

Chapter III Building Foundations of Independent Participation in Society

1 Education and Training of Children with Disabilities

Special Needs Education is education for children with disabilities, in consideration of their individual educational needs, which aims at the full development of their capabilities and at their independence and social participation. Special Needs Education is carried out in various forms, including in resource rooms, in classes for special needs education (both are in regular schools), and in special needs education schools.

The amendment of the School Education Act went into force in April 2007. The system of schools for the blind, for the deaf, and for children with intellectual disability, physical disability, and health impairment was converted to a system of schools for special needs education that can provide education to students with a diverse range of disabilities. The amendment requests schools for special needs education, by applying the specialized knowledge and skills they have accumulated, to endeavor to advice and support primary and secondary schools where students with disabilities are enrolled in response to their requests to fulfill the role and functions as local centers for special needs education (function as resource centers). Meanwhile, a new article was added that clearly requires primary and secondary schools to develop special needs education for children with disabilities, including developmental disabilities.

【Main Measures】

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology formulated and proclaimed the standard of textbooks printed in large characters to be used in primary, secondary and high schools. The Ministry accelerated the publication of textbooks printed in large characters by textbook publishers. Meanwhile, following the wishes of volunteer groups publishing textbooks printed in large characters, the Ministry offered digital data versions of textbooks, thus lightening the burden represented by publishing those books.

- A research study project has been undertaken called the Deeper Learning with Information and Communication Technology Learning Innovation Project since

fiscal year 2009, with a view to develop textbooks and instructional materials tailored to the level of each person with disabilities and to do pragmatic research into what the appropriate instructional materials should be, how best to use them in teaching and their likely educational outcomes.

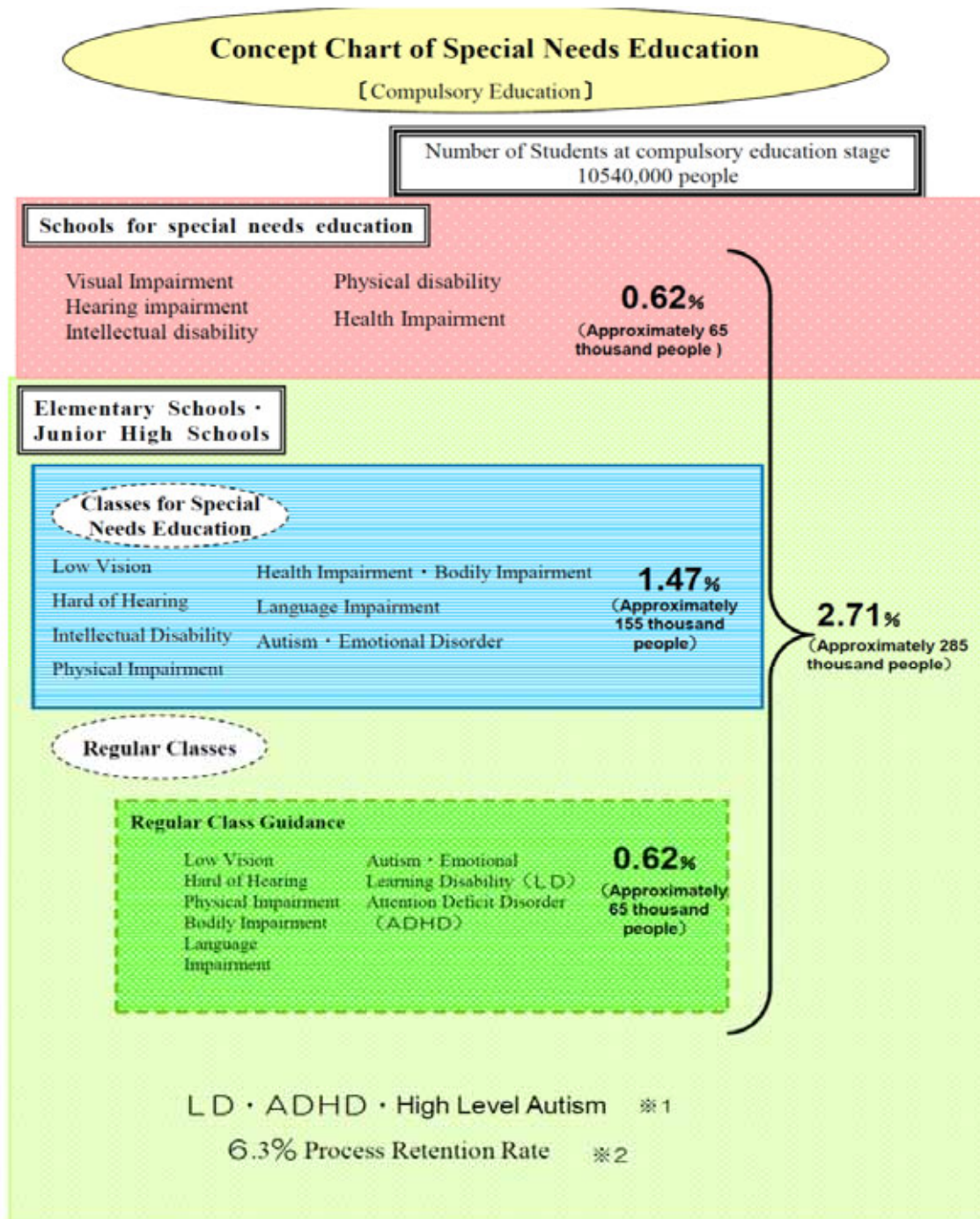
- At the National Institute of Special Needs Education, the government is conducting research on the use of telecommunications technology. Furthermore the government is planning for ways to carry out training for people in leadership roles in the field of education throughout all the various municipal levels of the nation; while also considering how to realize financial support systems for education based on up to date communications with those in education.

