

Title of Session: Benkyoukai-Using Tech for Japanese Advocacy

Moderator: Keiko Schneider

Guest Speaker: Michaela Kennedy

Title of File: 20040219benk

Date: February 19, 2004

Room: After School Online Room

MichaelaK: Good evening!

MichaelaK: Keiko, I created a tapped in office...I just have to learn how to utilize it now

KeikoS: Good for you!

MichaelaK: Can I use it for any purpose? of course within reason!

KeikoS: I use for talking with my colleagues all the time!

KeikoS: conference presentation prep and things.

KeikoS: And you could bring students to student's center, too.

MichaelaK: just tapped in presentations, or for example, if I plan a presentation for the Boston teachers' conference?

MichaelaK: hmm, that's a good idea

KeikoS: No, we meet here and do uchiawase...

KeikoS: But I suggested many groups to meet here.

KeikoS: Like ATJ's heritage group.

MichaelaK: it's an easy format

KeikoS: They are in Japan, US, Canada and all over.

MichaelaK: naruhodo

KeikoS: TI is a cool place

MichaelaK: yes, I'm looking forward to exploring it more

KeikoS: Well....

KeikoS: It is ALMOST time...

MichaelaK: yes...

KeikoS: I don't see a lot of people in the reception either.

KeikoS: OK.

KarenCh: I'm thinking I'll get a lot of individual attention from the "teacher" ...

MichaelaK: well...I'm happy to see Karen and BJ here!

MichaelaK: lol...I'm all yours, Karen!

KarenCh: great! because I read your paper and we have common issues!

MichaelaK: do you teach?

KeikoS smiles

KarenCh: yes, in a public secondary school in western Canada

MichaelaK: what is your subject?

KarenCh: Japanese, for now, and I hope, French too, in the future

KarenCh: if my district ever has any money to hire another teacher

MichaelaK: I've been thinking the same, though I need a few more credits in French

KeikoS . o O (sounds common, huh)

KarenCh: I actually taught French first, and Japanese came after

MichaelaK: In Canada, how much have you heard of the No Child Left Behind Act?

MichaelPE joined the room.

KeikoS: Hi, Michael.

KarenCh: since I belong to American list-serves, I have some familiarity

KeikoS: Welcome to Benkyoukai!

MichaelaK: Hello Michael...welcome

MichaelPE: Hello everyone.

KeikoS: We will start in a couple of minutes.

MichaelaK: I look forward to hearing your comments

KeikoS: OK, maybe we will start?

MichaelaK: sounds good

KeikoS: Welcome everybody to Benkyoukai!

KeikoS: Today we have Michaela Kennedy as the featured speaker!

KeikoS bows deeply

KeikoS: The topic is... Advocacy

KeikoS: First of all, I would like to ask Michalea sensei to introduce herself..

KeikoS: and everybody follows...

MichaelaK: Hello everyone, and thank you so much for coming in. I teach 8th grade through 12th grade

MichaelaK: in Middletown, RI

KeikoS: I am Keiko Schneider, the organizer of benkyoukai. web designer ESL teacher....

MichaelaK: I've taught 4 years of Japanese

KeikoS: Michael, do you know about DEATCH?

KarenCh: teaching grade 9 Japanese, public school, Creston, BC, Canada (oh, and French 5-8 in a private school!)

MichaelaK: You sound busy, Karen

KeikoS looks around

KarenCh: It doesn't add up to many hours per week

BJ: I'm a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In and an art teacher in Pennsylvania

KeikoS: Today's presentation is based on the paper... Are you all familiar with it?

BJ: can you give us the url, please, Keiko?

KeikoS: <http://www.sabotenweb.com/bookmarks/about/kennedy.html>

MichaelaK: I see, BJ and Karen, that we can understand each other and how important advocacy is to our jobs

KathySa joined the room.

KeikoS: Hi, Kathy, we were just doing intro. Join us.

KathySa: Thanks

KeikoS: RIGHT.

