

Gifts

Suggestions:

- T-shirts: school teams or groups, brands, patriotic
- Key chains
- Sees chocolate, small candies
- CA picture book
- Magazines
- Coffee
- Anything related to the city you live in, or US related
- Visit the 99cent store for multiple small gifts

At minimum, the teaching staff at their schools should be given gifts. For instance Hamada, which is an average size elementary school in Mito, has a full-time staff of 36 people. The top administrators at the school (usually 3-4 people) should get something a little extra.

Individually wrapped treats/chocolates are a big hit, especially coming from outside Japan. It's also a good idea to present something representative of one's hometown/state.

This initial gift-giving is an important part of establishing a professional relationship in Japan--it's a gesture that makes a tremendously good impression.

Here's what I recommend (Some might say I went a bit overboard, but if so, do so without regret).

The first day of training at the Board of Education (the Monday after arriving), I recommend bringing the two direct contacts at the Board of Education each a gift bag containing a package of short-bread cookies, a small box of See's truffles, and handmade pottery. I also brought the working staff at their office (15-20 people) a 2 lb. box of See's Candies.

(Choose See's over Godiva because Godiva Chocolates are readily available in Japan whereas See's are not).

For the staff at your school, I suggest bringing 4 lbs. of assorted See's Candies, which worked well to treat 36 people, ...

For the Principal, Vice-Principal, Curriculum Director and Disciplinarian (the four top administrators), don't bring gifts similar to those of the two direct contacts at the Board of Education, but rather than handmade pottery, each bag contained novelties.