

Outline of Education

October 2019, Fukui Prefecture

I Purpose of Formulation

This charter, which is based on the provisions of article 1-3, paragraph 1 of the Act on Organization and Operation of Local Educational Administration, details the basic policy measures stipulated by the governor of Fukui Prefecture for the promotion of education, science and culture.

Based on this policy, the Fukui Prefectural Board of Education shall develop a basic plan for Fukui Prefectural education promotion, with specific and concrete measures.

II Basic Philosophy

Developing people who will support the future of Fukui, where each person's individuality shines.

-Promoting education to nurture children's "Hopes and Dreams" and "Fukui Love".

During times of intense societal change, such as an aging population, globalization, technological innovation, child poverty, and regional disparities in society, education plays an increasingly major role in the next generation being able to develop Fukui and take it forwards into a prosperous future.

Although children in Fukui prefecture acquire good scholastic ability and physical fitness, it is a similar story all over Japan that as they grow up they begin to lose interest in their community and lack self-esteem, and therefore tend to be less ambitious and hopeful of a bright future.

In such circumstances, to help them realize their hopes and dreams and to become dependable mainstays of the region, it is essential for children not only to have the fundamental and basic knowledge and skills but also to nurture their competency to cooperate with a variety of people. They should also be able to recognize and overcome difficult problems that cannot be solved by themselves, while demonstrating their personality and challenging their own potential

Fortunately, in this prefecture there are many diligent teachers who engage in careful lesson planning and checking of homework, utilize a “*vertical class responsibility*” * system, conduct “*full department meetings*” ** and are active in regular “*lesson study collaborations* (and the associated post-lesson discussions)” with other schools in the region. Fukui consistently ranks at the very top for national academic aptitude and physical condition tables. This is due to the fostering of an excellent education culture supported by strong family, school and regional ties. The benefits of these good practices are then passed on to the next generation. However, to progress to the next level the teachers should not only teach the students facts and figures, but also should be acutely aware of the students’ individuality and use “*Eliciting Education*” which allows the students freedom beyond the existing traditional frameworks. It also helps to develop the concept of “*Enjoying Education*” in a free-thinking manner. This will enable children to willingly engage their intellectual curiosity and develop their inquiring minds, and it will ultimately create a new education culture in Fukui prefecture.

To achieve this, it is important that the prefecture’s teaching staff are familiar with each child’s individual needs so that they can continue to learn. Of course, not only schools, but homelife and the community also play an important role in supporting students’ growth and development, so collaboration and cooperation between the schools and society are also needed to create this environment.

Based on these original ideas, the qualities in students that education in Fukui prefecture wishes to achieve is outlined below.

Qualities of the Students We Aim to Create

1. People who continue to cultivate their individuality and personality, and challenge themselves.
2. People who recognize the existence of diverse people and collaborate to create new values.
3. People who love their hometown and nature, and contribute to society and the community whenever and wherever they are.

*Vertical Class Responsibility: A system in which teachers oversee a subject in all three grades - mainly in junior high schools. The course can be taught with a three-year outlook, and experienced and young teachers who are in charge of the same school year collaborate to create lessons, enabling high-quality classes. On the other hand, "*horizontal responsibility of classes*" is a system in which teachers oversee multiple classes of the same grade.

**Full Department Meetings: A meeting is organized for all of the same subject teachers to discuss the contents, processes and teaching methods of each class. In Fukui prefecture, this meeting is a regular feature of the timetable, and in conjunction with the "*vertical class responsibility*" system, it has led to a significant improvement in teaching.

III Basic Policy Course of Action

In order to realize the educational objectives of the prefecture the basic policy is as follows:

- 1. People who continue to cultivate their individuality and personality, and challenge themselves.**

[Course of Action]

○ **Promotion of connections between the different school stages.**

The qualities and abilities that enable each child to achieve a rich life will be nurtured through a continuous connected journey from early childhood education to compulsory education to high school education

and in some cases finally on to university education. At each stage, high-quality education, based on the continuity of their development and learning, is essential. In addition, infant/nursery school education will also be strengthened and connected to create a smooth path into elementary school and beyond. This journey and process will create a rich lifelong education basis. In addition, we will promote practical cooperation in high schools to a much greater extent than ever before, regardless of whether it is a regular school or vocational school. This will also include exploratory learning in cooperation with universities in and outside of the prefecture.

○ **Training for solidified academic ability.**

The importance of having a basic academic ability has never changed throughout the ages. However, each child can have a different learning process. Therefore, we will enhance their proficiency by using smaller groups, using ICT tools, by teachers maximizing the students' individual abilities, and giving them guidance according to their specific situation and learning style. In particular, we want to cultivate and express reading skills as the foundation of learning. We will also promote the system in which each subject in elementary school has its own specific teacher to increase the teaching expertise.

○ **Improvement of learning through self-motivation.**

In a complex and unpredictable era, a mix of curiosity, the ability to discover and solve problems, and logical thinking are required. These abilities will be developed by the experience of setting their own questions and challenges, and then proceeding to discover the answers themselves. Therefore, instead of teaching unilaterally, teachers will be igniting their "*minds that want to learn and discover what they do not know*" as well as creating encounters of surprise, uncertainty and excitement. Creating an awareness of issues and problems in this way helps promote exploratory learning.

○ **Promotion of competitive sports.**

When the prefecture's athletes play an active part in national competitions and international competitions, such as the recent Fukui national sports tournament, it not only creates new dreams and

excitement for the residents, but also raises the interest and motivation for them to get involved in sports. Therefore, we will establish a system to find and nurture junior athletes and also utilize the elite athletes to support, advise and train the students.

