

To the parents of Kodomo No Ie pupils, alumni, and parents of the alumni:

Thank you so much for your support in our petition to build a new sand box last month. With your signatures and a letter from one parent, Mrs. Umehata (Principal), 2006-2007 Parent Association President Mrs. Anicich who had led the petition, and I attended a Trustee meeting in mid-May to ask their approval for the sand box. We also brought a design drawing of the new suggested sand box, done by Mr. Anicich (civil engineer) to visualize what Mrs. Umehata wants. To our disappointment, the Trustee didn't discuss the sand box in detail (at least while we were in attendance) except to read the letter out loud. However, the Chair of the Trustee expressed privately to Mrs. Umehata before the meeting that the suggested sand box is too big in size and that it should be no bigger than 8 feet in diameter.

In the following week, Mrs. Umehata tried to talk to the Chair of the Trustee about the sand box on her own, but he told her there was no point in talking if she wanted to talk about the size. So, to make her and our wishes for a big sand box come true, could you support us and write a letter or your children's experience about the old big sand box? If you have photos of your children playing in the old big sand box under Yagura play structure, please e-mail me or give them to Mrs. Umehata. (If your photos are not in the digital format, Mrs. Anicich will scan them and return them to you.)

Here are some of the points that we would like you to stress in your petition letter:

- What kind of creative plays your children used to do in the old big sand box;
- The current tire sand box is too small for the abovementioned plays;
- Since the renovation was over, pupils have been playing in the vegetable garden, in which the soil was in the resting stage, because the current tire sand box is too small for the plays they are used to; and so on.

As long as your letter conveys "We need a bigger sand box than the current one, and preferably bigger than 8 feet in diameter," you can write anything you'd like. Also, from guessing Trustees' past opinions and complaints, whether the new sand box will increase the amount of the sand coming into the church facility by pupils' and parents' shoes can affect their decision. To head this off, the design Mr. Anicich drew is the one with a box frame that minimizes the sand going out of the sand box. We plan to argue that the new sand box with this design shouldn't bring in as much sand as the old sand box used to.

Majority of the Trustee members have never seen how our children play in the school yard during the school hours. Therefore, I felt after attending their meeting that it is critical to have as many parents and alumni raise the voices to tell the Trustee what precious experience a big sand box like the old one gives the pupils and how important that experience is to their balanced growth into rounded people.

If you support our petition, please write a letter and/or look for photos of your children playing in the old sand box under the *Yagura* structure (especially, when they were doing KNI-typical dynamic plays such as making dams.)

For your information, the size of the old sand box under the *Yagura* structure was 36 feet x 23 feet.

The size of the current tire sand box is 6 feet in diameter.

The size of the proposed sand box Mrs. Umehata's wishes is 17 feet x 12 feet (the maximum size using the available space between the vegetable garden and the big-kid swing set, replacing the existing tire sand box).

If you have any questions about this petition, please e-mail Mrs. Kumi Anicich or catch her at school. Her e-mail address is [kumikoara@hotmail.com](mailto:kumikoara@hotmail.com). Please also submit your letter and photos to her. Because I am leaving for Japan in the week of June 14, I asked Mrs. Anicich to kindly continue being in charge of this petition. I understand all of you are very busy at the end of a school year, but I encourage everyone to take time to write a letter for our children so that they can have a big sand box, which allows them to connect with nature.

Yoshiko Nakamura

2009-2010 Parent Association President