

FY 2015 National Institute for Educational Policy Research,  
Seminar on Educational Facilities Research

Creating Schools for Extending the Features of Inclusive Education  
School architecture in **Japan** and **Finland**



Reino Tapaninen  
Finnish National Board of Education  
Chief Architect  
Lecture: "Finnish Inclusive  
School Architecture"



Aya Wabanabe  
Associate Professor, Tsuda College  
Lecture: "Finnish Inclusive  
Education System"



Jun Ueno  
President, Tokyo Metropolitan University  
Lecture: "Creating Schools for  
Extending the Features of  
Inclusive Education in Japan"

# Report

January 20, 2016 (Wednesday)

MEXT Auditorium

Host



MEXT  
National Institute for  
Educational Policy Research

Supporter

Architectural Institute of Japan



January 20, 2016

Wed

Creating Schools for Extending the Features of Inclusive Education

## School architecture in Japan and Finland

1:30–5:00PM MEXT Auditorium

Finland has one of the world's most advanced education systems. In 2000, it incorporated the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act into the Basic Education Act, enabling children enrolled in special needs education classes or schools to participate in ordinary classes to the greatest extent possible in accordance with their capabilities. Japan also ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in January 2014, and the Act on Promotion of the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities enters into effect on April 1, 2016. Under this new Act, the national and local governments, etc., will be legally required to give reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities. We therefore hosted a seminar in FY 2015 to learn from Finland's advanced experience with inclusive education. This seminar featured as invited guests Mr. Reino Tapaninen, a specialist in school architecture and Chief Architect at the Finnish National Board of Education; Ms. Aya Watanabe, an associate professor of Tsuda College specializing in research on Finnish educational policies and systems; and Mr. Jun Ueno, a prominent researcher in the field of school architecture and president of Tokyo Metropolitan University.

### Program / Table of Contents

#### I. Opening address ..... 3

##### Organizer's remarks

Mr. Haruo Minatoya Deputy Director-General, National Institute for Educational Policy Research

#### II. Keynote speech ..... 7

##### 1. "Finnish Inclusive School Architecture"

Mr. Reino Tapaninen Chief Architect, Finnish National Board of Education

Reino Tapaninen  
- 9

##### 2. "Finnish Inclusive Education System"

Ms. Aya Wabanabe Associate Professor, Tsuda College

Aya Wabanabe  
- 63

##### 3. "Creating Schools for Extending the Features of Inclusive Education in Japan"

Mr. Jun Ueno President, Tokyo Metropolitan University

Jun Ueno  
- 101

#### III. Closing address ..... 131

Mr. Takeshi Isoyama Director, Educational Facilities Research Center,  
National Institute for Educational Policy Research



## I . Opening address

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Every year since 2010, this seminar has been conducted with a theme chosen for that year. This year's theme is "Creating Schools for Extending the Features of Inclusive Education: School architecture in Japan and Finland." Today we have an audience of approximately 200 individuals who have an interest in school facilities, including staff from boards of education, schools, and other school-related professions. We are very grateful that you all could come.

School is a place that builds in all students the fundamental skills that enable them to survive independently in society. School could be called, in a sense, a part of life. According to Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, signed in Japan the year before last, an "inclusive education system" is one in which individuals with disabilities and those without disabilities learn together, and it requires that individuals with disabilities not be excluded from the education system in general, that they be given the opportunity to receive primary and secondary education in the region in which they live, and that they be given reasonable accommodations as necessary for each individual. Additionally, the July 2012 report of the Central Council for Education's Subdivision on Elementary and Secondary Education states that we should aim to have children with and without disabilities learn together in the same place as much as possible, and that there is a need to build environments for such learning. In particular with regard to this new concept of "reasonable accommodations," we must research how to fully achieve such accommodations and create a national "reasonable accommodations" database that can be provided as a reference tool to practitioners and schools.

On April 1 of this year, as the Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities goes into effect in Japan, national and local public bodies will be legally obligated to provide reasonable accommodations for disabled individuals. Therefore, it will become necessary for facilities, as well, to provide reasonable accommodations for disabled children suitable for the nature of their disabilities when those students use school facilities, including standard classrooms in public elementary and junior high schools. In light of these developments, for the last two years since 2014 we at the National Institute for Educational Policy Research have been engaged in a foundational research project on school facilities with an aim toward building inclusive education systems. We analyze case studies in order to create a database of "reasonable accommodations" made for disabled individuals with a focus on the facilities themselves. In Finland, from which we have invited a lecturer who will speak today, we have been told that the integration in the year 2000 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act into the Basic Education Act enabled children enrolled in special needs education classes or schools to participate in ordinary classes to the greatest extent possible for their disability type or degree.

For today's seminar, in order to learn from Finland's advanced experience with inclusive education, we have invited from Finland Mr. Reino Tapaninen, a specialist in school architecture and Chief Architect at the Finnish National Board of Education. From Japan, we have invited Ms.

Aya Watanabe, an associate professor of Tsuda College working in research on Finnish educational policies and systems, who until last year was a Senior Researcher at this institute; and Mr. Jun Ueno, a prominent researcher in the field of school architecture and president of Tokyo Metropolitan University. To these honored guests, I would like to extend our deepest thanks for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend this seminar.

Ms. Watanabe and Mr. Ueno are also both participants in the institute's two-year research project that I mentioned earlier. Today, I hope that we can discuss Finland's inclusive school architecture and education system, as well as discuss the latest findings from Japanese case studies in which the features of Japanese inclusive education are utilized. These findings include the fruits of our own institution's research.

In closing, I expect that this seminar will be an opportunity to gain knowledge useful for thinking about how to build schools for an inclusive education system, and that it will contribute to the enhancement of school facilities in a way that improves the learning environment for all children. This concludes my opening remarks. Thank you.

## II . Keynote speech

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# Finnish Inclusive School Architecture



Mr. Reino Tapaninen

Chief Architect,  
Finnish National Board of Education



I work at the Finnish National Board of Education, which is a principal organization under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The National Board of Education's primary job is to formulate a national core curriculum for schools and local governments throughout Finland. The curriculum serves as a model for schools to follow. We also provide a wide variety of other support services to schools and local governments, and one of those is our school construction and architecture service. As the Chief Architect of the Board of Education, I work on the development of Finnish school architecture and design. Specifically, I coordinate and finance pilot projects and experimental projects pertaining to school design, provide guidelines for high-quality school construction, and publish guidebooks as well as host seminars and meetings for architects and teachers. Today, I will discuss Finnish schools and special education schools in particular. First I will provide an overview of the country of Finland. Finland is a very small country. Although it has the same land area as Japan, its population is just 5.4 million, making it a very low population-density country. Its population is concentrated in ten major cities, with approximately one million people living in the area around the capital of Helsinki. The areas outside the cities have become increasingly depopulated, leading to school closures, but in the major cities, new schools are being built and structural alterations of existing schools are underway. In other words, the population is flowing into the big cities. Finland's official languages are Finnish and Swedish. Only 5% of the population speaks Swedish, but there is a school system in place for that population and they can receive an education in Swedish. In the northern portion of Finland live the indigenous Sami people, who speak a unique family of languages called the Sami languages, which also have official status.

## FINLAND IN BRIEF



- ◆ Population 5.4 million (18 inhabitants / sq. km)
- ◆ Two official languages: Finnish and Swedish
- ◆ Foreigners: ca 4.8% of population
- ◆ Education level of the adult population 2013:
  - 27 % basic education
  - 51 % upper secondary education
  - 22 % tertiary education



Statistics Finland 2015, City of Helsinki Media Bank

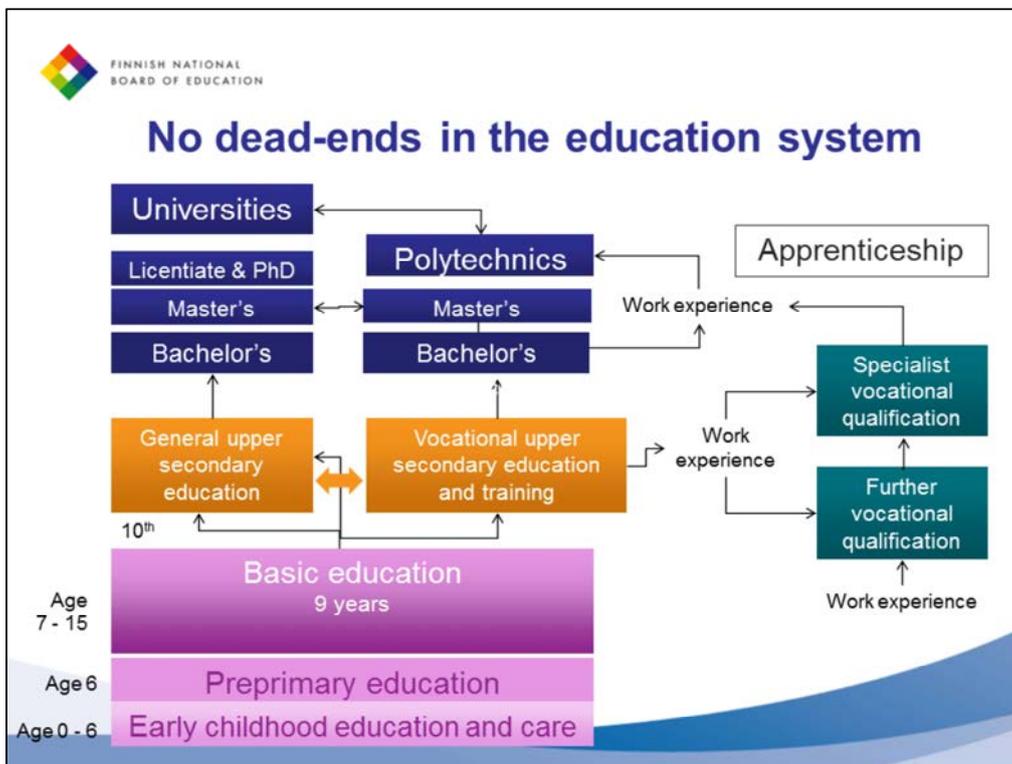
Finland is not blessed with many natural resources. But to us, the issue of investment in education is one of our largest unresolved issues, as well as a core goal. It is the one and only legacy that we can leave behind to our children that will help them survive in the future. Approximately 25% of all Finnish citizens who complete compulsory basic education go on to complete upper secondary and university education, as well. Education is very important to the Finnish people.

## Underlying educational understanding is based on equity

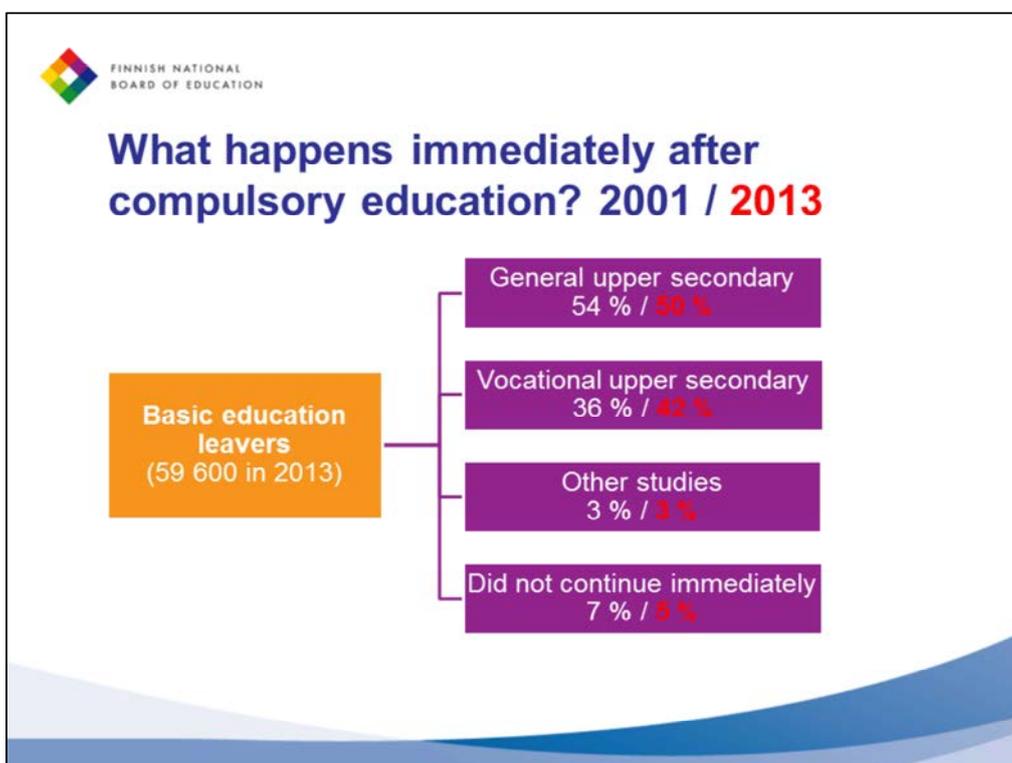
**One of the basic principles of Finnish education is that all people must have equal access to high-quality education and training. The same opportunities to education should be available to all citizens irrespective of their ethnic origin, age, wealth or where they live and irrespective of their financial standing** (*Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015*).



Finland's education system is rooted in the core principle of equity. The basic principle underlying Finnish education is that all people be given the opportunity to receive high-quality education and training. Regardless of race, age, property, location, or economic status, all Finnish people must be provided with equal educational opportunities.



This diagram shows Finland's education system, which is extremely flexible. There are no dead-ends in this system, and thus it is possible to receive a degree through a number of different methods and paths. Compulsory education, or general education, lasts for nine years from the age of six or seven through to the age of fifteen. All Finnish citizens are required to complete this basic education. After graduation from basic education, there are two paths of progression: general upper secondary education or vocational upper secondary education and training. It is not necessary to remain fixated on the path chosen, as it is also possible to change paths along the way. It is also possible to advance to a university or polytechnic (secondary vocational school) after choosing to attend vocational upper secondary education and training. This system is very flexible and allows students freedom of choice.



In 2013, 60,000 students completed compulsory basic education, and approximately 95% of them advanced to general upper secondary or vocational upper secondary school, followed by university. Education is extremely important to future success.

## Two-tier national administration

### Ministry of Education and Culture

- ◆ Education policy
- ◆ Preparation of legislation
- ◆ State funding

### Finnish National Board of Education

- ◆ National development agency
- ◆ National core curricula & qualification requirements
- ◆ Support for evidence-based policy-making
- ◆ Services for learners

Finland's administration is very flexible. The Ministry of Education and Culture is the organization responsible for creating education policy guidelines. It develops education-related laws and allots the education budget in a phased, graduated manner. A major organization underneath the umbrella of the Ministry is the Finnish National Board of Education, to which I belong. It is responsible for determining the national core curriculum and qualification requirements for vocational upper secondary education and training, supporting policymakers, and providing services for learners, teachers, and schools.

## Central steering – local decisions



In Finland's education system, the central national government provides general guidance, but the rest is left to the judgment of local governments. The central government determines things such as the minimum number of hours to be assigned to each subject—for example, how many hours of history, English, and math must be taught each week. Schools are required to adhere to these national standards. The central government also determines the size of national government subsidies. The amounts of government subsidies allocated to schools and local governments are determined at the level of the local government and school. Distribution and uses of national government subsidies as well as class sizes at schools are determined by the local governments. The local governments also serve the role of hiring teaching staff and evaluating the quality of learning.

## Expenditure on education 2013



### Operative costs per pupil/student

Basic education	<b>8 740 €</b>	(5341 – 20253 <sup>1</sup> )	= ¥1117000
General upper secondary	<b>7 584 €</b>	(6859 – 9321 <sup>1</sup> )	= ¥970000
Vocational upper secondary	<b>11 845 €</b>	(8100 – 16200 <sup>2</sup> )	= ¥1515000

<sup>1</sup>) difference between regions

<sup>2</sup>) difference between fields of VET

Source: FNBE Statistical yearbook 2014

In terms of finances, this slide shows annual expenditures per student. These figures change depending on the area of residence, but basic education costs roughly 5,000 to 20,000 euros per student. This is a large variation, but when converted to Japanese yen it is over one million yen per student. Of course, when it comes to vocational upper secondary schools, the facilities and equipment involved cause costs to jump up much higher. With this information, I believe that you should be able to get a rough idea of the per-student costs of education.

