

NISE Newsletter

for Special needs Education in Asia-Pacific

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Greetings from the President



Today great changes are being made to the educational system in order to further promote and implement the concepts of normalization and inclusion in the education of children with disabilities in Japan. The Japanese government signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in September 2007. Accordingly, our Institute can be expected to play an even more important role in the future as the national center on education for children with disabilities in Japan.

In response to this, the name of this institute was

changed on April 1, 2007 from the “National Institute of Special Education” to the “National Institute of Special Needs Education”. The Institute’s logo was also changed on this occasion. The new logo more clearly symbolizes the mission of this Institute.

We intend to promote ever more strongly activities that accord with our new name and the image symbolized by our logo.

Yutaka Oda

President,

The National Institute of Special Needs Education

Systematic Revisions Regarding Special Needs Education – Revise Part of the School Education Law

In June 2006 revisions were made to a part of the School Education Law in order to promote special needs education. They took effect on April 1, 2007. A summary of the revisions is given below.

(1) Special schools for the blind or the deaf etc. were integrated into schools for special needs education that could provide education regardless of categories

according to disabilities.

(2) It was stipulated that, schools for special needs education, as well as providing education for the children enrolled in them, schools for special needs education are to provide advice and support for children with disabilities who are enrolled in elementary and junior high schools, etc.

(3) Elementary and junior high schools etc. are to provide appropriate education for children with disabilities, including learning disabilities (LD) and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

A particularly important point is that children with disabilities in ordinary (mainstream) classes at elementary and junior high schools should be able to study while receiving the required support according to their individual needs.

Japan is aiming to become a cohesive and inclusive society that supports mutual respect for everyone's personality and individuality, regardless

of whether or not they have disabilities. In order to realize this, the government as a whole is promoting comprehensive policies, based on the Disabled Persons' Fundamental Law and the Fundamental Plan for Persons with Disabilities, that aim for the participation of people with disabilities in society, based on the concept of normalization. Taking into account this systemic reform, school education is expected to play an important role in these policies, toward for the independence and social participation of people with disabilities.

Introduction to the NISE's Research (A Summary of Research Activities for 2007)

◇High Priority Research Projects

Practical and comprehensive research on an urgent problem based on policy issue and an educational site, and cross-cutting project team is organized and executed by the team.

1. A Practical Study on Promotion of "Effective Educational Support System" and "Exchange & Cooperative Study" for Children with Disabilities in Elementary and Lower-secondary Schools (2004-2007)
2. Research on Development of the Instruction Package Based on the Special Needs of Children with Autistic Disorders in Schools for Special Needs Education (2006-2007)
3. Comprehensive Research toward Understanding and the Fullness of Correspondence to Special Needs Education in Elementary and Junior High school (2006-2007)
4. Research on the Comprehensive Support from the Early Stage of the Children with LD, ADHD, and High-Functioning Autism (2006-2007)

◇Research studies in Specific Areas

Specialized research corresponding to the

clarification of disabilities and adopt depends on priority to the needs in teaching basically.

1. Practical Research on Special Improvement of Visual Impairments Education of School for the Blind and the Support for its Needs in Primary and Secondary School to Carry out as the Function of Resource Center on Education for the Visual Impairments in the Area (2006-2007)
2. Research of Communication Means on School for the Deaf -Improving instructional method and educational materials focused on using Sign Language- (2006-2007)
3. Practical Research on the Community-Based System to Consistent Support for Children with Speech and Hearing Handicap. (2006-2007)
4. Research on the Content of Instruction and Method toward Good Employment for Students with Intellectual Disabilities -From the view point of career education- (2006-2007)
5. Evaluation and Lesson Improvement of Educational Activities for the Children with Physical/Motor Disabilities (2006-2007)
6. Research on the Education for Children with Health Impairments in Japan -With the perspective

- of partnership between education for children with health impairments and school health- (2006-2007)
7. Research on Assessment for Children with Multiple Disabilities -With focus on communication and understanding environment- (2006-2007)
 8. Developmental Research on the Use of ICF Children and Youth version(ICF-CY) to Educational Policy (2006-2007)
 9. Research on Japanese phoneme and recognition of Syllable for Children with Developmental Disabilities in a Regular Class Room -Analysis the characteristic of Japanese special syllable which is to be mistaken and development of the teaching technique- (2006-2007)
 10. Research on the Special Educational Support of Autistic Disorders and Emotional Disturbances in Elementary and Junior High Schools - From the survey of the special support classes and the resource rooms- (2007)
 11. Research on Assistive Technology for Children with Disabilities and Development of a Video Guide to Assistive Technology Devices (2007-2008)
 12. A Practical Study on the State of Educational Consultation to Support the Area- Focusing on the Method of Consultation and Assessment II (2007-2008)
 13. Research on Staff Development in Deafblind Education (2007-2008)
 14. Research on Brain Science and Education for Children with Disabilities (2007-2008)

◇Collaborative Research

It is highly expected that we can achieve our goals more effectively by building tight collaboration between two types of research, NISE's practical

research and Universities' academic research. We also collaborate with institutions of other fields such as medical, welfare, engineering etc. We are currently conducting six collaborative researches in this year.

