が、同誌の対象分野と視点を説明し、投稿から採択までの出版プロセスを概説するとともに、出版を目指すための実践的なヒントを紹介する。

Abstract: Are you looking to strengthen your conference proposals and academic publications? Join us for this engaging webinar! The first part focuses on effective strategies for developing strong and compelling conference proposals, drawing on experience as a co-director of the AATJ Spring Conference. This section highlights key evaluation criteria, common pitfalls, and practical strategies for writing clear and persuasive proposals. The second part provides valuable insights from the perspective of the AATJ's Coordinating Editor of the Journal of Japanese Language and Literature (JLL). It explains the journal's scope and perspectives, outlines the publication process from submission to acceptance, and offers practical tips for successful publication.

J.LIVE 2026

TAKAE TSUJIOKA
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Dear Instructors of Japanese,

J.LIVE Talk 2026 will be held in person on Sunday, November 15 at George Washington University. Applications for individual divisions open September 1–October 2. High school group video submissions are due October 15–30 (theme: “Connections that shape who we are”). Finalists receive up to $500 travel support. Cash prizes are awarded, and the college Gold winner earns a Summer 2027 study abroad trip to Japan. Please see the attached flyer for key dates and details, and encourage your students to start preparing over the summer. More information: www.JLIVEtalk.com. Please email us at info@jlivetalk.com for any inquiry.

Introducing the

OKA FUND

Flexible, Small-Scale Grants

- Program Enrichment
- Professional Development
- Student Assistance

Now accepting inaugural grant applications at
okafund.org

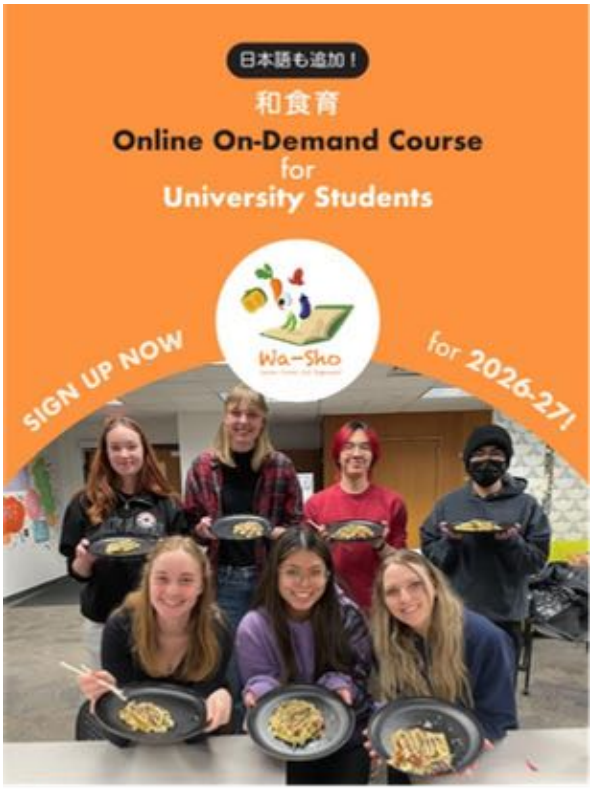
LAURASIAN INSTITUTION

和食育オンデマンドコース FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
2026–27年度 参加校募集のご案内

Are you looking for a unique and engaging program for your students?

Applications are open for our **Wa-Sho**（和食育）**Online On-Demand Course** for university students. We are currently seeking **30 teachers** to collaborate with us for the 2026–27 academic year. **The program will be provided free of charge** to selected schools.

Application deadline: June 5th, 2026
https://form.jotform.com/260889181229164



About the Program
Through this course, students will:

- Learn the fundamentals of Japanese cuisine and food culture
- Develop practical skills to prepare healthy, balanced meals
- Explore global food-related issues and their impact on our lives
- The course is written both in Japanese and English.（日本語も追加！）

Flexible and Easy to Use
This program is designed to fit your teaching needs.

- Use the full course or select only the parts that align with your curriculum
- Adapt content to your lesson plans and schedule
- Occasional optional hybrid activities such as an Okonomiyaki Party (Oko Party).

Around **30 colleges participate annually**, and we have wonderful experiences collaborating with teachers and institutions!