MichaelaK: Keiko, should private chat have a send button?

KeikoS: I would like to ask Michaela sensei to pinpoint some issues...

KeikoS: in her paper.

KeikoS: <http://www.sabotenweb.com/bookmarks/about/kennedy.html>

MichaelaK: I would like to start with a little of my background, the state of the educational budget

MichaelaK: and ways to fight for our important positions in the world!

KarenCh cheers

KeikoS claps

MichaelaK: smile

MichaelaK: I came into a program where .4 of my position was grant money

MichaelaK: .6 paid by the district

MichaelaK: it's a small school, and because Foreign Language is an elective

MichaelaK: it's not deemed important

MichaelaK: only recommended to take two years, but FL is not a graduation requirement

MichaelaK: however it's a 2-3 year req

MichaelaK: to enter most colleges

KarenCh thinks "hmm, same requirement as here"

MichaelaK: With the No Child Left Behind Act, many schools are chasing standards

KeikoS nods solemnly

MichaelaK: and school to career programs are getting amped up

MichaelaK: most businesses now require people to have some FL skill for hire

MichaelaK: Please, Keiko, the letter

KeikoS: <http://www.sabotenweb.com/bookmarks/about/advocacyLetter.pdf>

MichaelaK: Last week I went before the school committee to fight for my Japanese program...the grant money is gone, and they want to phase j out of the curriculum

KeikoS: This is PDF file...

MichaelaK: So I brought this letter before the board. Some taxpayers stood up in support of the program...a number of students showed up as well to speak and present a petition

MichaelaK: On the one hand, they are spending tens of thousands for state accreditation, but on the other hand cutting vital programs

MichaelaK: State and National Standards put a strong emphasis on FL, especially since Americans lag so far behind other countries in knowledge of FL and world geography, world issues

KeikoS nods solemnly

KarenCh thinks "is that true?"

MichaelaK: Most Americans couldn't tell you where Japan is, let alone that it is America's #1 Asian Ally and the #1 largest economy in the world

MichaelaK: Karen, in my letter I have references

KarenCh nods

MichaelaK: Japan is working hard politically now, pledging \$3 bil to ASEAN

MichaelaK: to help build the infrastructure of a number of So. East Asian countries

MichaelaK: the J. also are trading int'lly more and more in yen, not dollars

MichaelaK: they will not give up #1 Asian spot to China without a fight

MichaelaK: but much of these important global events do not reach the local papers

MichaelaK: even the NY Times

MichaelaK: this is where advocacy steps in

MichaelaK: it's part of our jobs to educate the adults

KeikoS: educate parents!

MichaelaK: the taxpayers who make the decisions on education

MichaelaK: say, Michael, this includes the arts....when Commodore Perry opened up Japan to the Western World, Japanese woodblock artists made a huge "impression" on Van Gogh and Monet

MichaelaK: heheh, couldn't resist, sorry

KeikoS grins

MichaelaK: many students are online, and many schools have their own websites now

MichaelaK: what easier way of celebrating student work, sharing some pertinent info, and providing links

MichaelaK: knowledge is power!

MichaelaK: any comments, qs so far?

KeikoS: I am ready for the next part... technology, right?

MichaelaK: I was inspired by SenseiOnline. I noticed that a number of J. teachers also had Ed. Tech. degrees

KeikoS bows deeply

MichaelaK: I was fascinated w/ Internet Technology long before I thought about advocacy

MichaelaK: my students write w/ Japanese keyboard on the computers

MichaelaK: we use sites like gahoh.com, the J. Reading Tutor

MichaelaK: we sometimes surf around Asian newspapers online

MichaelaK: Yookoso is good, and many others

MichaelaK: last year the students created their own electronic portfolios

KarenCh wonders "what did that look like?"

MichaelaK: that showed off their Japanese accomplishments and gave reflections on how the studies changed their world perspective

MichaelaK: I'm truly sorry that I don't have it uploaded for you, my school website with the student work

KeikoS: Ohhh

MichaelaK: we have a brand new system that is burping to life

KarenCh grins "I can show you mine ..."