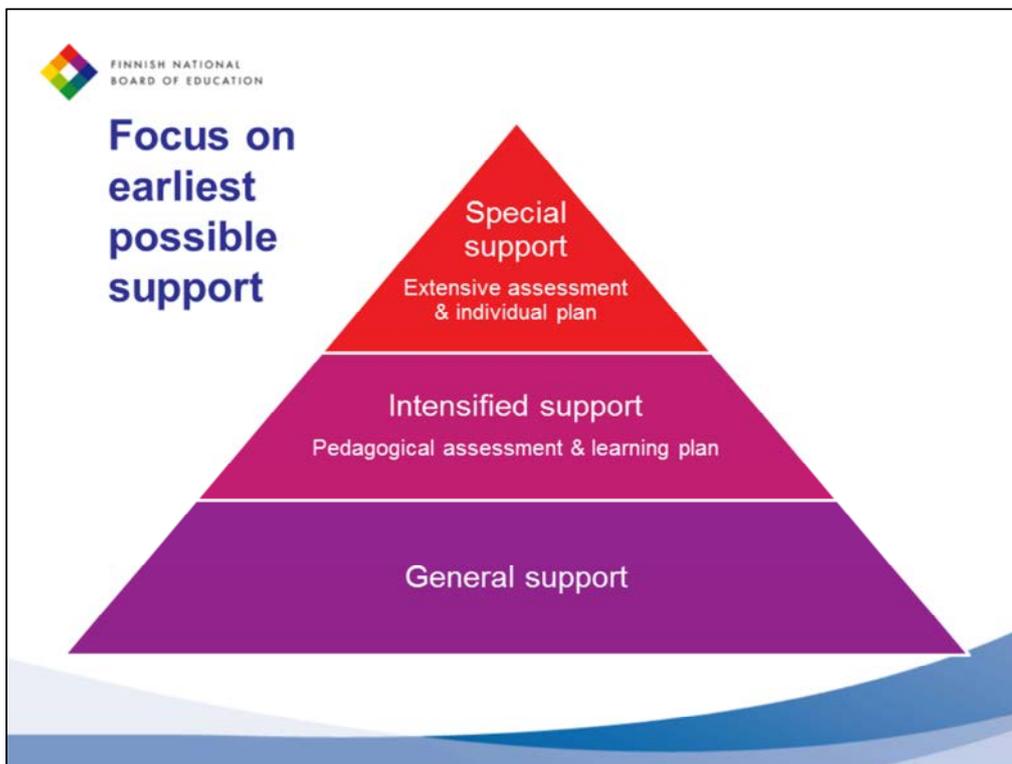
## Rethinking competences

National goals for Basic Education and Transversal Competences:

- ◆ Knowledge
- ◆ Skills
- ◆ Values
- ◆ Attitudes
- ◆ Will



This diagram shows what goals are set for basic education and competence in Finland. The five major concepts or goals are knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and will. Placed at the core of these is “development as a human being and citizen.” This is the largest concept and goal. Another section of the pie is “thinking and learning to learn.” To learn for the sake of learning is extremely important. “Multiliteracy” is also essential. Students must learn how to operate computers and other equipment. Other areas of learning on this chart are “ICT competency,” “Competence for the world of work, entrepreneurship,” and “Taking care of oneself and others, managing daily activities, safety.” These are the system’s major goals.



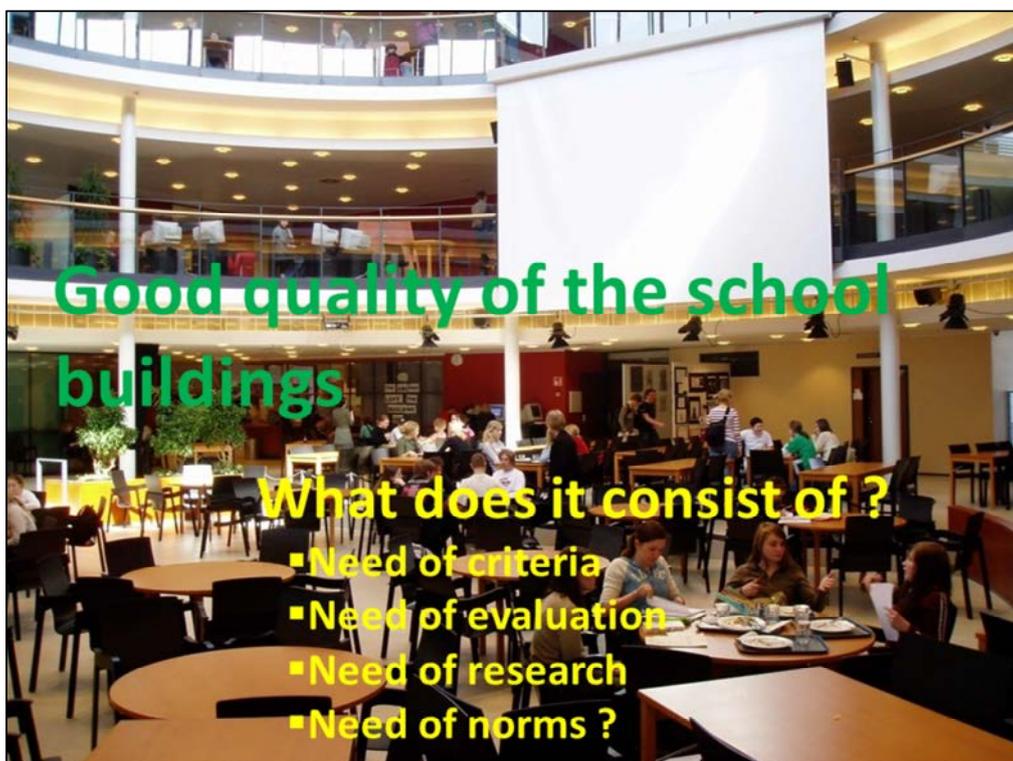
Next is special education, i.e. special support education. As this diagram shows, there is a focus on providing students who require special support with that support at the earliest possible stage. These types of support are separated into different categories: general support, intensified support, and special support. I will explain this diagram in a little more detail later on.



Finland is famous for having achieved very high scores in international assessments of academic ability. Finland's youth have reported some of the top results among OECD countries in PISA and other international assessments, demonstrating high capabilities in math, problem-solving, science literacy, and reading. We are very proud of these results. However, in the latest PISA scores released in 2012, Asian countries took the top rankings, with South Korea, Shanghai, Singapore, and Japan among the highest scores. Finland remained in the top spot for Europe. Policymakers and education providers were a little shocked at Finland's drop in the rankings, but we are now working on major improvements in our effort to take back the global top spot of which we have been so proud.



Finland has achieved high scores on PISA, but this raises a variety of questions that we will now answer. Why are Finland's scores so high? Indeed, no one was able to hide their surprise when the first PISA results came back. "Finland's results are extraordinary—but why?" is what everyone wondered. A few of the reasons are clear. First of all, education in Finland is provided free of charge from kindergarten through university. Students are not required to pay anything. Furthermore, because all Finnish citizens are provided equal opportunities for education, few students leave school prematurely. Everyone goes to school. As explained earlier, the organizational administration for education is also extremely flexible. Interactive, cooperative learning methods are encouraged, and teamwork is heavily utilized for projects and other activities. Another very important factor is Finland's high-quality, highly qualified teachers. Almost all teachers, including kindergarten teachers, have a master's degree from a university. In Finland, the teaching profession is very highly regarded by society and respected by everyone. If you say to a friend that you are a "teacher," you will be regarded with very high social esteem, almost on par with a lawyer or a doctor. Moreover, the fact that Finland's PISA scores are so good can also be attributed to its high-quality learning environments, school facilities, and physical infrastructure.



Therefore, the next questions are: What is a high-quality school, and what does it consist of? In order to determine what a high-quality school is, it is of course necessary to set certain criteria by which to assess schools. One increasingly important type of assessment is post-occupancy evaluation. This is a type of assessment performed two years after a school building has begun to be used, and it investigates whether the facilities are all functioning flawlessly. Also increasingly important are interdisciplinary research among architects and educators, and research on school architecture and school environments. This is because there is scientific evidence that physical school architecture has a direct effect on learning outcomes.



Our next point of question is: Are norms necessary for school architecture and design? School architecture in Finland was heavily regulated by norms until 1993, but 25 years ago these restrictions were removed, and the school-specific design and architecture norms were abolished. Today, schools are built in accordance with general construction laws and regulations that are applied to construction and architecture projects of all sorts. There is only one section of the law on schools: "A pupil participating in education shall be entitled to a safe learning environment." Safety is heavily prioritized.

Tilaohjelma	Kalleus- luokka Osmo 5.1/200 A	Teoreettinen tilantarve			
		hym2		kpl	
		B	C	D	
<b>Opetustilat</b>					
<b>Esiopetus</b>					
Opetustilat (tilan teoreettinen koko ryhmäkoon perusteella)	120	40	3	120	
Opetusvälineilat (3 hym2/ryhmä)	110	3	3	9	
<b>Perusopetuksen vuosiluokat 1-6</b>					
Opetustilat (tilan teoreettinen koko ryhmäkoon perusteella)	120	50	12	600	
Pienryhmätilat	120	30	1	30	
Opetusvälineilat (10 hym2 = 0,1 hym2/opp.)	110			28	
<b>Perusopetuksen vuosiluokat 7-9 ja lukio</b>					
Ryhmä 10	120	30	1	30	
Ryhmä 15	120	40	2	80	
Ryhmä 20	120	50	0	0	
Ryhmä 25	120	55	0	0	
Ryhmä 30	120	60	0	0	
Ryhmä 35	120	65	0	0	
Ryhmä 40	120	70	0	0	
Lukujärjestysvara	120	40	1	40	
Opetusvälineilat (5 hym2 = 0,1 hym2/opp.)	110			14	
<b>Eriyisopetus</b>					
Opetustilat	120	40	3	120	
Opetusvälineilat (3 hym2/ryhmä)	110	3	3	9	
<b>Aineopetustilat</b>					
Musiikki	130		1	90	
Musiikin opetusvälineilat (jos ei ole aineopetustilaa)	110				
Tekstiilityö	130		1	125	
Yhdistetty musiikki ja/tai kuvataide ja/tai tekstiilityö (perusopetuksen vuosiluokkien 3-6 opetusta varten)	130				
Tietotekniikka	130		1	70	
Kuvataide	130		1	130	

**School dimensioning indicators, download:**

[http://www.oph.fi/download/139700\\_esi\\_ja\\_perusopetuksen\\_tunnusluvut.pdf](http://www.oph.fi/download/139700_esi_ja_perusopetuksen_tunnusluvut.pdf)

The department to which I belong publishes dimensioning indicators for school architecture, which can be downloaded from this website. These indicators provide an outline of ways to partition schools into school facilities and classrooms based on school sizes. These are not norms. These are recommendations concerning appropriate school size designs that ensure sufficient space for various school activities.

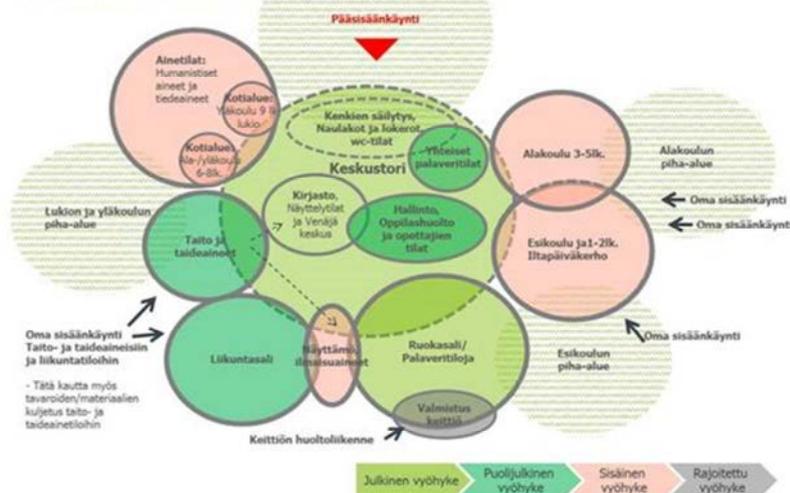
## Special education facilities for handicapped children

Vammaisten erityisopetus					
Opetustilat (EHA1: 7,5 hym2/opp., EHA2: 10 hym2/opp.)	130			0	
Montoimitila (kotitalous, tekstiilityö, askartelu)	130	50		0	
Hoito- ja sosiaalitytöt					
-fysioterapiatila	120	25		0	
-terapia-allas (5 hym2)	190	5		0	
-esteetön-wc 2 kpl 4 hym2 peilikuvina/ 2 ryhmää	190	8	0	0	
-hoituhuone	190	10		0	
-vaatehuoltotila	140	8		0	
-märkäeteinen (5 hym2/kpl)	190	5		0	
-opettajien ja avustajien puku-pesu-WC-tilat	140				
Oppilaiden vaatesäilytys	100				
Varastotilat					
-opetusvälinevarasto (5 hym2 / ryhmä)	110	5	0	0	
-liikkumis- ja apuvälinevarasto	80				
-terapiatilan välinevarasto	110				
Opettajien ja avustajien työskentely-, neuvottelu- ja taukotilat	110				

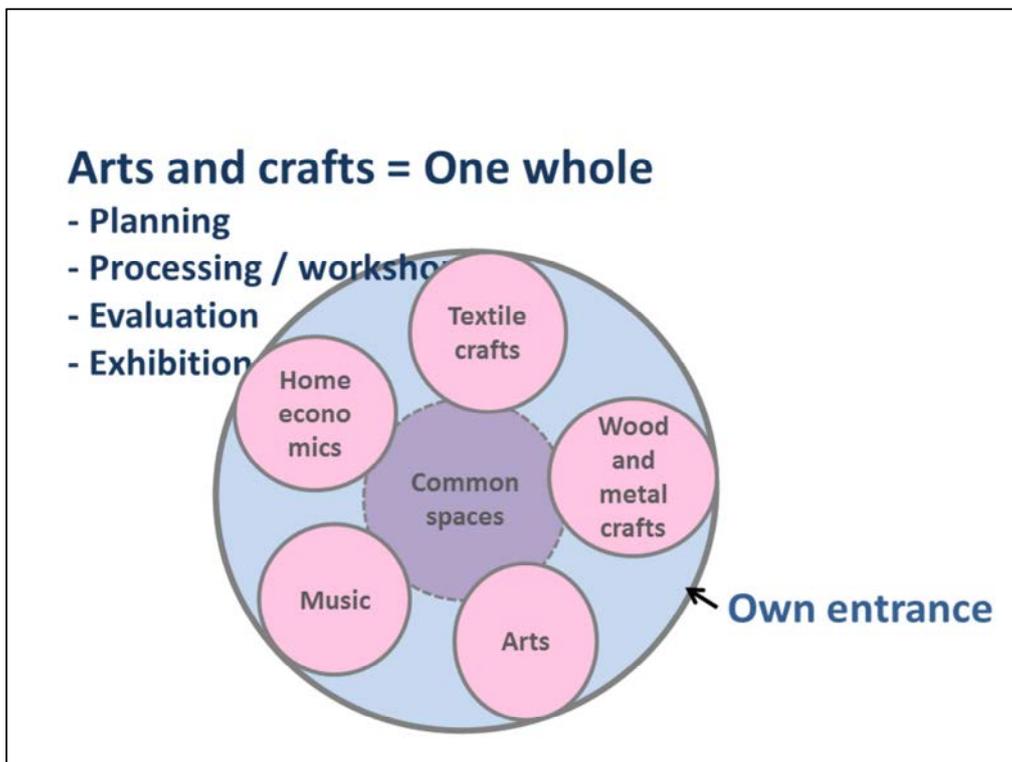
There are similar indicators for special education facilities, which include information on therapy rooms, therapy pools, disabled toilets, etc.

## School activities / division in public, semi-public, internal and restricted zones

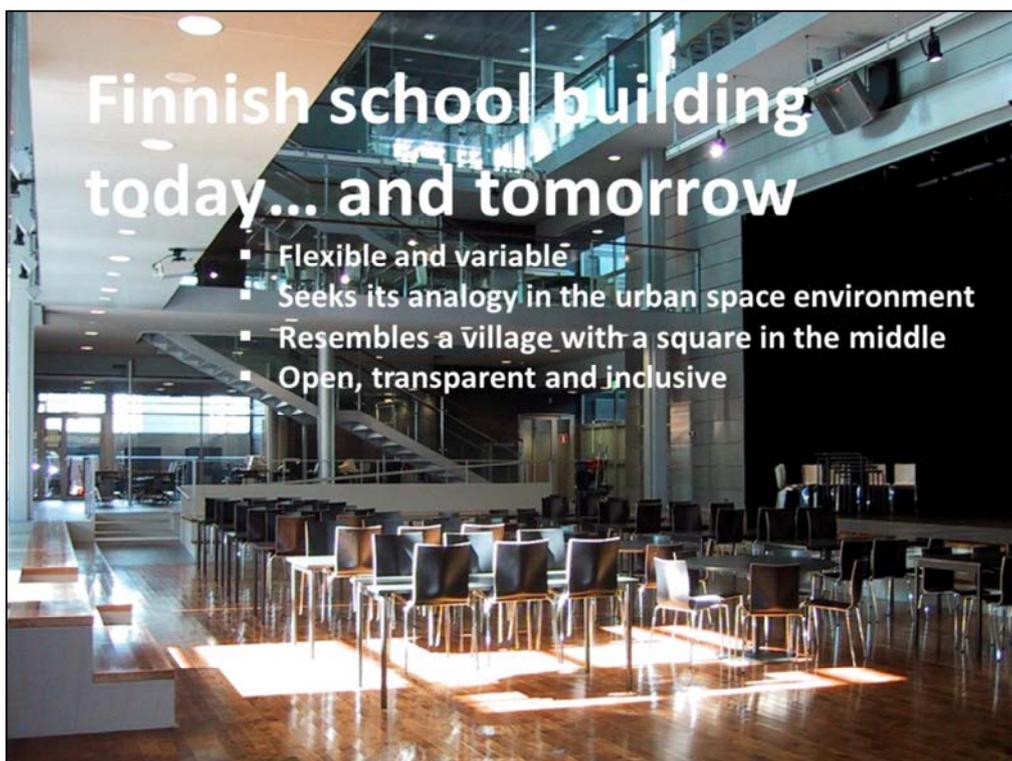
### Toiminnallinen kaavio 1



This is a technique used for a typical Finnish school. School activities are categorized into various zones: public, semi-public, internal, and restricted zones. In the center of the school is a common area, which is open to all other areas and includes multifunctional sections such as the main lobby, lunch room, cafeteria, library, and offices. Placed next to this central base are home areas and home bases for each grade, which can be used as independent learning spaces. Also in this area are the gymnasium and arts and crafts room. These are the fundamentals of modern school design.



