

**Advisory Committee on the Health and Hygiene
Environment in Facilities Aimed Exclusively at
Educating Foreign Children (so-called “Schools for
Foreign Students”)**

**The Final Report
(Tentative Translation)**

December 2021

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	P. 2
2. Current situations	
(1) Situations of schools for foreign students	P. 3
(2) Efforts to support schools for foreign students	P. 4
(3) Efforts for measures against COVID-19 in schools for foreign students	P. 4
(4) Survey on the current situations of the health and hygiene environment of schools for foreign students (questionnaire survey)	P. 5
(5) Additional survey on the current situations of the health and hygiene environment of schools for foreign students (interview survey)	P.11
3. Issues	P.19
(1) Issues related to monitoring schools for foreign students and the children attending schools for foreign students	P.19
(2) Issues related to taking measures for the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students	P.20
(i) Situations and administrative systems of schools for foreign students	P.20
(ii) Health and hygiene environmental guidelines based on the situations of schools for foreign students	P.20
(iii) Obtaining and utilizing appropriate information	P.21
(iv) Issues of countermeasures against COVID-19 and others	P.22
(3) Issues related to the support system when taking measures for the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students	P.23
(i) Relationships between local governments and schools for foreign students	P.23
(ii) Perspectives of wide area supports for schools for foreign students	P.24
(iii) Others	P.25
4. Future direction	P.27
(1) Items requiring prompt responses	P.27
(i) Appropriate dissemination of information	P.27
(ii) Detailed and effective supports	P.28
(iii) Promotion of initiatives based on the situations at schools for foreign students	P.28
(iv) Responses to issues related to countermeasures against COVID-19	P.29
(2) Items requiring mid- and long-term initiatives	P.29
(i) Showing the direction related to health and hygiene measures in schools for foreign students	P.29
(ii) Improving the capabilities of schools for foreign students to respond to health and hygiene issues	P.30
Annex 1 Summary of the results of the on-site observations at schools for foreign students	
Annex 2 Survey items in the additional survey	
Reference 1 Convening of the Advisory Committee on the Health and Hygiene Environment in Facilities Aimed Exclusively at Educating Foreign Children (so-called “Schools for Foreign Students”)	
Reference 2 Results of holding the Advisory Committees	

1. Introduction

Since countermeasures against COVID-19 are necessary in schools, the facilities aimed exclusively at educating foreign children (hereinafter referred to as “schools for foreign students”) are also required to take countermeasures against COVID-19.

Under these circumstances, so as to ensure the health of all children residing in Japan, and to realize a harmonious society inclusive of foreign nationals, and to keep people safe, it is also necessary to ensure health and hygiene in schools for foreign students.

For this reason, the national government also states in the “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” decided in June 2021 that necessary measures will be taken based on the considerations of the Advisory Committee on the Health and Hygiene Environment in Schools for Foreign Students¹.

Moreover, internationally, ensuring the health and hygiene of all people regardless of nationality or country of origin is being demanded, as exemplified by the call of Goal 3 (health) of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), which were adopted at a UN summit in 2015, to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.”

Based on these domestic and international trends, from June 2021, the “Advisory Committee on the Health and Hygiene Environment in Facilities Aimed Exclusively at Educating Foreign Children (so-called ‘schools for foreign students’)” (hereinafter referred to as the “Advisory Committee”) was held, at which a decision was made that while utilizing the knowledge of operators of schools for foreign students, local governments, NPOs and other stakeholders as well as that of health and hygiene professionals, the Advisory Committee will give consideration to the responses to the various issues relating to health and hygiene of schools for foreign students including countermeasures against COVID-19.

The Advisory Committee has compiled a final report based on its discussions to date regarding the current situations and issues for the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students and the future direction and so on. It is hoped that schools for foreign students, the national and local governments, support organizations, etc. will widely utilize the findings presented in the final report.

¹ The “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” (decided by the Ministerial Meeting on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals in June 2021) stated “as measures against COVID-19 in facilities aimed exclusively at educating foreign children (hereinafter referred to as ‘schools for foreign students’), information in plain Japanese and multilingual information will be provided using websites and e-newsletters, and necessary measures will be taken in FY2021 while considering the actual situations of the health management of children attending schools for foreign students and the appropriate involvement of the national government and local governments in ensuring health and hygiene of such children and based on the considerations of the Advisory Committee on the Health and Hygiene Environment in Schools for Foreign Students”.

2. Current situations

(1) Situations of schools for foreign students

○ Schools for foreign students are facilities aimed exclusively at educating foreign children, which are the schools stipulated in Article 1 of the School Education Act (hereinafter referred to as “Article 1 schools”), the miscellaneous schools that have been approved by the prefectural governors based on Article 134 of the School Education Act, and the facilities that have not been approved (hereinafter referred to as “non-approved facilities”).

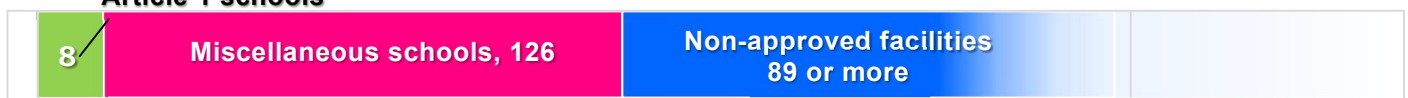
○ According to the fact-finding survey of private schools, there are 126 schools for foreign students that have been approved as a miscellaneous school, in which 25,960 children are enrolled (as of May 2021), and they are considered to play a definite role in enabling foreign children to learn. Most of them are founded by (quasi) incorporated educational institutess, but they may also be founded by stock companies, public interest incorporated foundations, general incorporated foundations, etc.

○ The overall picture of the non-approved facilities is not clear, but the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has been notified of the existence of 33 facilities that were reported by the prefectures in the survey (as of May 2020), 44 facilities (as of November 2020, those not reported by the prefectures), 6 facilities approved by the Brazilian government (those not reported by the prefectures), and 6 facilities registered in the e-newsletters for schools for foreign students.

○ According to the “Results of the Survey on the Status of School Enrollment of Foreign Children (finalized numbers)” compiled by MEXT in March 2020, foreign children of school age (equivalent to elementary school students and upper secondary school students), the number of children in the Basic Resident Registers is 123,830, and the number of foreign children who may be out of school or are not confirmed the status of school enrollment is 19,471².

<Reference> Composition of schools for foreign students

Article 1 schools



² According to the survey, the number of foreign children who are confirmed the status of school enrollment is 5,023. It is presumable that 19,471 foreign children who may be out of school or are not confirmed the status of school enrollment include the children attending schools for foreign students.

(2) Efforts to support schools for foreign students

MEXT is taking the following measures to support schools for foreign students.

(i) Exemption of corporate tax, income tax, etc.

In principle, schools for foreign students that have been approved as a miscellaneous school (excluding those are founded by stock companies, etc.) are exempt from having to pay corporate tax, income tax, etc.

(ii) Tax incentive of donation for designated donation / specified public-service promotion corporations

The following measures apply to schools for foreign students approved as a miscellaneous school that meet certain requirements.

- Expansion of the limits on deductive expenses for donations from corporations
- Income deduction for donations from individuals

(iii) Notification of flexible handling of approval of miscellaneous school and others

In June 2015, MEXT notified each prefecture in the notification of “Promoting approval of establishment of miscellaneous schools for schools for foreign students such as international schools (request)” that requires to positively consider efforts such as accomodating of the flexible requirements relating to renting school grounds and buildings and assets in appoval of establishment of miscellaneous schools for schools for foreign students.

(3) Efforts for measures against COVID-19 in schools for foreign students

Since February 2020, MEXT has taken the following measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in schools for foreign students.

(i) Issuance of the notifications regarding measures against COVID-19 similar to those for Article 1 schools to schools for foreign students that have been approved as a miscellaneous school (addressed to the departments of the prefectural governments in charge of miscellaneous schools) (from February 2020 onwards)

(ii) Support for schools for foreign students that have been approved as a miscellaneous school to purchase health and hygiene products for measures against COVID-19 (November 2020)

(iii) Launch of a website geared towards schools for foreign students providing information on countermeasures against COVID-19 in plain Japanese (November 2020)

(iv) Distribution of e-newsletters that provide information to schools for foreign students, including non-approved facilities, in both Japanese and English (from November 2020 onwards)

(v) Creation and posting on the website of multilingual versions of the “COVID-19 Infection Control Manuals and Guidelines for Schools”, and distribution to schools for foreign students including non-approved facilities (from December 2020 onwards)

(vi) Notifying schools for foreign students including non-approved facilities that applications for workplace vaccinations for COVID-19 have started (June 2021)

(vii) Distribution of the simple antigen test kits to schools for foreign students (excluding courses equivalent to kindergarten, elementary and lower secondary schools) including non-approved facilities (July 2021).

