For Deeper Understanding and Better Practice

Please make use of pamphlets, reports and manuals already published so that you can deepen your understanding of career education. Also, these publications will help you enhance your practices in a manner appropriate to the respective developmental stage of your students.

The full texts in the original Japanese versions of these materials are available at the “Career Education” section in the website of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shokoku/career/index.htm

Career Education to Help Self-Awareness and Build a Future: A Beginners’ Guide for Elementary School Teachers (March 2009)
Career Education to Link Students with Society and Build a Future: A Beginners’ Guide for Junior High School Teachers (November 2008)
Career Education to Enable Students to Contribute to Society and Achieve Independence: A Beginners’ Guide for High School Teachers (February 2011)
Manual for Career Education at Elementary Schools (January 2010)
Manual for Career Education at Junior High Schools (March 2011)
Manual for Career Education at High Schools (November 2011)
Future Vision on Career Education and Vocational Education at School (policy report issued by the Central Council for Education), January 2011
Research Report on Development of Competencies Related to Career Development (June 2012)

Detailed information on the theoretical background and appropriate educational practices regarding “Basic and General Competencies” based on the PDCA cycle is linked above.

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What is the Current Status of Career Education at Your School?

A policy report entitled "The Future Vision on Career Education and Vocational Education at School" (January 2011), issued by the Central Council for Education, pointed out the need for "the revolution of educational institutes and the implementation of improvement" by stating as follows: "If practice of career education is to become a more effective activity by achieving goals, objectives and educational goals of individual institutions, it is important for each school to exit goals and specify evaluation items concerning educational programs for achieving such goals and construct appropriate evaluation based on the specified items, thereby improving specific educational activities." (Chapter 2, Section 2.2011)

To make career education practiced at each school more effective, you should check the current status of your school as the first step based on the PDCA cycle.

Check sheet for evaluating the status of career education based on the PDCA cycle

Check the boxes for items that you think apply to the status of your school and identify the next challenges to be tackled.

Plan

- Setting goals
  - The goals have been set and properly specified for the plan. The Department enables outcome-based verification.
  - The goals have been set and properly specified for the plan. The goals have not been revised for the past several years.
  - The goals have been set and properly specified for the plan. The goals have not been revised for more than five years in accordance with the circumstances of students.

- Formulating a teaching plan
  - A teaching plan exists. Most of the contents are copied from a high school or an educational institution or other school's existing teaching plan.
  - Although there is a teaching plan, teachers are not fully aware of or understand it.
  - Although there is a teaching plan, the plan has not been effectively used.

- Utilizing a teaching plan
  - Not utilized because of the absence of such plans.
  - Not utilized because of the absence of such plans.
  - Not utilized because of the absence of such plans.

Do (Practice)

- Practicing career education through overall educational activities
  - Not making any conscious efforts in particular.
  - Although teachers are willing to make possible efforts, the level of effort differs widely from teacher to teacher.
  - Although teachers are willing to make possible efforts, the level of effort differs widely from teacher to teacher.

- Practicing experience-based career education
  - Not implemented in a systematic manner.
  - Although experienced-based education is practiced in a systematic manner, sufficient pre- and post-assessment is not provided.
  - Although experienced-based education is practiced in a systematic manner, sufficient pre- and post-assessment is not provided.

- Cooperation with families and local communities
  - Not making any conscious efforts in particular.
  - Not making any conscious efforts in particular.
  - Not making any conscious efforts in particular.

Check (Evaluation)

- Recognizing the growth of and changes in students
  - Not trying in particular to recognize growth and changes.
  - Not trying in particular to recognize growth and changes.
  - Not trying in particular to recognize growth and changes.

- Review and verification of the practice of career education
  - Not sufficiently conducting an evaluation in particular.
  - Not sufficiently conducting an evaluation in particular.
  - Not sufficiently conducting an evaluation in particular.

- Relationship with school evaluation
  - Not sufficiently evaluating the plan and the results of school evaluation
  - Not sufficiently evaluating the plan and the results of school evaluation
  - Not sufficiently evaluating the plan and the results of school evaluation

Action (Improvement)

- Improving the teaching plan
  - The teaching plan has not been revised for more than five years in accordance with the circumstances of students.
  - Although the teaching plan has not been revised for more than five years in accordance with the circumstances of students, the plan has not been effectively used.
  - Although the teaching plan has not been revised for more than five years in accordance with the circumstances of students, the plan has not been effectively used.

