

Education in Japan

– Schools and their offerings –

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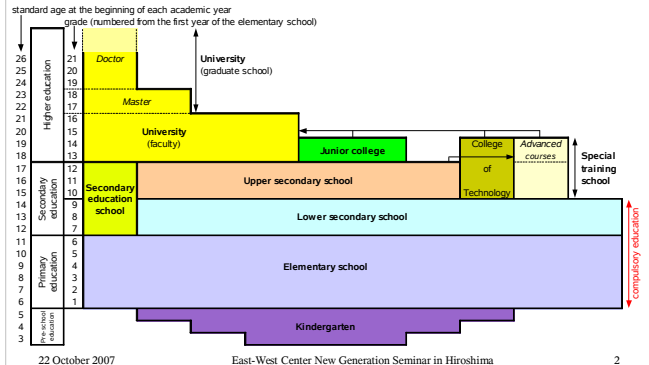
In Saijo-Luther Kindergarten

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1. School structure and student enrolment
2. Education in schools and teachers
3. Educational administration
4. Recent reforms
5. Issues and challenges

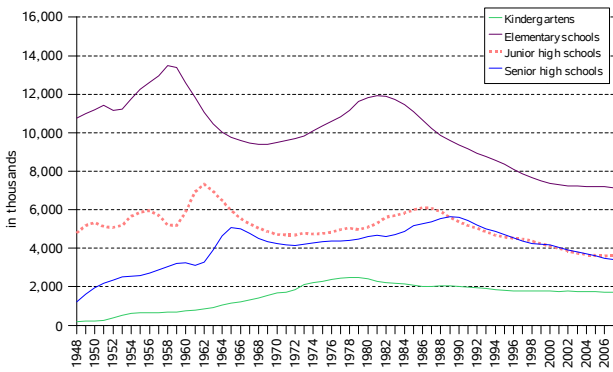
1. School structure and student enrolment

(1) The structure of schools



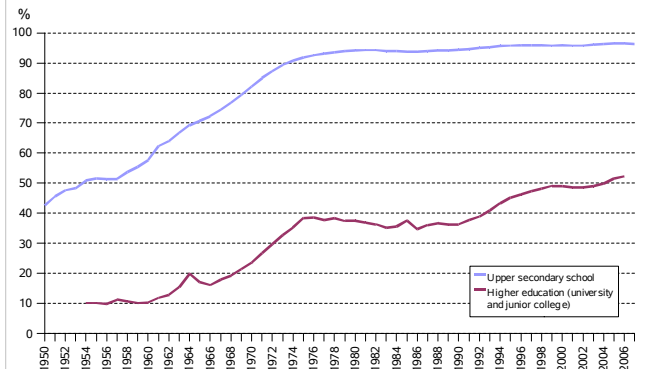
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(2) Enrolment in schools



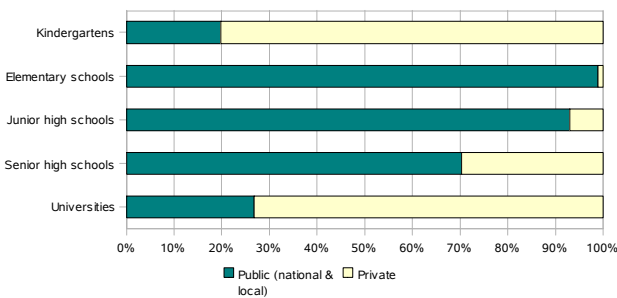
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Access to upper secondary (senior high) schools and to higher education institutions



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Distribution of students by institutional type