Learn More
Website: **https://www.wa-shokuiku.org/ondemand-university**
Instagram: **https://shorturl.at/lOmce**
Facebook: **https://shorturl.at/d304P**

Paid Advertisement

AATJ Officers, Directors and Staff

Officers

President: **William Matsuzaki** (All Saints Episcopal School, TX)
President Elect: **Jae DiBello Takeuchi** (Indiana University, IN)
I*mmediate Past President*: **Nobuko Chikamatsu** (DePaul University, IL)
Vice Presidents: **Kate Davis** (Washtenaw Community College, MI), **Atsushi Hasegawa** (University of Hawaii, HI)

Directors

Global Network: **Nobuko Chikamatsu** (DePaul University, IL)
Newsletter: **Shinji Shimoura** (William & Mary, VA)
Professional Development: **Yoshiko Saito-Abbott** (California State University, Monterey Bay), **Kazue Masuyama** (California State University, Sacramento)
Advocacy: **Patricia Breun** (Madison Country Day School, WI), **Shinsuke Tsuchiya (**Brigham Young University)
Diversity and Inclusion: **Andy Scott** (Kamehameha High School, Maui, HI), **Yasuko Takata Rallings** (Wake Forest University, NC)
Nengajo Contest: **Brian Thompson (Hagihara)** (University of South Florida, FL)
Japanese National Honor Society: **Tomoko Baker** (Morton Ranch HS, TX), **Yayoi Takeuchi,** (University of North Texas, TX)
National Japanese Exam: **Junko Tokuda Simpson** (University of California, San Diego)
Fall Conference (ACTFL-affiliated): **Jun Takahashi** (San Diego State University, CA), **Makiko Fukuda** (University of Texas, San Antonio, TX), **Jaimelynn Tateyama** (Moanalua High School, Oahu, HI)
Spring Conference (AAS-affiliated): **Mariko Wei** (Purdue University, IN), **Yoshihiro Mochizuki** (University of Michigan, MI)
Japanese Language and Literature (journal): **Suwako Watanabe** (Portland State University, OR)

Staff

Executive Director: **Katie Ross**
Membership Coordinator: **Maiko T. Bacha**
JLPT Director: **Michiyo Colclasure**
Emeritus *Executive Director:* **Susan Schmidt**

2026 SIG Co-ordinators

AI and Technology	Ryo Nakayama	ryon@sas.upenn.edu
AP Japanese	Mieko Avello	avellosensei@gmail.com
Classical Japanese	Elizabeth Oyler	eaoyler@pitt.edu
DIEB	Yasuko Takata Rolling	takatay@wfu.edu
Elementary School Japanese Education	Shiho Matsutaka	aatjelementarysig@gmail.com
Japanese as a Heritage Language	Masako Douglas	jhlsig@gmail.com
Japanese Language Education Graduate Program Network	Jae DiBello Takeuchi	jtake@iu.edu
Japanese for Specific Purposes	Tomoko Takami	ttakami@sas.upenn.edu
Online Japanese Language Education	Magara Maeda	magara.maeda@uwrf.edu
Professional Development	Yoshiko Saito-Abbott	ysaito-abbott@csumb.edu
Proficiency Assessment	Ken-ichi Miura	ken-ichi.miura@fandm.edu
SAFLA (Study Abroad)	Hiroaki Kawamura	kawamura@findlay.edu
Translating and Interpreting	Yukiko Hanawa	yh14@nyu.edu

AATJ Membership Renewal

Thank you to the members who have already renewed their AATJ membership for 2026!

If you have not renewed yet, please take a moment to make sure you are included in the benefits that membership brings: professional development opportunities like conferences and webinars; activities for your students like the Japanese National Honor Society; publications and other resources.

Renew online by going to **https://www.aatj.org/membership**. We'll look forward to seeing next year, online or in person!

Get Involved with AATJ!

AATJ's activities and events thrive thanks to the dedication of our Directors, Co-directors, and many enthusiastic volunteers. Becoming involved in AATJ is not only rewarding, but it also provides outstanding opportunities for professional growth. There are countless ways for members to participate in AATJ's programs and events. Please let us know your areas of interest by selecting completing **this survey**, selecting one or more areas of interest. We're excited to collaborate with you and look forward to your contributions!

American Association of Teachers of Japanese, Inc.
Campus Box 366
University of Colorado
Boulder, CO 80309-0366