- Enhancing in-school teacher training
  - No particular in-service training is provided.
  - In-service training is provided to improve specific activities in light of growth of the number of students and changes in students due to career education.
  - In-service training is provided to improve specific activities in light of growth of the number of students and changes in students due to career education.

- Improving the in-school organization
  - Revision has not been made for the past several years.
  - Revision has not been made for the past several years.
  - Revision has not been made for the past several years.

Direction of the promotion of career education

- Excellent
  - All teachers have prepared the contents of the teaching plans, the plan has been effectively used.
  - Teachers are practicing a variety of career education through the teaching of their subjects and efforts to link the various activities held systematically are being made.
  - The role of experienced-based career education, including practical exercises, is practiced in-experiential manner, organized classroom activities and practical work is practiced and educational activities are conducted through cooperation with other educational institutions and local communities.

What was the result of your check? What challenges have you identified in light of the current circumstances? What should be improved?

In the following pages, we will show you specifically how the processes of PDCA should be implemented in order to promote career education that takes account of the characteristics of each school and local community. The information will help you develop original and sustainable career education programs for your school, together with the checked items as indices of the current status at your school site.
Create a “Story” of Your School’s Original Career Education

Career education sets principles and a direction for establishing school education from the perspective of promoting an individual’s development and their independence as working adults and professionals. To achieve the objectives of career education, it is necessary to appropriately relate various relevant activities to each school’s curriculum and implement them in a systematic and organized manner.

To implement career education through overall educational activities, you should clarify goals based on the circumstances of your school and students and set tasks for the achievement of these goals.

You should also formulate a teaching plan comprising of specific activities concerning career education so as to take advantage of your school’s characteristics and create a “story” of your school’s original career education.

1. Understand the Current Circumstances

Understand the current circumstances of your school and students

The PDCA cycle starts with the understanding of the current circumstances of your school. It is important to understand the current circumstances from various perspectives, including those of students, characteristics of your school and course type, and the situation of the local community. Make sure that all teachers share an understanding of the current circumstances of your school and the direction of career education.

Key Points of an understanding of the current circumstances

- Qualitative understanding
  - General understanding: Understand the circumstances of students through observation and interviews.
  - Indirect understanding: Understand the character of students through daily observation.
- Quantitative Understanding
  - Understand the circumnances of individual students and overall trends through performance assessments using two, three, and multi-option questions.
  - Use school evaluation (self-evaluation and evaluation by peers) connected with school rating.
  - Use self-evaluation and mutual evaluation concerning various activities.

Plan

Plan

Understand the current status of your school and students, set goals and formulate a teaching plan.

First understand the current status and set a goal where achievement is verifiable, and then pay attention to the difference between the current status and the goal.

Teaching plan for accomplishing tasks

Goal

Goal

Internal perspective

- Goal of school education
- Current status of students
- Career development of students
- Values of teachers and parents/guardians

External perspective

- Social requirements/ “Basic and General Competencies”
- Policies of prefectural and municipal governments
- The local community’s expectations

Goal of your school’s original career education

(Desired path of growth of students)

Key points of goal-setting

- Goals should be expressed in terms of the “vision of desirable growth of students,” namely what students and children should be like at the time of graduation.
- Goals should be described from the perspective of specifically what tasks your school wants students to achieve and the achievement of the goals should be verifiable.

4. Formulate a Teaching Plan

Formulate overall and annual plans

After understanding the current status of the school and students, through setting the goals of career education and clarifying the challenges by identifying the gap between the current status and goals, each school should formulate a teaching plan based on its own creative and resourceful ideas.

The key points of the formulation of a teaching plan

- Specify the goals and challenges of career education.
- Set priority goals for each grade.
- Ensure consistency between grades.
- Ensure relevance with each subject, moral education, the period for integrated studies, special activities and overall school education.
- Specify the evaluation method.
- Specify the method of examining improvement measures.
- Clarify the roles of each organization.