In Finland, joint projects are promoted that cross the boundaries separating the arts, crafts, home economics, and other subjects. Students can join together to participate in such projects. In other words, students share the same rooms, facilities, and equipment. In this way, it is more effective for students to learn all subjects in the same place, sharing space and equipment with each other. Students are able to cooperate with one another in a cross-boundary, multi-disciplinary way, and this also serves to save space and reduce costs.



Finnish school buildings now and in the future. First of all, schools must have flexibility and versatility, as the needs of schools may change in the next five years. They absolutely must be flexible. A school is sometimes likened to a village or a town. People set up open squares for congregation in the middles of schools. The hallways are like roads, and there are roofed areas and gathering spots. A school, like a village, must be a place full of vitality and energy. Finnish schools are transparent and open. Glass walls are heavily used indoors. These are inclusive schools, usable by everyone.

# Education is for All

## Support for learning and school attendance in basic education

The Finnish basic education system has been based on the philosophy of inclusion for a long time. **Basic education is the same for all.** There is no streaming, but children are supported individually so that they can successfully complete their basic education.

Amendments to the National Core Curricula for pre-primary and basic education (2015) include a new systematic way of organizing support. **The focus is on earliest possible support** in order to prevent the emergence and growth of problems. Support for growth, learning and school attendance is shaped into three categories: **general support, intensified support and special support.** Everyone is entitled to general support. It is a natural part of everyday teaching and the learning process. Intensified and special supports are based on careful assessment and long-span planning in multi-professional teams and on individual learning plans for pupils.

If general support is not enough, pedagogical assessment shall be done and a plan for the intensified support handled in the pupil welfare group of the school. Following this a learning plan is drawn up for the pupil. If intensified support is not enough, new and more extensive pedagogical statements on the pupil shall be done. The education provider collects information from teachers and the school's welfare group. Based on this information, the education provider makes an official decision concerning special support. Following this decision, an individual education plan shall be drawn for the pupil.



Education is for all citizens. For a long time in Finland, “inclusion” was the core principle underlying the basic education system. In basic education, all students are provided with common content as well as individual instruction. If students are diagnosed with a learning disability, the focus is on providing them with assistance as soon as possible. If they are diagnosed as early as possible, they can be swiftly given support. As shown in the pyramid diagram, support is divided into three categories: general, intensified, and special. All students have the right to receive general support. If general support is inadequate, pedagogical assessments will be performed and planning undertaken for intensified support. This plan will be implemented by a pupil welfare group set up in the school in collaboration with the student’s parents. In some cases, an individualized plan may be created that focuses on the relevant student. If intensified support is still inadequate, a wider and more comprehensive pedagogical assessment will be conducted, and education providers and the school will collect information from teachers, parents, and the pupil welfare group. On the basis of this information, the school and education providers will make a formal determination regarding special support. This is represented by the top of the triangle in the diagram. The formal determination by the school will lead to the creation of an individual plan for the relevant student.

# Education is for All

## Support guarantees equal opportunities to complete upper secondary education and training

The National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (2015) emphasises the fact that the purpose of special support is to help and support students so as to guarantee them equal opportunities to complete their upper secondary school studies. Once a student’s learning difficulties have been identified, planning and implementation of support measures are started immediately, taking into account the information acquired on the student’s study performance and their needs for support during basic education. The local upper secondary school curriculum will determine how instruction and support measures for special needs students are to be organised.

All students in vocational education and training have the right to receive sufficient personal and other educational guidance as needed. Vocational institutions are required to pay particular attention to the counselling and guidance of students with learning difficulties, absences from school or problems with everyday life. Students in need of special educational or student welfare services are provided with an individual education plan. This plan must set out details of the qualification to be completed, the requirements and scope of the qualification, the individual curriculum drawn up for the student, as well as the student welfare services and support required for studying.

Vocational special needs education and training is primarily provided in regular vocational institutions with all other students. There are seven separate vocational special schools. These provide special facilities and services to promote the vocational education and training primarily for students with the most severe disabilities or chronic illnesses.

The same principles apply to students in general upper secondary education and vocational upper secondary education and training. If it can be established that a student is having learning difficulties, support measures will be formulated immediately and put into action. All students engaged in upper secondary and vocational upper secondary curricula have the right to receive adequate individual guidance and other educational guidance as necessary. The principles of support are applied to all kinds of students.

## The state-run special schools...

# Valteri Network

In order to implement this sort of support system in all of Finland's schools, a special network was created for national state-run special education schools. These are called Valteri schools. Valteri is an abbreviation of a term meaning "national state-run special education school," as well as being a boy's name. I think this is a great name for a school.



The Valteri Network used to consist of six state-run schools operated by the Finnish National Board of Education and located in six locations throughout Finland. Last year, however, the schools were all merged into a single school. This one school has the same six facilities through Finland, but the system has been reformed such that there is now one principal, one director, and one board of education for the entire school.

## **VALTERI renewed**

On 1 August 2015, the Valteri network became the **Valteri Centre for Learning and Consulting**, which consists of six units:

Mikael, Mäntykangas, Ruskis, Onerva, Skilla (former Svenska skolan för synskadade and SPERES) and Tervaväylä.

All the units also have a **Valteri school**.

After the merger, all services will remain and even become more diverse than before.

Valteri is not merely a school, but also a learning and consulting center.

## **Support for learning and school attendance**

VALTERI is a national centre for learning and consulting with six units in different parts of Finland.

VALTERI supplements municipal and regional support services in learning and school attendance.

VALTERI supports the implementation of inclusive education by offering a comprehensive range of services in the fields of general, intensified and special support.

VALTERI services can target the needs of individual children and young people, or the needs of an entire working community, municipality or region.

Valteri is a national state-run center with six facilities, or units, located throughout Finland. The center serves to complement the learning and school attendance support services of the local government and region. The Valteri school supports the implementation of inclusive education by providing comprehensive general, intensified, and special support services. With Valteri, it is possible to provide services focused on the needs of children and young people, or the needs of the community, local government, or region as a whole.

### Counselling and support

Valteri supplements municipal learning and school attendance support services. The forms, content and practical implementations of support services vary according to support needs at the various support categories.

Services may target the needs of individual children or young people, or the needs of an entire working community, municipality or region. They can include, for example consultation visits and counselling for daycare centres and schools support periods for pupils evaluation and rehabilitation services for individual children and young people workplace counselling and in-service training for professional personnel.

In addition, Valteri produces materials for the planning and implementation of support services.

Valteri possesses special expertise in support needs related to autism spectrum disorders, neuropsychiatric disorders, language and communication, hearing, vision, mobility and motor functions, and neurological illnesses or other chronic illnesses as well as multiple needs.

Valteri is an organization that complements the learning and school attendance support services of the local government. These services include consultation visits and counseling services for daycare centers and schools, support periods for students, assessment and rehabilitation services for children and young people, workplace counseling, and training for in-service personnel. Valteri also creates materials for the planning and implementation of support services. Valteri is a network that contains the specialized knowledge to handle needs related to autism spectrum disorders; neuropsychiatric disorders; language, communication, hearing, vision, mobility, and motor function disorders; neurological illnesses; and other chronic illnesses, as well as other complex needs.

### In-service training

Valteri organises national, regional, local and school-specific training courses and seminars. Courses can consist of long-term training and development processes or compact training sessions focusing on specific topics. Process-based courses can also include consultations and workplace counselling.

Valteri training projects are financed by the Finnish National Board of Education and are free-of-charge for participants. The training courses offered by individual Valteri units are, for the most part, tailored training packages. The potential topics and content of tailored training courses are described in our course calendar and on the websites of each Valteri unit.

Valteri also hosts training courses and seminars at the national, regional, local, and school level. These courses can consist of long-term R&D processes or compact training sessions focusing on specific topics. Process-based courses can also include consulting and workplace counselling. Valteri is financed by the Finnish National Board of Education, and participants can receive services free of charge.

### Have a look at the training services offered by Valteri:

**Mikael** Mikkeli: language and communication, hearing, neuropsychiatric disorders, multiple needs, vision

**Mäntykangas** Kuopio: mobility and motor functions, neurological illnesses or other chronic illnesses, communication, multiple needs, neuropsychiatric disorders, vision

**Onerva** Jyväskylä: autism spectrum disorders, neuropsychiatric disorders, language and communication, vision, hearing, multiple needs

**Ruskis** Helsinki: mobility and motor functions, neurological illnesses or other chronic illnesses, communication, vision, multiple needs, neuropsychiatric disorders

**Tervaväylä** Oulu: autism spectrum disorders, neuropsychiatric disorders, language and communication, hearing, mobility and motor functions, multiple needs, neurological illnesses and other chronic illnesses

**Svenska skolan för synskadade / Speres** Helsinki: hearing, neuropsychiatric disorders, vision (Swedish-speaking)

This is a list of the training services and facilities provided by Valteri. Mikael specializes in language and communication, hearing, neuropsychiatric disorders, complex needs, and vision disorders. Mäntykangas in the city of Kuopio handles vision, chronic illnesses, communication, complex needs, and other similar illnesses. Onerva in the city of Jyväskylä specializes in autism spectrum disorders, language and communication disorders, and complex needs. Ruskis in the city of Helsinki specializes in mobility and motor functions, complex needs, and neurological illnesses. Tervaväylä in the city of Oulu specializes in autism spectrum disorders, language, communication, hearing, mobility and motor functions, and complex needs. Finally, Speres in the city of Helsinki is a Swedish-language special needs support facility that specializes in hearing, neuropsychiatric, and vision disorders. There are services available that can handle children with even the most severe problems and disabilities.

### Guidebook for the Design of Schools for Handicapped Children

[http://www.oph.fi/download/48029\\_Liikunta\\_ja\\_toimintaesteisten\\_tilat.pdf](http://www.oph.fi/download/48029_Liikunta_ja_toimintaesteisten_tilat.pdf)

Toim. Heli Anttalainen ja Reino Tapaninen

#### Liikkumis- ja toimimisesteisille soveltuvat perusopetuksen tilat, kalusteet ja varusteet



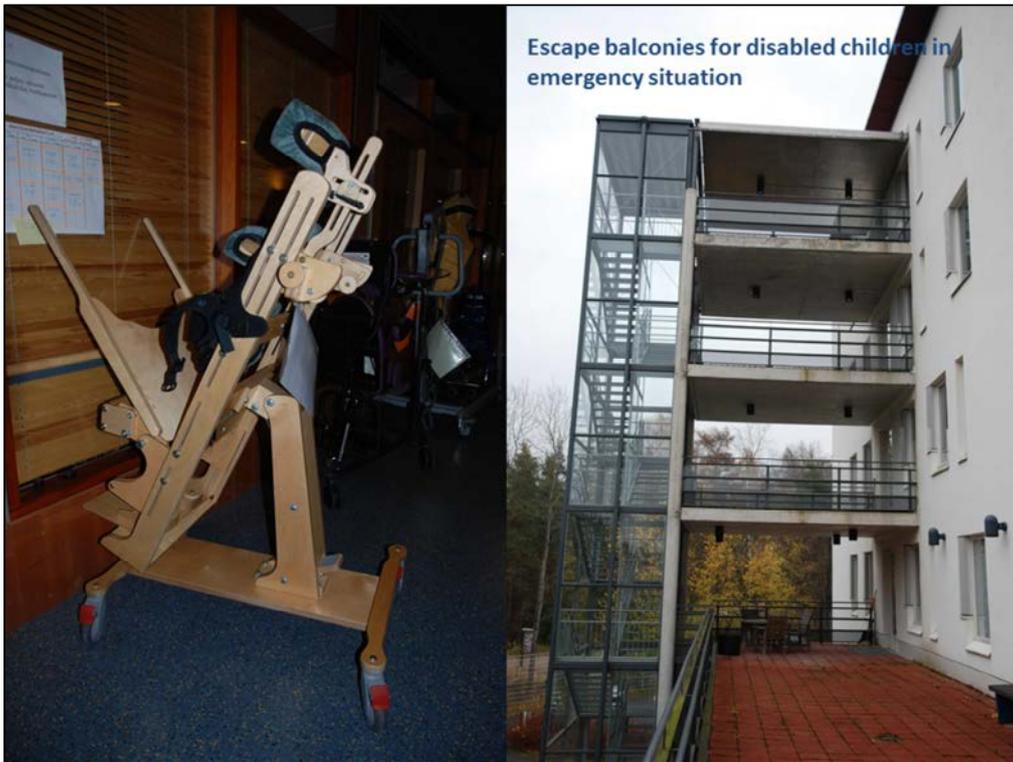
This network also publishes the Guidebook for the Design of Schools for Handicapped Children. This can be downloaded from the Finnish National Board of Education website.



The Valteri Network pursues research on individual equipment, combining play and rehabilitation together.

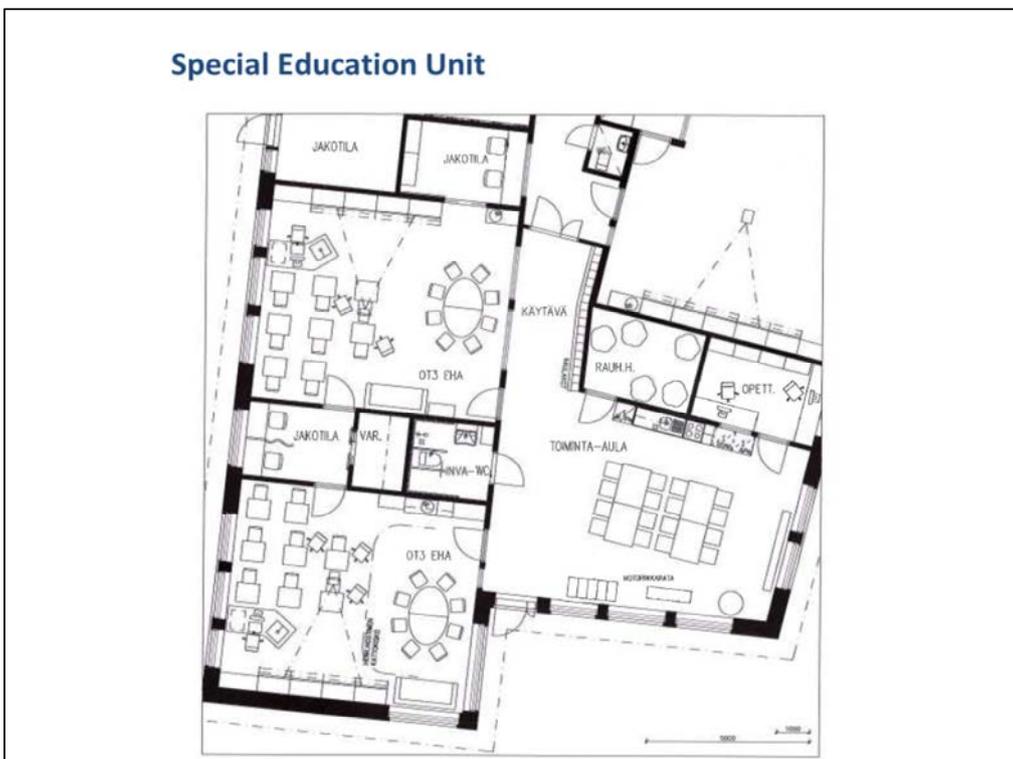


Valteri is gaining deeper understanding of the different types of mobility equipment. Each and every child has different, individual needs.