(viii) Distribution of the simple antigen test kits to schools for foreign students that have been approved as a miscellaneous school (courses equivalent to kindergarten, elementary and lower secondary schools) (September 2021)

(ix) Additional distribution of the simple antigen test kits to schools for foreign students that have been approved as a miscellaneous school (September 2021)

(4) Survey on the current situations of the health and hygiene environment of schools for foreign students (questionnaire survey)

○ The regulations for Article 1 schools are not applied when it comes to ensuring health and hygiene in schools for foreign students that have been approved as a miscellaneous school and non-approved facilities, and they are treated in the same way as general business offices.


○ With the recent spread of COVID-19 infection, outbreaks of persons who have tested positive and clusters were also observed in the children and teachers of schools for foreign students.

3) Limpeza e desinfecção

○ Onde limpar e desinfetar diariamente

- Uma vez por dia, limpar as superfícies que são muito tocadas (maçanetas, corrimãos, tomadas, etc.) com um pano limpo umedecido com água e em seguida, desinfetar com um pano ou papel embebido em desinfetante.
- Para os objetos de uso compartilhado, como os utensílios de limpeza e faxina, ao invés de desinfetar estes objetos a cada uso, orientar os alunos para que lavem as mãos antes e depois de usá-los.

(Referência) Imagens de alunos limpando as carteiras no final da aula




○ Desinfecção quando surge uma pessoa infectada

- Caso seja confirmada a infecção de um aluno, professor ou colaborador no ambiente escolar, delimitar a área de atividade da pessoa infectada e desinfetar todos os objetos suspeitos de contaminação (superfícies e objetos tocados pela pessoa infectada) com etanol ou desinfetante de hipoclorito de sódio a 0,05%.
- O tempo de sobrevivência do vírus nas superfícies dos objetos depende do tipo do objeto, porém é dito que os vírus podem persistir nas superfícies de 24 a 72 horas, portanto em locais onde não possam ser desinfetados, proibir a entrada e tomar outras medidas adequadas, considerando o tempo de sobrevivência do vírus.

(3) Aumento da resistência

Orientar os alunos a manter um “sono suficiente”, “exercícios moderados” e uma “alimentação equilibrada” para aumentar a imunidade.



6

The Portuguese version of the “COVID-19 Infection Control Manuals and Guidelines”

○ Based on this situation, a survey was conducted on the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students in order to ascertain the basic information necessary for examining their health and hygiene.

○ The survey period, survey targets and main survey items were as follows.

Survey period: April 23 to May 24, 2021

- Languages offered in: Japanese, English and Portuguese
- Survey targets: Schools for foreign students meeting any of the following conditions (161 schools)
 - (i) Schools for foreign students approved as a miscellaneous school by the prefectural government
 - (ii) Schools for foreign students that have not been approved as a miscellaneous school but whose existence is acknowledged by the prefectural government
 - (iii) Member schools of the Japan Council of International Schools (JCIS)
 - (iv) Brazilian schools authorized by the Embassy of Brazil in Japan
- Methods of conducting the survey: For schools for foreign students falling in categories (i) and (ii) above, the survey was distributed and collected through the department of prefectural governments in charge of miscellaneous schools. For schools for foreign schools in categories (iii) and (iv) above for which categories (i) and (ii) above are not applicable, MEXT directly distributed and collected the survey.
- Total number of the responses (response rate): 80 facilities (50%)
 - Number of miscellaneous schools: 72 facilities (58%)
 - Number of non-approved facilities: 8 facilities (22%)
- Main survey items:
 - (i) Measures against COVID-19
 - Status of response measures from March 2, 2020 when all schools were closed nationwide until around June 2020
 - Status of school operations at the time of the survey (as of April 23, 2021)
 - Utilization status of the information provided by the national and local governments for countermeasures against COVID-19
 - (ii) Measures for ensuring general health and hygiene
 - Existence of school infirmary
 - Assignment of nursing teacher
 - Assignment of school doctor
 - Conducting of health checks for students
 - Establishment of standards for hygiene management in school
 - Conducting of health checks for teachers and staff
 - Entry by school in private insurance system such as accident insurance, etc.
 - Other measures for health and hygiene of students, teachers and staff carried out by the school

○ Main survey results are as follows:

(i) Measures against COVID-19

a) Response to the request for all facilities to temporarily close in March 2020
68 facilities temporarily closed, but 12 facilities did not.

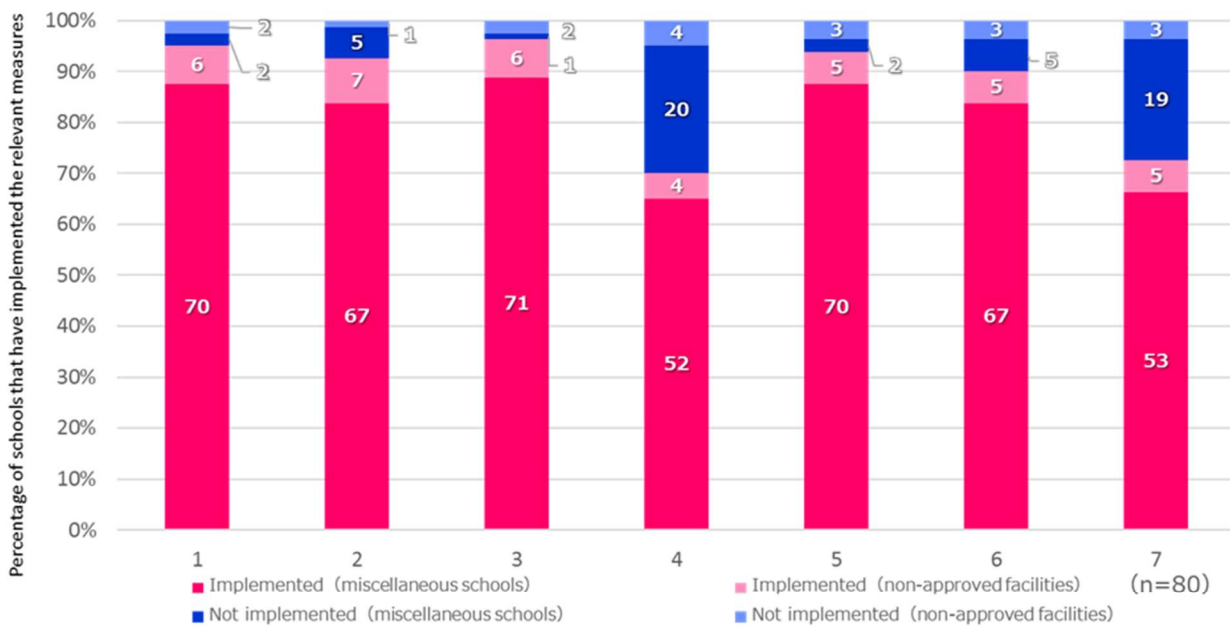
b) Measures against COVID-19 taken by each school for foreign students

Over 90% of the facilities took countermeasures, including appropriately ascertaining health condition of students, constant ventilation of classrooms, and preventing dispersal of airborne droplets when drinking and eating.

On the other hand, in regards to school activities requiring close contact among students such as group work and physical education, the proportion of the facilities taking measures was relatively low at around 70%.

Moreover, disparities were seen between miscellaneous schools and non-approved facilities in the proportion of carrying out countermeasures regarding some of the items.

○ Situations of countermeasures against COVID-19 taken by each school for foreign students



1. Appropriate monitoring of health status, such as temperature check before going to school or work
2. Creating an environment in which it is easy for teachers and staff to take time off and see a doctor when they are sick
3. Constant ventilation in classrooms, etc.
4. Suspension of activities that bring students into close proximity, such as experiments and observations in science, chorus and wind instrument performances in music, collaborative work and appreciation in art, cooking practice in home economics, physical education, and group work in all other subjects
5. Preventing the spread of droplets in all eating and drinking situations in the school (refraining from talking, seating separately, etc.)
6. Temporarily restriction of high-risk extracurricular activities based on the infection situation in the area
7. Implementing measures such as limiting the number of passengers, ventilation, and health check before boarding, if the school owns a school bus that students use to get to and from the school

Measures taken by each school for foreign students against COVID-19 (open responses, overview)

- Requiring all staff and students to wear masks at all times
- Restrictions on entry of parents or guardians and outside persons into the school
- Requiring all people coming to the school to have temperature taken and to use hand sanitizer
- Requiring new visitors to the school to fill out short questionnaire regarding their recent activities
- Paying attention to activities requiring close contact among students
- Suspension of elective courses in order to stop exchanges with other classes
- Prevention of contact among students of different classes, grades (including postponement of whole-school events)
- Disinfecting of classroom, facilities, and common spaces
- Increasing places to wash hands
- Setting of automotive air purifiers on school buses
- Taking temperatures twice daily, once on arriving at school, and the other during lunch break
- Making submission of daily health observation card mandatory

c) Utilization status of support provided by the national government for countermeasures against COVID-19

Around 60% of the facilities were aware of notifications from the national government, but just around 40% utilized subsidies and around 20% gained information from the e-newsletters.

