

# 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.

Improving the Quality and Ability of Teachers: training, employment, and development

- 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.

## 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

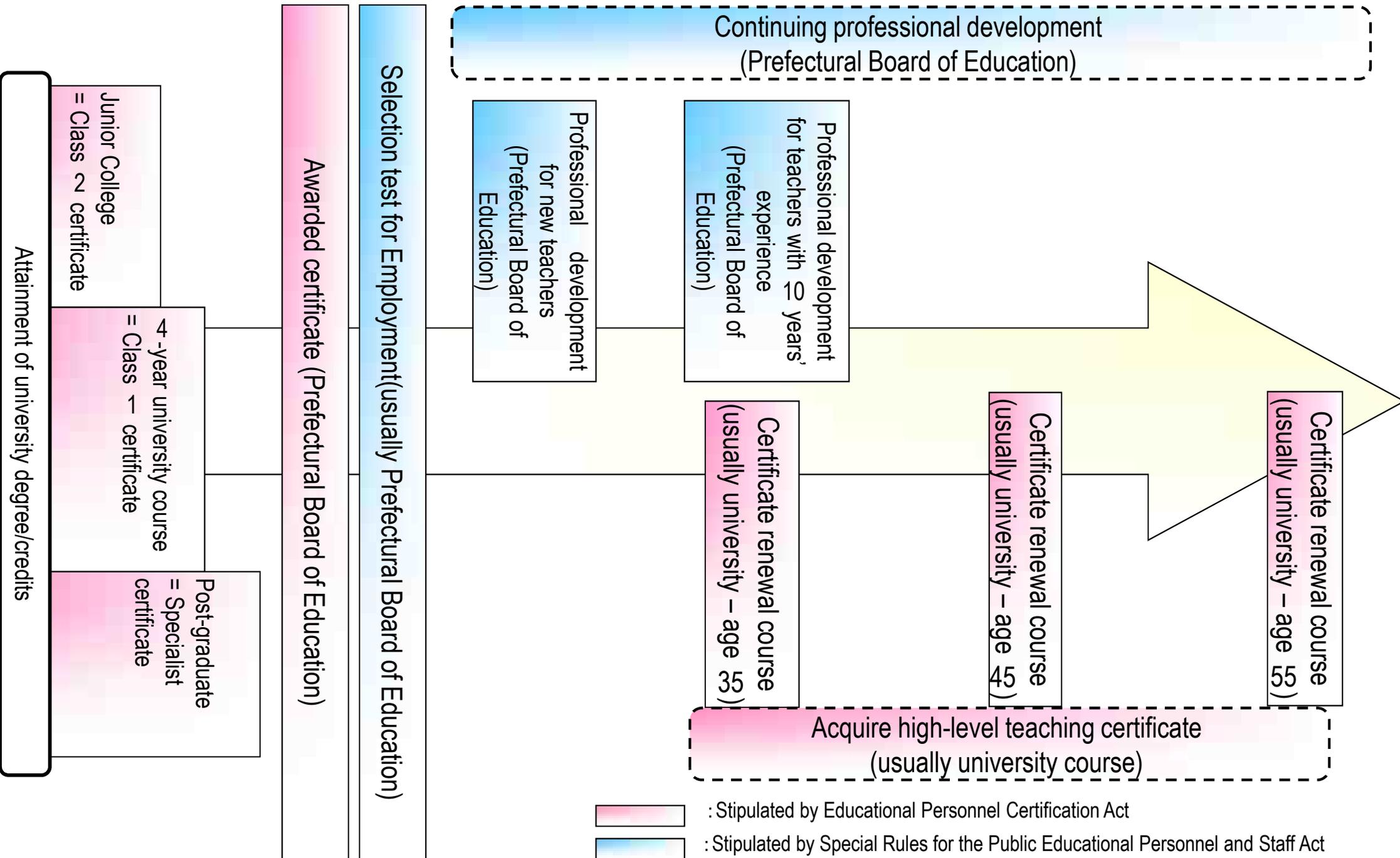
# Diagram: The Current Path of Teacher Improvement

20 years of age

30 years

40 years

50 years



# System of Teacher Training and Teaching Certification

## 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)

② Specialized certificate  
(Valid for ten years)

③ Provisional certificate  
(Valid for three years)

※ Certificate granted to those with superior experience and knowledge but without an ordinary certificate

※ Certificate granted as an exceptional case only when no teachers with ordinary certificates can be hired

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)

○ Authority awarding certificate  
Prefectural Board of Education

○ Valid scope of the certificate

• Regular certificate: All prefectures

• Specialized certificate: } Within the prefecture  
• Provisional certificate: } where the certificate was awarded

# Number of teacher's certificates conferred

(FY2012)

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

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

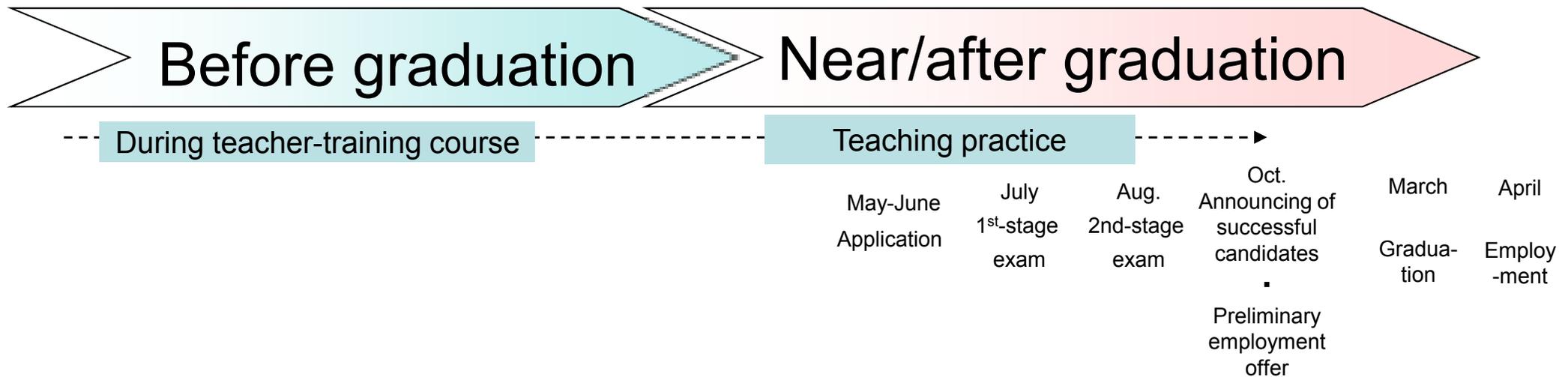
Universities, designated training institutions, prefectural and other boards of education, incorporated administrative agencies, public-interest corporations, etc.

(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



◆ **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)

Category	No. of Examinees (A)※		No. hired (B)※		Ratio of candidates to those hired (A/B)	
		Female		Female		Female
Elementary school	58,703	31,192	13,626	7,956	4.3	3.9
Junior high school	62,998	26,228	8,383	3,582	7.5	7.3
Senior high school	37,812	12,184	4,912	1,616	7.7	7.5
Special needs school	10,172	6,172	2,863	1,760	3.6	3.5
Nursing - teacher	9,827	9,227	1,171	1,105	8.4	8.4
Diet and nutrition school teacher	1,390	1,193	152	141	9.1	8.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>180,902</b>	<b>86,196</b>	<b>31,107</b>	<b>16,160</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>5.3</b>

※ 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 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 appointing authority (school board, etc.)

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

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 of over half a million) and "designated medium-sized city" (pop: 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.

# Structure of Teacher Development

