## Improving the Quality and Ability of Teachers

With the aim of improving the quality of teaching, various measures centering around everyday classroom teaching and the professional development of teachers are being systematically implemented at each stage: teacher training in universities, recruitment carried out by boards of education of prefectures and designated cities, and continuing professional development.

### Training

- **Teacher training provided by universities in principle**
  - Teacher training courses that combine subject-based training and practical teaching skills in an approved subject area — provide newly qualified teachers with the minimum skills necessary to immediately take responsibility for a class or course of study and to put into practice the student guidance and curriculum delivery techniques acquired during training.

### Employment

- **Teacher recruitment and selection carried out by boards of education of prefectures and designated cities**
- **Evaluation from a broader perspective:**
  - Greater weight given to performance in interviews and demonstration lessons
  - Non-teaching experience also taken into account

### Development

- **Continuing professional development provided by boards of education:**
  - For new teachers
  - For teachers with 10 years’ experience etc.
- **Continuing professional development at the national level** (National Center for Teachers’ Development):
  - School management training for staff who play a central role in education in each region etc.

### Appropriate HR mgt

- **Effective management of a system for teachers performing unsatisfactorily**
- **Teacher evaluation system**
- **MEXT Outstanding Teacher Award**

### Teacher Certificate Renewal System

- **Purpose is for teacher to stand at the podium with confidence and pride and to gain social respect and trust by periodically learning the latest knowledge and skills in order to preserve the quality and ability needed as a teacher.**
- **Setting of a ten-year period of validity for teacher certificates**
Diagram: The Current Path of Teacher Improvement

20 years of age:
- Junior College
- At the age of 21, you can take the test for a specialist certificate (Prefectural Board of Education)

30 years:
- Certificate renewal course (usually university age 35)
- Continuing professional development for teachers with 10 years' experience (Prefectural Board of Education)

40 years:
- Certificate renewal course (usually university age 45)
- Continuing professional development

50 years:
- Certificate renewal course (usually university age 55)

Stipulated by Educational Personnel Certification Act

Acquire high-level teaching certificate (usually university course)

: Stipulated by Educational Personnel Certification Act

: Stipulated by Special Rules for the Public Educational Personnel and Staff Act
1. The Principle of Teaching Certification and Principle of an Open System

**Principle of Teaching Certification**
Teachers shall be those persons possessing one of the applicable certificates awarded through the Educational Personnel Certification Act.

**Principle of an Open System**
Teacher training in Japan is conducted fostering the particular characteristics of regular universities and universities specializing in teacher training.

2. Types of Teaching Certificates

By type of school (by subject for lower and upper secondary schools)

- **① Regular certificate** (Valid for 10 years)
  - Specialized certificate (on completing a master’s degree)
  - Class I certificate (on graduating from a university)
  - Class II certificate (on graduating from a junior college)

- **② Specialized certificate** (Valid for ten years)
  - Certificate granted to those with superior experience and knowledge but without an ordinary certificate
  - Specialized certificate (on completing a master’s degree)
  - Class I certificate (on graduating from a university)
  - Class II certificate (on graduating from a junior college)

- **③ Provisional certificate** (Valid for three years)
  - Certificate granted as an exceptional case only when no teachers with ordinary certificates can be hired
  - Authority awarding certificate: Prefectural Board of Education
  - Valid scope of the certificate:
    - Regular certificate: All prefectures
    - Specialized certificate: Within the prefecture where the certificate was awarded
    - Provisional certificate: Within the prefecture where the certificate was awarded
## Number of teacher’s certificates conferred

(FY2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Specialized certificate</th>
<th>Class I certificate</th>
<th>Class II certificate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>14,897</td>
<td>28,052</td>
<td>43,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary school</td>
<td>1,623</td>
<td>21,764</td>
<td>4,959</td>
<td>28,346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior high school</td>
<td>5,387</td>
<td>45,173</td>
<td>2,383</td>
<td>52,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>7,120</td>
<td>60,436</td>
<td></td>
<td>67,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special needs school</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>4,099</td>
<td>4,653</td>
<td>9,049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing—teacher’s certificate</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>2,931</td>
<td>1,825</td>
<td>4,865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet and nutrition school teacher’s certificate</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>2,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special needs school social independence course etc.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,829</strong></td>
<td><strong>150,720</strong></td>
<td><strong>42,688</strong></td>
<td><strong>208,237</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Special licenses and provisional certificates not included.

※No. receiving certificates from conferring authorities (prefectural boards of education) in fiscal 2012.

Source: MEXT
Teacher Certificate Renewal System

Purpose is for teacher to stand at the podium with confidence and pride and to gain social respect and trust by periodically learning the latest knowledge and skills in order to preserve the quality and ability needed as a teacher.

<Introduction of teacher certificate renewal system: April 1, 2009>

Renewing Fixed-Term Certificates

- Term of ordinary and special teaching certificates fixed at 10 years.
- Certificate is renewed by completing 30 hours or more of “certificate-renewal courses” approved by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

Certificate-Renewal Courses

(1) Those that can offer certificate renewal courses
   Universities, designated training institutions, prefectural and other boards of education, incorporated administrative agencies, public-interest corporations, etc.

