Promotion of ESD through ASPnet Schools in JAPAN

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ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) is education to cultivate leaders who will help build a sustainable society for the future.

This is in the form of learning and activities whose goal is to have people view the various problems of modern society to be their own problems and to endeavor to tackle these problems in their immediate environment, and as a result, to produce new values and actions which will lead to solutions to these issues, and thereby create a sustainable society.

The themes and contents covered by the learning and activities of the ESD are not necessarily new. Rather, by viewing them anew from the fresh perspective of ESD, it becomes possible to assign the common goal of building a sustainable society to the efforts being undertaken in individual areas and to form a clear direction for the development of specific activities. In addition, linking each of the efforts together allows for increased enhancement in the development of the existing initiatives.
The UNESCO Associated Schools form hubs to promote ESD.

MEXT and the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO have positioned the UNESCO Associated Schools as hubs to promote ESD and are working on increasing the number of member schools. In addition, guidelines on the UNESCO Associated Schools have been prepared in order to ensure their quality.

The guidelines for the UNESCO Associated Schools (Summary)

i) What is expected of ASPnet Schools
   - Mutually learn from one another through the network.
   - Build an open network through collaboration with multi-stakeholders.
   - Widely promote ESD outside of school.
   - Indicate in the school management policies the efforts to implement the activities of ASPnet Schools.

ii) What is expected of hubs to promote ESD
   - Clarify the qualities and abilities that the schools wish to foster through ESD, and make efforts to formulate curricula that put emphasis on the process of learning that aims at problem solving.
   - Make efforts to improve teaching methods.
   - Engage in research and practice and endeavor to spread the ESD concepts.
UNESCO Associated Schools as hubs to promote ESD

**Recognizing UNESCO Associated Schools as model schools to lead initiatives that enhance quality of implementation of ESD as well as aiming to implement ESD at all schools.**

**UNESCO Associated Schools**
(Schools approved by UNESCO that practice peace and international collaboration in order to realize the ideas of UNESCO)

**ESD Model schools in Japan**

Implementing ESD at all schools (Elementary and secondary)
(Implement ESD in cross-curricular learning and Period of Integrated Study etc.)

⇒ Nurture abilities to find out problems, work on to solve them proactively and cooperatively, and take actions.

Feedback on Good practices
Secretariat of ASPnet Schools

A secretariat to manage the ASPnet Schools has been established. The secretariat also operates the official website, which functions as the clearing house for accessing good practices, useful materials, information on events etc. For FY2016, MEXT commissioned its operation to ACCU.

“Inter-University Network to Support the ASPnet Schools (ASPUnivNet)”

A network comprising 20 universities was created to advise and support activities and the application process for becoming an ASPnet Schools.

Japan National UNESCO ASPnet Conference

Since 2009, MEXT has been organizing an annual national conference to provide opportunities for ESD practitioners to discuss and share good practices on ESD conducted in ASPnet Schools. It attracts hundreds of participants each year.
Higher education institutions have the ability to provide superior education resources relating to ESD. Utilizing this ability, an inter-university network named the Inter-University Network to Support the UNESCO Associated Schools Project (ASPUnivNet) was created as a partner to support the activities of the UNESCO Associated Schools.

Details of the activities

Advice and support offered to the ASPNet Schools as an approach which is characteristic of Japan.

1. Support offered to schools to become an ASPNet School (application and activities)
2. Intellectual resources of the universities are made available for the activities of the UNESCO Associated Schools
3. Support given to create a network between the UNESCO Associated Schools both in Japan and other countries
4. Promotion of cooperation between the educational institutions in the region and the UNESCO Associated Schools
The guideline on promotion of ESD

- Developed by MEXT in cooperation with ESD experts following the proposal made in the report “Towards further promotion of ESD”

   “it is necessary to promote ESD practices in every schools....Therefore, it is necessary to **develop a guideline on practicing ESD, which explains the concrete methods to introduce ESD into each subject**, and **show the image of how to prepare lessons based on ESD**”

- Targeting **supervisors in the board of education** and **school administrators** (principles, vice principles) who organize ESD teacher training

- Consists of the chapters below

  1) Explanation and background on why ESD is necessary
  2) Points to advise when implementing ESD at schools based on case studies
     (Setting objectives, Drafting lesson plan, Evaluation, Cooperation with local community, School management-whole school approach)
  3) Points to advise when planning teacher training
  4) FAQ when implementing ESD
  5) ASPnet and ESD

- Released in **March 2016**, and distributed to **each board of education, ASPnet schools etc.**
Recent Development related ASPnet Schools and ESD

New rules in response to the introduction of OTA

To ensure good quality of ASPnet schools’ activities,

→ Include **one year probation period** into the domestic process before applying ASPnet memberships to UNESCO HQs.

→ Recommend **active usage of OTA** to schools to improve their visibility and promote active exchanges on their own initiatives
Thank you for your attention!

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