On the other hand, around 10% of the facilities responded that they did not utilize support from the national government, and the majority of them answered that they "did not know the national government support."

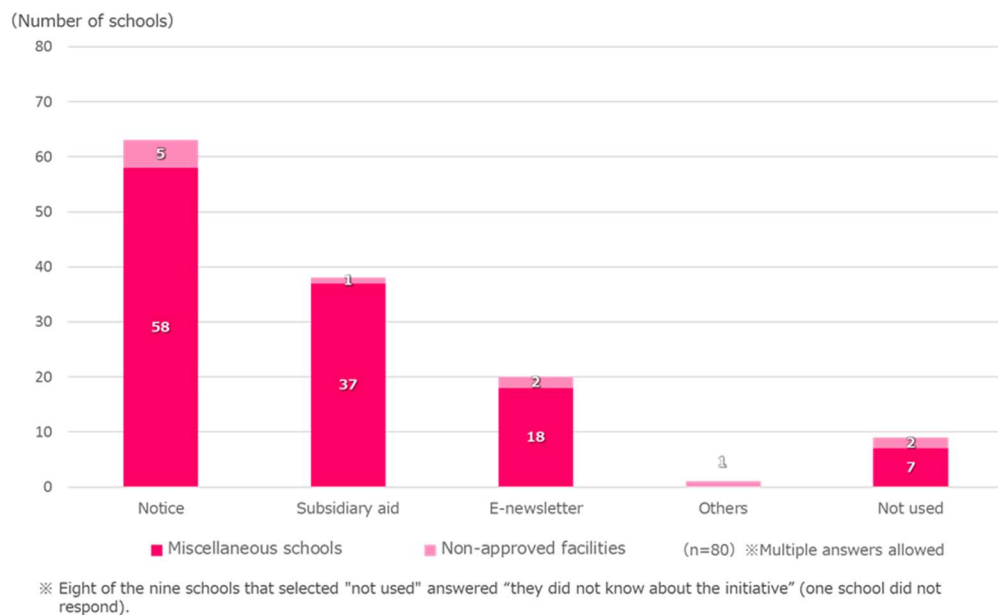
d) Utilization of support provided by local governments for countermeasures against COVID-19

Around 80% of the facilities utilized information provided by local governments, around 50% received materials and financial support, and around 40% received guidance and recommendations.

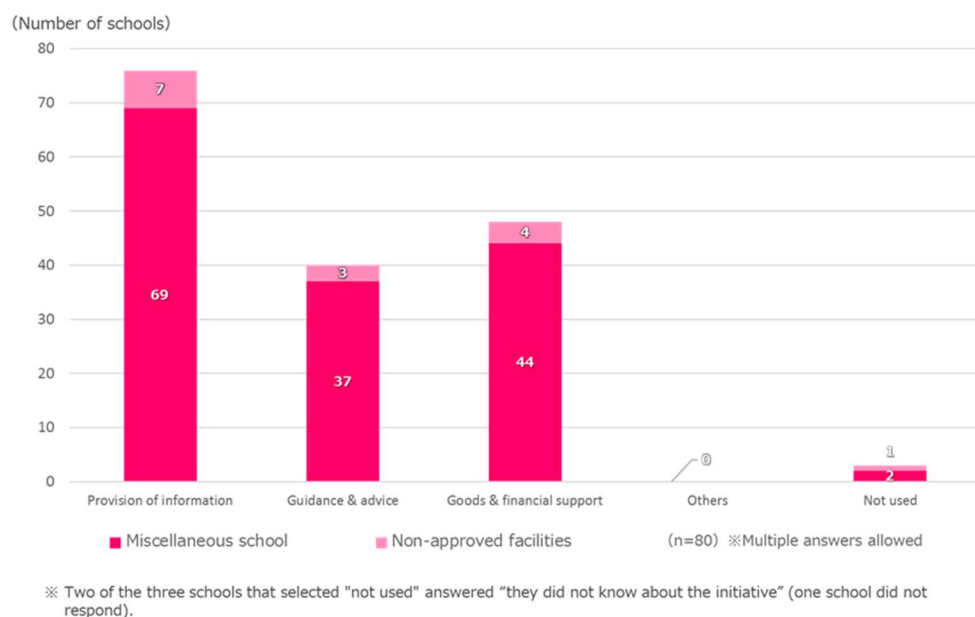
A greater proportion of the facilities, whether miscellaneous schools or non-approved facilities, relatively utilized support from local governments more than that provided by the national government.

Nevertheless, 3 facilities did not utilize support from local governments, responding that they "did not know about the local government support." The number of facilities which answered "never utilized any services" and "did not know about any of these efforts" about support from local governments was smaller than that for the same question asked about support from the national government. This indicates that in many cases the facilities had closer contact with the information provided by local governments than that provided by the national government.

○ The number of facilities that answered "utilized any services" about the national government support



○ The number of facilities that answered "utilized any services" about the local government support

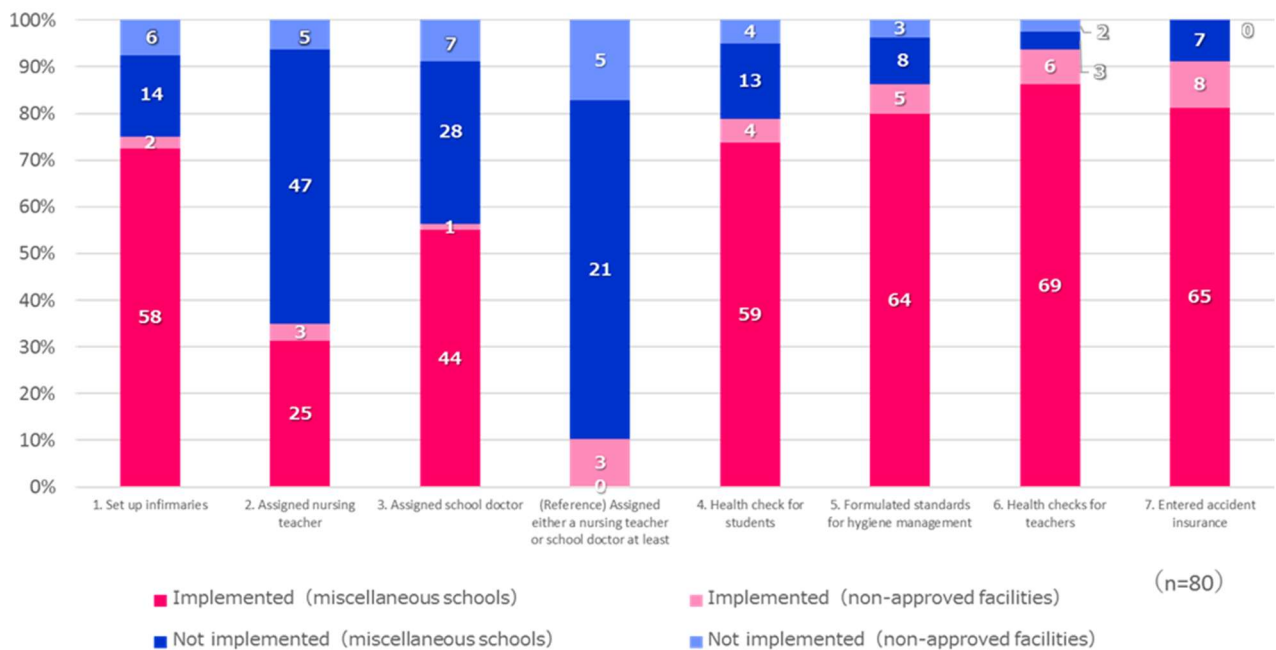


(ii) Measures for general health and hygiene

Around 90% of the facilities were carrying out health checks for teachers and staff, entered accident insurance programs targeting students, and formulated the standards for hygiene management. In addition, around 80% were providing health checks for students.

Around 70% of the facilities responded that they had set up infirmaries, and less than 70% had assigned either a nursing teacher or a school doctor at least. In particular a nursing teacher was assigned in only around 30% of the facilities.

○ Measures for general health and hygiene in each school for foreign students



Efforts for ensuring health and hygiene carried out by each school for foreign students (open responses, overview)

- Thorough the implementation of hand washing/sanitizing by providing hand disinfectants, disinfection gel, and soap
- Disinfecting of desks, doors, entrance, school bus, etc.
- Providing classes and lectures on health and hygiene
- Distribution and wearing of masks and face shields
- Temperature-taking of students, teachers and staff, and visitors
- Restrictions on entry of parents or guardians and outside persons into school grounds
- Thorough ventilation of school facilities
- Placing of protective shields
- Conducting of meetings related to health and hygiene by hygiene committee, etc. (targeting teachers and staff)
- Raising awareness of health and hygiene through bulletin boards
- Prohibiting, in principle, talking during lunch time

- Formulation of guidelines for absences and staying at home
- Daily confirmation of health condition
- Refraining from going outside other than for necessity
- Providing health checks at school enrollment
- Conducting PCR and antigen tests (relating to COVID-19)

(5) Additional survey on the current situations of the health and hygiene environment of schools for foreign students (interview survey)

○ Considering the response rate for the questionnaire survey described in (4) above was no higher than around 50 percent and more information on the situations of individual schools for foreign students was needed to more precisely ascertain their current issues, needs, contact and cooperation with local communities, and so on, an additional survey was conducted targeting schools for foreign students, local governments and other organizations.

