

2. Comprehensive Study on Development of Educational Conditions  
(Research Area: School Placement)

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(1) Purpose and Aim of Study

This study tackles the question of how best to use policy on school placement to address the phenomenon of decreasing school size in the context of the long-term trend to declining birthrates and ageing populations throughout Japan. This involves categorizing different regions of the country based on trends in school-aged population, and developing models for placement of schools tailored to each category.

(2) Outline of Research Results

- Conducted a complete survey of municipal boards of education across Japan on the issue of elementary and lower secondary school amalgamations.
- Re-analyzed data gathered under the MEXT-commissioned Program for Development of New Educational Systems (project no. 19; study on placement of elementary and lower secondary schools).
- Conducted onsite surveys, gathered materials, and interviewed board of education officials, school principals, and other individuals associated with local government bodies across Japan engaged in amalgamation and reorganization of elementary and lower secondary schools.
- Implemented a survey of all prefectural boards of education in Japan and produced a table on the status of elementary and lower secondary school amalgamations and abolitions in past years, combinations of amalgamation and abolition, and the names of new schools created through amalgamation.