1. A Study on Evaluation of Figure Drawing by Children with Visual Impairment and Blindness (2006-2007) Collaborative Research Tokyo Polytechnic University.
2. Study on Development of Non-Invasive Imaging Techniques of the Brain Function for Children with Disabilities (2007-2009) Collaborative Research Institute National Hospital Organization Kurihama Alcoholism Center
3. Empirical study on teaching-learning systems utilizing wireless communication network and ICT devices for children with health impairments (2007-2008) Collaborative Research Institute WESTFIELD Co., Ltd.
4. A Practical Study on Making Support Network System of Children with Disabilities in Yokosuka City (2007) Collaborative Research Institute Yokosuka City, Kanagawa University of Human Services
5. Development of Animation Teaching Material and Internet Technology which Children with Articulation Disorder are able to learn by themselves (2007-2008) Collaborative Research Institute RIKEN
6. Research on the support of students with developmental disorders in higher education (2007-2008) -Development of an evaluation method and enlightenment of faculty and staff- Collaborative Research Institute Japanese Student Services Organization (JASSO)

The Special Needs Education Conference for Japanese Schools Using ICT

The Department of Counseling and Consultation for Persons with Special Needs runs a Special

Needs Education Conference using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as part of its support

for Japanese schools in foreign countries.

The conference was held for the second time on September 18, 2007. This time four schools participated via the Internet: the Shanghai Japanese School Pudong Campus, the Hong Kong Japanese School Primary Section, the Hong Kong Japanese International School

Japanese Section, and the Japanese School of Johor. During the conference, lectures and Q and A sessions about “The Expansion of Special Needs Education” were held and each school reported on the current state of their special needs education.

Japan-Malaysia In-service Training

As a new project for international contribution, the Institute is to welcome trainees from Malaysia on a three-year schedule from January 2007. This project is a part of the agreement to strengthen the bilateral economic partnership (Japan-Malaysia Economic Partnership Agreement: EPA) agreed at the Japan-Malaysia Summit in 2003. The Malaysian government has a plan to establish a national institute of education for children with disabilities and is sending trainees to the Institute with the aim of enhancing the personnel aspects involved.

As a preliminary step, the Institute welcomed two officials from the Malaysian government between January 29 and February 9, 2007. They learned about the outline of special needs education in Japan and the functions and activities of the Institute via training sessions with our staff and tours of the facilities. Meetings were also held about the in-service training course to be held.

Six trainees were then welcomed from June 4 to 29 for in-service training related to mental



disabilities, physical disabilities and ICT. Their expertise in specialized areas was deepened by way of lectures, practical training sessions and tours of the facilities held for each of the courses. In November, three trainees were welcomed for in-service training courses related to visual and auditory disabilities.

We hope that this project will be an opportunity for the Institute to further develop its international exchanges with Asian countries.

Report on the 26th Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Education for Individuals with Special Needs (Held in December 2006)

The 26th Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Education for Individuals with Special Needs was held at Yokohama Symposia from December 4 to 7, 2006.

This seminar was part of the Institute’s project for Japan’s “Person with Disabilities’ Week” and, as well as aiming to publicize special needs education, the running of the seminar was reformed through

endeavors such as organic linkage with seven other related institutions using the accommodation of JICA Yokohama (Japan International Cooperation Agency). The name of the seminar was also changed from the “International Seminar on Special Education” used until last year to the Asia-Pacific International Seminar on “Education for Individuals with Special Needs”.

Including Japan, there were 14 countries participating: Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand. During the course of the seminar there was a total of approximately 250 participants, including delegates from the participating countries, people involved in special needs education in Japan and private individuals.



The fundamental theme established for the next five years was “Advancement of Education to Meet the Special Needs of Individuals ~Toward Realization of Principle of Equity and Social Cohesion ~”, and the foundation of the themes to be established for each year was decided as, so to speak, the concepts of normalization and inclusion. Accordingly, this year’s theme was “Collaboration Based on Partnership among Related Fields (Education, Healthcare, Medical Care, Welfare, etc) for Appropriate Service Provision to Individuals”, and each country contributed to presentations and discussions on this theme. Consequently, the importance of activating the linkage and cooperation of social resources such as organizations and personnel, within the area surrounding each child’s residence, was recognized.



Report on the 7th NISE and KISE Seminar on Special Education (Held in March 2007)

The 7th NISE and KISE Seminar on Special Education was held at the Institute on March 23, 2007. This seminar is held every year based on the research partnership agreement concluded in November 1995 by the National Institute of Special Education (NISE) and the Korean Institute of Special Education (KISE).