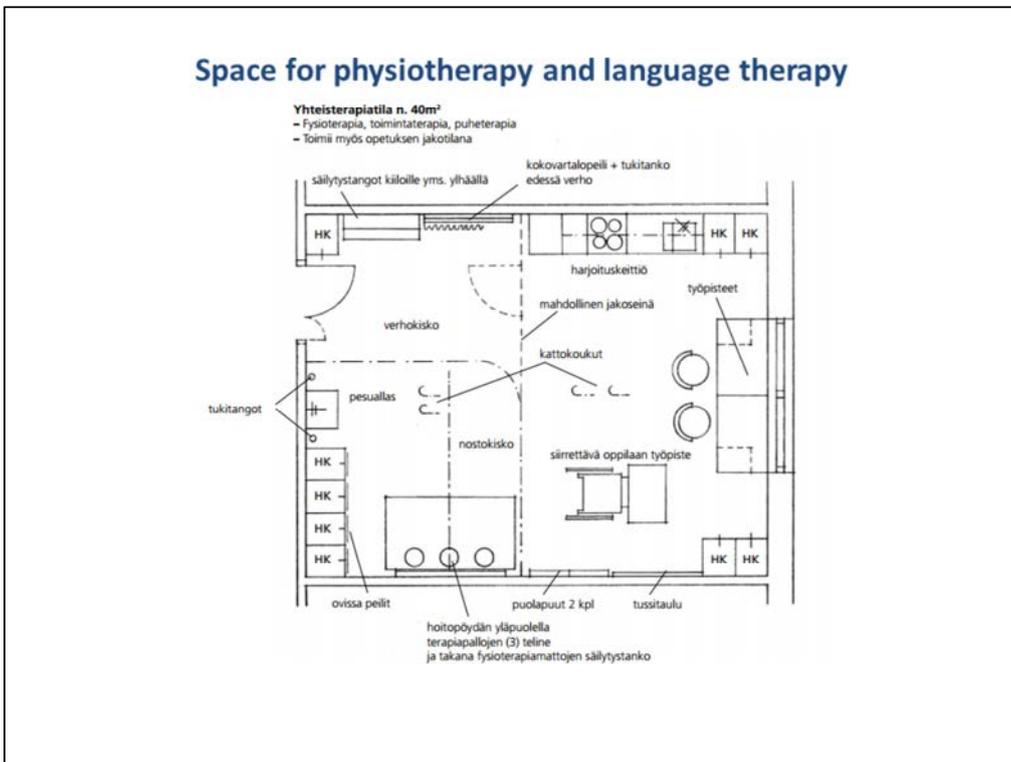
Escape balconies for disabled children in emergency situation

In the photograph on the left is an example of support equipment for children who cannot move their bodies at all. Using this piece of mobility equipment, an individual can participate in learning, teaching, and other such activities. In the photograph on the right is a type of escape balcony that can be used by wheelchair-bound students in a fire emergency. These escape balconies must be installed at special support schools where there are students with mobility or motor function disabilities.

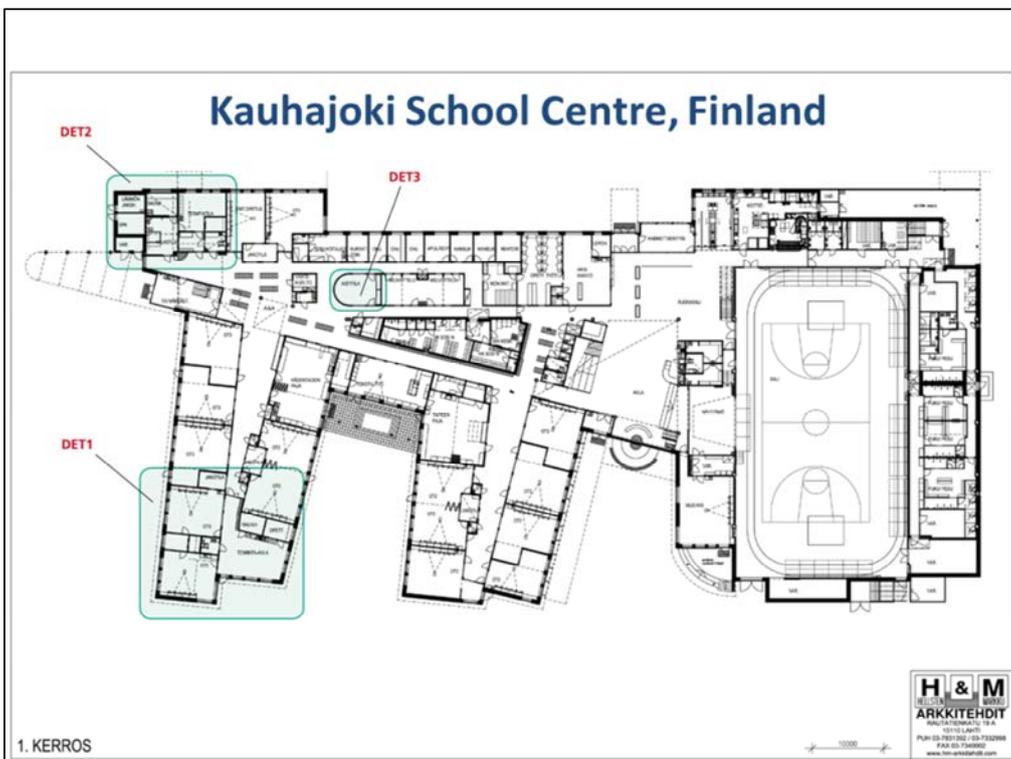


Special Education Unit

Special education units are also established to provide learning support for children who require quiet, calm environments. Units like this can also be set up at normal schools. These units have smaller classrooms for smaller numbers of students, as well as special toilets for disabled children.



This is a Valteri model for a physiotherapy and language therapy space. Any type of school can implement a space such as this one.



This is an example of special education units implemented at a normal school.

## Valteri School, Tervaväylä - Lohipato Unit, Oulu, Finland

Tervaväylä School, Lohipato Unit is a school and dormitory for disabled and neurologically ill children. The school provides a wide range of therapies and support for disabled children and their families, offers temporary education for disabled children placed in local schools and also provides support and training for teachers, therapists and parents.

All students have physical disabilities, so they move around in wheelchairs or other assistive devices. Some also have other sensory impairments. Special attention is paid to students' environmental management and accessibility. The floor plans are simple, following the L-shaped structure of the building, with wide corridors to ease the movement. Three large drive-through elevators are used for students' internal traffic.

Next, I will showcase two new facilities in the Valteri Network. These facilities were only recently established. First is the Lohipato Unit established at the Tervaväylä School in the city of Oulu. This is a school and dormitory for disabled and neurologically ill children that provides a wide variety of therapies and support for disabled children and their families. Even disabled children who attend low-cost schools can be taught here temporarily. In the event that children will receive short-term special support, they can learn at this facility for a certain period before returning to their local schools. All students at this facility have some physical disability, and thus wheelchairs or some other assistive equipment are used for movement. Some students here also have autonomic sensory disabilities.



The next two slides show a photograph of the school at night and a rough sketch of the school. The school is located in the heart of the city of Oulu. It is a multistory building.

## Tervaväylä School, Oulu



Although the building looks complex at first glance, it is in fact very simple.

### Ground Floor



This is the ground floor of the building, shown here in a very simple sketch. This sketch shows the front entrance, the entrance lobby, the cafeteria, the gymnasium, and the rehabilitation pool.

## 1st Floor

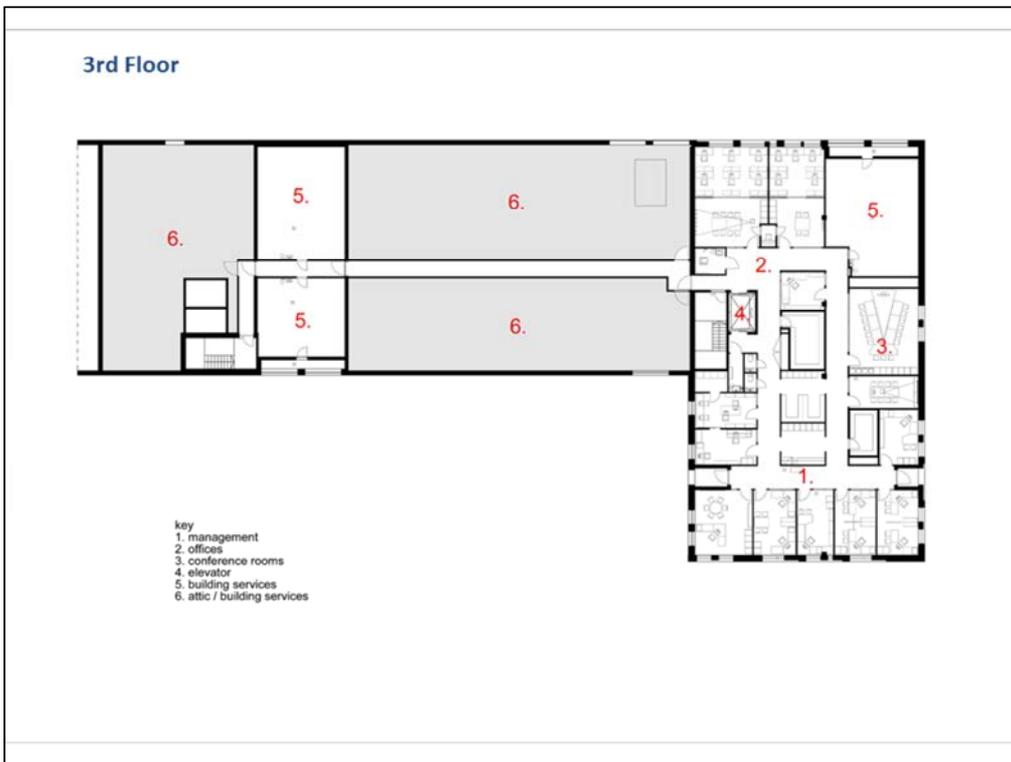


The first floor contains living space for students and family members who will be staying at the school for a long period.

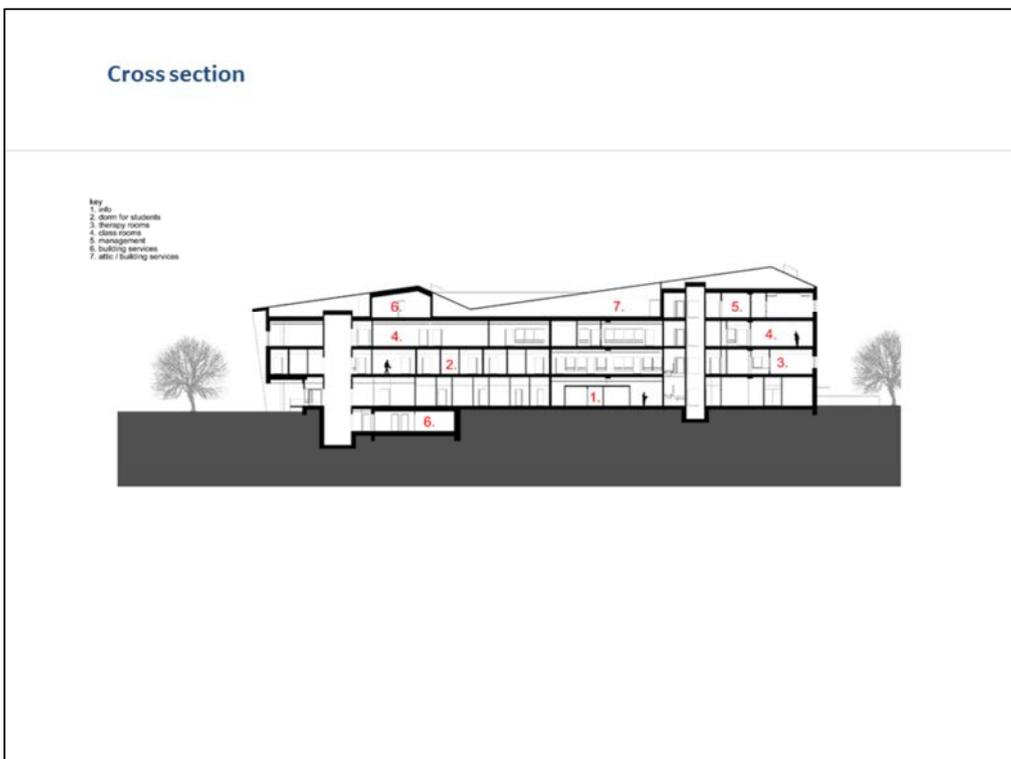
## 2nd Floor



The second floor contains special classrooms such as the arts and crafts room.



The third floor contains offices. As a whole, the building is rectangular in shape and of safe design.



This diagram shows a cross-section of the building.



The building looks very complicated from outside. It is a beautiful-looking building.



Five years ago, this building was featured in the “Compendium of Exemplary Educational Facilities” published by the OECD.



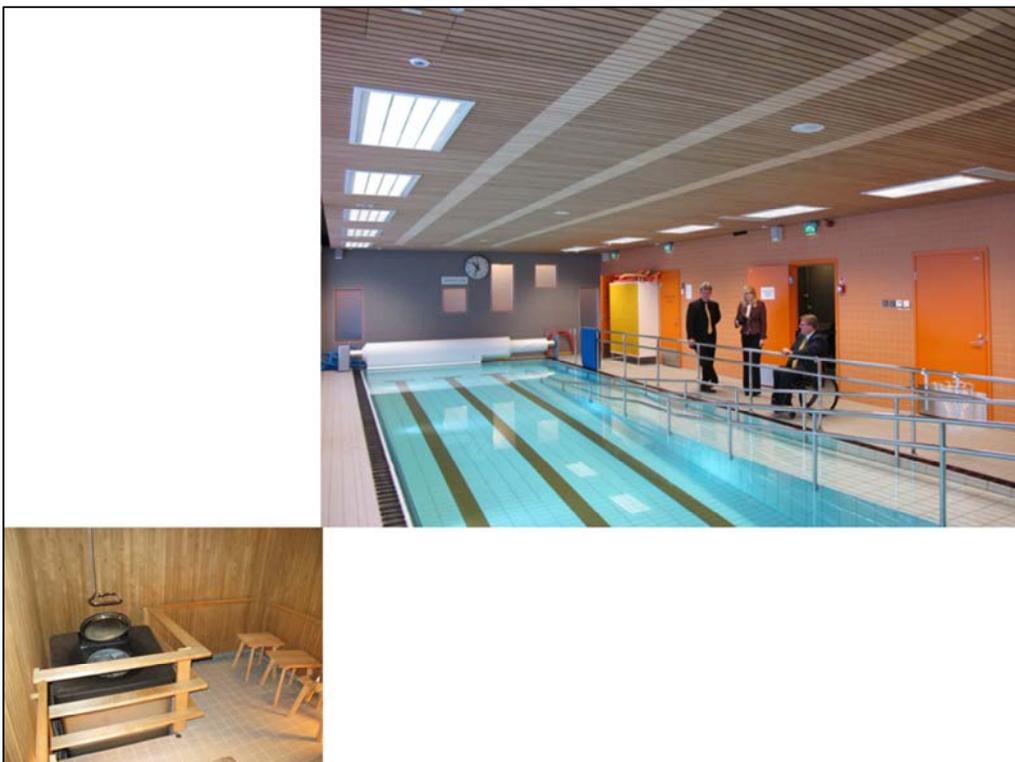
These next two slides are photographs of the school cafeteria. Typically in Finnish schools, cafeterias are extremely open and expansive spaces. It is also necessary to be mindful of acoustics, of course, and this school has rather good acoustics.



In this photograph, individual guidance is being provided to students. Dedicated teaching staff and assistants are assigned to almost all students, and so for a group of 40 students, there will be more than twice as many teaching staff and assistants. The ratio of students to teachers is completely different from a normal school. Each student receives individualized support. All students have mobility- or motor skills-related disabilities and thus use wheelchairs.



Here a student is learning in a classroom. There is only one student shown in this photograph. The other three people are teaching staff and assistants. For this reason, there are many different ideas afloat pertaining to learning assistance.



This is a photograph of the school's rehabilitation pool. Obviously, Finnish schools must also be equipped with saunas.

### Valteri School Onerva, Jyväskylä, Finland

Valteri School Onerva is one of the six units of the state-owned Valteri School. As a special school, Onerva is in charge of providing pre-primary, basic and voluntary additional basic education for pupils who need special support due to difficulties related to vision, hearing or language. Onerva also offers accommodation services for pupils who live at a distance.

Education at Valteri School Onerva is based on a curriculum that complies with the national core curriculum. Each pupil gets an individual educational plan (IEP, in Finnish HOJKS).

In addition to educational staff, the multidisciplinary group that works with pupils includes rehabilitation experts and employees of the school's residential home.

At Onerva, education is combined with rehabilitation and guidance that support learning to form a seamless whole. The guiding principle in all school activities is rehabilitative everyday life. The residential home is thus also a learning environment. Its diverse leisure activities and homelike environment are an essential part of pupils' holistic rehabilitation.

Another new special support school in the Valteri Network is the Onerva school located in the city of Jyväskylä, Finland. Construction on the school was completed in December, but school operations only began two weeks ago. As one of the six units of the Valteri School, this unit provides basic education in preparation for entering school and voluntary additional basic education for students who require assistance due to visual, hearing, or language disabilities. There are many students at this school who suffer from autism. It also features fully furnished accommodation facilities for students coming from distant locations.