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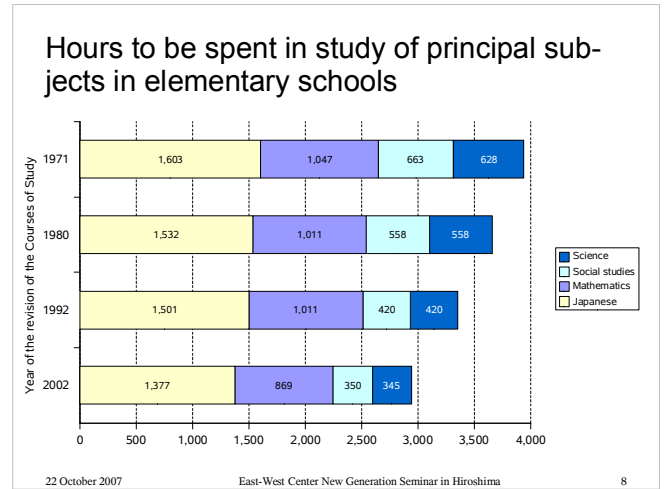
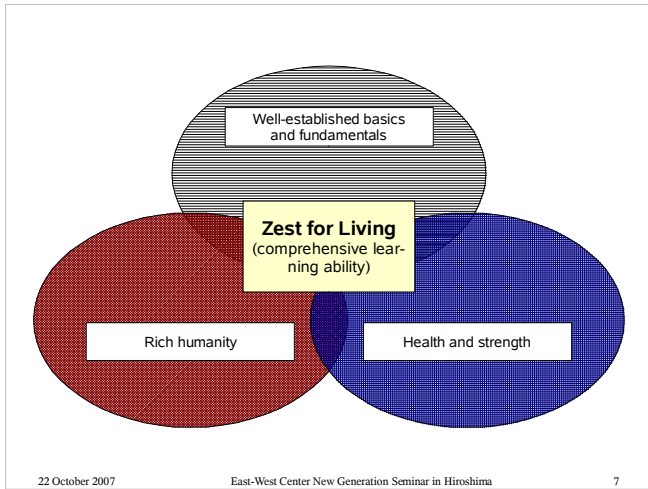
2. Education in schools and teachers

(1) School curricula

- Organisation of school curricula
 - determined by schools, based on the Courses of Study, laid down nationally by the MEXT*
- aims of the Courses of Study (2002)
 - foster knowledge and skills acquisition
 - develop the academic ability to learn and think for themselves
 - develop a *zest of living* through rich humanity and health and strength

* Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

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(2) Textbooks

- Publication
 - edited and published by private editors in accordance with the Courses of Study
- Authorisation by the MEXT
- Distribution
 - distributed by the MEXT free of charge to compulsory school children

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(3) School teachers

- Initial education by universities
 - courses of school education staff, accredited by the MEXT
 - 2008 : a new system of professional graduate schools for teacher training
- Licensing system
 - licences delivered upon completion of an accredited course
 - 2009 : a renewal system for teacher licences
- Continual education
- Evaluation system

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3. Educational administration

(1) Public education

Level	Organisation	Principal responsibilities
National Level	MEXT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of the general framework of the system • Stipulation of the Courses of study and authorisation of textbooks • Definition of the teaching licence requirements and accreditation of teacher training courses • Subsidies to local governments (teachers' salary, construction of schools, aid to private schools, etc.) • Distribution of textbooks to compulsory school children • Nation-wide assessment of academic ability
Large-area local level	Prefectural Board of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of teaching staff (including those of municipal institutions) • Issue of teaching licences • Continual education of teachers • Establishment and management of senior high schools • Financial aid to senior high school students • Technical supports to municipalities
Basic local-level	Municipal Board of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment and management of elementary schools and junior high schools • Supervision of the teachers and report to the prefectural board of education

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(2) Private institutions

- Establishment of institutions
 - founded by school juristic persons
 - recognition by the prefecture (governor)
- Activities
 - education in accordance with the national standards
 - Courses of study
 - textbooks authorised by the MEXT
 - teachers with a licence
 - subsidies from the prefecture

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4. Recent reforms

- Diversification of institutions
 - integrated courses in senior high schools (1994)
 - general course
 - specialised courses
 - secondary education school (1999)
 - lower secondary education
 - upper secondary education
 - approved children's centre (2006)
 - kindergarten
 - nursery

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- special support education school (2007)
 - school for the blind
 - school for the deaf
 - school for the handicapped
- Decentralisation of the educational system
 - increased discretion over teaching and learning
 - simplification of the Courses of Study
 - expansion of elective subjects
 - period for integrated study (2002)
 - team teaching, small-group teaching, etc.

Special education schools

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- administrative decentralisation
 - abolition of approval for superintendent appointment (2000)
 - flexibilisation of class size in schools (2003)
 - discretionary funding scheme for the national treasury's share of compulsory education expenses (2004)
 - special education schools included in the aforementioned scheme (2006)
 - discretion over the number of members of the board of education (2008)
 - The board will have to include a parent.

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- Enhancement of the system
 - teacher training
 - professional graduate schools for teacher training (2008)
 - renewal system for teacher licences (2009)
 - school management
 - school council (2000)
 - self-evaluation system (2002)
 - school management board (community school) (2005)
 - enhancement of the management structure in schools (2008)

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5. Issues and challenges

- Improving academic ability
- Problem behaviour of children
- Teacher training and evaluation system
- School management
- Funding system and new mode of school establishment
- Aid to underrepresented classes
- Articulation issues and reconfiguration of the school system
- Health and physical education

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