This time we welcomed three participants

from South Korea and, under the main theme of “Movements towards Inclusive Education in Japan and South Korea”, there were three sub-themes: (1) Policy trends, (2) Educational practices (school and class management) and (3) Guidance practices and study cases. Representatives from South Korea and Japan (staff members of this Institute) gave presentations on these sub-themes and discussions

were held.

In the general discussions including participants from outside the Institute, the current state of educational practices in Japan and South Korea and future issues, as well as suggestions about the possibilities of future joint research regarding surveys, were vigorously discussed.



Participation by an NISE researcher in the OECD SENDDD Experts Meeting on Statistics and Indicators as an advisor to the Japanese delegate

The OECD SENDDD Experts Meeting on Statistics and Indicators was held in Helsinki, Finland on May 15 and 16, 2007. This conference was known as the SENDDD Meeting up until the previous one, the 16th SENDDD Meeting. However, in January 2007 it was removed from the CERI and placed under the Directorate for Education, at which time the name was changed. Building on previous content, delegates from the member countries held discussions within a larger OECD framework about statistics and indicators regarding students with disabilities, learning difficulties and social disadvantages. Yukiko Hotate from the Special Needs Education Department of the MEXT was the Japanese delegate. At the request of the Special Needs Education Department, a researcher from the Institute (Megue Nakazawa) participated as a specialist advisor to the delegate. Due to its relatively late participation in the SENDDD meetings, the state of Japanese special needs education had not been



fully communicated to the OECD member countries. Since this is a turning point in Japanese special needs education reform, and in order to promote more productive participation in future SENDDD meetings, an hour-long report was given at this meeting about the current state and issues of special needs education in Japan. The other countries at the meeting showed great interest in the Japanese movements for reform.

Reports on NISE's Seminars I and II for fiscal year 2006

On January 16 and 17, 2007 “Special Needs Education Seminar I” was held in Tokyo based on the theme of “To respond to the special educational needs of each individual child” with a total of 1,460 participants over the two days. “Seminar I” holds lectures, symposia and discussions in order to diffuse trends and up-to-date research in special education, as well as to investigate modern issues and trends that should be promoted in the future.

This time, after the keynote speech, symposia and discussions were held on the following themes: (1) Issues and outlooks in special needs education shouldered by elementary and junior high schools, (2) class management that respond to each individual’s needs, and (3) instruction for individualized academic skills.

On February 21, 2007 “Special Needs Education Seminar II” was held in Tokyo based on the theme of “Developing special needs education and expertise” with 692 participants. “Seminar II” presents research results and discusses research in order to diffuse details and results of the research being carried out at the Institute and to be of use to the guidance given in schools etc.

This time, after the keynote speech, research results were reported and discussions held centered on the following themes: (1) Applying brain science in educational practice, (2) Use of assistive technology, and (3) Curricula to deal with multiple disabilities and profound disabilities.

Welcoming Special Research Students based on the Exchange Agreement with the University of Cologne

NISE has accepted Christina Arlt from the Faculty of Human Sciences of the University of Cologne as a special research student for six months from this October. She specializes in education for children with disabilities and will carry out in-service training and research in Japan focusing on education for children with severe and multiple disabilities and on the Japanese system of special needs education.

Christina Arlt’s studies here are part of the activities based on the academic exchange agreement concluded in 1998 with the Faculty of Human Sciences of the University of Cologne.





Editorial postscript

There has been a big change in the Japanese system of education for children with disabilities and “special needs education” has commenced in 2007, as has been described in this article. This Institute has changed its name as a national center and plans to further enrich its international exchanges and international contribution as well as its activities at home. We are delighted to publish this newsletter as part of these activities.

This newsletter provides a condensed version of some of the Institute’s activities. We hope that you will also look at other publications and the Institute’s web site, as well as the newsletter, and we would welcome any feedback from you.

Charge of International Exchange

Akio Tokunaga

NISE’s English Top Page

http://www.nise.go.jp/en/index_e.html

NISE’s International Exchange Page in English

<http://www.nise.go.jp/en/international.html>

Table of Contents

	page
Greetings from the President	1
Systematic Revisions Regarding Special Needs Education	1
Introduction to the NISE’s Research (A Summary of Research Activities for 2007).....	2
The Special Needs Education Conference for Japanese Schools Using ICT	3
Japan-Malaysia In-service Training	4
Report on the 26 th Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Education for Individuals with Special Needs (Held in December 2006)	4
Report on the 7 th NISE and KISE Seminar on Special Education (Held in March 2007)	5
Participation by an NISE researcher in the OECD SENDDD Experts Meeting on Statistics and Indicators as an advisor to the Japanese delegate	6
Reports on NISE’s Seminars I and II for fiscal year 2006	7
Welcoming Special Research Students based on the Exchange Agreement with the University of Cologne	7
Editorial postscript	8