MichaelaK: fabulous! I'd love to see it

KarenCh: just a sec

MichaelaK: but with such a site, links to the National Educational Standards and other FL (and art, and other electives that need more recognition)

MichaelaK: advocacy sites

MichaelaK: Michael, do you find yourself doing advocacy work?

MichaelaK: how about you, Kathy?

MichaelaK: Okay.....

KathySa: Not really. In our area we are lucky if one FL is offered.

KathySa: It's a long fight for our state.

KeikoS: Oh...

MichaelaK: How large is your high school, Kathy, Karen?

KathySa: We are about 450

KarenCh: Michaela, my school sounds very similar in size to yours ...

KarenCh: but on a downward growth trend

KarenCh: As the school pop. drops, they cut more and more courses

KathySa: We are in the same downward trend. People are moving to the larger cities.

MichaelaK: wow, but is it public or private?

KarenCh: yes, I teach at the only high school in a small town

MichaelaK: there also is talk these days of more regional schools...is that a possibility for your future?

KathySa: Ours is public...that is the only choice that students have.

KarenCh: for me, no. The next town is over an hour away

MichaelaK: so that's not even a possibility, gee

KathySa: That is what I see also. We have already combined as many districts as possible, without having students commute over an hour to school.

KeikoS growls

MichaelaK: it's especially hard when there are parochial minds....but IT is helping to change all that

KarenCh: We do have 3 lang's right now -- French Spanish and Japanese ...

KathySa: We have Spanish.

KarenCh: but when they do cuts, they preserve European lang's over Asian ones

MichaelaK: what may happen soon is virtual classrooms for remote districts

KeikoS nods solemnly

KarenCh: people are always told here "go study that on the internet" but that doesn't work for everyone

KathySa: Do you think virtual classrooms are viable for high school students?

KarenCh: especially foreign lang's

MichaelaK: I recently did a little research on the direction of global business

KeikoS is all ears

MichaelaK: flights, conferences are way down, online corporate training is exploding

KathySa: Large corporations are becoming involved in the college education industry.

MichaelaK: I think Spanish is crucial, but so are the critical languages, according to the feds

MichaelaK: last year, IBM did almost 45 % of its training online

MichaelaK: with branches in 164 countries

KathySa: Online training is definitely the trend of the future.

MichaelaK: they saved \$.5 bil in travel expenses

KathySa: How are they dealing with the different languages?

MichaelaK: by introducing remote areas to IT and utilize it in and out of the classroom, it's easier to educate the students and adults with real facts/figures

MichaelaK: they don't just take my word for it in a teacher/parent conference anymore

MichaelaK: Most businesses, large and small, have multi lingual speakers on staff

MichaelaK: even if someone is not fluent, they look for the FL on transcripts/resumes

MichaelaK: I mentioned earlier about the School to Career program we have in Middletown

KathySa: FL is really not something that is looked at strongly in our area.

MichaelaK: most of the local businesses look for FL on the resume, and it doesn't even matter what the language is!

KathySa: That is interesting. I haven't seen that at all in my area.

MichaelaK: unfortunately, that is a more traditional attitude taken towards languages....but we have more powerful tools now for advocacy than we ever had in the past!

MichaelaK: it may be on it's way...

MichaelaK: Karen, do you have your site to show us?

KathySa: I hope so.

KarenCh: Keiko's trying to help me with that ...

KeikoS: <http://pcsscriston.ca/>

MichaelaK: thanks, Keiko

KeikoS: Now tell us where to go, Karen...

KarenCh: There are a couple of places ...

KarenCh: nengajou for the contest are in the Picture gallery, under "Japan Art"

MichaelaK: ok

KarenCh: pictures from a cooking class (miso soup) are under Japanese cooking, same picture gallery

KarenCh: if you look at the staff pages (menu on left)

KarenCh: My "Mrs. Christiansen" page has links for my students

MichaelaK: judo as well!