○ An interview survey was conducted at schools for foreign students that had low response rates to the questionnaire survey, in addition to schools for foreign students, local governments and support organizations in regions where many foreign residents reside.

○ The survey period, survey targets, survey items, etc. were as follows:

- **Survey period: October 8 to November 4, 2021**
- **Survey method: Interviews conducted online (On-site interviews were conducted in some cases (see Annex 1))**
- **Survey items: See Annex 2**
- **Survey targets:**

Division	Name	Location	Survey Method
Schools for foreign students	Instituto Educacional Gente Miúda	Gunma	on-site
	Instituto Educacional Centro Nippo Brasileiro de Oizumi - NIPPAKU GAKUEN		
	Hiro Gakuen - Escola Brasileira Prof. Kawase	Gifu	online
	Escola Paulo Freire - Seto	Aichi	
	Canadian Academy	Hyogo	
	St. Michael's International School		
	Marist Brothers International School		
Local governments	Aichi Prefectural Government, Prefectural Culture Bureau, Prefectural Living Department, Social Activity Promotion Division, Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Office	Aichi	online
	Hyogo Prefectural Government, Department of Planning and Prefectural Civil Affairs , Administration Bureau, Education Division, Department of Industry and Labor, International Bureau, International Relations Division	Hyogo	TEL
	Oizumi Town, Gunma prefecture, Planning Department, Multicultural Cooperation Division	Gunma	on-site
	Minokamo City, Gifu Prefecture, Citizens' Cooperation Department, Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Office	Gifu	online
	Support organizations, etc.	NPO Minokamo International Exchange Association	Gifu
NPO Medical Information Center Aichi		Aichi	TEL

○ Basic information of survey targets

(i) Schools for foreign students

Name of school	Approved miscellaneous school	Juridical type	Year of establishment	Education level and number of children enrolled *				Main Nationality of Foreign Students
				Kindergarten	Elementary school	Junior high school	High school	
Instituto Educacional Gente Miúda	no	Limited company	2003	43	56	30	27	Brazil
Instituto Educacional Centro Nippo Brasileiro de Oizumi - NIPPAKU GAKUEN	no	Limited company	1996	38	28	24	19	Brazil
Hiro Gakuen - Escola Brasileira Prof. Kawase	yes	Quasi-Incorporated Educational Institution	2006	7	38	75	84	Brazil
Escola Paulo Freire - Seto	no	Individual	2012	4	5	4	1	Brazil, Peru
Canadian Academy	yes	Quasi-Incorporated Educational Institution	1952	44	196	162	167	USA, Korea, China, Europe, India
St. Michael's International School	yes	Quasi-Incorporated Educational Institution	1969	26	140	-	-	India, USA, China, Korea
Marist Brothers International School	yes	Quasi-Incorporated Educational Institution	1957	43	135	85	64	India, Australia, Korea, USA

* As of May 1, 2021 (as of April 1 for Gente Miúda and Instituto Educacional Centro Nippo-Brasileiro de Oizumi)

(ii) Basic information of local governments

Local government	Department	Population * 1	Of these, the number of foreign nationals	Percentage of foreign nationals in the population (%)	Of these, number of children of foreign nationality (Under 20 years of age)	Of these, number of children of foreign nationality (Under 15 years of age)	Number of schools for foreign students *2
Hyogo Prefecture	Department of Planning and Prefectural Civil Affairs, Administration Bureau, Education Division and Department of Industry and Labor, International Bureau, International Relations Division	5,523,627	113,349	2	11,031	7,932	12 (0)
Oizumi Town, Gunma Prefecture	Planning Department, Multicultural Cooperation Division	41,718	7,860	19	1,736	1,305	2 (2)
Minokamo City, Gifu Prefecture	Citizens' Cooperation Department, Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Office	57,304	5,266	9	1,205	941	1 (0)

*1 Based on the Basic Resident Register (as of January 2021)

*2 Included in reports from prefectures to MEXT (as of May 2021, including schools that had temporarily closed). The number of non-approved facilities shown in parentheses.

(iii) Basic information of support organizations

Support organizations	Location	Organization type	Year of establishment	Activities
NPO Minokamo International Exchange Association	Minokamo City, Gifu Prefecture	NPO	1991	Educational support, opening of Japanese language classes for foreign nationals to contribute to multicultural inclusion.
NPO Medical Information Center Aichi	Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture	NPO	1998	Providing medical support to foreign residents (introducing medical institutions to foreign nationals; holding of health consultations)

○ Overview of the results of the interview survey

The overview of the results of the interview survey items are as follows:

(i) Schools for foreign students

a) Measures regularly taken to ensure health and hygiene of students and teachers (including measures against COVID-19)

- Regarding health checks, while some schools carry out regular health checks utilizing local medical institutions and local government health projects as well as their own simple health observations, there are some schools that provide no health checks. The contents and frequency of health checks vary according to the circumstances of the school, for example, securing of implementation costs, classroom time, etc. A reason cited for not providing health checks was the issue of cost.
- Regarding health and hygiene measures, some schools make efforts to conduct health education taking up the subject of COVID-19 as well as urging the washing of hands and wearing of masks, etc. Many schools responded that problems related to measures for health and hygiene could arise from cultural background.

b) System and persons in charge for implementing health and hygiene measures (including consultations with outside health and hygiene professionals such as school doctors)

- All schools with infirmaries were miscellaneous schools, while most of the schools without infirmaries were non-approved facilities.
- Regarding the assignment of health and hygiene professionals, several schools had established posts for school doctors and full-time health officers. Among these schools,

some have established their own standards for health and hygiene using Japanese and overseas health and hygiene manuals as a reference.

- In some cases, the school principal, administrative director, or teachers who can speak Japanese are put in charge of health and hygiene measures. Among such cases, some schools have established health consultation systems based on specialist knowledge and information acquired through collaboration with local medical institutions, and some staff receive training and acquire related qualifications to take care of the health management of children.

c) Involvement and contact with, support from, the national government, local governments and support organizations such as NPOs

- Regarding countermeasures against COVID-19, even though they may not be acquiring information from the national government, such as through MEXT e-mail newsletters, many schools are taking up countermeasures against COVID-19 through collaboration with local public health centers and local governments. Many schools, including non-approved facilities, are receiving support, particularly from local governments, through the dissemination of information on policies regarding countermeasures against COVID-19, on-site surveys, and the provision of health and hygiene goods.
- Regarding assistance from NPOs and other support organizations, schools are receiving support from various organizations, such as local medical institutions, international exchange associations, embassies and consulates, universities, religious organizations, and medical foundations. Types of assistance cited were the dispatch of medical translators, donations for the purchase of health and hygiene goods, provision of health and hygiene goods, etc.
- Regarding collaboration between schools, some schools responded that they exchange information with other schools through the Japan Council of International Schools (JCIS) and the Associacao das Escolas Brasileiras do Japao (AEBJ). However, some respondents said they want to know about the information provided to Article 1 schools because opportunities for exchanging information on health and hygiene with other schools are limited.

d) Issues arising when taking health and hygiene measures in schools for foreign students

- Particularly for non-approved facilities, some facilities are unable to establish infirmaries or provide health checks, even though they recognize their necessity, due to shortages of space, personnel, and budget. As the issues not reaching the above, some schools are facing the issues of lack of adequate space for classrooms, lack of exercise facilities such as school grounds or gymnasiums, etc.
- Some schools expressed concerns that, depending on whether they have health insurance, some children attending schools for foreign students cannot receive necessary medical care at home.

- Since in some cases that information related to measures against COVID-19 provided by local governments are written only in Japanese teachers who can understand Japanese translate the information to provide it to other teachers, some schools expressed their hope for improvements regarding the way to disseminate information, including the multilingual provision of information.
 - Some responding schools stated that there was a lack of information about medical institutions capable of providing different languages and that consultation services regarding response to health and hygiene in schools for foreign students should be set up.
- e) Items regarding health and hygiene requested that the national government and local governments implement (including formulation of standards and guidelines regarding health and hygiene in schools for foreign students)**
- Regarding local medical care in local governments, it was hoped that local governments will provide health checks at no cost and enable them to receive support by school doctors.
 - Some respondents said that since there are limited opportunities for teachers to acquire necessary information and gain specialist knowledge in order to carry out health and hygiene measures in schools for foreign students, conducting training targeting teachers in schools for foreign students would be effective.
 - Many respondents said that the preparation of standards and guidelines regarding health and hygiene in schools for foreign students would be beneficial. However, some stated that since schools for foreign students face financial and personnel constraints, it is important to ensure that the contents of such standards and guidelines are applicable to the current situations at such schools.