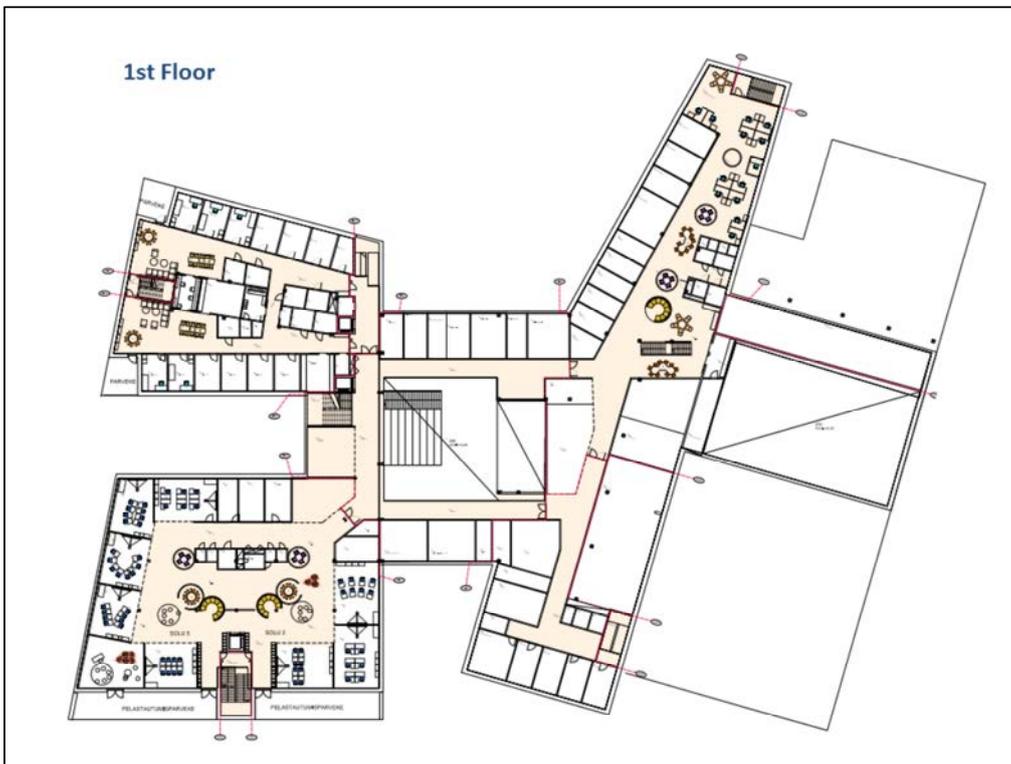
This is a bird's-eye overview of the facility.



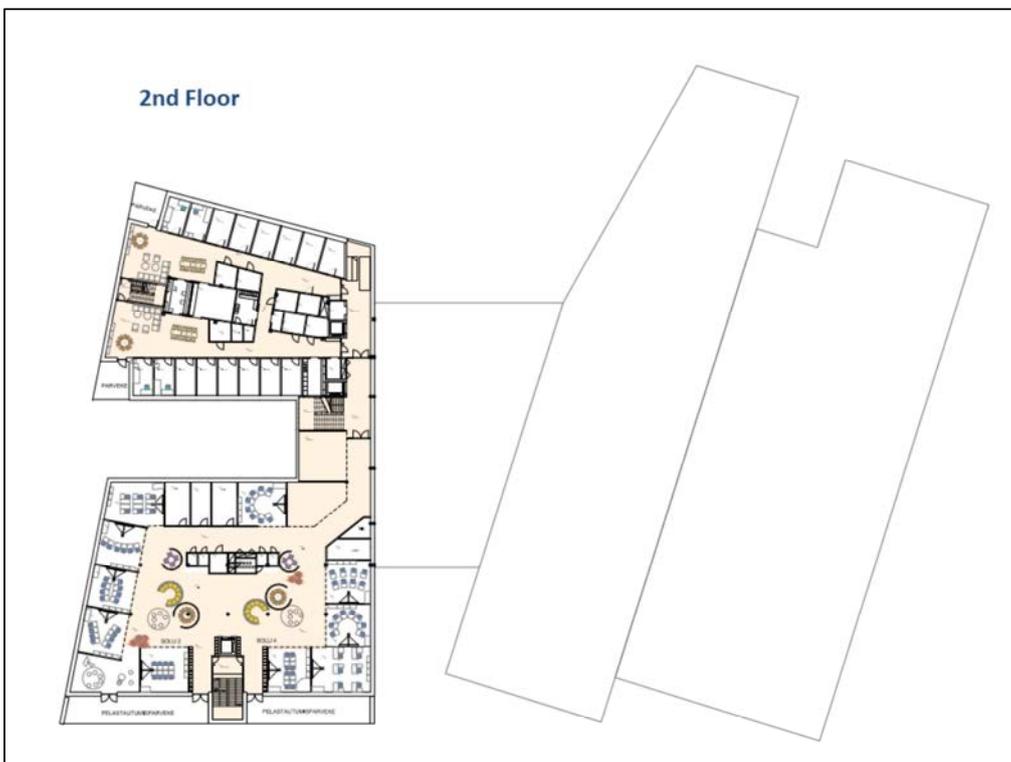
This is a site plan for the facility. There is an extremely active playing field located to the south side of the facility.







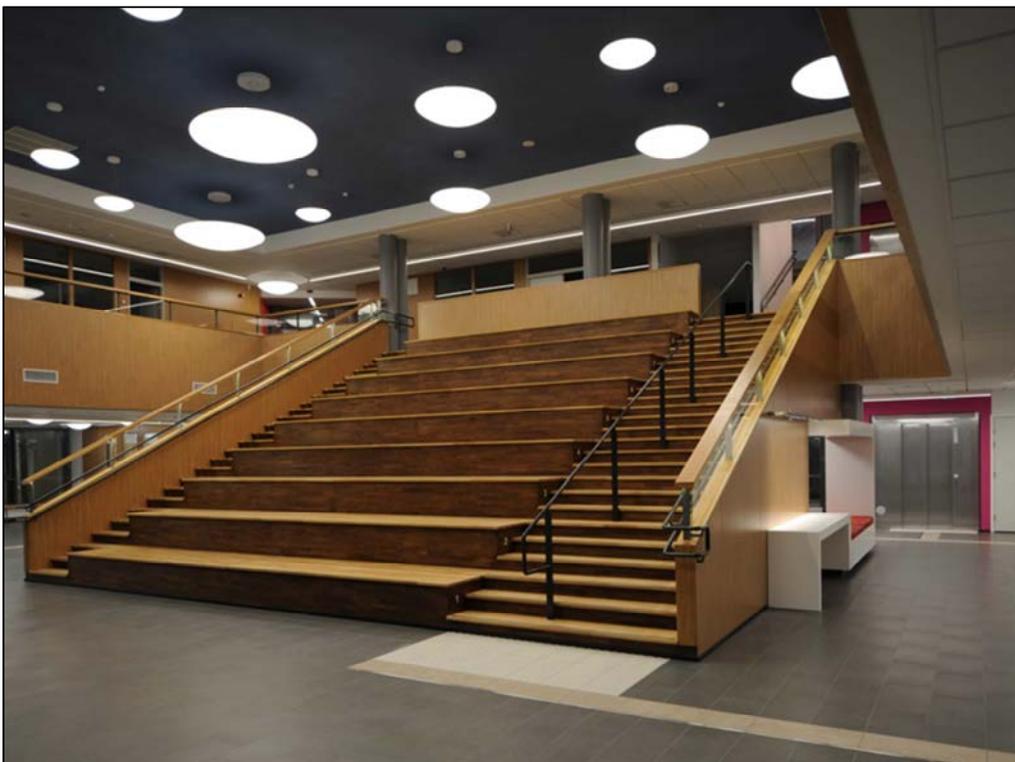
This is the first floor of the facility. This area can also be freely opened up to connect classrooms with lodging rooms. Also on this floor are more offices as well as therapy and counselling rooms.



The second floor also contains lodging rooms and classrooms.



Here is the exterior of the facility. It is an extremely beautiful new facility and we are very proud of it. It was just finished last week. We had used an impromptu temporary facility until this building's completion, and thus the students seemed very happy with the new building.



This is the lobby area with an auditorium. This school is attended by students with visual and hearing disabilities, and thus the use of color and contrast is extremely important here. The elevators are marked with bright colors to make them stand out, and the auditorium uses contrasting coloring to make the stairs easier to identify. Paths and routes are made very clear and easy to understand on the floors.



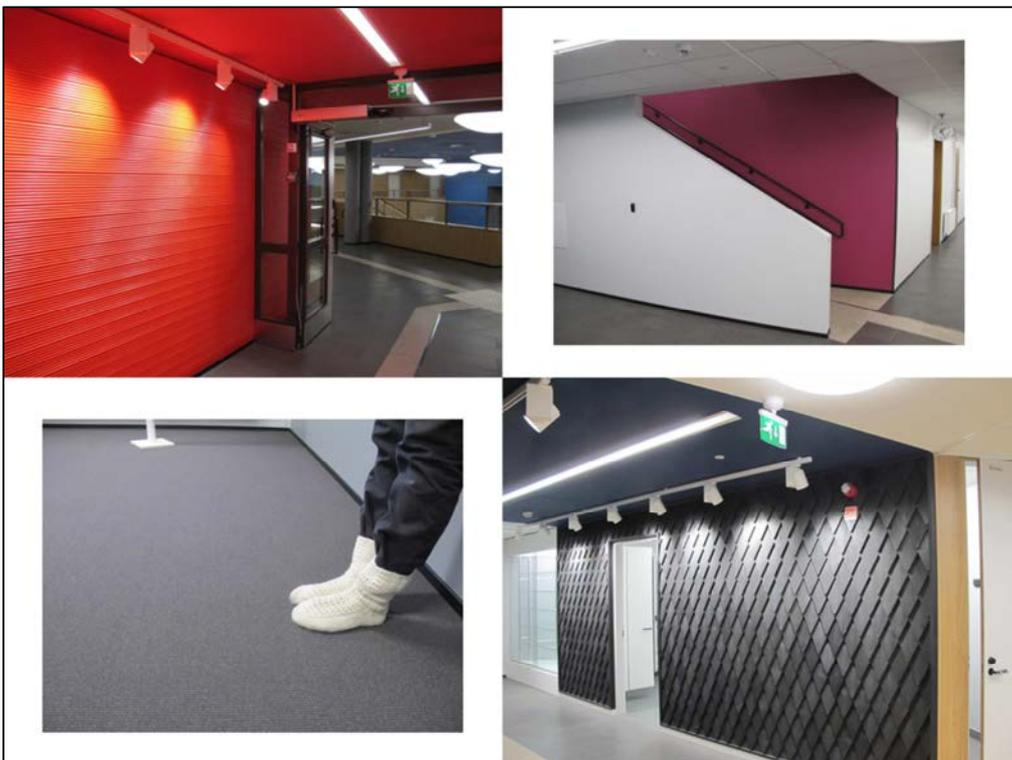
This is a fireplace. This is the front entrance to the school. Creative touches can be found used throughout the school to promote learning. For example, there are numbers written on the stairs that help students learn about increasing numbers. In a variety of ways, school equipment and facilities themselves are utilized as learning and teaching tools.



This is a hallway. Wheelchairs can be stored at the sides of the hallway. The flooring uses clear and distinct coloring and materials, which can help serve as guides for visually impaired children walking with the aid of white canes. At crossroads, it is easy to tell when a path is for a different facility, and it is easy to change directions if necessary.



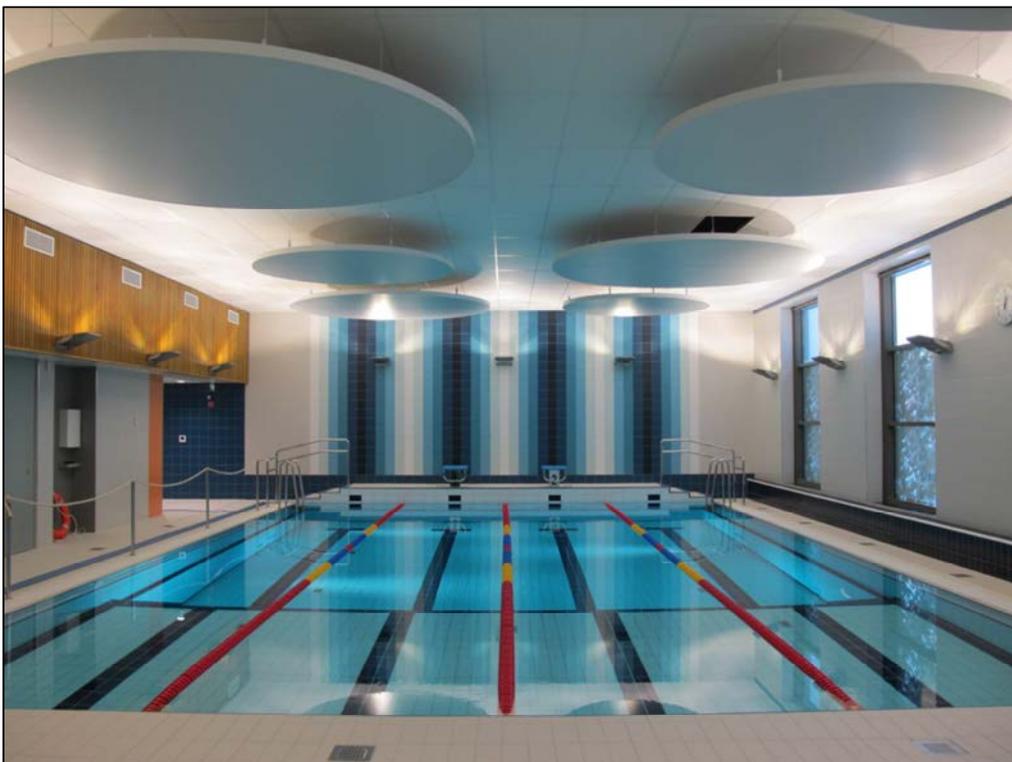
Speakers are installed in the ceiling. These speaker send signals to students pertaining to where they are currently located. For example, if you were to hear the sound of tableware from the speakers, it would mean that you are close to the kitchen. If you heard balls bouncing, you would know you are near the gymnasium. This is the pattern used on the floor.



Each area utilizes a variety of creative methods to make itself conspicuous and help students realize immediately that they have come to another location. This is the “red area,” which uses different materials from other areas. Measures have been taken to try to make the stairs really stand out.



All classrooms are of an “open” style of design. There is also a play area. The children each have their own cups decorated with Moomin characters that they use to drink juice. From what I hear, Moomin is also popular in Japan.



This is the rehabilitation pool.



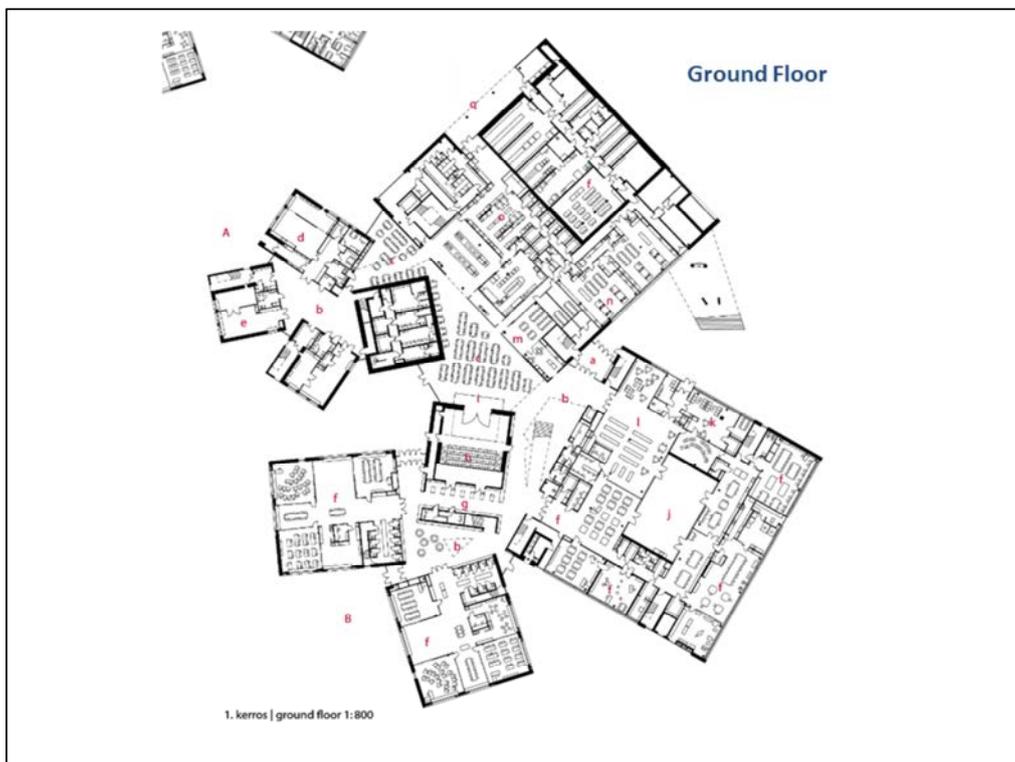
Next I will discuss two comprehensive schools newly established in the cities of Espoo and Helsinki. This is a modern architectural trend seen in the construction of new large schools. This is a new residential area in Espoo.



