

Chapter 3 Building Foundation for Independence for Social Participation

1. Education and Nurture of Children with Disabilities

In order for infants and children with disabilities to maximize their abilities and potentials, and acquire the necessary strength to participate in a society, fine-tuned teaching is provided in special needs education schools, or special needs education classes or special needs services in resource rooms in elementary and junior high schools, for the degree of each disability.

In terms of special needs education schools, it has been clearly defined that to fulfill the function and roles as hub of special needs education in a region (function as a resource center) using the expert knowledge and skills accumulated for years, they shall give advice and support on the education of children with disabilities based on the requests from the elementary and junior high schools where these children are enrolled in, and also in elementary and junior high schools, special needs education for children with disabilities including developmental disability shall be promoted.

【Main Measures】

- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has formulated and publicized the general standard of enlarged textbooks to be used in elementary, junior high and high schools, and encouraged textbook publishers to publish these enlarged textbooks, and provided the electronic data of these textbooks to volunteer groups of creating enlarged textbooks to lighten their burden of the creation.
- It is important to foster the ability of children with disabilities to use information, and to promote the use of the information communication technology as an assisting means to support the children's learning. Hence, since FY2011, in "Learning Innovation Project," we have been promoting the experimental study of the use of information communication technology in special needs education schools.
- National Institute of Special Needs Education (NISE) is performing the study for using information communication technology, and making efforts to improve the content of educational supports using a means of getting information in a training course for teachers and school staff who are a leader in each prefecture and others. In addition to this, it is providing the general information, such as distributing many kinds of training classes to support the training by each of board of education, and providing different educational information on the web site of Educational Information Center for Developmental Disability, and broadcasting training courses for teachers on the internet.
- For children with developmental disorder, since it is necessary to perform the study of textbooks and teaching materials depending on characteristics of each disability, we are implementing "Private Organization, Special-needs Education Research Project Using Support Technology" and performing an experimental study on the ideal textbooks depending on state of disability of a child with developmental disability and on the effective teaching method or education effect using these textbooks.

- In order to building inclusive education system, the ideal future for special needs education is deliberated based on the concept of Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in “Special Committee of the Future Directions of Special Needs Education” of Central Council for Education. In July, 2012, “Promotion of Special needs Education for building an inclusive education system for forming cohesive society (Report by Subdivision on Primary and Secondary Education)” was summarized, and proposed as follows: 1) About building an inclusive education system, 2) about the ideal way of counseling and deciding school to attend, 3) to enhance reasonable accommodation and to build an educational environment as the basis of it, and others 4) about creation of varieties of learning places and promotion of cooperation between schools, and 5) about improvement of the expertise of teachers and school staff.
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has been working on “Promotion Project for Special Needs Education.” MEXT selects some regions and provides the information and offering consultation service to the children from early stage who have possibility to need a special support and to their guardians, in order to construct a consistent support system that makes it possible to do the flexible and fine-tuned response. Also MEXT picks up some high schools and performs the experimental study on enhancement of career education for children with developmental disabilities.
- The expense for staffing of “Special needs education assistant” who supports the children with disabilities who are enrolled in public kindergarten, elementary, junior high and high schools is paid towards local municipalities as local government finance to help build a support system.
- In terms of teaching system of teachers and school staff, a special consideration is given: the standard class composition should be 6 for elementary and junior high school divisions of public special needs education school, 8 for that of public elementary and junior high schools, and furthermore, the measures of additional staffing (government budget of FY2013 : 5,941 persons including 600 persons for improving the quota) is taken to respond to special needs education, such as staffing of teachers for special needs service in resource rooms in public elementary and junior high schools, and special-needs education coordinators.
- In order to improve the quality of teachers and school staff engaged in special-needs education, Independent administrative institutions, The National Institute of Special Needs Education (NISE) gives training, and also National Institute of Teacher Training Center offers school management training course to raise managerial staff who work actively as a core in each region. The course includes contents related to special needs education. For prefectural boards of education, the content relating to special-needs education is incorporated also in beginning teacher’s training for elementary school teachers or teachers with 10-year career.