3. Set Challenges

Specify Challenges

The key point to promoting career education is specifying challenges to be overcome through career education by identifying the gap between the current status of students and the desired path of growth of students to be achieved through career education, and reflect them in the teaching plan.
1. **Identify**

Have awareness about “fragments” of career education

- **Matters regarding the contents of each subject**
  - Example: When the study units or the themes used in individual subjects are related to occupations and jobs, students should be made to understand them as something directly related to their own futures.

- **Matters regarding the teaching method**
  - Example: Combinatory educational activities related to social and work life should be enhanced through modification and improvement of teaching methods, including the use of dialogue and group activities.

2. **Link**

Link “fragments” so as to practice systematic and organized teaching

- **Matters regarding life and learning routines and rules**
  - Example: The competency to improve self-discipline and deal with various problems should be enhanced through teachings regarding learning discipline, punctuality, and responsibilities.

- **Revise the experience-based career education so far conducted**

The role of experience-based career education activities, including lectures by working people, visits to workplaces, workplace experience and internships should be clarified with the desired path of growth of students and competencies that they should ideally acquire in mind. Such activities, including pre- and post-guidance, should be implemented in a systematic and organized manner.

3. **Consider**

Aim for career education unique to your school

- **Provide effective teaching for children under your care**
  - In order to implement systematic and organized teaching based on the purpose of education while keeping in mind the desired path of growth of students under your care and competencies that they should ideally acquire, it is important to give consideration to the following points:
    - Is the objective (desired competencies) of career education provided based on study units or the themes concerned?
    - Is it often made to ensure line with studies of other subjects and experience-based career education?
    - Are there opportunities to explain to children why learning is necessary?

- **Enhance individual support**
  - In addition to providing teaching and support targeted at groups such as grades and classes, it is necessary to enhance individual support, such as career counseling, one-on-one encouragement. The key points of counseling provided at various occasions are as follows:
    - Understanding challenges faced by each student.
    - Finding potential for future growth.
    - Make them reflect on their efforts to overcome challenges.

4. **Practice**

Practice deliberate teaching throughout overall educational activities

- **Take advantage of the characteristics of individual subjects**
  - Practice career education while taking advantage of the characteristics of various educational activities, including studies of individual subjects, moral education, the period for integrated studies and special activities, and ensuring correlation between them.

- **Make follow-up reviews and corrections**
  - It is important to practice career education in line with the teaching plans, however, you should avoid the attitude of practicing education as if it being forced to do your share of work. Make follow-up reviews and corrections as necessary while keeping track of the growth of and changes in children.

- **Seize the opportunity for individual support flexibly**
  - Individual support is not limited to two-way communication (teacher-student consultation) and three-way communication (teacher-parent/guardian-student consultation). You should communicate with students and be keeping in mind what teachers say to children in classrooms and outside during break time as well as during lessons may provide them with the opportunity to recognize their own strength and potential, and to look forward to their own future.
Verification of Your “Story” — Recognize Changes in the Main Characters

How do students change through career education programs? The process of evaluation allows for recognition of any change. By checking growth of and changes in students from various perspectives, you can verify the effects of career education activities and make improvements based on the results. Thus, the PDCA cycle works. Specify the objectives of activities and efforts and at the same time, conduct qualitative and quantitative evaluation.

1. What Should Be Evaluated?

Changes in students
Students grow and change through their daily school life. The evaluation process is intended to recognize such change. Change can be grasped through qualitative evaluation which uses questionnaire surveys and self- and mutual evaluation, and qualitative evaluation based on observation, consultations and interviews. Various aspects of students can be identified by combining these evaluation methods as necessary.

2. When?

Just before or after activity
Usually, evaluation is conducted according to a scheduled plan just before or after a relevant activity. When various activities are implemented in a succession, evaluation may be conducted at the beginning or end of each school year or term or in the interim. As quantitative evaluation continues to use the same “yardstick,” it is necessary to conduct evaluation at a frequency that does not make students feel fed up with the repetition.

3. How?

Create evaluation benchmarks that suit objectives, the characteristics of your school and the current status of students.

• “Yardsticks” that suit objectives
You should create “yardsticks” (benchmarks) that suit the objectives of activities in order to conduct qualitative evaluation. The competencies that should Ideally be acquired by students and the desired path of growth of students as specified in the “Plan” stage may be used as yardsticks. In that case, you should provide multiple-point scales such as “Strongly Agree – Agree – Disagree – Strongly Disagree,” “Excellent – Above Average – Average – Below Average – Poor,” etc.

