

English Education Reform Plan corresponding to Globalization

In order to promote the establishment of an educational environment which corresponds to globalization from the elementary to lower/upper secondary education stage, MEXT is working to enhance English education substantially throughout elementary to lower/secondary school upon strengthening English education in elementary school in addition to further advancing English education in lower/upper secondary school.

Timed with the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, in order for the full-scale development of new English education in Japan, MEXT will incrementally promote educational reform from FY2014 including constructing the necessary frameworks based on this plan.

1. New English Education corresponding to globalization

○Elementary school (Third and Fourth grade): English Language Activities classes 1-2 times a week

-Nurture the foundations for communication skills.

-Supervision by class teacher.

○Elementary school (Fifth and Sixth grade): English Language (Subject) classes 3 times a week (also utilize module classes)

-Nurture basic English language skills.

-In addition to class teachers with good English teaching skills, actively utilize specialized course teachers.

※To ensure nurturing English communication skills by establishing coherent learning achievement targets throughout elementary and lower/upper secondary school.

※Enrich educational content in relation to nurturing individual's sense of Japanese identity(focus on traditional culture and history among other things).

○Lower Secondary School

-Nurture the ability to understand familiar topics, carry out simple information exchanges and describe familiar matters in English.

-Classes will be conducted in English in principle.

○Upper Secondary School

-Nurture the ability to understand abstract contents for a wide range of topics and the ability to fluently communicate with English speaking persons.

-Classes will be conducted in English with high-level linguistic activities (presentations, debates, negotiations).

2. Constructing Necessary Frameworks for New English Education (vigorous promotion from FY2014)

○Empower teachers in elementary school

-Create measures for the additional posting and training of English education promotion leaders in elementary school.

-Improve teaching skills of specialized English course teachers.

-Improve English teaching skills of elementary school class teachers.

-Develop and provide audio teaching materials for training.

-Improve teacher training program and teacher employment.

○Empower teachers in lower/upper secondary school

-Nurture English education promotion leaders in lower/upper secondary school.

-Improve teaching skills of lower/upper secondary school English subject teachers.

-Utilize external language exams to periodically inspect English levels of achievement for teachers posted within each prefecture.

※ All English subject teachers must prove English capabilities by passing Grade pre-1 in the Test in Practical English Proficiency (EIKEN), scoring over 80 in TOEFL iBT test or achieving equivalent scores.

○Promoting utilization of external staff

-Expand placement of Assistant Language Teachers (ALT), promote utilization of community members (formulate guidelines for such external staff use, etc.).

-Strengthen and enrich ALT training programs.

○Developing Guidance Teaching Materials

-Prepare teaching materials for early implementation.

-Develop and prepare Information and Communication Technology (ICT) teaching materials for module classes.

Enrich English education throughout each stage in elementary, lower/upper secondary schools and improve students English ability (aim to pass Grade 2 or above in the Test in Practical English Proficiency, score over 57 in the TOEFL iBT test, etc.)

→Examine student's English abilities by utilizing external language exams and expand the utilization of such exams which measure all four skills for university entrance including the Test in Practical English Proficiency and TOEFL.

3. Schedule (provisionary)

○Around January 2014

Establish expert council

○2014-2018

Establish teacher empowerment frameworks, expand advance implementation through support by the Regional Core Project aimed to Enhance English Education and Schools with Special Substitute Curriculum

○Revise the Course of Study upon examination by Central Education Council, advance incremental implementation from FY2018.

○Full scale implementation from FY2020 timed with the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.