(2) Content of certificate-renewal courses
   ① Items regarding reflections on the teaching profession and understanding childhood changes, education policy trends, collaboration both inside and outside the school (12 hours or more)
   ② Course instruction, student instruction, and other education-enhancing items (18 hours or more)

※Each year, some 90,000 currently employed teachers take such courses.
Period of holding of employment examination for public school teachers

Before graduation

During teacher-training course
- May-June Application
- July 1st-stage exam
- Aug. 2nd-stage exam
- Oct. Announcing of successful candidates

Teaching practice
- Preliminary employment offer
- Graduation
- Employment

Near/after graduation

Teaching practice
- March
- April

◆ As public school teachers are local government public servants, recruitment and hiring are carried out by prefectural boards of education or designated municipal boards of education.

◆ Example of employment examination
  (Written exam)
  - Questions on general knowledge, knowledge about teaching, specialized knowledge about subjects, short essay, etc.
  (Practical exam)
  - Physical education, music, art, English competence, etc.
  (Interview exam)
  - Personal interview, group interview, group discussion, etc.
  (Others)
  - Aptitude test
  - Trial lesson, preparation of lesson plan, etc.
### Number of examinees for the public school teacher employment exam and number of candidates hired (FY2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. of Examinees (A)※</th>
<th>No. hired (B)※</th>
<th>Ratio of candidates to those hired (A/B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary school</td>
<td>58,703</td>
<td>31,192</td>
<td>13,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior high school</td>
<td>62,998</td>
<td>26,228</td>
<td>8,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior high school</td>
<td>37,812</td>
<td>12,184</td>
<td>4,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special needs school</td>
<td>10,172</td>
<td>6,172</td>
<td>2,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing - teacher</td>
<td>9,827</td>
<td>9,227</td>
<td>1,171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet and nutrition school teacher</td>
<td>1,390</td>
<td>1,193</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>180,902</strong></td>
<td><strong>86,196</strong></td>
<td><strong>31,107</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

※ Unit: 1 person

Note 1: "No. hired" is the number hired by June 1, 2013.

2: The number of examinees for prefectural and municipal schools that hire teachers without setting test categories according to school level include examinees for elementary school teaching positions.

3: The number of examinees for prefectural and municipal schools that hire teachers without setting test categories according to junior high school or high school levels include examinees for junior high school teaching positions.

4: The number of special needs school examinees is the number applying to prefectural or municipal schools conducting employment examinations in the “special needs school” category.

Source: MEXT, 2013 survey
## Professional development conducted by National Center for Teachers’ Development

### Each board of education conducts training to develop teacher trainers and local core instructors

※National Center for Teachers' Development: Location: Tsukuba City, Ibaraki Prefecture; 42 full-time staffs; FY 2014 budget, some 1.38 billion yen; facilities: 304-seat lecture hall, 17 research rooms, 300 dormitory rooms, library, gymnasium, cafeteria, administrative wing, etc.

### Professional development conducted by prefectural board of education

#### Professional development for new teachers

1. Objective: To cultivate practical teaching ability and a sense of mission among newly appointed teachers while providing them with a broad range of knowledge.
2. Trainees: Newly hired teachers at public elementary schools, etc.
3. Trainers: Boards of education at each prefecture, designated large city (population over 500,000) and designated medium-sized city (population over 300,000).
4. Legal Basis: Special Law for Education Officials, Article XXIII (System established in 1988, implemented in 1989)
5. Training Content: Determined by the appointing authority (school board, etc.)

#### Professional development for teachers with 10 years’ experience

1. Objective: To improve each individual’s capability and quality as a teacher in an appropriate manner.
2. Trainees: Public elementary school teachers who have been in service 10 years.
3. Trainers: Board of education of each prefecture, designated large city (population over 500,000) and designated medium-sized city (population over 300,000).
4. Legal Basis: Special Law for Education Officials, Article XXIV (system established in 2002 and implemented in 2003)
5. Training Content: Determined by the appointing authority (school board, etc.)
### Structure of Teacher Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Five</th>
<th>Year Ten</th>
<th>Year 15</th>
<th>Year 20</th>
<th>Year 25</th>
<th>Year 30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- School administration training for principals, vice principals and other faculty and staff who play central role in school education in each region.</td>
<td>- Mid-level teacher training</td>
<td>- Overseas training (two months)</td>
<td>- Principal management training</td>
<td>- Vice principal training</td>
<td>- Training for instructors in charge of planning and for instructors at local public organizations who conduct training on issues of urgency</td>
<td>- (Two-week) Overseas program for education issue training instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mid-level teacher training</td>
<td>- Legal training (in principle for all teachers)</td>
<td>- Training in line with work experience</td>
<td>- For new teachers</td>
<td>- For teachers with 10 years' experience</td>
<td>- 5-year teacher training</td>
<td>- 20-year teacher training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Training in line with ability</td>
<td>- Training related to specialist knowledge and skills</td>
<td>- Training of students in charge of planning</td>
<td>- Training of new and senior teachers</td>
<td>- Training of principals and vice principals</td>
<td>- Specialist training related to course and student instruction</td>
<td>- Instructional improvement training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Training of instructors to promote education at boosting students' language abilities and to improve school organizational management</td>
<td>- Training in line with ability</td>
<td>- Training in line with work experience</td>
<td>- Training of new and senior teachers</td>
<td>- Training of principals and vice principals</td>
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