

## Yushima Elementary School

The Japan-U.S. educational teachers program provided a wonderful opportunity for elementary teachers from both Japan and U.S. to gather together and share their teaching practices in actual class settings, as well as for students to have a great chance to take classes by teachers from America. Yushima elementary school, a public school located in the center of Tokyo, is one of the schools that actively cooperated to this program. This school invited to three of school teachers from Colorado state and had activities for three days. The teachers from both sides put great efforts to conduct classes through a preparation to production; therefore, it ended up with success.

There are two great learnings from this event at Yushima elementary school: from micro and macro perspectives. In a micro level, it has been observed a lot of interesting intersections between teachers and students and among teachers. For example, during a craft activity, a teacher encouraged one student who almost gave upon cutting a paper by saying “you can do it!” with smile. Another student tried speaking English and said “thank you” for the teacher’s supporting. The teacher replied with “you’re welcome. Good English!”. There are lots of face-to-face conversations, and it was because of a number of American teachers in the classroom and well-prepared activities. About among teachers, because they shared one goal of doing class together, they mutually taught how and what they understand the process and instruction in class. This small level of practices means a lot from the macro perspective. As Putnam defines social capital as ‘the connections among individual – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them’<sup>1</sup>, this event could promote ‘bringing’ capital and create network not only among teachers but also students between two different countries.

Finally, the program served as a successful platform to not only share teacher’s knowledge of pedagogy from each other, but also creat the personal interactions among teachers and students. Last but not least, I would like to express my thankfulness to teachers from Yushima elementary school and Colorado state and other participants such as staffs and volunteers to make this event happen.

Yuki Nagae, Master’s Student at Graduate School of Education

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<sup>1</sup> Robert D. Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. NY: Simon and Schuster. P.19.