

NISE Newsletter

for Special Education in Asia and the Pacific

No.25
October, 2005

Address by New President In Assuming Office As President, National Institute of Special Education

I am Yutaka Oda, who has assumed office as President, National Institute of Special Education, since April 1 of this year, following the former President Mr. Michio Hosomura.

So far, I have carried out research activities and engaged in educational administration, by mainly specializing in the field of education for and development of children in their early childhood. I believe my past experiences can be utilized in conducting researches on education for children with disabilities, as well as in managing the National Institute of Special Education.

Today, the education for children with disabilities in Japan is undergoing a major change, from what used to be called “special education” which provided education by setting up special educational opportunities such as schools for the blind, deaf and other disabled children and special classes, depending on the type and severity of the disability, to what is called “special support education”, which is designed to support the voluntary efforts made by disabled children for independence and social participation, by

providing appropriate education and necessary support in meeting with the educational needs of individual disabled children, who include children with light to moderate developmental disabilities, such as LD's, ADHD and high-functioning autism (HFA).

Given such a major reform of the educational system for disabled children, as Japan's National Center for special education, the National Institute of Special Education has been making added efforts in meeting with national-level policy issues and the needs arising on the actual sites of education, for the mission of contributing towards realization of education in compliance with the educational needs of each and every disabled child.

The education for children with disabilities that our Institute has been making efforts with can be said as the starting point of education. Furthermore, the research and other activities carried out in relation to such education are something that can play a part in realizing a cohesive society in Japan. I would like to make my utmost efforts for the further enrichment of the Institute activities and operations, by fully

recognizing the mission of someone engaged in such a highly important task. To this end, I would like to ask for your cooperation and support.

ODA Yutaka

President, NISE



Greetings

My name is Sakashi Kamada, who has assumed office as Executive Director, National Institute of Special Education, since February 14 of this year, as the successor to Former Director Nakayama.

The National Institute of Special Education became an independent administrative institution in fiscal 2001. It has been five years since, and this year marks the final year of its five-year medium-term plan.

Accordingly, this year, we will be reviewing the entire medium-term plan, in view of its initial targets. We will be evaluating ourselves from diverse angles, namely if we were able to implement appropriate research activities on a steady basis in view of the national policy issues and measures, if we were able to appropriately answer the realistic issues and needs faced by schools and teachers, and if we were able to implement activities that were meaningful for disabled children and their parents. We would like to thank you all for the support and advise that you have provided during the five-year period, and would like you to provide us with frank opinions in the future also.

As you know, the education for children with disabilities in Japan is undergoing a major change, from

“special education” to “special support education”.

In relation to such a major change, I believe the NISE is expected to play a major role, by flexibly coping with the changing times and diverse needs, as Japan's National Center for special education.

I will be making my utmost efforts for the promotion of special education and special support education in Japan. For this, your cooperation and understanding will be appreciated greatly.

KAMADA Sakashi

Executive Director, NISE



Research Activities that have started since fiscal 2005

1. A practical study on exchange and cooperative learning for students with disabilities and students without disabilities

Promotion of Kouryu oyobi Kyoudou gakusyu “exchange and cooperative learning for students with disabilities and students without disabilities” in primary and lower secondary schools was prescribed by the Fundamental Law for People with Disabilities in Japan. To achieve this aim, however, there many problems : how to make up and carry out school activities including lessons and according to heterogeneous group of students with various educational needs, how to make suitable school organization for this aim, and so on. The purpose of this study is to survey and solve these problems in practical point of view.

2. A study on educational program and support system for children with Physical/ Motor Disabilities -Making of Guide book on “jiritsu-katsudou (Activities to promote Independence)”- (2005)

The purpose of this research makes the Guide book for “jiritsu-katsudou (Activities to promote

Independence)” of special school for children with Physical/ Motor Disabilities.

This guidance book will contribute to the enhancement of educational program in classroom.

3. Practical Studies on Medical Cares System at Special Schools. -A Practical Guidance for Building Medical Care Support System-

In this study,

- ① a survey on medical care support system in special schools is conducted,
- ② based on a result of the study, a guidance for a medical care support system would be made.

4. A study of teaching materials for pupils of elementary school about understanding disability.

The purpose of this study are to develop teaching materials for pupils of elementary school and to make a guidance documents for these materials. We are aiming to know how we should teach pupils about disability in elementary school while making the teaching materials.

NISE Seminar I, Fiscal 2004

The NISE has been holding national seminars twice a year. These are designed to explore the trends of researches in special education, extend the outcomes of up-to-date researches, identify and deal with contemporary issues and explore future measures, in order to further enrich and improve the education for disabled children. These seminars are participated by specialists, experts, teachers and others concerned with special education, to exchange a wide range of information concerning diverse issues such as

the contents and methods of education for disabled children and systems to support such children.

Seminar I was held at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center (Metropolitan Tokyo) on January 18 and 19, 2005 (which is fiscal 2004 that ends in March 2005).