An architecture competition was conducted for the design of a comprehensive school with a capacity of 1,000 students. Comprehensive schools are multipurpose in nature, fully equipped with a kindergarten, primary schools providing basic education, a library, an auditorium, and a gymnasium. This facility is usable by any area residents.



This is a model of the facility.



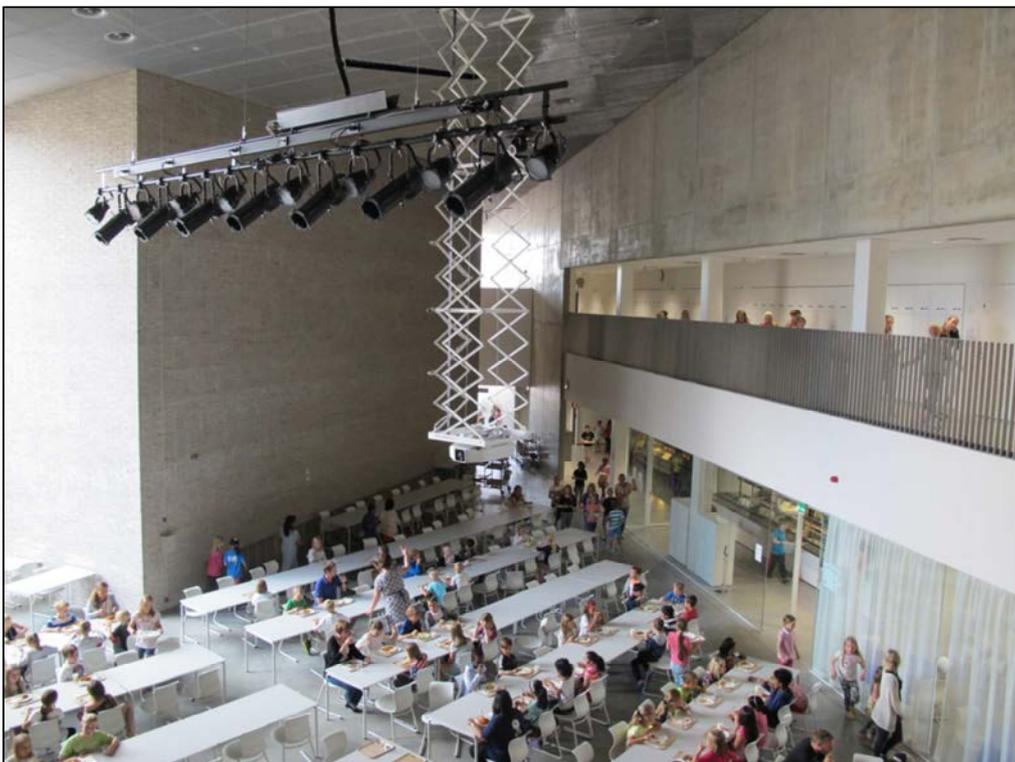
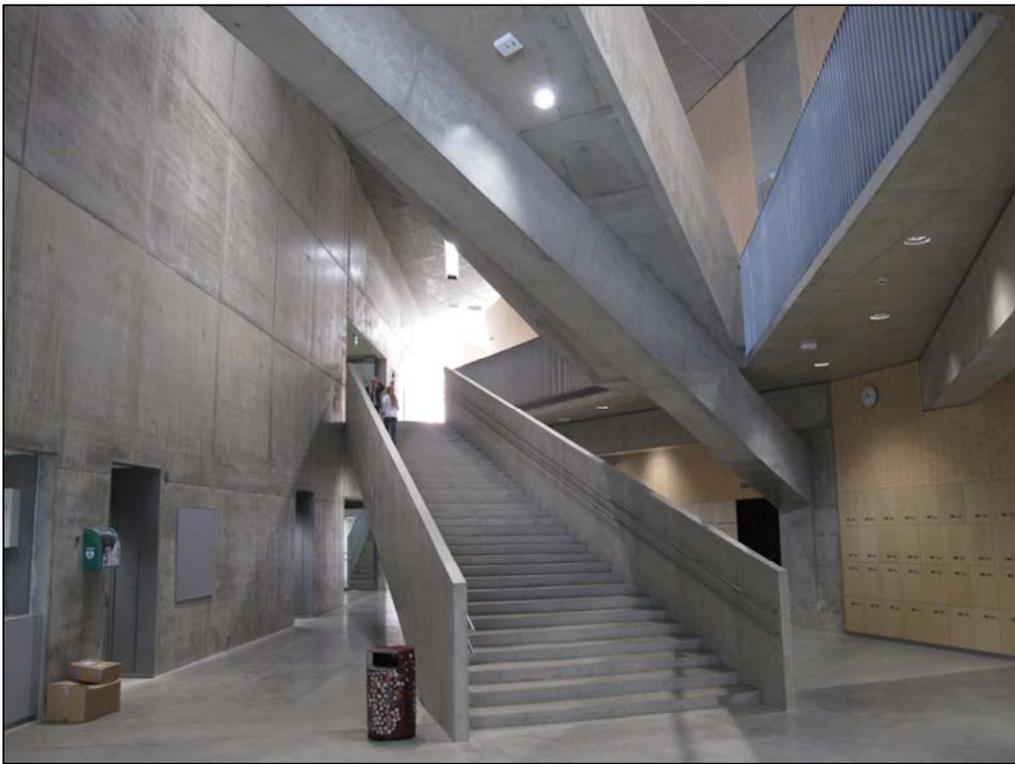
This is a rough sketch of the school. Seen here are the kindergarten, nursery school, primary schools teaching basic education, library, auditorium, cafeteria, and finally arts and crafts and other special classrooms.



This is the first floor. The gymnasium is here.



These next two photographs show the school exterior and the main lobby. The plan is to lay large fabric materials here to improve the quality of acoustics in the area. When this photograph was taken, the room was still under construction.



These are photographs of the cafeteria and lobby area. It is clearly a very transparent space. The use of many glass walls enables one to see what is happening on the other side of the school.



This is a space located between classrooms. By opening the sliding doors, the entire area can be opened up into a large open space.



These rooms are divided by curtains rather than walls.



There is an extremely active play area located outside.

## Kastelli Community Centre, Oulu

Completed 2014, Lahdelma & Mahlamäki Architects



The second school is similar to the large school in Oulu, but this one was completed two years ago. This is also a comprehensive school with a capacity of 1,000 students.





This rough sketch of the facility is also very similar to that of the other school. There is a home base area for the kindergarten and primary schools providing basic education. There are also sports facilities.



This rough sketch shows how the school was designed.



The next four slides contain photographs of the building exterior, the main lobby, the front entrance interior, and the school's classrooms.







Next I will discuss the architecture competition, the results of which were announced in the autumn of last year. There is a new suburban area in Helsinki with a population of 20,000 people, and there was a need to build a new school for this area.



Thus, there was an architecture competition held for the construction of this school. These next few slides will share some of the proposals received from architects.



This is a different proposal for a different project.



Some people have said that this looks more like a concert hall or a theater than a school.

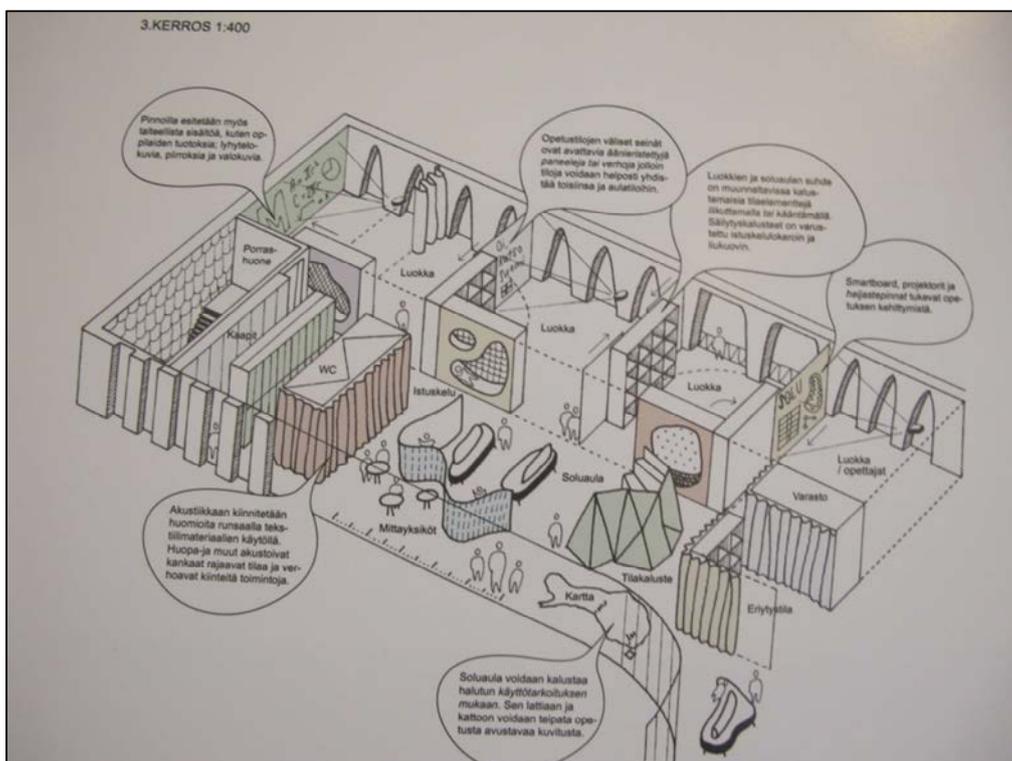


It is increasingly common for Finnish schools to have spacious, expansive lobby areas that are used for a variety of purposes.

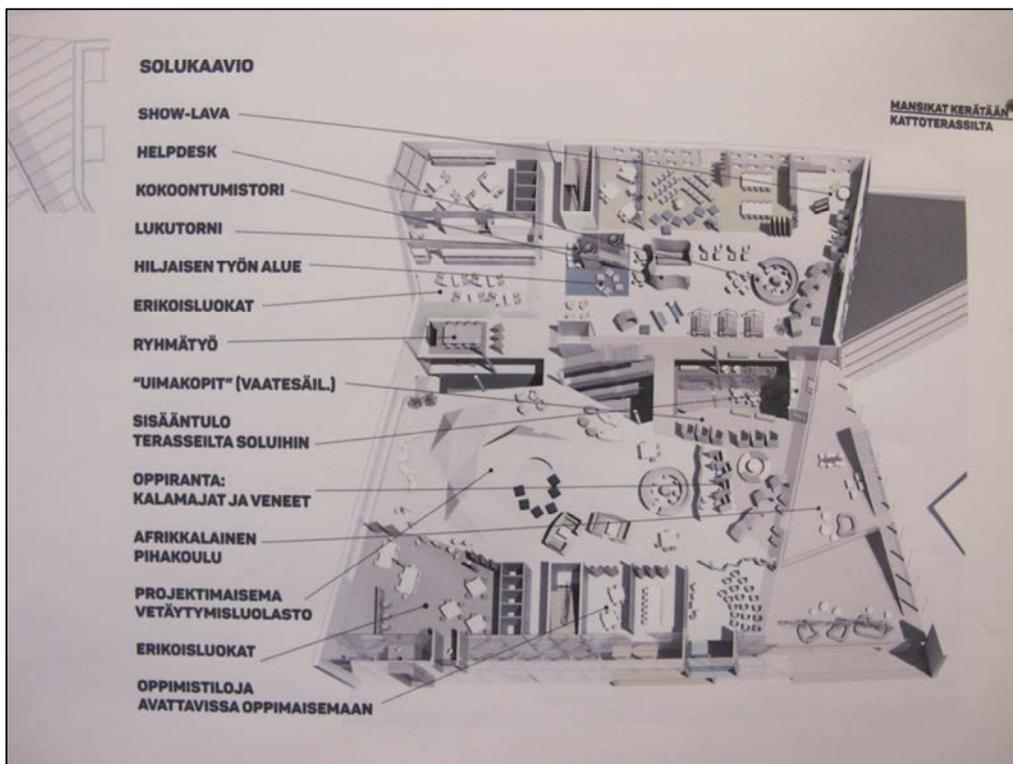




This is a current trend in Finnish architecture, and a tendency that has been growing over time. Opening up the spaces means that the individual classrooms gradually fade away.



Each room is opened up to create one large hall.

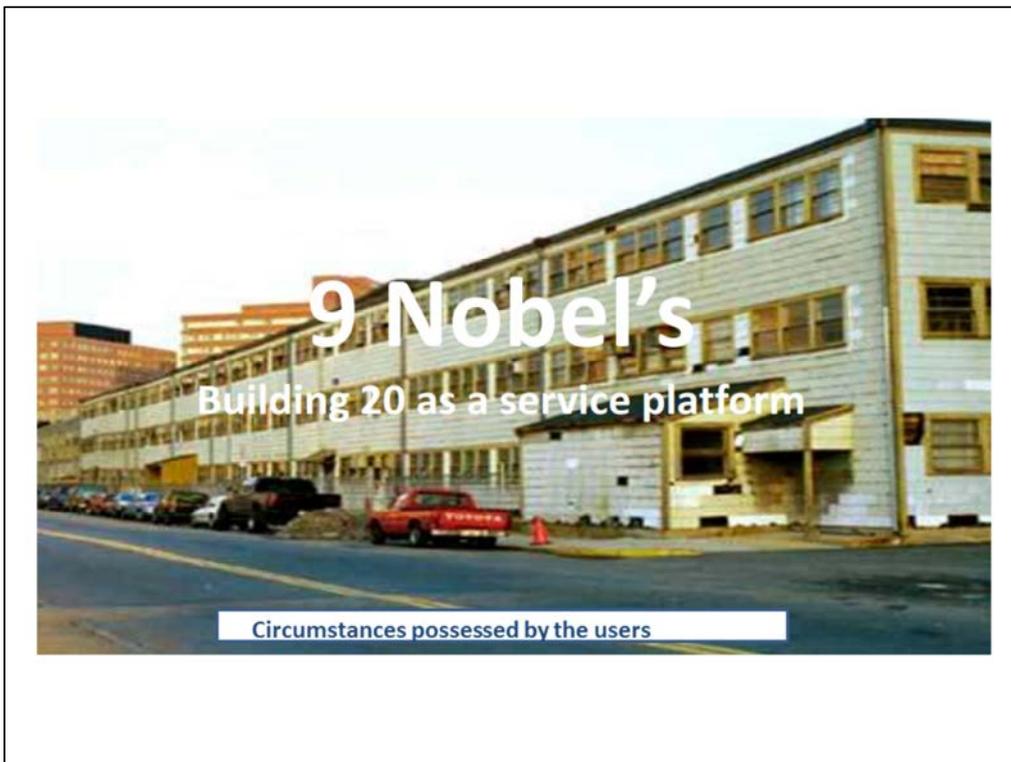


This slide shows another example of this trend. Individual classrooms disappear, leaving only a large “learning environment” in which a variety of activities are possible.

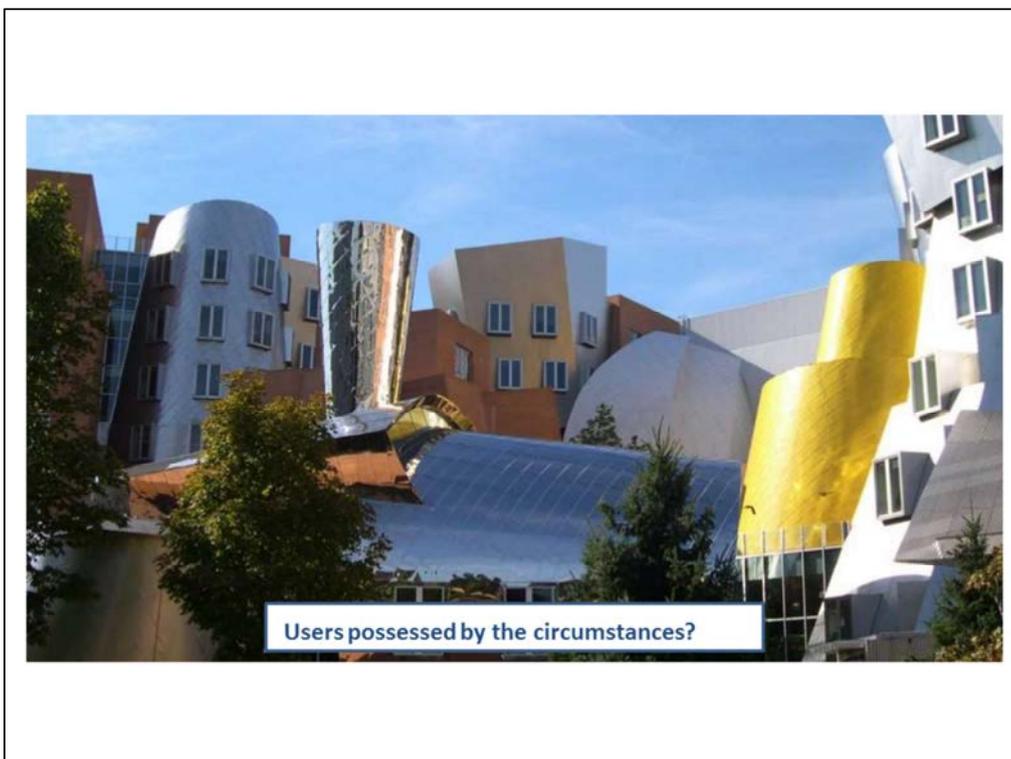
**What if the school is not  
a product, place or a  
building...**

**... but a service?**

A school is a massive investment. Finland’s economy is on a downturn, and it is not possible to build such expensive school buildings under present circumstances. As seen in the last example, schools in the past have been extremely expensive, and there is a need now especially to rethink schools in general. As a proposal or experiment to that end, I will next introduce the following idea: that a school is not one product, building, or place, but rather it is a service.

