

Our Comments on the Final Report

Information Room for Inclusive Education

The Meeting on the Support to Children with Disabilities in Regular Classes, which was set by the ministry of education, was held nine times from June 2022 to February 2023. The final report was published on March 2023. In this report, the report has repeatedly emerged the needfulness of support, but we have to say that the "support" is used for segregation. We would like to state two issues below.

I. Our Comment on the Report

During the meetings, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted its concluding observations on Japan. The observation states that special education, which makes children with disabilities marginalized, has perpetuated, and recommends abolishing it clearly (Concluding observations on the initial report of Japan, paragraph 51(a), 52(a). <https://www.crpd-in-japan.com/inforoom-un2022cr-a24>).

This report states the observation as follows.

Based on the recommendations, further enhancement of related measures is required to achieve a more inclusive society, including the arrangement of settings in which children with and without disabilities can learn together in the same place as far as possible.

We must think about whether understanding "the arrangement of settings in which children with and without disabilities can learn together in the same place as far as possible" is precisely based on the purpose of the CRPD. The observation recommends Japanese government should realize settings in which they can learn together all the time, not "as far as possible". The right to learn in the same place is respected unconditionally. Thus, the CRPD Committee pointed out that current special education in Japan is segregated one and urged the Japanese government to abolish it. In short, the words "as far as possible" can be excuses for not realizing the settings and mean the report justifies the segregated education. It shows that the educational authorities maintain the present system that divides children by "disabilities".

The CRPD obligates the State Party not to exclude children with disabilities from the general education system (CRPD Article 24(2)). What does the general education system mean? The Plain Version for General Comment No.4, which the CRPD Committee published to promote comprehension of the CRPD, describes as follows.

Inclusive education is where students of all abilities learn together in the same classroom environment. This means students with and without disabilities.

In Japan, educational authorities divide children with disabilities to four forms (regular classes, tsu-kyu¹, special classes, and special schools). These measures contradict CRPD because dividing is to exclude children with disabilities from the general education system. Concrete measures such as abolishing segregated education and providing reasonable accommodation should be written in the report to realize inclusive education in light of the recommendations. Therefore, we think the report denies the UN recommendations and implicates the Japanese government maintains the segregated educational policy.

¹ This is a form of special instruction provided according to the disabilities of students who are enrolled in regular classes at elementary schools, junior high schools, and senior high schools, and who are generally able to participate in their studies in regular classes but require special instruction.

II. Issues

A. The School Committee

The School Committee consisting of teachers is setting up in every school to discuss supports for students with disabilities or may need supports and adopt their plans. The report shows ideas for giving lectures easy to understand, provideing reasonable accommodation, and deploying assistances as examples. But it's inadequate to realize inclusive education that the report doesn't state condition of personnel arrangement.

Furthermore, the report doesn't deny "placement review for segregated setting" often used in the School Committees. They review their support and put children in more segregated settings (ex. sending children to special classes or special schools from regular classes). It doesn't respect the right to inclusive education at all. The placement review is not in line with the CRPD.

Besides, the School Committee does not expect participation of children and they make plans without children's views. It is violention to the right to be heard.

B. Model for the Inclusive School Management

This model is NOT inclusive because it only intends to unify managements of mainstream schools and segregated schools. If it realizes, children with and without disabilities do not learn in the same class. We regard it as a desperate measure that can solve a shortage of personnel and budget as the government maintains present segregated education.

The report proposes establishing a system that can cooperate with several schools including special schools, and explains it as follows.

While maintaining the current diverse places for learning, it is necessary to promote initiatives to create an inclusive school management model in which special-needs schools and either elementary, junior, or senior high schools are operated in an integrated measure at the dicision of local authorities, etc., making use of the specialized knowledge and experience in special education and resources such as facilities that special schools possess. It is considered that.

In other words, this model intends to use empty classrooms and closed schools as special schools and one principal manages two schools. Saving budget in education is proposed in name of "inclusive". Sadly, the special school will obtain an important role in the model.