(ii) Local governments

- a) Ascertaining the current situations of schools for foreign students, including non-approved facilities, and children attending them (including health and hygiene)**
- Prefectural governments are making every effort to ascertain the current situations in schools for foreign students through various channels, such as surveys on the operation of miscellaneous schools under the jurisdiction of prefectural governments, the original surveys, the provision of information from municipalities, towns, and villages, information collected from the Internet, and so on. However, particularly for non-approved facilities, it was pointed out that the means for ascertaining the current situations are limited since it is difficult to contact such facilities and they are under no legal obligation to respond to surveys.
 - In municipalities, towns and villages, some examples were cited of making very active efforts to ascertain the current situations in schools for foreign students, including non-approved facilities, through local foreign communities.

b) Provision of information to schools for foreign students and foreign communities

- Some prefectural governments made efforts to disseminate information to foreign communities through local international exchange associations, embassies and consulates, and to provide information to schools for foreign students through collaboration between their several departments.
- Municipalities, towns and villages, in addition to the efforts mentioned above, provided information through various routes that are closer to local foreign communities such as by key persons and churches familiar with local foreign communities, companies employing many foreign nationals, residents visiting local government offices, etc.

c) Efforts regarding supports for health and hygiene measures in schools for foreign students

- The Aichi prefectural government is making efforts to ascertain the current situations regarding the implementation of health checks through surveys of schools for foreign students conducted by the prefectural government, although it has not carried out efforts to support health and hygiene measures in schools for foreign students up to date.
- Hyogo prefectural government was responded that its relevant departments in charge of schools for foreign students are responding and providing guidance to schools for foreign students seeking various types of advice, but had never received any questions regarding health and hygiene. It has implemented its own budgetary measures to schools for foreign students regarding measures against COVID-19.
- In Oizumi Town in Gunma Prefecture, health checks in schools for foreign students are being carried out, liaising with Brazilian volunteers and others. Heart examinations are included in the health checks, and lectures on health for parents are also conducted. Costs are cut through efforts such as the town's provision of venues and public schools' lending of equipment.
- Minokamo City in Gifu Prefecture is cooperating to lend weight scales and other equipment to schools for foreign students when they conduct health checks. Moreover, the city is conducting COVID-19 public awareness campaigns for foreign residents, including schools for foreign students, by preparing videos and informative leaflets to explain what kind of symptoms appear when a person is infected with COVID-19 and what kind of measures are necessary for preventing infections.

d) Issues regarding supports for health and hygiene measures in schools for foreign students

- Opinions were voiced on the necessity of showing national guidelines for, and the direction of, health and hygiene measures so that discrepancies would not be created among regions. An issue raised was what kind of support the national government and local governments should provide so that schools for foreign students would be able to respond to such guidelines.

- Another issue pointed out was what departments would lead efforts when support is given by local governments for the implementation of health and hygiene efforts in schools for foreign students, and it is necessary for the departments with jurisdiction over miscellaneous schools, departments in charge of multicultural inclusion, departments in charge of health, and so on to cooperate together for these efforts.
 - It was cited that there are some cases when schools for foreign students and foreign communities show differing awareness of the need for measures against COVID-19 and other health and hygiene measures due to the cultural background of the home country, and this is an issue when information and support were provided to schools for foreign students.
- e) Coordination with other organizations for ensuring health and hygiene in schools for foreign students (the national government, local governments, support organizations such as NPOs, etc.)**
- In prefectures, some opinions were voiced that although cooperation and the sharing of information are being carried out with prefectural international exchange associations and municipalities, towns, and villages where there are miscellaneous schools for ensuring health and hygiene in schools for foreign students, the prefectural governments do not have any daily interactions with their departments in charge of health affairs such as public health centers, and international exchange associations and public health centers of municipalities, town and village.
 - In municipalities, towns and villages, examples were cited of support provided to foreign communities through liaising with support organizations for foreign nationals and international exchange associations in other cities with concentrations of foreign residents in the prefecture, and of cooperation with the prefectural government for implementing measures against COVID-19 in schools for foreign students and sharing information about infected persons.

(iii) Support organizations

- a) Efforts regarding supports for health and hygiene measures in schools for foreign students**
- The two support organizations interviewed for this survey are providing assistance for the carrying out of health checks at schools for foreign students.
 - The Minokamo International Exchange Association is introducing primary care doctors towards conducting the health checks at non-approved childcare facilities, under the guidance of the prefectural government, and is confirming that health checks in multiple languages are carried out once a year for non-approved facilities.
 - The Medical Information Center Aichi (MICA) is introducing medical institutions capable of providing multilingual health care and is supporting the conducting of health consultations for foreign residents, in addition to providing support for health checks at schools for foreign students.

b) Ascertaining situations of and providing information to schools for foreign students including non-approved facilities

- The Minokamo International Exchange Association is ascertaining the situations of children under non-approved childcare facilities and providing support for children's enrollment through the support for such facilities, and sharing information with relevant officials of the city as well as is providing information to schools for foreign students through SNS, etc.
- The Medical Information Center Aichi (MICA) is making efforts to provide information on health checks and others, utilizing SNS to schools for foreign students.

c) Issues regarding supports for health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students

- For providing support, an issue was cited of a wide variance in the situations and awareness of health and hygiene at schools for foreign students due to the cultural background of their mother countries.
- Another issue raised was that when providing support, in some cases support is provided by the prefectural government, but in other cases support is built upon donations and membership fees by limited members and volunteers of the support organizations, which created an issue for ensuring the continuity of the organization's activities. In particular, the difficulty of conducting free detailed health checks was cited, since greater costs are incurred for it.

d) Collaboration with other organizations for ensuring health and hygiene at schools for foreign students (the national government, local governments, support organizations such as NPOs, etc.)

- The Minokamo International Exchange Association is on the same floor of the same building as the Multicultural Inclusion Department of Minokamo City, which enables it to closely share information with the Department on a daily basis.
- The Medical Information Center Aichi (MICA) collaborates with the regional medical practitioners associations, medical associations, dental associations, etc. It was voiced that although there are opportunities for exchanges of views with local governments, a sufficient cooperative relationship is not necessarily established.

3. Issues

3 main issues have been identified from the discussions at the Advisory Committee and the results of the survey described in 2 (4) and (5) above: (1) issues related to monitoring schools for foreign students and children attending them, (2) issues related to taking measures for the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students, (3) issues related to the support system when taking measures for the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students.

The discussions at the Advisory Committee related to these three issues are summarized below.

(1) Issues related to monitoring schools for foreign students and children attending them

- In the guidelines in which MEXT indicates the items for local governments to develop in order to promote the school enrolment of foreign children and monitor the school enrollment status, the importance of collaboration with boards of education, departments of local governments (department for Resident Basic Register, department for international relations, department for welfare, department for miscellaneous schools, etc.), NPOs and other support organizations³. It is conceivable that information on non-approved facilities can be better ascertained through monitoring children in such collaboration with many organizations.
- Since local government departments in charge of international relations have means for liaising with foreign communities, it could be possible for them to ascertain the situations of foreign children through these contacts. Even if it is difficult for MEXT and boards of education to ascertain the situations of foreign children, it is still possible to consider how they can support the school health environment by utilizing the relationships between international relations departments and foreign communities.
- It is also conceivable to ascertain the situation of foreign children from the results of the Survey on the Status of School Enrollment of Foreign Children, immigration records and other sources.
- It is important to accurately ascertain the situations regarding the administrative system and operation of each school for foreign students and related organizations with which they are normally involved.
- It is also important to ascertain the situations of children who quit Article 1 public schools because they couldn't fit in the surrounding environment of such schools due to differences in language and culture and are currently attending schools for foreign students.

³ Regarding to monitoring the school enrollment status of foreign children, the "Guidelines for the Promotion of School Enrollment of Foreign Children and Identification of Their School Enrollment Status" (issued by MEXT on July 1, 2020) indicates that the boards of education need to promote the initiatives that "ascertain and manage integrally the school enrollment status of all foreign children for making the registration of school-age children in collaboration with local government departments (department for Resident Basic Register, department for international relations, department for welfare, etc.), NPOs and other groups supporting foreign children".

(2) Issues that arise when taking measures for the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students

(i) Situations and administrative systems of schools for foreign students

- Attention must be paid to the relatively high possibility that children who attend schools for foreign students face health risks due to various factors such as the situations in the home, language problems, etc.
- In some cases, it is difficult for schools for foreign students to take adequate daily health and hygiene measures and supports from the government that exceed the administrative capability of the receiving schools. Accordingly, it is necessary to recognize the current situations in each school for foreign students.
- When promoting the establishment of infirmaries and the allocation and utilization of professional staff (including nursing teachers, school doctors, dentists and pharmacists), it is necessary not only to disseminate its necessity but also to show how schools for foreign students can build implementable systems, considering the characteristics of such schools.
- In order to advance health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students, it is important for training to be provided to teachers so that they can acquire necessary information on health and hygiene measures to acquire specialist knowledge.
- Schools for foreign students face fiscal constraints since they must depend on tuition fees, donations from private companies, individuals, and others. Therefore, attention must be paid to the fact that making the establishment of infirmaries or the allocation of health and hygiene professionals mandatory is a large burden on the schools.
- So that schools for foreign students can fully take advantage of tax incentives according to the legal status as miscellaneous schools and make it easier for them to receive donations from private companies and other sources, it is necessary to further disseminate the contents and procedures of these systems and consider ways to further enable them to take advantage of these systems, including expanding eligible schools, in light of the situations of schools for foreign students.