4. For Appropriate Evaluation

Comprehensive evaluation
Rather than relying solely on quantitative “yardsticks,” you should consider factors behind numerical changes by conducting qualitative evaluation. To that end, it is useful to take into consideration teachers’ impressions and information concerning changes observed in students’ learning and attitudes regarding life. It is also useful to review the teaching method and teachers’ communications with students. Other options include using self-evaluation and mutual evaluation as well as the portfolio-based evaluation. You should aim for comprehensive evaluation by examining changes from various perspectives according to your objectives.

Evaluation using various materials
The career portfolio comprises records of various learning experiences and activities that promote career development. Teachers can use the portfolio to conduct qualitative evaluation of growth and changes in students. The portfolio can also be used as an important reference material for providing teaching and support to each student. The Hiroshima Prefecture Board of Education has created common formats for overall career education plans and annual teaching plans and the outline of career education-related learning summarized by students themselves and is accumulated using these materials, together with other relevant materials collected based on school’s own documents, in the form of a “Personal Career Notebook.” An approach like this enables not only qualitative evaluation using “yardsticks” but also evaluation of students from various perspectives and in a manner suited to each of them.
The “Story” Continues — Toward a New Evolution

The results of evaluation represent growth of and changes in students. Establish the PDCA cycle by improving educational activities in light of the challenges identified through the analysis of the evaluation results. Examples include improvements concerning the teaching approach, including the method of supporting students, those concerning organizational cooperation, such as teaching staff and those concerning local communities, including cooperation with organizations outside the school.

Use Evaluation Results for Teaching

Revise the teaching plan

It is necessary to identify weaknesses in competencies and qualities based on the evaluation results, and review and revise the ongoing school activities one by one.

Conduct “Check” of career education based on teaching activities and set them out in a systematic and organized manner in line with your school’s principles and direction.

Regard activities that do not contribute to your school’s goals, revise the contents or implementation methods, or replace them with other activities.

Strengthen Individual Support

Career education attaches importance to support for the development of each student. Understand the circumstances of each student by examining the evaluation results individually and use resourceful ideas that suit each.

Understand the circumstances of each student based on the evaluation results as accurately as possible, examine the presence or absence of change and the cause thereof, and consider the resulting policies.

Individual support is not necessarily provided in a one-on-one setting. Taking a group of students may have similar effects on individual support.

Encourage growing students by informing them of their areas of growth and support through students developing interest in what is most possible.

Use Evaluation Results for the Local Community

Cooperation with different levels of schools and the local community

You should add the element of cooperation with different levels of schools to your evaluation and take note of medium- and long-term changes in students. You should also enhance workplace experience activities and internship programs by promoting cooperation with the local community and society.

- Develop programs that link different levels of schools through exchanges between students and between teachers (for example, having students publish the results of workplace experiences across different levels of schools).
- When cooperating with business establishments in workplace experience activities, inform them of the significance and objectives of career education and your school’s needs, such as the competencies that should be acquired by students, as accurately as possible.
- Verify the effects of the activities on the partner company and establish a sustainable system of cooperation.

Improve the organization

Management of the core organization

Review the school organization involved in career education and reorganize it as the core organization that plays a role in linkage in order to facilitate collaboration between different grades and among divisions of duties in your school and cooperation with the local community, companies, and parents/guardians while also ensuring smooth utilization of local facilities and human resources.

Identify challenges based on the evaluation results and create a core organization that suits the activities that should be implemented.

Encourage parents/guardians and local personnel to participate in the core organization as necessary.

Actively promote cooperation with organizations comprised of students, such as the student council and committees in managing the core organization in accordance with the stage of children’s development.

Enhance in-school teacher training

You can create an “ever-learning organization” that shares observations and lessons and apply them to new circumstances by conducting a review during in-school teacher training after a specific activity or at the end of a full year of educational activities.