KarenCh: I hope they are telling their parents to look at the photos and see what we do in class ..

KarenCh: Oh, yes, I almost forgot the judo!

MichaelaK: do you send out press releases for the pics?

KarenCh: the local paper is hosting a page for the high school once a month, and I am submitting photos for it

KarenCh: ... every chance I get

MichaelaK: that's fantastic

KeikoS nods

KarenCh: I don't know if it will help me keep my job though

KarenCh: I don't have a full class for the fall yet

KarenCh: the principal says there's no money for half-full classes

MichaelaK: last week I noticed in the local newspaper 4 pages of sports, no pages for education

KarenCh: they'll just cancel it

KeikoS grins about sports

MichaelaK: Karen, I hope there's something in my letter you can find for fuel

KeikoS: Yeah, they at least take up 7 minutes of local news every night

KarenCh: I'm certainly going to examine your sources carefully!

KarenCh: right now, it all comes down to \$\$\$

MichaelaK: we are teaching our students the importance of sports, but I wonder how that will help them find jobs?

KarenCh: I live on the Pacific Rim and an Asian language is a hard sell -- go figure!

KeikoS: That is rough

MichaelaK: one more thing: every district is worried about the standardized test results....FL stats prove that students with FL training excel on the test

KarenCh: you mean tests like SAT?

MichaelaK: SAT, and the tenth grade national tests

KarenCh nods

KarenCh: I want to look for some similar data relating to our standardized provincial tests

MichaelaK: it's really wonderful to meet you ladies and get your stories

KarenCh frowns at the clock

MichaelaK: some of the universities have wonderful online resource databases for that very info

MichaelaK: lol Karen

KarenCh: Michaela, I have an office here (Tapped IN) too ... maybe we can stay in touch

MichaelaK: Keiko, do you have the other page, by any chance?

KeikoS: I hope the discussion can go on senseiOnline, too.

MichaelaK: Karen, that sounds wonderful

KeikoS: Oh, school web site?

KarenCh nods

MichaelaK: yes

KeikoS: <http://www.sabotenweb.com/bookmarks/about/schoolwebsite.pdf>

MichaelaK: thanks

MichaelaK: this is what should be posted

KeikoS: and will be!

MichaelaK: when it's finally up and running, which should be quite soon, I'll send you the url

KathySa: Thank you everyone...I need to run and make supper.

MichaelaK: Since Asia is becoming the economic hotbed (already) I like to use Japan as a springboard

MichaelaK: Thanks for coming in, Kathy!

KathySa left the room (signed off).

KeikoS: Thank you for your presentation, Michaela sensei!

KarenCh bows

KarenCh: Thank you!

MichaelaK: <bowing> thank you everyone for coming!

MichaelaK: Karen, since I'm new to tapped, how do I find your office?

KeikoS: It is always good to see you here, Karen sensei.

KarenCh: hmm .. I know how to find it, but you ...

KarenCh: Keiko, how can Michaela find my office!?

KeikoS: Well, if you want, we could do a little trick.

KarenCh: ok...

KeikoS: It is easy for Karen to go then we join.

MichaelaK: Keiko, could never have done it without you...you're a beautiful hostess

KeikoS: Then we add your office as one of our favorite places.

MichaelaK: If you find me, I should be able to figure out how to respond!

KarenCh: ok, follow me!

KeikoS bows to Michaela sensei.

KarenCh left the room.

KeikoS: Michaela sensei, click on online tab.

KeikoS: Do you see Karen sensei in the list?

MichaelaK: Keiko, maybe there'll be response to the transcript

KeikoS: I certainly hope so.

MichaelaK: how do we follow Karen?

KeikoS: Did you click on Online tab?

KeikoS: Next to here?

MichaelaK: ah, I see

KeikoS: Do you see Karen sensei?

MichaelaK: I see Karen

KeikoS: Highlight her and click on the little door

MichaelaK left the room.

KeikoS left the room.