(ii) Health and hygiene environmental guidelines for schools for foreign students

- The School Health and Safety Act provides for school health and school safety in relation to Article 1 schools in order to stipulate specific provisions corresponding to parts of provisions of the School Education Act, and is not intended to apply to any educational facilities that are not placed in Article 1 schools. In addition, the contents of the School Health and Safety Act contains that “schools must formulate and implement a plan on health-related issues to maintain and improve the mental and physical health of students and teachers” (in Article 5), which covers a wide range of issues that requires specialist knowledge. That is why, the Act is applied *mutatis mutandis* to specialized training colleges which are educational facilities which have a certain scale and level, but miscellaneous

schools are not applicable. According to these points, it is difficult for the School Health and Safety Act to be uniformly applied to schools for foreign students. However, it is desirable for schools for foreign students to take measures according to those of Article 1 schools, such as health and hygiene measures including health checks and environmental hygiene inspections implemented as much as possible, considering the characteristics of schools for foreign students and the objectives and philosophy of the School Health and Safety Act applied to Article 1 schools.

- Since it is difficult for schools for foreign students to meet the same standards as those for Article 1 schools in implementing general health and hygiene measures during normal times, it is necessary to formulate guidelines regarding health and hygiene for schools for foreign students⁴⁵. For the making of such guidelines, it is desirable to consider matters that each school should handle on its initiative based on the guidelines, while also keeping in mind that there are various types of schools for foreign students.
- Upon the implementation of countermeasures against COVID-19 in schools for foreign students, it could be effective for each school to utilize in accordance with their situations the “COVID-19 Infection Control Manuals and Guidelines for Schools” updated by MEXT.
- In order to proceed with the efforts based on the guidelines, it will be essential to organize and prepare the roles that the relevant organizations, including the national government and local governments, should play, and to develop health and hygiene measures in coordination with all the relevant organizations.
- By just presenting the health and hygiene guidelines, it is difficult for schools for foreign students to carry them out continuously. Therefore, it is considered effective to promote the actual utilization of the guidelines and raise understanding of the significance of implementing them through publicity, awareness building and training targeting relevant organizations, including schools for foreign students and local governments.

(iii) Obtaining and utilizing appropriate information

(a) Obtaining information

- With regard to channels for providing information to schools for foreign students, it is important to ensure the effective utilization of various channels for providing information such as networks of schools for foreign students, word of mouth between parents or guardians, foreign communities and companies which have a lot of foreign nationals as a channel for providing information from local governments to schools for foreign students.

⁴ For the making of the guidelines, it is desirable to refer to the School Health and Safety Act.

⁵ It is also necessary to consider ways of health and hygiene inspections at schools for foreign students because the hygiene environment such as water and air cannot be known without inspection.

In addition, building a framework to communicate to foreign nationals health and hygiene-related information by translating it in an easy-to-understand format is also important.

- For countermeasures against COVID-19, taking measures at home is also important, but in some cases, foreign parents or guardians are in the situations where it is difficult to obtain information. Thus, it is important to positively provide the parents or guardians with health and hygiene-related information.
- Schools for foreign students do not necessarily receive detailed COVID-19 related information from their home countries, and schools for foreign students which have been approved as a miscellaneous school can obtain information from local governments or other means, while non-approved facilities are at risk of being isolated from information as they can not necessarily receive information from local governments.
- If there is a multilingual platform consolidating and providing health and hygiene information to schools for foreign students, it is possible for respective schools to more easily acquire reliable information they can utilize when carrying out health and hygiene measures by themselves.

(b) Utilizing information

- Considering the differences between overseas and Japanese cultures is important.
- There are instances when the matters considered important in Japan are not required to be implemented in schools overseas. Accordingly, it is necessary to ascertain the needs of schools for foreign students as to what kind of information they need in order to deliver appropriate information.
- It is good to have summarized and translated the existing health and hygiene materials intended for Article 1 schools into English, but it is also necessary to translate and to provide the additional detailed information useful for daily life, such as how to dilute disinfectant spray.
- As there are cases when the Japanese language hinders the smooth management of schools for foreign students, increasing the number of staff who can speak Japanese may help schools develop effective countermeasures when schools gather and exchange information related to health and hygiene and communicate with local authorities. For this reason, Japanese language education for teachers and staff at schools for foreign students is also important.
- To date, a great deal of information has been provided, including materials translated into several different languages. However, there are schools for foreign students that have problems grasping where necessary information is found within the materials in Japanese and recognizing the important points in them. Because of that, it is beneficial to prepare materials that are easily understandable for schools for foreign students by clarifying the important points in such materials and using plain Japanese.

(iv) Issues of countermeasures against COVID-19 and others

(a) Countermeasures against COVID-19

- There are limitations to the responses schools for foreign students can take for appropriately implementing COVID-19 countermeasures.
- One of the important issues is countermeasures for school buses.
- In order to prevent foreign nationals from being isolated from the community due to discrimination and harmful rumors if they are infected with COVID-19, it is necessary to actively disseminate information to the community regarding the efforts of schools for foreign students and local governments to appropriately implement the measures against COVID-19.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has reconfirmed the importance of health and hygiene measures, including implementing proper ventilation and ensuring hygiene environments. Moreover, looking forward to the future, it will also be necessary to consider measures against infectious disease and general health and hygiene measures during normal times in schools for foreign students.

(b) Mental care and other issues

- If an infection case is confirmed at a school for foreign students, it is important to appropriately correspond to mental healthcare and defamation so that the school does not become isolated within the local community.
- Nursing teachers are deeply involved in various issues including health issues faced by children, and are anticipated to play a crucial role also in foreign children's mental care and the early detection of mental and physical issues.
- There are also children who need special supports at schools for foreign students, and they may face mental issues and difficulties establishing identity in adolescence from language and cultural background. Thus, the roles which clinical psychologists play in supporting such children is important.
- Children going to schools for foreign students are sometimes anxious about continuing their life in Japan and their path forward to the future. Accordingly, it is considered effective for dealing with this anxiety to establish opportunities for them to hear older foreign nationals who act as role models recount their experiences and so on.
- Existing manuals for mental care in Article 1 schools could be translated and used at schools for foreign students.

(3) Issues related to the support system when taking measures for the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students

(i) Relationships between local governments and schools for foreign students

- In regards to COVID-19 countermeasures at schools for foreign students, there are many cases where these schools, together with miscellaneous schools and non-approved schools, utilize support, such as the provision of information, more from local governments than the

national government. Hence, to develop effective countermeasures, it is important to collaborate with local governments with whom schools for foreign students have closer information contacts.

- There are large disparities in local governments and in schools for foreign students among the carrying out of health and hygiene measures for schools for foreign students and children attending them. It is possible that the disparities will widen only in the voluntary efforts by local governments and requests for their supports by schools for foreign students. To improve that situation, it is necessary for the national government to show the directions of measures and guidelines regarding health and hygiene nationwide to local governments.
- There are various departments dealing with health and hygiene in schools for foreign students at local governments, and cases arise where it is difficult for them to respond promptly to requests for consultation from these schools⁶. Because of that, which departments at each local government responsible for such consultations regarding health and hygiene measures in schools for foreign students should be clarified.
- It may be difficult in some cases to build a continuous relationship with the persons in charge at local governments, since there are frequent personnel changes at administrative departments. Moreover, the level of understanding and knowledge of local government officials in charge have a great impact on the effectiveness of measures.
- In order to build good and continuous relations between local governments and schools for foreign students under their jurisdiction, building support systems under the cooperation between related departments in local governments, providing supports anticipating the needs of these schools, and daily contact and exchanges in person are effective.
- In order to assign and promote the utilization of primary care doctors, some local governments have surveyed whether collaboration between schools for foreign students and medical institutions providing primary care doctors for such schools goes beyond just the provision of information, issued notifications for promoting bridge-building between these schools for foreign children and medical institutions, provided lists of medical institutions offering multilingual care and assistance to schools for foreign students and households of foreign nationals for wide use.
- In some cases, schools for foreign students may not be able to obtain information or technical advice from public health centers. For this reason, it is also necessary to take measures being aware of the local health framework in order to ensure the health of foreign children and schools for foreign students.