- Feed in a “sense of participation” and a “sense of difficulty” throughout the teaching staff.
- Make sure all teachers share the recognition of the level of achievement of goals, review challenges and reframe the goal of career education.
- Strengthen cooperation by securing time for the sharing of external information between different grades, among persons in charge of the student council, student committees and extracurricular club activities, and among teachers’ divisions of duties.
Key Points of Promotion of Career Education at Each Level of School

Elementary schools, junior high schools and high schools are expected to make efforts to develop competencies and attitudes required for achieving social and vocational independence through overall educational activities based on the PCCA cycle so that students can overcome challenges related to career development in each stage of development. In this section, we will sort out the points to which you should attach particular importance when your school implements career education.

1. **Shed the mentality that “Everything we do has to be for the sake of career education.”**
   - In all aspects of elementary school education, there are many extracurricular activities that can be used for career education. However, that does not mean that everything you do has to be for the sake of career education.
   - It is desirable that all teachers have an understanding of career education. The “fragments” of career education contained in individual educational activities and make conscious efforts to realize systematic and organized educational activities by implementing career education by making systematic use of various opportunities while taking advantage of the characteristics of each subject, Moral Education, the Period for Integrated Studies, and Special Activities.

2. **Provide deliberate teaching appropriate to each stage of development**
   - It is important to implement career education while keeping in mind what competencies should be acquired by children. During the period of elementary education, which lasts as long as 6 years, it is necessary in particular to provide teaching appropriate to each stage of development.
   - For example, teachers should focus more on the development of students while developing practical and interpretative skills and establishing the PCCA cycle so that children can do as follows:
     - Grade 1 and 2: Expand their areas of interest and strength, and start to engage in various activities with motivation and will.
     - Grade 3 and 4: Recognize their values and develop self-awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses.
     - Grade 5 and 6: Bodily attempt things they are not good at, and experience that they have not experimented so that they can attain a sense of being useful in a group and a sense of self-reliance.

3. **Develop systematic career education by making increased use of workplace experience activity**
   - In workplace experience activities, the main challenge is to provide a close look at the reality of society by using specific occupations and jobs as a provisional window. It is important to make students conscious of the objectives of the activity, the path and means to achieving them and to implement the activities on the premise of an appropriate group setting and supporting factors.
   - Producing workplace experience in various educational activities (job training, career education, etc.)
   - Building the link between workplace experience and the job market.
   - Ensuring students benefit from the experience.

4. **Innovate cooperation between different levels of schools**
   - In career education, which supports students in career development, an integrated set of continuous and gradually developing activities are expected to be implemented throughout the periods of elementary, junior high and high schools. In particular, it is necessary to provide opportunities and occasions for deepening the mutual understanding of activities between different levels of schools and creating a system of cooperation that involves the network of students’ learning and activities. Each local community should make efforts to ensure cooperation between different levels of schools.

5. **Enhance internship programs**
   - Link the joy of experience-based learning with classroom learning. In particular, enhancing internship programs for students willing to advance to higher education will provide an opportunity for a shift from passive learning to active learning. Internship programs should be designed so as to give consideration to their differences from workplace experience activities at junior high school.

6. **In the case of general courses**
   - Review teaching of subjects from the perspective of career education
     - It has been pointed out that in many general courses, sufficient attention has not necessarily been paid to the provision of career education through curricula and subjects. Teachers should ask themselves what competencies can be developed in the subjects they teach for the purpose of social and occupational independence, and the competencies and values acquired through career education should be linked together as important factors for career decisions.

7. **In the case of specialized and integrated courses**
   - Make better use of the characteristics of the course
     - Many schools adopting specialized and integrated courses are implementing career education that makes use of the characteristics of the courses. Make full use of the characteristics and what competencies the courses enable students to acquire.
   - The key phrases are “coordination between specialized and general courses” for specialized courses and “fostering of students capable of making selection” for integrated courses
     - In specialized courses, practices at workplaces, research projects and internships represent the core in realizing the results of the sequence of career education activities implemented throughout the periods of elementary, junior high and high school education. Teachers take an approach to understand the core of the integrated course, which is to enable students to develop self-awareness about their own career courses with a view to future selection of an occupation and to foster students who can select the best suited to themselves.

