

Hillcrest High School

I started organising the day by having a class discussion with my senior composite class.

Student responsibility

I wanted to have senior students take some responsibility for this event for two reasons in particular:

1. I did not arrange any staff help last year and it was really stressful as I needed to be in several locations at the same time. This year I got the students to organise supervision by some of their teachers.
2. I also had some thoughts linking this to relevant key competencies in the NZC.

We began with a brain-storming session to determine the activities we would choose.

We decided on 3 different activities. Sumo tournament and food were two must- have activities. The class decided to make the third activity a promotion parade with posters.

We selected three year 13 students as the leaders for each activity group.

After the class discussion I conducted a meeting with these leaders and told them the requirements and restrictions on school-based activities. I also went around each group and asked questions so that they could be more conscious about what needed to be done before and on the day.

There were communication breakdowns amongst the group members and also amongst the leaders as the students did not communicate with each other as much as I expected. There were quite a few school trips for other subjects during the weeks prior to ILW so it was difficult to keep everyone on the right track. In future I would give each group a log sheet to record the progress of preparation to manage this kind of problem for next year.

However, overall the day went well.

Students and some teachers dressed in various types of Japanese costumes such as Japanese school uniform, happi coat, yukata, Judogi etc.

It took four hours to prepare approximately 150 Omusubi (Onigiri) and they were sold out in 5 minutes.

Sumo tournament

The greatest expectation for the day was the Sumo tournament. However, it turned out to be the greatest disappointment even though we had arranged to have a very dynamic teacher as the MC. We were required to call off the tournament for safety reasons. We had removed the motors (required for inflation) from the suits because they hampered movement. We had done the same last year and stuffed pillows inside the suits instead, but had not come prepared with pillows this year.

We plan now to save the prizes and arrange another date in term four to make it happen – with inflated suits or with pillows!

Other ideas

In previous years, we had a language challenge whereby a student of Japanese teaches a friend a set of expressions introducing themselves, and brings them to the teacher. The successful friend gets a small prize. We also held quizzes for staff, teaching a few expressions to staff meeting in the morning etc.