(ii) Perspectives of wide area supports for schools for foreign students

⁶ Examples of departments of local governments related to health and hygiene at schools for foreign students are: departments in charge of miscellaneous schools (jurisdiction over approval for establishing schools for foreign students, etc.); international exchange departments (responsible for international exchanges, multicultural inclusion, etc.); welfare departments (responsible for infectious diseases countermeasures, coordination with medical institutions, etc.); boards of education (responsible for coordination with Article 1 schools); etc.

- Since many children go to school across prefectures and municipalities, towns and villages, it will be important to consider administration and perspectives over wide areas.
- One support measure considered is for professional staff such as nursing teachers to be assigned to a wide area and go around to different schools for foreign students to provide guidance and advice regarding health and hygiene measures. In addition, with the assumption that multilingual responses would be necessary, providing remote responses through online consultations can be considered effective.
- If many children go to school from a wide area, it is necessary to reconsider whether support from only the locality of schools for foreign students is sufficient regarding measures for providing primary care doctors and other issues.
- It is important to provide support and disseminate information through cooperation with not only local governments but also stakeholders, including NPOs working for foreign nationals and children's health and hygiene, private companies employing large numbers of foreign nationals, foreign communities, etc.
- It is important for local governments and schools for foreign students to regularly share information regarding local medical institutions that can accept foreign patients. Moreover, rather than schools for foreign students directly contacting medical institutions, local governments, NPOs, etc. can facilitate such contact by providing consultations with such medical institutions as a bridge between them.

(iii) Others

- Values regarding health differ from country to country. In order to achieve better health and hygiene environments, the idea that government administrations and schools for foreign students engage in sufficient dialogue and jointly develop relevant measures is important.
- At first, liaising rather than only assistance is necessary. Thus, ascertaining with which organizations should be collaborated is vital. In addition, it is important to consider that schools for foreign students that did not respond in the questionnaire survey regarding health and hygiene and local governments develop exchanges and then how the two sides cooperate. It is also important to consider how they can cooperate together through specific matters like ascertaining the school enrollment status of foreign children by the registers of school-age children in an integrated manner.
- In order to conduct health checks by school doctors and other professional staff going around to schools for foreign students in the region, it is necessary for local medical associations, medical institutions, and professionals including nursing teachers and clinical psychologists to understand the health and hygiene situations at schools for foreign students and the necessity of measures at these schools through publicity, training, and so on.
- While prefectural governments have the authority to approve schools for foreign students as a miscellaneous school, many also have deep ties with municipalities, towns, and villages. It is important both to raise awareness of persons in charge at local governments for co-creation with schools for foreign children to solve issues and to promote understanding of schools for foreign students about local governments.

- It is necessary to consider what schools for foreign students work on their own to improve their health and hygiene environment.

4. Future direction

With the opportunity provided by the identifying of issues through the above survey and discussion, it is necessary to thoroughly identify and consider methods for ascertaining the current situations of the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students and ways to support these schools in order to prevent COVID-19 from expanding and to improve their health and hygiene environment.

Moreover, based on the current situations of schools for foreign students outlined in section 2 above and the issues they are facing outlined in section 3 above, it is necessary for the national government, local governments and schools for foreign students to collaborate each other to promptly develop countermeasures with mid- and long-term perspectives while considering various viewpoints, including the special characteristics of schools for foreign students.

When taking countermeasures, it is essential for government administrations not to just give one-way support to schools for foreign students but for government administrations and these schools to develop jointly measures (3 (3) (iii)), and for them to collaborate with professionals including nursing teachers and clinical psychologists to deal with a variety of issues, including mental care and measures against defamation (3 (2) (iv)).

Based on these perspectives, as shown below, the items have been classified into (1) items requiring prompt responses, and (2) items requiring mid- and long-term initiatives, and the future direction of each category have been organized.

(1) Items requiring prompt responses

(i) Appropriate dissemination of information

- The effective dissemination of information to schools for foreign students can be facilitated by the preparation of a multilingual platform that can consolidate and disseminate information on health and hygiene measures for foreign nationals in a unified way. This platform is expected to establish a nationwide multilingual platform for the dissemination of information to such schools, operate websites and SNS accounts for such schools, and provide multilingual translations of materials. (3 (2) (iii))
- Particularly in regards to multilingual translations, it should, for example, be promptly carried out to translate not only an outline but also specific information that can be utilized on a daily basis of the COVID-19 Infection Control Manuals and Guidelines for Schools, and to provide them to schools for foreign students. (3 (2) (iii))
- Since many schools for foreign students find it difficult to organize all of the great deal of information they receive, it is necessary to devise ways to make it easier for such schools to obtain necessary information; for examples, clearly showing the important points in the materials and using plain Japanese, when disseminating information. (3 (2) (iii))

- It is necessary to establish a system that enables the dissemination of information not only through local governments but also through a variety of stakeholders such as networks among schools for foreign students, NPOs, private companies and foreign communities. (3 (2) (iii))

(ii) Detailed and effective supports

- In order to improve the health and hygiene environments of schools for foreign students, local governments and schools for foreign students need to build relations each other and develop systems for providing necessary support (3 (3) (i)).
- Some prefectural and municipal governments have developed a certain level of collaboration systems with schools for foreign students. For this reason, by supporting these efforts and expanding them nationwide as good practices, it is necessary to increase examples of practices tailored to the current situations of each local government and school for foreign students, and to accumulate the necessary knowhow for improving health and hygiene environments. (3 (3) (i))
- Among schools for foreign students, some have difficulties building relations with particular local governments because they accept children from a wide area. Because of this situation, in order to promote measures for improving the health and hygiene environment in these schools, it is necessary to provide opportunities for such schools to communicate with professional staff and disseminate information through the setting up of a nationwide multilingual platform that functions both to provide consultations and advice regarding health and hygiene and to disseminate information, which will lead to the accumulation of knowhow. (3 (3) (ii)).
- Local governments should clarify the roles that they should play and specify the departments responsible for the liaison office regarding health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students in order to provide integrated responses to these schools. (3 (3) (i))
- Building relationships with medical institutions that are able to accept foreign patients is effective for progressing with countermeasures against infectious diseases and health and hygiene at schools for foreign students. For that, it is important to promote the sharing of information regarding medical institutions in the local community between local governments, support organizations such as NPOs and schools for foreign students. (3 (3) (ii))

(iii) Promotion of initiatives based on the situations at schools for foreign students

- Among schools for foreign students, in some cases, there are differences in the recognition of the necessity for countermeasures against infectious disease and health and hygiene due to the cultural background of the home country. Accordingly, more effective health and hygiene measures should be promoted not only by disseminating information but also by conducting individual consultations with health and hygiene professionals, training to teachers, etc. (3 (2) (ii))

- It is necessary to try to vitalize efforts related to the health and hygiene environments in schools for foreign students not only by informing local governments and such schools about systems involving the granting of permission for the establishment of miscellaneous schools and the giving of donations to schools, but also by considering ways to further enable them to take advantage of these systems, including expanding eligible schools, in light of the situations of schools for foreign students. (3 (2) (i))

(iv) Responses to issues related to countermeasures against COVID-19

- From the standpoint of preparing for another wave of COVID-19 infections, the national government should continue to provide supports for the implementation of countermeasures at local governments, schools for foreign students, etc., which includes the continuous dissemination of information through websites in plain Japanese, e-newsletters and the multilingually translated versions of the COVID-19 Infection Control Manuals and Guidelines for Schools. (3 (2) (iv))
- Local governments should make efforts to ascertain the COVID-19 situations at schools for foreign students and coordinate their relevant departments to support detailed measures according to the situations in the community and schools for foreign students. (3 (2) (iv))
- To promote mental care at schools for foreign students, it is important to make teachers at schools for foreign students aware of this issue while utilizing existing manuals for Article 1 schools. (3 (2) (iv))
- For the conducting of mental care at schools for foreign students, it is important to promote the understanding of the issues and special backgrounds at these schools through training targeting psychology professionals including clinical psychologists, nursing teachers, etc. (3 (2) (iv))

(2) Items requiring mid- and long-term initiatives

(i) Showing the direction related to health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students

- Based on the fact that the schools for foreign students play a certain role for the educating of foreign children in accordance with the situations in local communities, further study should be conducted regarding the specific way of health and hygiene guidelines for schools for foreign students that are also applicable for non-approved facilities to facilitate the implementation of general health and hygiene measures in normal times in the future. In studying this regard, it is also desirable to clarify what should be voluntarily undertaken by schools for foreign students, considering the wide variance in the juridical type of schools for foreign students and the scope ages of children, and cultural differences between the home countries and Japan. (3 (2) (ii))
- In order to realize effective measures based on the guidelines, it is necessary to ensure that the contents of the guidelines can be implemented by schools for foreign students and to clarify the roles that the national government, local governments, support organizations and other related

organizations should play and the ways where these organizations should coordinate their efforts. (3 (2) (ii))

