

## Tokkatsu Manual 4

### How to Conduct Student Committee Activities

*This manual explains how to conduct student committee activities. It can be used in both elementary and junior high schools. Please adapt it flexibly according to the situation of your school.*

### What Are Student Committee Activities?

#### 1. Purpose

1. Student committee activities use children's creativity and ingenuity to make the school an easy-to-spend-time-in and enjoyable place.
2. Through this activity, children can develop initiative, the ability to plan and carry out activities with foresight, the ability to participate in society, cooperation with friends, problem-solving skills, and related qualities.

#### 2. Flow of Student Committee Activities

- Decide the committee to which each child will belong. If too many children want the same committee, decide by rock-paper-scissors or a similar method.
- At the first meeting, decide the committee mission (activity goal). Make it a mission that is enjoyable and useful for the school and everyone.
- Example: Physical Education Committee - plan activities so that everyone can enjoy building physical strength. Beautification Committee - think of plans to keep the school beautiful so that everyone can have a pleasant school life.
- Think of plans that are enjoyable and useful for everyone, announce them at a student assembly, and hold events.

#### 3. Tips for Running Committees

- Membership is fixed for two years. In junior high school, it is fixed for three years.
- By watching how Grade 6 children operate the committee when they are in Grade 5, children learn the basic way of running a committee. Therefore, teachers only need to watch over them.
- Children can manage committees independently, and this becomes a source of confidence.

#### Column 1: What Should We Do When a Child Says, "I Couldn't Join the Committee I Wanted!"?

When Student A became a fifth grader, he was looking forward to joining the Broadcasting Committee. However, the Broadcasting Committee was popular, and unfortunately he lost at rock-paper-scissors. He joined the Animal Care Committee, which had fewer applicants. That afternoon, his parent called and said, "He is crying because he wanted the Broadcasting Committee but ended up in the Animal Care Committee. I comforted him by saying he could try again in sixth grade, but I heard the term is two years. Please do something."

The principal answered, "What matters more is not where you are, but what you do there. Wherever he is, he can do what he wanted to do. We will support him so that he can shine in the Animal Care Committee, so please watch over him for a while."

The next day, the principal asked Student A, "Why did you want to join the Broadcasting Committee?" Student A answered, "Because I could touch the broadcasting equipment, and broadcasting in front of everyone is cool. During the lunch broadcast, I wanted to play my favorite songs and make everyone happy." The principal

Tokkatsu Manuals - English Version

said, “Something cool that makes everyone happy - couldn’t you do that in the Animal Care Committee too? If you have a good idea, please tell me.”

A week later, Student A visited the principal’s office and suggested, “How about giving first and second graders an experience of feeding guinea pigs?” The principal answered, “That sounds fun. Please discuss it in the Animal Care Committee and make it happen.” Based on Student A’s idea, the Animal Care Committee held a feeding experience event during recess, and it was a great success. Upper-grade children also said, “We wanted to do it too.” The Animal Care Committee then held an “Animal Interaction Fair” for all students, which was also a great success. The next year, the Animal Care Committee became very popular, and Student A of course ran for committee chair. For Student A, this became an opportunity to learn something very important for life: what matters more is not where you are, but what you do there.

### **Column 2: What Should We Say to Junior High School Students Who Ask, “Committee Activities Are Boring. What Are They For?”**

When my son was in the second year of junior high school, he was assigned to the Life Committee. The main task of the Life Committee was to conduct greeting activities regularly in the morning when students arrived at school. Members came to school a little early and said “Good morning” to students entering the school gate. However, he could not find meaning in the activity and did not participate even once during the first term. As a result, the teacher in charge scolded him severely.

When he came home, he asked me, “Committee activities are boring. What are they for?” I then told him the episode in Column 1 and suggested that he try to make the Life Committee’s greeting activity more enjoyable. At the next committee meeting, he proposed, “It is boring just to say hello. How about greeting people in different languages?” Other ideas were also suggested, such as holding national flags so that people would know which country’s greeting was being used, or putting stickers on the flag if someone returned the greeting in that language and competing by the number of stickers. The activity was actually carried out.

A Chinese person passing by taught the correct pronunciation, and a local resident told the principal, “This junior high school seems to be doing a fun activity from the morning.” As a result, the principal praised the Life Committee’s efforts at a school assembly, and my son seemed to gain a great sense of achievement. I am grateful for the generosity of the teacher in charge who allowed such an arrangement. For my son, this experience became a valuable opportunity to develop an awareness of social participation: perhaps he could change society with his own ideas.

### **Reference: Committee Activities at Nibukata Elementary School, Hachioji City**

The original Japanese manual includes a visual reference showing committee activities at Nibukata Elementary School.

### **Acknowledgment**

In preparing this manual, materials and valuable advice were provided by Ms. Hiromi Shimizu, former principal of Nibukata Elementary School in Hachioji City. I express my sincere gratitude here.