

Hiroshima English teacher learns a new curriculum and other cultures



Nagi Fujita

Nagi Fujita is a Grade 10 student at Shanghai Community International School.

JAPANESE teacher Yasuko Tokunaga worked at Hiroshima Akifuchu High School before coming to SCIS-Pudong in August to learn about the IB program. The reason that she chose SCIS was to learn about the curriculum in a truly international environment. Ms Tokunaga is an English teacher and recently taught Japanese high school students. She learned that she would come to SCIS in March.

When she heard about the opportunity, she expected "to go to SCIS to learn about the IB program and see the

difference between Japanese high schools and international schools." She also researched SCIS from the school website. Tokunaga was very nervous on arriving in China because she could not speak Chinese. She also didn't know the culture and expected to need to make a lot of adjustments while living away from home for half a year. However, she felt good after arriving because everyone at the school speaks English, and everyone was very welcoming. Tokunaga is currently observing the IB classes in order to learn about basic IB programs and their benefits.

You will often see her in Ms Murphy's room, learning about the DP Literature curriculum. She is also an advisor of the Japanese club, and teaches basic Japanese to non-Japanese students on Wednesdays after school. "The differences between Japanese high schools and SCIS are the nationalities of the students, the size of the class, and the attitude of the students," she said. In Japanese high schools, students are usually only Japanese. But at SCIS there are approximately 40 different nationalities. Also, Japanese high schools have about 40 people

in each class. SCIS averages between 10 and 20. Therefore, the attitude of the students is different: the students at SCIS have a more positive attitude than Japanese. Tokunaga is staying at SCIS for one semester and then she will head back to Japan in December. She doesn't know where exactly she will go after she leaves SCIS, but she wants to adopt the great points of the IB program and what she's learned at Shanghai Community International School at her next school.