- For enhancing the health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students, it is essential to coordinate efforts not only with these schools but also with local medical care and medical institutions. For this, local governments need to carry out crosscutting considerations of health and hygiene measures in collaboration with the departments of the local government in charge of health in order to gain the understanding and cooperation of professionals including nursing teachers and clinical psychologists regarding the current situations at and support measures for schools for foreign students. (3 (3) (iii))
- In regards to the fostering of professionals who can overcome language barriers and smoothly communicate with foreign nationals, since it is expected that time will be required for this, including for institutional responses, it is necessary to collect information including examples from overseas and consider this regard. (3 (2) (iii))
- Since some of the issues and knowledge gained through countermeasures against COVID-19 can be applied for responses to future infectious diseases and to the general health management during normal times, there should be continuous considerations of how such knowledge can be linked to continuous health and hygiene measures in preparation for the future. (3 (2) (iv))

(ii)Improving the capabilities of schools for foreign students to respond to health and hygiene issues

- It is necessary to promote the assignment and utilization of health and hygiene professionals including nursing teachers to schools for foreign students. Moreover, because it is a great burden on them, it is necessary to collect examples of efforts in this regard from schools nationwide and prepare implementable systems. (3 (2) (i))
- Considerations should be made on building systems enabling health checks to be carried out at schools for foreign students based on coordination between local governments, NPOs, companies, medical associations, and so on. (3 (2) (i))
- Promoting voluntary efforts by children at schools for foreign students and their parents through health education is effective for carrying out health and hygiene measures. (3 (3) (iii))
- It is important to collect information regarding the situations of schools for foreign students nationwide, including non-approved facilities, obtained through a multilingual platform (4 (1) (i)) and the knowhow obtained through support for the initiatives of local governments and a nationwide multilingual platform (4 (1) (ii)), and to utilize nationwide the knowledge gained through these initiatives by effectively sharing this information with schools for foreign students and local governments. (3 (1), 3 (2) (iii))

Summary of the results of the on-site observations at schools for foreign students

On October 12, 2021, on-site observations were conducted at Instituto Educacional Gente Miuda and Instituto Educacional Centro Nippo-Brasileiro de Oizumi in Oizumi Town (both are non-approved facilities). The following is summary of the observations.

(1) Situations of Oizumi Town

- Several manufacturing and food industry companies employing foreign workers, and many shops run by Brazilians were seen in the town.
- Many signs and materials in several languages for foreign residents were displayed in the stations and town facilities (Oizumi Multicultural Cooperation Community Center). The town were making efforts to create an environment conducive for foreign residents to live.

(2) Gente Miuda

- It was observed that children from kindergarten to high school study at two simply constructed one-story buildings (total of nine classrooms) and on the first floor of one two-story building (two classrooms). In each classroom, one or two grade levels of children were taking lessons together and the classrooms were quite small, making it difficult to provide adequate space between the children's desks. Moreover, The respondent said that since there are no facilities such as an infirmary, school ground, or gymnasium, it is difficult to ensure the children have opportunities to exercise.
- It was said that some teachers and staff are able to communicate in Japanese, but not all. The facility's communication with the town department in charge is usually conducted through town officials and Portuguese language translators.

(3) Instituto Educacional Centro Nippo-Brasileiro de Oizumi

- It was observed that the facility has school buildings at two locations; two two-story buildings (total of nine classrooms) and one one-story building (six classrooms), where children from kindergarten to high school studied, and there is no infirmary but there is a school ground.
- It was observed that the facility put emphasis on Japanese language education. Within the facility, there were posters about washing hands, etc. written in both Japanese and Portuguese (some had been prepared by Oizumi town). The facility had been making active efforts to raise children's awareness about health and hygiene.
- The respondent said that the Japanese school operator handles external school matters, and the facility has smooth daily contact with the local government officials in charge.

Survey items in the additional survey

1. Interview survey items

(1) Schools for foreign students

- (i) Measures regularly taken to ensure health and hygiene of students and teachers (including measures against COVID-19)
- (ii) System and persons in charge for implementing health and hygiene measures (including consultations with outside health and hygiene professionals such as school doctors)
- (iii) Involvement and contact with, support from, the national government, local governments and support organizations such as NPOs
- (iv) Issues arising when taking health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students
- (v) Items regarding health and hygiene requested that the national government and local governments implement (including formulation of standards and guidelines regarding health and hygiene at schools for foreign students)

(2) Local governments

- (i) Ascertaining the current situations of schools for foreign students, including non-approved facilities, and children attending them (including health and hygiene)
- (ii) Provision of information to schools for foreign students and foreign communities
- (iii) Efforts regarding supports for health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students
- (iv) Issues regarding supports for health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students
- (v) Coordination with other organizations for ensuring health and hygiene at schools for foreign students (the national government, local governments, support organizations such as NPOs, etc.)

(3) Support organizations

- (i) Efforts regarding supports for health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students
- (ii) Ascertaining situations of and providing information to schools for foreign students including non-approved facilities
- (iii) Issues regarding supports for health and hygiene measures at schools for foreign students
- (iv) Collaboration with other organizations for ensuring health and hygiene at schools for foreign students (the national government, local governments, support organizations such as NPOs.)

2. Questionnaire survey items “general measures for health and hygiene”

- (i) Establishment of school infirmary
- (ii) Assignment of nursing teacher
- (iii) Assignment of school doctor
- (iv) Conducting of health checks for students
- (v) Formulation of standards for hygiene management at school
- (vi) Conducting of health checks for teachers and staff
- (vii) Entry by school in private insurance such as accident insurance, etc.

Convening of the Advisory Committee on the Health and Hygiene Environment in Facilities Aimed Exclusively at Educating Foreign Children (so-called “Schools for Foreign Students”)

May 25, 2021

By decision of

Director of International Affairs Division,

Minister’s Secretariat, MEXT

1. Aim

The number of children of foreign nationals is tending to increase in Japan, and some of them go to facilities aimed exclusively at educating foreign children (hereinafter referred to as “schools for foreign students”). Under this situation, from the perspective of ensuring health of all children residing in Japan, including responses to COVID-19, the Advisory Committee is convened to discuss how to ensure the health and hygiene environment at schools for foreign students which assume that there are communal activities at the schools.

2. Items to discuss

- (1) Issues and measures for improvement related to health and hygiene in schools for foreign students
- (2) Others

3. Method of holding

- (1) The Advisory Committee is composed of the members listed in the attachment.
- (2) Support can be received from persons other than the members of the Advisory Committee when necessary.

4. Others

The International Affairs Division of the Minister’s Secretariat handles the general affairs of the Advisory Committee, with cooperation from relevant divisions of MEXT.

List of the members of the Advisory Committee on the Health and Hygiene Environment in Facilities Aimed Exclusively at Foreign Children (so-called “Schools for Foreign Students”)

ASANO Akemi

Chairman

National Liaison Committee of Yogo Teacher

OCHANTE MURAY Rosa Mercedes

Associate Professor

Department of Human Education, Faculty of Human Education

Momoyama Gakuin University of Education

KITAGAKI Kunihiko

Professor

Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Tokyo University of Pharmacy and Life Sciences

KURAHASHI Tomu

Vice Chairman

NPO Association of Brazilian Schools in Japan

SATO Gunei

Professor

School of Global Japanese

Meiji University

SUZUKI Mitsuo

Division Director

International Affairs Division, Planning and Coordination Department

Hamamatsu City

TANAKA Iki

Director

Department of Immigrant Children and Youth Support

NPO Youth Support Center

Daniel REYNOLDS

Head of School

Tokyo International School

YASUDA Keiichiro

Manager

Environment and Living Department, Private Education Promotion and Youth Division

Gifu Prefecture

Names listed in order of Japanese syllabary; titles omitted.

Results of holding the Advisory Committees on the Health and Hygiene Environment in Facilities Aimed Exclusively at Foreign Children (so-called “Schools for Foreign Students”)

The 1st Committee (Wednesday, June 2, 2021)

- (1) Administrative rules of the committee
- (2) Current situations of schools for foreign students
- (3) Discussion

The 2nd Committee (Wednesday, June 23, 2021)

- (1) Current situations of health and hygiene in schools for foreign students
- (2) Presentations from experts

The 3rd Committee (Monday, July 12, 2021)

- (1) Countermeasures against COVID-19 in schools for foreign students
- (2) Presentations from experts
- (3) Draft outline of the Interim Report

The 4th Committee (Thursday, August 5, 2021)

- (1) Draft of the Interim Report

The 5th Committee (Wednesday, September 29, 2021)

- (1) Budget request for FY2022 for the health and hygiene environment of schools for foreign students
- (2) Additional survey on the current situations of the health and hygiene environment of schools for foreign students
- (3) Presentations from experts

The 6th Committee (Monday, October 25, 2021)

- (1) Presentations from experts

The 7th Committee (Wednesday, November 24, 2021)

- (1) Presentation from an expert
- (2) Results of the additional survey on the current situations of the health and hygiene environment in schools for foreign students
- (3) Preliminary draft of the Final Report

The 8th Committee (Wednesday, December 22, 2021)

- (1) Draft of the Final Report