Additionally via the institute, the government is in the process of providing lectures on various training and up to date information on education via the Disabilities Developmental Disabilities Education Related Information website in order to support training of various boards of education. Furthermore, the government is conducting training seminars for education employees and also providing general information via portal sites.

- In regards to child pupils with developmental disabilities, because it is imperative that research is done concerning text books and educational materials specialized for child students with disabilities depending on the particular traits of each pupil's perspective disability, the government is conducting, the "Special needs education research operation via support mechanisms and the aid of private organizations"

As well, the government is conducting research and use of educational materials that match the needs of the various disability conditions of children with developmental disabilities. The government is also taking into account proven educational strategies and strategies on effective uses of the various educational materials.

■Chart 27 **Concept Chart of Special Needs Education** 【Compulsory Education】



(Excluding number ※2
all statistics are of May 1st 2011 until present)

○ In order to evaluate the implementation of special needs education and to consider concrete measures to promote special needs education, “The Advisory Committee for the Promotion of Special Needs Education” was held. Additionally, in order to investigate the enrichment of special needs education in senior high schools, the “Senior High School Working Group” was established. In order to promote further implementation of special needs education in senior high schools, a report was published in August 2009. The report concerned primarily the following: consideration and support at entrance examinations for students with disabilities; enhancement of special needs education systems; enhancement of instructions and support for students with disabilities, and enhancements of career education and job-finding support. Based on these deliberations, “The Advisory Committee for the Promotion of Special Needs Education” compiled a progress report in March 2010.

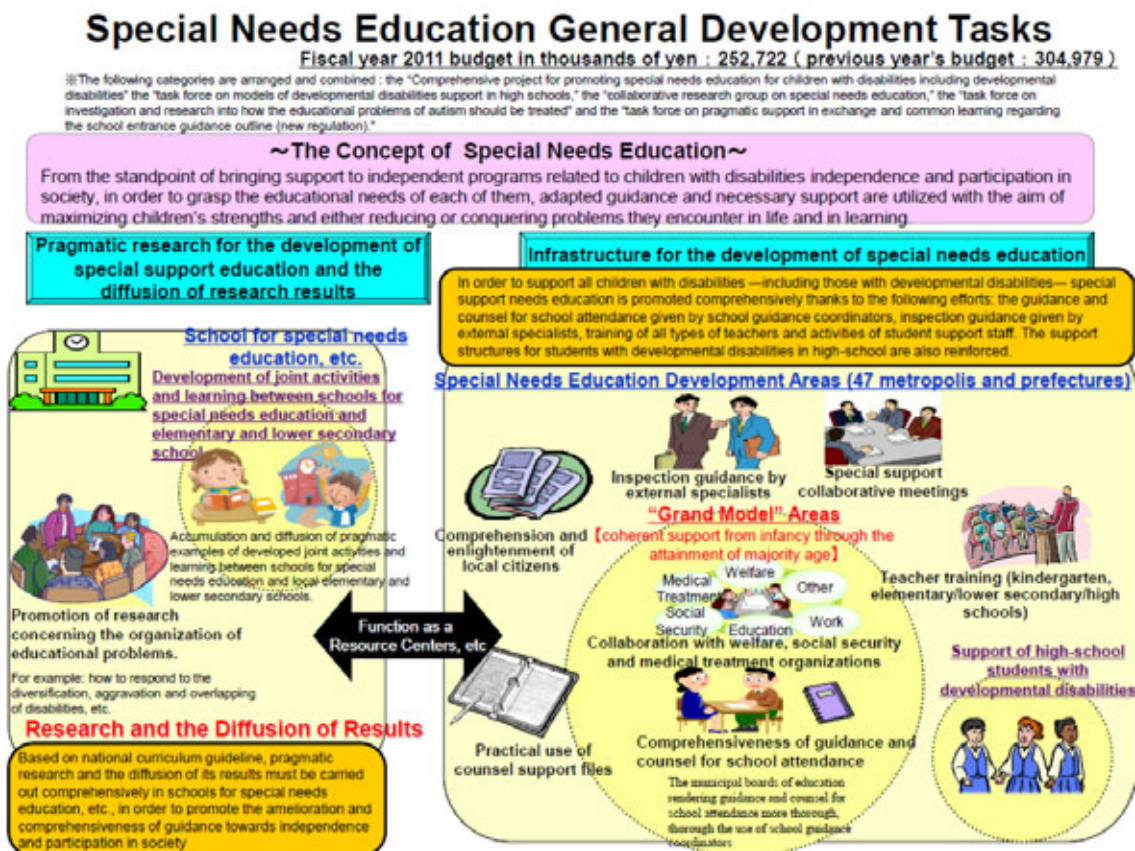
○ In order to evaluate the nature of special needs education in light of the ideas proposed by the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities that declares the need for the creation of an inclusive education system, deliberations were held on the Central Council for Education’s, Special Needs Education Special Committee. In December 2010 a series of issues were gathered together with the intent of moving in the direction of inclusive education systems regarding the direction of special needs education, counseling for school entrances and the nature of how school entrances are decided. Also, in July of 2011, under the previously mentioned Special Needs Education Special Committee, the “Inquiry into Reasonable Accommodations and Environmental Preparations Working Group” was held. In February of 2012, reports were established together regarding the defining of reasonable accommodations and the way they are decided, and the foundation of reasonable accommodations: environmental preparations. Furthermore reports on the various points of views regarding reasonable accommodations at schools were gathered. Presently work is being done in the light of these deliberations to improve upon the nature and implementation of special needs education.