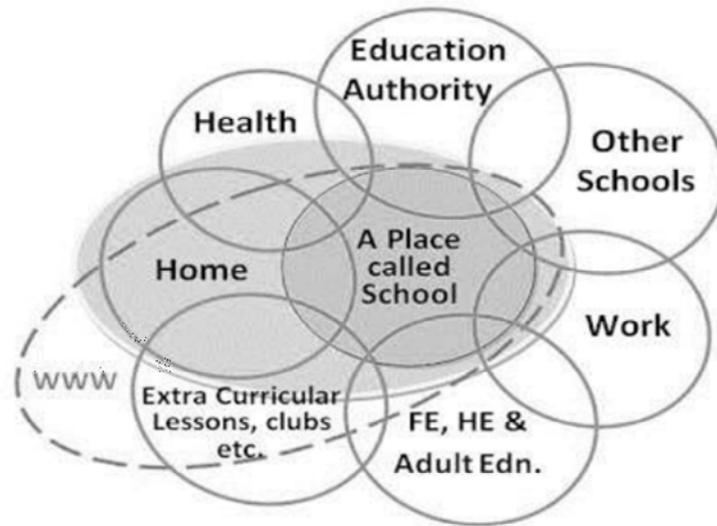


This is a shabby industrial building located in the United States. Many famous Nobel Prize winners have emerged from the team that worked here—from those that worked in this ugly, dirty building. Does the appearance of a building really change the output of the activities conducted inside? Or is the appearance of the building irrelevant?

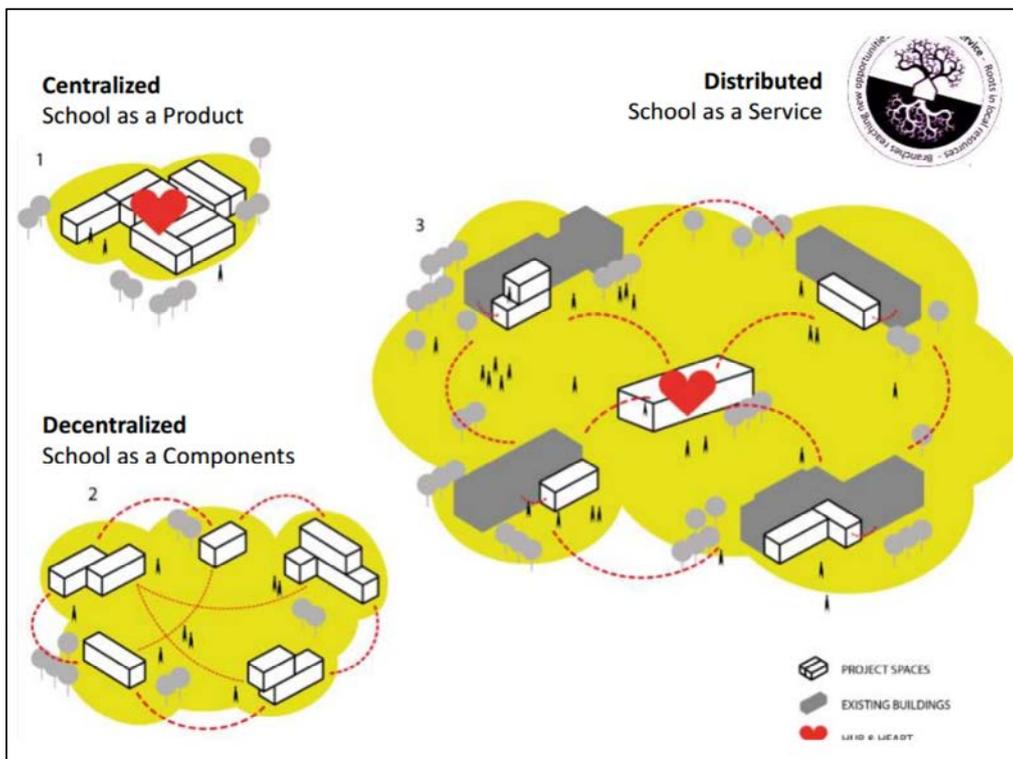


The ugly building was demolished and this building was built instead. No Nobel Prize winners have emerged from this building.

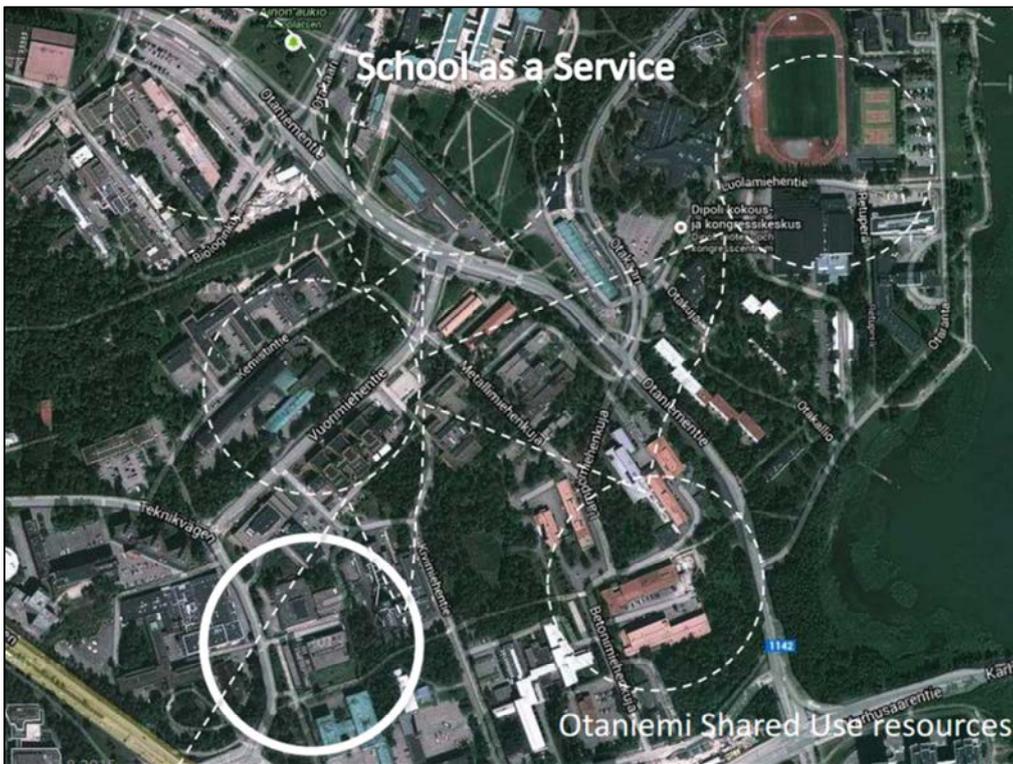
# Where does the learning take place?



There is a need to think about where “learning” is born and takes place. Learning does not need to emerge or take place at a school, but can also emerge in the home or a variety of other places.



Teaching staff and architects typically view a school as one product, place, and building. That is the typical image of a school. However, it is also possible to view schools as consisting of several decentralized components, or as distributed services that rely on an existing service. Because there are already existing services in local regional communities and local governments, the communities use just these services. Is a building really required for a school?



Here I will provide the example of the Otaniemi district of Helsinki. This is the campus of the Aalto University School of Chemical Technology, designed by Finnish architect Alvar Aalto. The city of Espoo set up a temporary school facility here for schools undergoing remodeling. This means that they constructed a temporary facility here. The school made use of the university's existing services, such as its laboratories, gymnasium, and auditorium. It is here that we can see a solution to our question. There is no need to construct a new school building. We should simply use existing facilities instead.



What would happen if we put a school on a subway train? This may be a strange idea, but it has actually been tested. There is a very short subway in Helsinki. In considering ideas for a high school, someone suggested the idea of using the subway as a school. Each numbered car of the subway train would be used for a certain grade, and the train would stop at certain stations, such as Matinkylä Station (where there is a swimming pool and sports hall) and Kivenlahti Station (where there is a library). The subway would be a school. Students would make use of the existing services in their local regional community. This may well be the future of schooling in Finland.

**Thank you !**  
**どうもありがとうございました!**



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Thank you for listening.

# Finnish Inclusive Education System



Ms. Aya Watanabe

Associate Professor, Tsuda College

# Finnish Inclusive Education System

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Aya Wabanabe  
Associate Professor, Tsuda College

I have been researching Finland's education system and policies for nearly 20 years. In that time, I have been given a variety of opportunities simply by researching the country of Finland and education there, and for that reason I felt that I need to give something back to Finland at some point. Today, I hope that I can work to build a sort of bridge that will bring Japan and Finland together.

## Agenda

1

What is inclusive education?

2

The situation surrounding inclusive education

3

Changes surrounding inclusive education

I will begin with an explanation of what “inclusive education” means. Then I will advance to a description of the situation surrounding inclusive education, and finally I will conclude with the changes surrounding inclusive education, focusing primarily on Finland. I have been given this opportunity to present on inclusive education as education policy and education system at this seminar held by the National Institute for Educational Policy Research's Educational Facilities Research Center. I will also be comparing the situations in Finland and Japan, and sharing my thoughts on all of these matters.

## What is inclusive education?

### Central Council for Education

“A system that enables children with and without disabilities to study together under the aim of developing respect for the differences in people and maximally developing the mental and physical abilities of children regardless of the presence or absence of disabilities, and to realize a free society in which every person can effectively participate.”

Special Committee on the Future Direction of special education of the Subdivision on Elementary and Secondary Education of the Central Council for Education (2012). “Promotion of special support aimed at forming an inclusive education system for building a convivial society (report)”

What is inclusive education? As stated at the beginning, the definition used by the Central Council for Education is extremely well-known in Japan. This definition defines it as “a system that enables children with and without disabilities to study together.” This is a domestic Japanese context, but of course there is no need for me to state that there is much work on inclusive education being done internationally as well.

## What is inclusive education?

### Salamanca Statement

- Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning,
- Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs,
- Education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs,
- Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs
- Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

The statement or declaration that established that basic line was the Salamanca Statement. This is recognized to have set in motion the path that led to today's special education.

## What is inclusive education?

### UNESCO

- Inclusion: “a dynamic approach of responding positively to pupil diversity and of seeing individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning.” (UNESCO, 2005)
- Inclusive education: It is “appropriately responding to a wide range of learning needs in regular/irregular educational environments.” Also, “rather than the peripheral issue of how to integrate some learners (with special needs) into mainstream education, it is a direction of exploring how to transform the educational system as a whole to cope with learner diversity.”

An “inclusive” education system can only be created if ordinary schools become more inclusive (UNESCO, 2009)

I would also like to introduce another definition provided by UNESCO. This is not a definition of inclusive education, but rather a definition of what circumstances constitute “inclusion.” Here, the inclusive approach and state of affairs is taken to mean an active appreciation of diversity. Although conventional approaches emphasized acceptance, this definition takes the next step, including a diverse array of circumstances—not limiting itself to disabilities, but including various other circumstances such as social minorities, or the recently topical immigrants or refugees and other such children with international backgrounds.

With this, how are we to interpret an inclusive education system and UNESCO’s “inclusion”? In inclusion, an “inclusive” state of affairs is the end goal or target. I believe this is where the idea of children with and without disabilities learning together comes into play from Japan’s definition of inclusive education, as a method of arriving at that goal.

## Is Finnish education “inclusive?”

Next I will discuss the question of whether Finnish education is “inclusive”.

# UNESCO “Guidelines for Inclusion”(2005)

## Inclusion IS about:

- welcoming diversity
- benefiting all learners, not only targeting the excluded
- children in school who may feel excluded
- providing equal access to education or making certain provisions for certain categories of children without excluding them

Source: UNESCO (2005)

## Inclusion is NOT about:

- reforms of special education alone, but reform of both the formal and non-formal education system
- responding only to diversity, but also improving the quality of education for all learners
- special schools but perhaps additional support to students within the regular school system
- meeting the needs of children with disabilities only
- meeting one child’s needs at the expense of another child

Here I will once again introduce the UNESCO definition. Roughly ten years ago in 2005, UNSECO explained inclusion in terms of what it is and what it is not. In this, they stated that inclusion means to welcome diversity; to benefit all learners and not just the excluded; to include children in school who may feel excluded; and to provide equal access to education without excluding any particular children.

On the other hand, what is NOT inclusion? It is not inclusion when, for example, reforms are performed on special education alone, without performing reforms on the whole education system, including both formal and non-formal education systems. It is also not inclusion when only diversity is addressed, without improving the quality of education for all learners. After all, a prerequisite for this system is that it benefits everyone. Additionally, establishing special schools and not providing additional support within a normal school system means to create a place for implementing special education. Finally, the fourth point refers to addressing only the needs of disabled children, the relevance of which to the whole is something that is considered. If certain children are sacrificed in order to meet the needs of other children, then that is not inclusion. This is the definition of “inclusion,” or perhaps the guidelines for it. With this as our start and guide, I would now like to take a look at Finnish education. However, more than approaching this like a check list or report card, advancing through each point one by one, I will put forth concepts that exist as points of discussion internationally and consider Finnish education from a Japanese perspective.

## Finnish “inclusive education”

### The current situation of inclusive education

- Conceptual foundation
- The history of special education
- The current situation of special education

### Changes surrounding inclusive education

- Reform of the special education system
- Reform of public administration and finance of education
- School consolidation

# Finnish “inclusive education”

## The current situation of inclusive education

- Conceptual foundation
- The history of special education
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## Changes surrounding inclusive education

- Reform of the special education system
- Reform of public administration and finance of education
- School consolidation

Next I will explain current situation of inclusive education.

## Conceptual foundation

The current situation of inclusive education (1)

1

First, regarding the conceptual foundations of inclusive education, Mr. Tapaninen discussed this very comprehensively and in great detail in his talk, so I will abbreviate this section somewhat.

The current situation of inclusive education (1)

## Conceptual foundation

### Section 6 - Equality

- Everyone is equal before the law.
- No one shall, without an acceptable reason, be treated differently from other persons on the grounds of sex, age, origin, language, religion, conviction, opinion, health, disability or other reason that concerns his or her person.
- Children shall be treated equally and as individuals and they shall be allowed to influence matters pertaining to themselves to a degree corresponding to their level of development.

Source: National Diet Library Research and Legislative Reference Bureau (2015). "Constitutions of the world (9)—Finland" (Basic Information Series 18)



One of the conceptual foundations of inclusive education is its legal basis. For example, the concept of equality as expressed in Finland's constitution.

The current situation of inclusive education (1)

## Conceptual foundation

### Section 16 - Educational rights

- Everyone has the right to basic education free of charge. Provisions on the duty to receive education are laid down by an Act.
- The public authorities shall, as provided in more detail by an Act, guarantee for everyone equal opportunity to receive other educational services in accordance with their ability and special needs, as well as the opportunity to develop themselves without being prevented by economic hardship.

National Diet Library Research and Legislative Reference Bureau (2015). "Constitutions of the world (9)—Finland" (Basic Information Series 18)



Additionally, among the educational rights that people have is the right to equal opportunity, or the right to receive an education suited to their ability or individual needs.

The current situation of inclusive education (1)

## Conceptual foundation

### Basic Education Act: Section 3

- Education shall be **governed by a unified national core curriculum** in accordance with this Act.
- **Education shall be provided according to the pupil's age and capabilities** and so as to promote healthy growth and development in the pupil. (Amendment 477/2003)
- Those providing education shall cooperate with pupils' parents/carers.



The same sort of language can be found in Japan's Basic Act on Education, which in my opinion is extremely similar. It is also written in the Basic Education Act, which is the comprehensive law pertaining to the basic education stage of education. This also states that education shall be governed by a unified National Core Curriculum.

The current situation of inclusive education (1)

## Conceptual foundation

### Legal provisions

Constitution Sections 6 & 16  
Basic Education Act Section 3

### Comprehensive school model

A school model that holds up "all children learning under one roof," adopted in the 1970s under educational policies that take equality as their basis

**"The principle of inclusion" in Finland**

Source: Eurydice: Finland (<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php>) (retrieved October 1, 2015).

This legal framework constitutes one of the conceptual foundations. Another of the foundations is a comprehensive school model, which was even heavily publicized in Japan due to the high scores achieved on the Programme for International Student Assessment. The actual school is called a *peruskoulu*, or "basic school." This comprehensive school model wherein a variety of students learn together under one roof is another of inclusive education's conceptual foundations. These are the basic principles of "inclusion" in Finland, and such language can be found in the reference materials collected by the Finnish National Board of Education.