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**Elementary School**
- Period for forming the basis required for social and vocational independence
  - Development of positive interest in oneself and other persons
  - Development of hidden talent and motivation toward future jobs and the surrounding environment
  - Development of dreams, hopes and a desirable future
  - Development of the attitude of respecting diligence and striving toward goals

**Junior High School**
- Period for pragmatic exploration and provisional decisions
  - Development of positive self-understanding and self-evaluation
  - Development of attitudes concerning work and cooperation based on interests and concerns
  - Pragmatic decision concerning life style and career

**High School**
- Period for pragmatic exploration/trial and transition to mainstream society
  - Deepening of self-understanding and self-evaluation
  - Establishment of attitudes concerning work and cooperation on the criteria for career decisions
  - Planning the future and preparations for career transition to mainstream society
  - Examining the reality of careers and trial participation
New Direction of Career Education

In January 2011, the Central Council for Education published a policy report entitled “The Future Vision on Career Education and Vocational Education at School.” Below, we focus on the explanation of the new direction indicated in this policy report and sort out the desirable characteristics of career education that should be developed in the future.

New definition of career education presented by the Central Council for Education

Education which encourages career development by cultivating the competencies and attitudes necessary to raise the social and vocational independence of individuals.

Necessity of new definition

“Regarding Reform of Continuity Between Primary and Lower and Upper Secondary Schools, and Universities” (1999), issued by the Central Council for Education, defines career education as “education which enables the development of desirable attitudes concerning work and occupation and acquires necessary knowledge and skills which also fosters competencies and attitudes necessary to raise one’s individuality and proactively make career decisions.” In short, the report interpreted career education as placing priority on career decisions. Meanwhile, a report written by the Consultative Council for Comprehensive Research on the Promotion of Career Education (2006) regarded career education as “education which supports career development of individual students and fosters motivation, attitudes and competencies required for career formation suited to individuals based on the concept of ‘career.’” As the report defined career education as education which fosters attitudes concerning work and occupation — although noting that it was a simplistic definition — the focus was directed exclusively to fostering of such attitudes and development of necessary competencies which were somewhat neglected.

What does “career” mean?

People live their life while playing various roles, such as that of a professional, a family member and a citizen of the larger community in relation to other people and the larger society. These roles change and interact over the period of a lifetime. People are given some of these roles by groups in society to which they belong, and they uncannily play other roles in everyday life as a matter of habit. People judge the relationship between the values of such various roles for themselves, select roles while discarding others and also create new roles. As humans, we are involved with others and the larger society through the roles which we adopt, namely through our work, and the various distinctions of such involvement will characterize “one’s own style of life.” The term “career” means a sequence of continuous efforts that strive above all to recognize the value of their role, and the relationship between themselves and their role over their lifetime.

In short, the term “career development” means the entire process of achieving one’s own life through playing one’s role in society.

Presentation of “Basic and General Competencies”

“Zest for life” and career education

The new course of study advocates “zest for life,” which younger generations will likely need as they live in society in the future. This policy report suggests that the education competencies required for social and vocational independence in one’s own life should be acquired by the transition from school to society / one’s occupation, and then it pointed out that “it is sufficiently significant to specify elements and present “Basic and General Competencies.” Before, we explain the concepts of “Basic and General Competencies” and specify the concept of “Basic and General Competencies” and specifies the concept of “Four Fields and Eight Competencies” and specifies the concept of “Four Fields and Eight Competencies.”

Development of and advocacy for “Four Fields and Eight Competencies”

“Regarding Promotion of Education thatSizes Attitudes and Values Concerning Occupation and Work” (November 2003), a research report written by the Center for Comprehensive Research on the Center for Emotional and Vocational Research under the National Institute for Educational Policy Research. The following with regard to the purpose of the development of the “Sample Framework of Learning Programs to Foster Attitudes concerning Occupation and Work,” which was known as “Four Fields and Eight Competencies” and which had been utilized in most schools as the basis of career education. When fostering attitudes concerning occupation and work, it is important to do so systematically and specifically from the perspective that such attitudes are developed through overall vocational (career) development. Therefore, the “Sample Framework of Learning Programs to Foster Attitudes concerning Occupation and Work” includes a broad range of competencies related to the development of attitudes concerning occupation and work while taking into account overall vocational (career) development. In addition, it gives consideration to the relationship with vocational (career) development challenges at each school stage and presents the competencies and attitudes which should be developed at each stage as general guidelines.