- In order for persons with disabilities to expand opportunities to go up to the higher education depending on his/her ability, we have been asking for every national, public and private universities to give an adequate consideration to the persons with disabilities, in terms of implementation guideline for selecting enrolled students or through many different conferences. In 1st-stage common exam for University Admission and 2nd-stage exam for each university entrance, examination papers in Braille or written in enlarged letters are prepared with consideration to the persons with disabilities.
- “Guideline for Improvement of facilities for special needs education school” and “Guideline for Promoting “Accessibility” for School Facilities” are formulated to familiarize these. Also, we are working on the familiarization of needs of accessibility, such as summarizing “Urgent Proposal on “Development of School Facilities Based on the Damages of the Great East Japan Earthquake” in July, 2011. The proposal describes the necessity of promoting accessibility for school facilities because schools would be refuge places at the time of disaster. MEXT distributes it to local municipalities and others.

2. Measures for Promoting Employment of Persons with Disabilities

To realize normalization, social participation through employment is fundamental, and it is important to help persons with disabilities get employment as possible. In accordance with this idea, the measures centering on an employment rate system for persons with disabilities based on “The Act for the Promotion of Employment of Persons with Disabilities” are being implemented.

Since it is essential to give in-depth measures depending on the types and levels of disabilities, comprehensive assistance measures are implemented, such as promotion of job rehabilitation focused on the cooperation between the areas of healthcare welfare and education, the assistance measures to help persons with disabilities to get employed, and enhancement of development of occupational skills.

【Main measures】

- Regarding the situation of employment of persons with disabilities of FY2012, number of employees with disabilities in private enterprises was 382,363.5 persons, and reached record level for the nine year in a row, and the ratio of employees with disabilities was 1.69%.
Besides, number of employees with disabilities working at national institutions (legal employment rate is 2.1%) and ratio of the employees in office was 7,105.0 persons, 2.31%, respectively.
- Administrative organs of the government take initiative to implement “Trial Employment”, in which the central government or ministries hire persons with intellectual disabilities as part-time workers so that they can get employed in general companies and others through Public Employment Security Offices after one to three years of the job experience, and all the office and ministries are taking measures to hire them.
- To direct private companies to achieve legal employment rate, Public

Employment Security Offices constantly give guidance to private companies with extremely low employment rate, such as ordering these companies to make a hiring plan to promote the employment of persons with disabilities.

- From the point of view to promote the employment of persons with disabilities, the office and the ministries, and local administrative organs will practice a workplace experience, and in eight regional blocks, “Regional Study Groups on Business relating to Promotion of Persons with Disabilities’ Employment in Public Duty Section” are held.
- In order to relieve the financial burden of business owners to promote the employment of persons with disabilities and its continuation, various kinds of grants are paid based on Employment Levy System for the employment of persons with disabilities.
In-depth job counseling and job placement depending on characteristics of disabilities are offered at Public Employment Security Offices, and job rehabilitation is provided in Job Centers for Persons with Disabilities, and also establishment of “Employment and Livelihood Support Centers for Persons with Disabilities” is promoted to offer an integrated support in both areas of getting job and livelihood.
- In order to help promote independence of persons with disabilities who work at facilities for persons with disabilities to work, or at home, “Act on Priority Procurement Promotion for Persons with Disabilities,” in which prescribed is that public organs like the central and local governments take the necessary measures to promote priority purchase from facilities for persons with disabilities to work when they procure goods or services, was enacted in June, 2012, and became effective in April, 2013.
- With the aim of extending work places for persons with disabilities using IT devices, Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly, Persons with Disabilities, and Job Seekers is making effort to familiarize and enlighten about the device to assist working that meet the needs of persons with disabilities and the business owners, through providing the information about the equipment and its rental service.
- National Skills Competition for Persons with Disabilities, nicknamed as Abilympic, is held, with the aim of promoting the development of occupational skills of persons with disabilities and their participation in a society with confidence and pride as a skilled worker, and deepening the social understanding and knowledge of persons with disabilities to promote their employment.
In FY 2012, the 33rd competition was held in Nagano Prefecture.