

28. Study of School Boarding Programs Throughout Japan

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(1) Purpose and Aim of Study

To ascertain the status of municipal school boarding programs throughout Japan, analyze them from the perspectives of enhancing community educational functions and shaping basic lifestyle habits, and utilize the results as basic documentation for future studies of social education measures.

(2) Outline of Research Results

To ascertain the status of school boarding programs in Japan's various regions, we conducted a postal survey of prefectural boards of education (in all 47 prefectures), municipal boards of education (in all 1,840 municipalities), prefectural youth education facilities (all 192 facilities), and national youth education facilities (all 28 facilities). The results are outlined below.

- In fiscal 2006 there were 808 school boarding programs in total throughout Japan, of which 644 were operated by municipalities. This was 399 more than in fiscal 2001, when the total number of municipal programs was 245.
- The most common duration was 4–5 days (273 programs or 42.4%), followed by 2–3 days (200 programs or 31.1%), and 6–7 days (142 programs or 22.0%). There were also 22 long programs running for 8–14 days.
- Within municipalities most programs were operated by executive committees (114 municipalities or 43.0%), followed by boards of education (71 municipalities or 26.8%).
- Members of municipal executive committees were most commonly drawn from PTAs (74.6%), followed by board of education secretariat staff (71%), principals and vice-principals (58.6%), and Kodomo-Kai Ikusei-Kai (Child Development Associations) (43.0%).

- Whether programs were operated by municipalities or national/prefectural youth education facilities, the most common target age group was sixth-graders (85.3% and 78.8% respectively), followed by fifth-graders (84.5%, 76.9%), and fourth-graders (68.3%, 67.3%).
- In municipalities, programs were most commonly accommodated in citizens' public halls and other social education facilities (excluding youth education facilities) (51.3%), followed by youth education facilities (18.1%), public facilities such as senior citizens' welfare facilities (5.3%), and private facilities (3.0%).
- In municipalities, the most commonly-used bathing facilities during school boarding programs were bathrooms in the program venue (38.1%), followed by public baths or hot spring facilities (32.1%), and bathrooms in neighboring private homes (15.1%).
- For both municipalities and national/prefectural youth education facilities, the most common form of link with schools when conducting school boarding programs was to ask the school to distribute leaflets outlining the program, with this being done in over 80% of cases.
- The effects of school boarding programs were seen in the shaping of basic lifestyle habits such as making friends and greeting people in the course of communal living, keeping things tidy and in order, and going to bed and rising early.
- Survey results for municipal programs also revealed that they were effective in fostering the enhancement of community educational functions, for example by strengthening local residents' interest in and understanding of children (67.9%).