Problems related to “Four Fields and Eight Competencies”

According to the concept of “Four Fields and Eight Competencies,” some problems have been pointed out, including (1) that as its curriculum was limited only to the period up until high school education, it does not have much of a perspective of competencies that should (ideally) be acquired over a lifetime, (2) that the competencies required for work are limited, (3) that although the indicated competencies are given as example, schools regard them as a head set of required competencies in many cases, (4) that education is provided based on only a vague impression given by the name of the competencies without sufficient understanding of the specific contents of the fields and competencies.

What are “Basic and General Competencies”?

In order to resolve the above problems related to the concept of “Four Fields and Eight Competencies,” the Central Council for Education conducted a fresh analysis of the concept, as well as the competencies to which importance is attached in recruitment and various similar contexts of competencies, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, [Fundamental Competencies for Working People] (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry) and [basic Skills Required for Employment] (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare). The Central Council for Education conducted a comprehensive concept of “Four Fields and Eight Competencies” should be reconfirmed and presented as “competencies that form the basis required for achieving social and vocational independence regardless of the fields and occupation type.” As a result, the concept of “Basic and General Competencies,” which is presented in the current policy report, was developed. “Basic and General Competencies” is comprised of “competency to establish relationships and community,” “competency to understand and manage oneself,” “problem-solving competency” and “career-planning competency.” Regarding these competencies, the current policy report discusses as follows: These represent a comprehensive concept of competencies that has developed from the perspective of presenting essential factors as easy-to-understand and necessary competencies. These four competencies are not independent from each other but are intertwined and mutually dependent. Therefore, they are not ranked in order of importance, nor are all persons required to develop all the competencies to the same degree. It is presumed that which set of competencies should be ordered and which degree may depend on the characteristics of schools, local conditions and the stage of development of children and youth. It is desirable that each school set specific competencies. The current policy report focuses on light of its own challenges in reference to these four competencies and ensure the acquisition of the competencies through resourceful education. In that respect, elementary and secondary schools should be flexible in light of its own challenges in reference to these four competencies and ensure the acquisition of the competencies through resourceful education. In that respect, elementary and secondary schools should set the goals and evaluation items for educational programs and conduct appropriate evaluation based on the results of teaching and learning in vocational education. In that respect, it is necessary to further develop and clarify the meaning of the relationship of these competencies with the competencies and attitudes that students acquire through education, in the case of upper secondary and higher education, the related fields of study.

From “Four Fields and Eight Competencies” to “Basic and General Competencies”

Basic and General Competencies

Competency to establish relationships

- Competency to understand oneself and other people

- Communication competency

Competency to utilize information

- Competency to search and collect information

- Competency to understand occupations

Future planning competency

- Competency to recognize and understand oneself

- Competency to execute plans

Decision-making competency

- Competency to make choices

- Problem-solving competency

Four Fields and Eight Competencies

Key Points of the “Creation of Career Education”

“Change of course” based on the lessons of past activities

When implementing career education activities in the future, it is necessary to correct underestimating the need for “Basic and General Competencies.” It is evident that “Four Fields and Eight Competencies” has no way of representing a start from scratch. Each school needs to make a change of course based on the lessons learned over the course of three years in implementing career education. Therefore, it is necessary to set the goals and evaluation items for educational programs and conduct appropriate evaluation based on the results of teaching and learning in vocational education. In that respect, it is necessary to further develop and clarify the relationship of these competencies with the competencies and attitudes that students acquire through education, in the case of upper secondary and higher education, the related fields of study.

Implementation of career education based on the PDCA cycle

If practice of career education achieves individual institutional / ideals, objectives and educational goals and leads to more effective activity, it is important to set goals and evaluation items for educational programs and conduct appropriate evaluation based on the results of teaching and learning in vocational education. In that respect, it is necessary to further develop and clarify the relationship of these competencies with the competencies and attitudes that students acquire through education, in the case of upper secondary and higher education, the related fields of study.

Implementation of career education based on the PDCA cycle

[Student name in the above should include the relationship between the two competencies in a reliable way. The career “competency to establish relationships” and “problem-solving competency” included in the “Eight Competencies” may appear to indicate close alliance with “problem-solving competency.” In this case, the concept of the “Basic and General Competencies” would gain more meaning because the “competency to establish relationships” and “problem-solving competency” included in the “Eight Competencies” would increase the meaning of “competency to establish relationships and community.”]