

# Basic Policies for the Prevention, etc. of Bullying (Outline)

○ Act for the Promotion of Measures to Prevent Bullying (Act No. 71 of 2013)

(Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying)

Article 11 (1) The Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology should formulate basic policies for promoting measures for the prevention, etc. of bullying comprehensively and effectively (hereinafter referred to as the "National Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying"), in collaboration and cooperation with the heads of relevant administrative agencies.

(2) The National Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying should provide for the following:

- (i) matters concerning basic directions for measures for the prevention, etc. of bullying;
- (ii) matters concerning the details of measures for the prevention, etc. of bullying;
- (iii) other important matters concerning measures for the prevention, etc. of bullying.

## I. Matters concerning Basic Directions for Measures for the Prevention, etc. of Bullying;

- Significance of enacting the Act for the Promotion of Measures to Prevent Bullying, basic principles, and organized measures
- Definition of bullying and understanding of bullying
- Basic concepts regarding the prevention, etc. of bullying

## II. Matters concerning the Details of Measures for the Prevention, etc. of Bullying;

### 1. National Government's Initiatives for the Prevention, etc. of Bullying

- Formulation of the National Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying and establishment of organizations, etc.
  - Formulate the National Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying and more detailed guidelines
  - Ascertain and verify the status of related efforts based on the Act (establishment of the Council on Anti-Bullying Measures)
  - Build a liaison system with professional associations, etc. in order to support the establishment of organizations for investigations on serious situations
- Initiatives to be implemented by the national government for the prevention, etc. of bullying
  - (i) Prevention of bullying (nurture a rich spirit, promote independent-minded activities of children, secure personnel engaging in measures for the prevention, etc. of bullying and enhance their quality, carry out surveys and studies, raise people's awareness and disseminate information)
  - (ii) Early detection (enhance a system for educational consultations, and promote collaboration with local communities and families)
  - (iii) Responses to bullying (support solutions to problems through the utilization of diverse external human resources, and respond to bullying via the internet)
  - (iv) Development of a system to enable teachers to have enough time to face children

### 2. Local Governments' Initiatives for the Prevention, etc. of Bullying

- Formulation of Local Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying
  - It is preferable to formulate the Local Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying, while taking into account the National Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying.
- Establishment of a liaison council on measures against bullying
  - It is preferable to establish a liaison council on measures against bullying that consists of appropriate members in accordance with regional circumstances.
- Establishment of an affiliate organization under the relevant board of education as prescribed in Article 14, paragraph (3)
  - It is preferable to establish an affiliate organization in accordance with regional circumstances.
  - It is necessary to make efforts to ensure fairness and neutrality of such affiliate organization by seeking the participation of third parties with specialized knowledge and experience.
- Initiatives to be implemented by local governments
  - Initiatives to be implemented as local governments and initiatives to be implemented as school establishments
  - Efforts for prevention and early detection of bullying should be taken into account when evaluating teachers and schools.

### 3. Schools' Initiatives for the Prevention, etc. of Bullying

- Formulation of the School Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying
  - Formulate basic policies and details of what efforts should be made as a school for the prevention, etc. of bullying, while taking into account the National Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying or the Local Basic Policies for Preventing Bullying
- Organization for measures for the prevention, etc. of bullying at schools
  - A permanent organization that plays the central role in efforts by a school to prevent, detect at an early stage, and respond to bullying in an organized manner should be put in place and such organization should deal with bullying cases with the participation of external professionals (lawyers, doctors, retired police officers, etc.) as necessary.
  - Minor signs, suspicions or consultations from children or students concerning bullying should not be handled solely by teachers and other school staff but should be shared with this organization and responses should be made in an organized manner with this organization playing the central role.
- Actions against bullying at schools
  - i) Prevention of bullying; ii) Early detection; iii) Actions against bullying

## 4. Responses to Serious Situations

### (1) Investigations by School Establishers or Schools Established Thereby

#### Detection of and investigations on serious situations

- When it is found that there is a suspicion that bullying has caused serious damage to the life, mind and body or property of a child or student: Such cases where a child or student has attempted suicide
- When it is found that there is a suspicion that a child or student has been forced to be absent from school for a considerable period of time due to bullying: Based on the definition of non-attendance, or absence for 30 days per year, an investigation should be commenced promptly in such cases where a child or student has been absent from school continuously for a certain period of time.
- \* When there has been an allegation that bullying has developed into serious situations from a child or student or a guardian: A school establisher or the school established thereby should consider that serious situations have occurred and should report that fact and commence an investigation.

Regarding responses to serious situations, see the "Guidelines for Investigations on Serious Situations of Bullying" (March 2017, MEXT).

Key Points concerning "Prevention of Bullying," "Early Detection," and "Actions against Bullying" at Schools

#### Prevention of Bullying

- Regarding children and students requiring special consideration, each school should offer appropriate support regularly to such children and students based on their characteristics, while collaborating with their guardians and providing necessary guidance to surrounding children and students in an organized manner.
- Regarding bullying involving children and students with disabilities including developmental impairment, it is necessary for teachers and other school staff to deepen their understanding of the characteristics of individuals' disabilities and provide appropriate guidance and required support in accordance with individuals' needs and characteristics, while sharing information through the utilization of personalized education support plans and guidance plans for individuals.
- Considering that children and students who have returned from overseas, those with foreign nationalities, or those with a non-Japanese guardian or otherwise having certain connections with foreign countries often have difficulties in learning at school due to differences in languages and cultures, each school should promote understanding by its teachers and other staff, other children and students, and their guardians concerning those children and students with some connections with foreign countries in order to avoid bullying due to such differences, and should make all-out efforts to carefully watch and offer required support to those children and students.
- In order to prevent bullying targeting children and students for their gender identity disorder, sexual orientation, or gender identity, each school should promote correct understanding on these matters among its teachers and other staff, and should disseminate responses that the school is required to make.
- Regarding children and students who sustained damage due to the Great East Japan Earthquake, teachers and other school staff should fully understand the tremendous influences on their minds and bodies, and their anxiety due to unfamiliar environments, and should appropriately provide mental care to them, and also make efforts for prevention and early detection of bullying against such children and students, while paying careful attention.