○The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) joined efforts with The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare to create, “The Individualized Teaching Plan” and, “The Individualized Education Support Plan.”

As well, the two ministries collaborated on fulfilling training for education staff and general support systems for children until vocational acquisition. Furthermore, in order to make preparations for the entire country, they have administered, "The Special Needs Education General Development Tasks" from 2010.

○ In fiscal 2007, the fiscal assessment for the compensation necessary in order to employ special needs education assistant for supporting children with disabilities throughout all the various towns cities and other such municipal area public elementary and junior high schools was assessed based on the needs of each respective area. As well the overall financial support system was assessed. In fiscal 2009, the same was done for public kindergartens. Furthermore, in fiscal 2011, the assessments were expanded for public high school level students. Improvements are continually being made upon the support system.

■Chart28 Special Support Education General Development Tasks



- In field research by, “Special Needs Education General Development Tasks” on comprehensive systematic support preparations for children with developmental disabilities and children with disabilities from infancy until adulthood, development of support methods for children students with developmental disabilities in designated localities and high schools along with effective coalition policies with concerned institutions is under way.

- Regarding teaching staff, steps are being taken to enable the staffing of multiple vice-principals and nursing education counselors in large schools and to post teaching staff in charge of education counseling, student guidance, academic counseling and independent activities. Steps are also being taken to increase the number of special education coordinators shouldering leading roles in central functions special education occurring at public and private primary and junior high schools. In fiscal year 2012 according to the projections by the government, an additional posting of 600 staff will be added in to total 5,341 total staff.

- In order to improve the skill of teaching staff in special needs education, the National Institute of Special needs Education (NISE) — independently administered — held training exercises. Beyond that, the National Center for Teachers’ Development (NCTD) included, in their school management training, content related to special needs education for teachers who play central roles in school education in every region. In boards of education and local governments, training in the understanding of children with disabilities was included in initial teacher training, as well as in training for teachers with ten year’s experience

- In order to increase opportunities to advance in higher education according to the persons with disabilities skill level and aptitudes, requests for national, public and private universities to consider persons with disabilities during entrance exams by means of new student selection requirements and meetings of various sorts. Concerning exams held by entrance exam centers or by individual universities, special measures to have the exams printed in Braille or in large characters have been enforced.

- To promote making school facilities barrier-free, the “Guidelines for Designing School Facilities for Special Needs Education” and “Barrier-free School Facility

Promotion Guidelines” were formulated and distributed to local governments. In addition, to promote the importance of barrier-free facilities at schools used as emergency shelters, the “Urgent Proposals Concerning School Facilities in Light of the Damage Caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake” was formulated in July 2011 and distributed to local governments.