Seminar I's main theme was “Answering Special Educational Needs of Each and Every Child - Construction of the Support Systems and Actual Support Provided”. The keynote speech was given by

Mr. Hiroyoshi Miyata, Head of health for the Himeji City Welfare Center “Renaiss Hanakita”, entitled “Special Support Education to Enrich Community Life - 'Consistency', 'Individualization' and 'Local Collaboration' Needed”. This was followed by a symposium entitled “Promotion of Cooperation and Collaboration with Related Agencies”, by inviting those concerned with education and medical and welfare services as well as parents from the Ichinoseki City area of Iwate Prefecture where collaboration through grass-roots local networks formed by concerned parties is being promoted, and from the administrative concerns, the Iwate Prefectural Government's staff in charge of educational administration. Additionally, three sectional meetings were held under themes related with the three “Project Researches” (i.e.,

practical and comprehensive researches on urgent issues based on policy issues and needs of sites of education conducted by organizing cross-divisional project teams) conducted by the NISE, namely “Roles and Functions of Special Support Education Coordinators”, “Towards Formulation of Individualized Educational Support Programs for Elementary and Lower Secondary Schools” and “Education for Children with LD's, ADHD, HFA, etc. - Coping with Educational Needs of Each and Every Child”. The Seminar was participated by a total of about 1,200 persons.

The lectures given in the Seminar and the reports made by the symposists will be made available in the form of streamings on the NISE site (<http://www.nise.go.jp/>).



NISE Seminar II, Fiscal 2004

The National Institute of Special Education held the NISE Seminar II at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center (Metropolitan Tokyo) on February 23, 2005. In recent years, in addition to enrichment of education for children with disabilities, development and improvement of the systems to support children who attend regular classes but require special educational support have become an important issue. The NISE Seminar II selected as its main theme “For Better Education for Children with Disabilities - Trends of the (MEXT) Central Council for Education and Outcomes of NISE Research Activities”.

The morning session treated the theme “Education for Disabled Children in the Future - 'Special Support Education'”. In it, Mr. Sho Takakura, President, Meikai University, and Chairperson of the special committee on special support education of the MEXT Central Council for Education gave a keynote speech on the trends and future prospects of special support

education based on the deliberations conducted by his committee. In the afternoon, three sectional meetings were held which were also designed for the NISE to report on the outcomes of the researches that it had conducted. These three meetings treated the following issues: 1) systems to support disabled children in elementary and lower secondary schools, 2) the NISE's Center functions in relation to schools for the blind, deaf and other disabled children and 3) current innovations and future outlooks relating to educational practices in meeting with symptoms of autism. In these meetings, the participants actively participated in the discussions and exchanged information concerning diverse efforts and innovations made by teachers and schools. Such discussions and information exchange are believed to have provided important hints for future educational practices. During the lunch break, the NISE exhibited panels that summarized its research papers. The Seminar was participated by 706 teachers from all over Japan.



NISE and KISE Fifth Seminar on Special Education

The NISE held the NISE and KISE Fifth Seminar on Special Education from January 25 to 28, 2005. This Seminar is held every year based on an agreement for research cooperation signed by the NISE and KISE (Korea Institute for Special Education) in November 1995. In holding the Fifth Seminar, the NISE invited three persons from South Korea : Mr. Kim Yong-wook, Ph. D., KISE Director General ; Mr. Jong-mu Kim, KISE Educational Researcher and head of Division of Information Management; and Mr. Ki-young Kim who teaches at Kyong-num Hye-kwang School. The Seminar was held under the theme “Present State and Future Course of Informatization of Special Education in Japan and Korea”.

In the seminar held on the 27th, Japanese and Korean representatives made presentations followed by Q&A sessions on three sub-themes. It was participated by close to 30 persons, who included NISE staff, teachers of the National Kurihama School

for Children with Disabilities attached to University of Tsukuba, research personnel of the National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (JEED) and graduate students of Tsukuba University.

This year's NISE-KISE Seminar program included an inspection tour prior to the seminar on the 27th. This tour covered the NISE building and its neighboring Kurihama special school, as well as other schools that have been making efforts in line with the Seminar theme, namely Tokyo Metropolitan Komei Special School and Yokohama City School for The Blind. Probably for this reason, the participants were quite active in their discussions in the seminar. This year's Seminar became a foundation to construct a more specific and stronger system of cooperation, by accurately understanding through the presentations the present state of informatization of special education in the two countries.



NISE Tokyo Liaison Office Opens - for Cooperation and Collaboration with Related Agencies

Liaison Office Opening Ceremony (May 12, 2005)

The NISE opened and started operations of its Tokyo Liaison Office in May 2005, for the aim of strengthening the system of cooperation and collaboration with the related agencies.

The Campus Innovation Center where the Office is located is easily accessible with one-minute walk from JR Tamachi Station. It is a “center of knowledge” where many national, public and private universities have their offices to promote activities for social contribution, industry-academia collaboration and information dissemination.

For the opening ceremony, the NISE invited staff

of the MEXT Special Support Education Division and others concerned. Executive Director Kamada explained the Liaison Office's roles and goals, and President Oda made a speech stressing active use of the Office in more closely communicating with the MEXT Special Support Education Division.

Prior to the Opening Ceremony, an exhibition for the visitors was held using the information section on the second floor of the Center. It presented posters and reports giving the specifics of the FY2004 Project Researches, researches by theme, survey researches, etc.



President Oda speaking in the Opening Ceremony



From the editor

We are very pleased to publish the 25th Newsletter. It has been passed almost 6 months since we have new president. During the period, various reforms in diverse areas such as economic, administration, and education etc have been steadily and concretely advanced in Japanese society. NISE, without exception, has also carried out reforms. We have already had many medias, including the Newsletter, website and NISE Bulletin etc, to transmit our services and activities to overseas, however, those will be needed to reconsider toward more efficient and effective way of transmission in a comprehensive manner.

We would like to request your continued cooperation.

SASAMOTO Ken

Research Director, NISE

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