

Last Friday was Sports Festival Day at Tsu Nishi High School. It was my second year watching the students participate in all the different sports and fun activities, and the same as last year, I had a really fun time.

When I got to school, I remembered that all the teachers wear matching track suits on sports day—whether they are doing any sports or not. In America, no one wears these kinds of matching suits, so of course I don't have one! I just wore jeans and a normal shirt, so I felt a little out of place. Regardless, I put on lots of sunscreen and went outside to watch all the students compete in their different sports. It was fun to watch them compete. There were normal events like running, long jump and high jump but the best part was watching the more silly competitions, like the first year students' caterpillar race, the second years' mukade race, or the third years' dragging their homeroom teachers around the field on a tire. Are these races unique to Tsu Nishi, or do they have races like this at any school? It was funny, as last year, and fun to watch and cheer for the different sports together with the students.

But the best part of sports day for me is seeing each homeroom's class t-shirt. At home in America, most schools don't make t-shirts like this for sports day activities. Plus, sports day at home is a competition between different grades of students (first years vs. second years, for example) so there isn't any kind of homeroom pride. T-shirts are still exciting for American students too, but we usually make t-shirts for other things. Club t-shirts, team t-shirts or t-shirts that are made to commemorate a certain event (like a t-shirt from the Homecoming dance). It's interesting to see the designs that students here choose to put on their shirts. Funny caricatures of homeroom teachers, cute drawings and even some English phrases make the shirts even more entertaining. I love to see what each class has made!

Friday ended up being an extremely sunny and hot day. I got a sunburn on the top of my head—the one place I forgot to put sunscreen. I had to go inside the school to take a breather a few times, but I could enjoy most of the activities they did all day. The students were so enthusiastic that it was a nice change to watch them doing something they really enjoy, instead of only seeing them sitting quietly at their desks in my class.