○ **Enhancement of cultural and artistic activities.**

Cultural arts foster a rich sensibility and imagination, they also enrich people's lives and provides opportunities to relax and enjoy their leisure time. Therefore, in cooperation with cultural facilities and cultural arts groups, we will enhance opportunities to appreciate and experience first-class cultural arts from childhood, and encourage them to become familiar and involved with local cultural assets and traditional performing arts.

2. People who recognize the existence of diverse people and collaborate to create new values.
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[Course of Action]

○ **Nurturing a rich heart and healthy body.**

To build better human relations, it is important to have social and normative consciousness and rich humanitarian compassion. So, through experiential learning, community contribution activities and reading activities - including Moral Education and Special Activities at school, an "*attitude of mutual respect*" will be fostered. We will also establish and promote desirable lifestyle habits so that children can live healthy lives, even beyond their educational years.

○ **Development of human resources with an international sense.**

In an era when the region and the world are directly connected, it is important that this prefecture develops a rich international sense, the endowment to accept diversity, and the attitude of trying to communicate with others. Therefore, we will expand opportunities for international understanding by increasing the direct interaction they have with overseas children. For example, increasing opportunities to study abroad, to partner with sister schools, and to expand international exchange through accepting and hosting more foreign students.

○ **Promotion of special support education.**

Whether children are disabled or not, it is necessary for them to learn together in all schools, with the appropriate guidance and support for their needs and conditions. Therefore, by promoting early discovery of disabilities, enhancing the school support and promoting an understanding of their needs, we can communicate with the local communities and society and help disabled people choose suitable schools and help them seek appropriate employment. In addition, the teaching staff's expertise will be enhanced by deepening their understanding of disabilities and by promoting learning through the use of ICT.

○ **Enhancement of measures against bullying and school truancy.**

We should recognize that bullying and truancy "*can possibly occur to all children*" and it is important to create an environment that will enable them to navigate their school life with peace of mind. Therefore, cooperating with experts and agencies, communities and families, we will attempt to prevent disciplinary problems, such as bullying and truancy, by detecting the signs early and responding to them quickly and efficiently as a unified team.

3. People who love their hometown and nature, and contribute to society and the community whenever and wherever they are.

[Course of Action]

○ **Fostering a heart that loves one's hometown.**

Developing a heart that loves one's hometown not only raises awareness of their own community and society, but also enhances self-affirmation while having fun and achieving a sense of accomplishment by learning through the interaction with local people. By learning about local predecessors, the history, nature, traditions, culture, and industries, and also encouraging them to invest themselves in resolving the regional problems, children will cultivate a better understanding of their hometown of Fukui and willingly contribute towards it.

○ **Development of human resources responsible for local industries.**

To develop and secure motivated human resources who will be responsible for local industries in the future, it is necessary to enhance the appeal of vocational high schools. Therefore, while listening to the voices of local communities and companies, we will encourage the development of entrepreneurship, the acquisition of highly specialized qualifications, the challenges of certification, and the learning that emphasizes practical and cross-cutting perspectives. In addition, the opportunity for children, parents and teachers to learn about the appeal of local companies, such as exchanges between the business community and young teachers and the “*Welcome Seniors*” classes and occupational experiences by corporate managers, etc. will help to enhance the awareness of working in one’s hometown.

○ **Promotion of lifelong learning.**

To establish a lifelong learning environment, we will not only enhance school education but also support the activation of other organizations. We will also encourage mutual cooperation so that learning opportunities and information can be available from a wide and diverse range of sources. In addition, we will improve the functionality of libraries and other facilities so that they can be utilized as a base to support the activities of local people and help solve local issues.

IV Creating an Environment for the New Era.

In addition to the “*Basic Policy Course of Action*” described in the previous section, establishing an environment for this new era of education which is relevant to three “*Qualities of the Students We Aim to Create*” is vital, and is described in the following.

[Course of Action]

○ **Creating an environment where teachers' qualities and abilities can be improved and fully utilized**

Teachers will not only teach the subject’s content but will also be responsible for facilitating the students to discuss, consider and realize their future ambitions. Teachers will not only become further enriched by engaging with society inside and outside of school, but also enhance

their range of characteristics and expertise through systematic training.

As a result, this will steadily improve teachers' work-related comfort and satisfaction, also, the reform of the working conditions for education staff will help safeguard their own physical and mental well-being, and also allow them more free time to talk and bond with students and discuss important matters with them. We will work to create an environment where teachers can concentrate on educational activities with peace of mind while gaining understanding and support from the community.

○ **Improvement of education skills integrated by family and community.**

It is difficult for families, the community, and the school to improve educational skills independently. Therefore, it is important for all the people involved in the growth of the students to recognize their role and responsibility, to hold hands with each other, and to improve educational skills together as a team. Therefore, we will improve educational activities and opportunities in region, such as extra-curricular activities and "*after school clubs*", by utilizing the local people and school support volunteers in order to help run and organize them. In addition, to create a better understanding and deeper interest in education at home, we will strengthen the consultation system and information dissemination in regard to child-rearing, and also increase the opportunity for parents to share their concerns and learn from each other.

○ **Maintenance of safe and high-quality school facilities.**

Schools are both a place for students to learn and a place to live. Therefore, we will continue to improve school facilities so that children can develop and learn in an environment free from aging infrastructure, and in an environment that includes air conditioning, energy saving measures, and easy access.