# The history of special education

The current situation of inclusive education (2)

# 2

Next I would like to take a look at the history of special education.

The current situation of inclusive education (2)

## The history of special education: Before the establishment of comprehensive schools

### Period 1: 1840 to 1921

The first schools for pupils with hearing impairments, visual impairments and motor impairments were established in the 1840s, the 1860s and the 1890s, respectively. A national school system was set up in 1866 and attendance was subsequently made compulsory, but children with disabilities were exempted.

### Period 2: 1921 to the end of WWII

The Compulsory Education Act enacted in 1921 made it compulsory for all children to be given an education, but an exemption clause was established for children with intellectual disabilities and they were left out of compulsory education.

### Period 3: From the end of WWII to the 1970s

In addition to medical care and rehabilitation, vocational rehabilitation was developed and progress was made in increasing the amount of education for the disabled and in making its content more specialized. The principle of normalization and the philosophy of integration were introduced from Sweden.

Source: National Board of Education. (2001) *Education in Finland*.

Finland, or really all of northern Europe generally, has an image of being advanced in all aspects of education. Especially when it comes to topics such as special education, it is often assumed that northern Europe is definitely more advanced. Of course, there are some dimensions in which this is the case, but I feel that there are also many aspects in which Finland and northern Europe share a common context with Japan. For example, historically, it is said that special education got its start in Japan in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In roughly the same time period, Finland's history of special education also began. As it gradually progressed, the compulsory education system took shape. In the midst of that progression, the treatment of children with disabilities progressed in a gradual manner by degrees, as can be seen in this slide. The Compulsory Education Act of 1921 is represented as the second period on this slide. In this law, it was established that all children have an obligation to receive an education, but an exemption clause was established for children with intellectual disabilities. They were left out of compulsory education. After the end of the Second World War, the amount of education for the disabled gradually increased, and the major developments that took place and led to modern special education were also passed on to Finland. In particular, it seems that these developments spread to Finland from Sweden and other neighboring countries.

The current situation of inclusive education (2)

## The history of special education: After the establishment of Comprehensive schools

1980s

- With the 1983 "Comprehensive Schools Act," in principle all children became subject to compulsory education. However, regarding children with intellectual disabilities, with the Special Care Act for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, provisions were established for alternative education (care).
- With the 1985 "National Core Curriculum," possibilities were opened up for education that meets the individual needs of children/pupils. Regarding special education, a curriculum standard separate from that of basic education was formed.

1990s

- Partly because of the influence of the Salamanca Declaration and other international trends, movements toward the construction of an inclusive education system gained momentum (the integration of a core curriculum, etc.).
- The education for children with severe intellectual disabilities that had been carried out by the social welfare administration was repositioned from special care to one part of basic education (1997).

Source: National Board of Education. (2001) *Education in Finland*.

In the 1980s, all children began to receive compulsory education as a general rule. In Japan, this happened perhaps in the latter half of the 1970s, although I apologize because that is not known for certain. In the 1980s, a curriculum standard was created separately from standard schools to address disabled children specifically. In the 1990s, both types of schools came to use the same core curriculum, around the time that the Salamanca Declaration and other international trends emerged. In this way, developments oriented toward the establishment of an inclusive education system were rapidly realized. In Finland, too, I think of the 1990s as being one of the points of origin of the perspective of inclusive education.

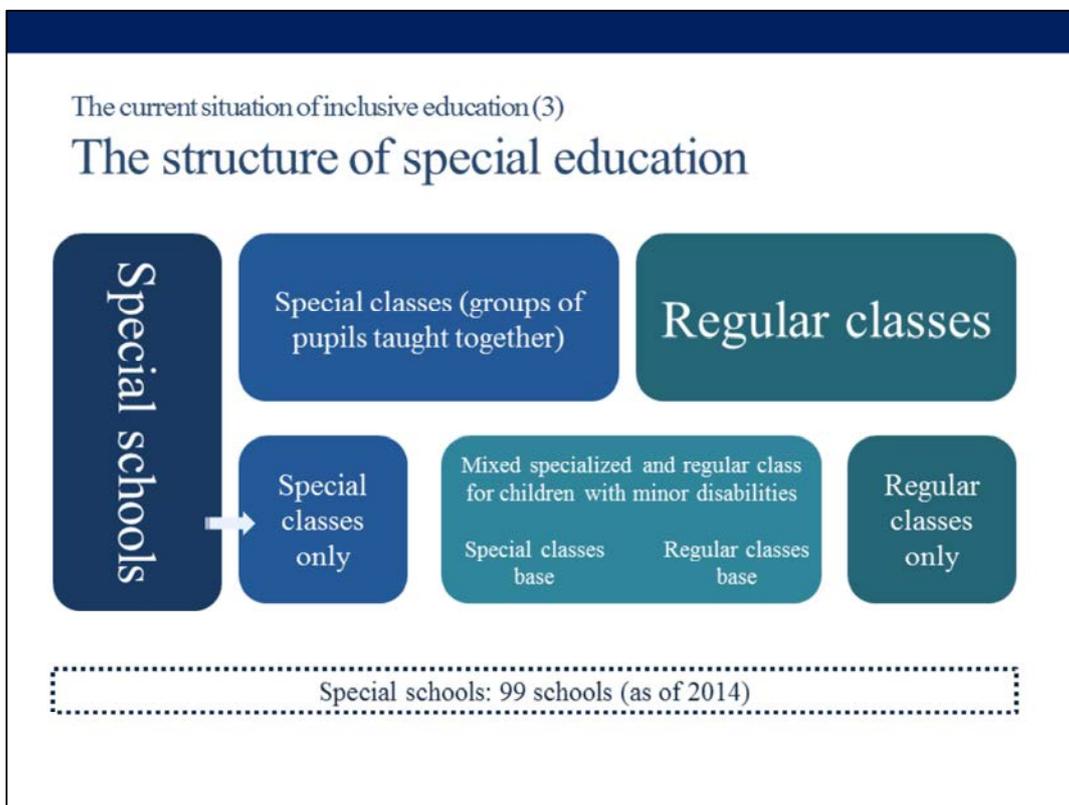
## The current situation of special education

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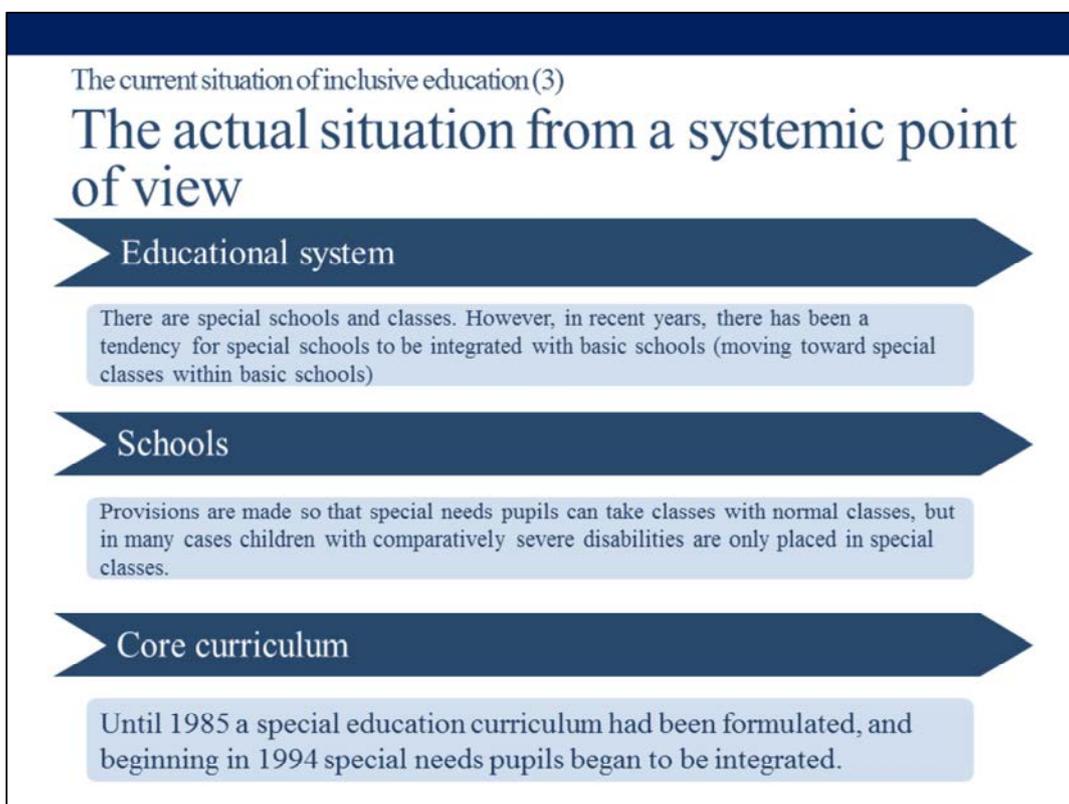
The current situation of inclusive education (3)

3

Next, I will examine the current situation of special education.



This slide provides an easy-to-understand diagram of the structure of special education. From this diagram, I think it will be clear that the structure in Finland is very similar to the one in Japan. First of all, there are students who only attend special schools. Then there are special classes, including those established within schools and children who only attend special classes. There are also students in regular classes who also receive special classes. Among such students, there are those based in special classes and those based in regular classes. Of course, there are also some integrated into regular classes. In terms of the number of special schools, as of 2014 there were 99 such schools, and I will explain changes in these numbers a little more detail later on.



From a systemic point of view, Finland has special schools and special classes. In recent years, there has been a tendency for special schools to be integrated with basic schools, but this means that there are special classes set up within basic schools. At the school level, provisions are made so that special-needs students can attend normal classes, with support both in terms of facilities and personnel. However, students with relatively severe disabilities are often placed in special classes only. As stated earlier, special needs has been integrated into the National Core Curriculum as a general rule since 1994.

## Finnish “inclusive education”

### The current situation of inclusive education

- Conceptual foundation
- The history of special education
- The current situation of special education

### Changes surrounding inclusive education

- Reform of the special education system
- Reform of public administration and finance of education
- School consolidation

## Finnish “inclusive education”

### The current situation of inclusive education

- Conceptual foundation
- The history of special education
- The current situation of special education

### Changes surrounding inclusive education

- Reform of the special education system
- Reform of public administration and finance of education
- School consolidation

Next, I would like to take a look at the changes surrounding inclusive education.

# Reform of the special education system

Changes surrounding inclusive education (1)

# 1

First is the reform of the special education system.

## Traditional learning support

- **Support from teachers**  
Carried out before or after school. Carried out to overcome specific issues.
- **Support from school assistants**  
Working with someone or offering advice under the direction of a teacher
- **Support from special support instructors**  
Carrying out learning support in partnership with the homeroom teacher for children having trouble with the basics of their native language or arithmetic
- **Support from support groups**  
When children and pupils' poor academic performance and missteps in class are caused by problems outside school, a support group (made up of teachers, special support teachers, school counselors and other school staff, along with specialists outside the school such as mental health counselors and social workers) helps resolve the problem.

Before we discuss the reform of the special education system, I would first like to explain what sort of system came before it. In the past, Finland had a distinctive system called エリトウイネン・オベス, which directly translates to "special education." This term was used to refer generally to both the special education that we think of and, by a broader definition, standard support including learning assistance and living assistance. Finland's system could be said to consist of these two sides.

What sorts of support are included in special support? In terms of traditional learning support practices, there are four main patterns. First is support by the teaching staff themselves. This sort of support is conducted before or after school and aims to resolve specific problems and issues.

Second is support by school assistants. There are all kinds of assistants, including young people who have just graduated high school and those who have been working as assistants for many years. However, one can become a school assistant without having a teacher's license, and thus such assistants work under teachers, providing encouragement and advice.

The third pattern is support by special support instructors. These instructors work with homeroom teachers to provide learning support for students struggling at a basic level with subjects such as their native language and math. I would like to take a moment to explain a little more about what role exactly a special support instructor performs. As with special education, this too can be split into two main types. One type is the kind of teacher responsible for special classes who teaches at a special school, or who serves as a homeroom teacher for a special class. The other type is the type of teacher who provides learning support and fulfills that sort of role. The type of teacher described in this third pattern is more of the latter type who provides learning support.

The fourth pattern is support by support groups. Poor academic performance and problems in classes are not necessarily problem arising within school or in classes. Sometimes they are caused by problems outside of school. Support groups and systems are formed to resolve such problems. The members of such groups can of course be teaching staff and those involved in special support at schools, as well as school counselors, school social workers, and other experts. Recently in Japan and elsewhere, there are developments surrounding so-called "team schools" that attempt to further incorporate such specialists and their skills into schools, potentially creating more organizational capabilities. I believe that such initiatives have traditionally been pursued in Finland, as well.

Some of this has likely been difficult to grasp, so I would like to provide some photographs to explain in more detail.

## Instructions in regular classes Mixed specialized and regular class for children with minor disabilities

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First is after-school instruction by special support instructors. This can be thought of as supplementary in nature. In this photograph, students in supplementary classes at school use computers to play instructional game-like software to receive supplementary instruction in math. Here, a teacher responsible for special education is watching over the children as they learn.

### After-school instruction by a special support instructor



Using computers to support children in a supplemental class after school

## Instruction in a separate classroom by special support instructors



Pulling children out of class, a special support instructor gives instruction in an environment with fewer people. (A school assistant provides support.)

Next is instruction by special support instructors in a special separate classroom. These students are primary-school first graders. Upon entering a school at the first-grade level, students display extreme variation in ability with their native language, in particular. Although some children may be able to read books with ease, others are just encountering the alphabet for the first time. Further, although some children are able to simply sit down in classrooms and pay attention, others are still not accustomed to sitting and listening like this. Recently, such issues are beginning to be addressed in preschools before the children advance to school, but here we can see initiatives in place at schools, as well.

In the photograph shown here, there are five children and two teachers. Actually, there are two more teachers present who are not shown in the photo. Assistants are present to support children who have significant difficulty sitting quietly.

## Musical theater in a regular class



Next is the performance of musical theater and plays in a regular class. If you visit a Finnish school, the most striking aspect is that many classes are implemented in a creative format. Musical and musical theater classes are examples of this, and initiatives that combine multiple classes into one and emphasize rich expressiveness are conducted in a variety of forms. In this photograph, a girl in a wheelchair dances and sings together with other children, holding a drumstick-like instrument in a musical dance performance as other children play other instruments around them.

## Using equipment to learn in a regular class



This next slide shows a child with amblyopia, or lazy eye, participating in a regular class with the use of equipment. Although he is learning in a regular class, he is using a tool that expands and zooms in on objects. This photo is rather old, and its age is likely apparent from the thickness of the monitor and similar elements. Equipment like this is regularly used even at public schools as special-needs students learn together with other children.

## Reform of the special education system

March  
14, 2006

The Ministry of Education appointed a steering group to prepare for a long-term strategy for the development of special education in the stages of pre-primary and basic education.

Nov. 5,  
2007

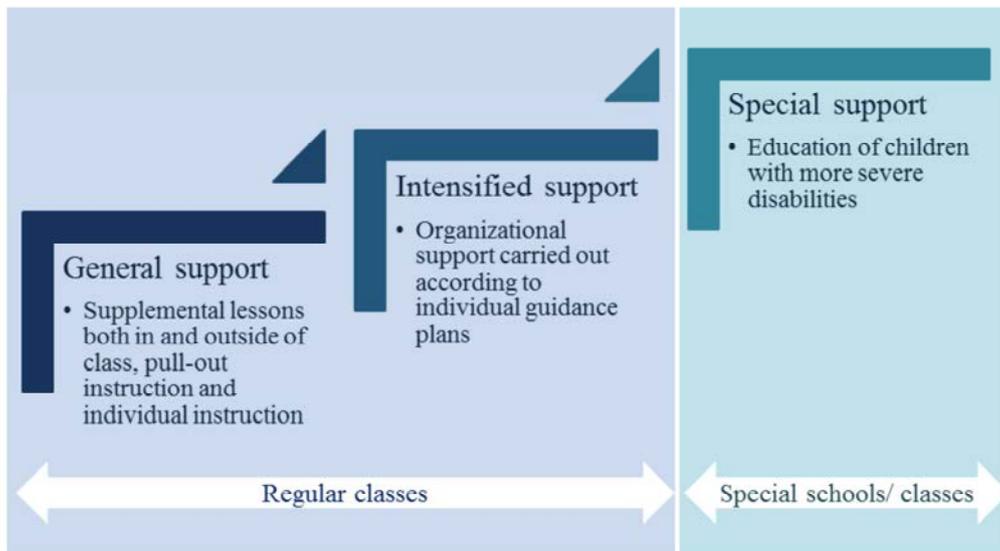
The steering group submitted a “special education strategy,” proposing the expansion of such practices as early intervention, early support, support in stages and teacher development.

Jan. 1,  
2011

The Basic Education Act was partially revised, reformed to make early intervention, early support and scheduled support first principles

So those are some ways in which Finnish special education is implemented, but the entire system underwent a major reform in 2011. Building up to this reform were various discussions and various stages of development that led to the transfer to the new system. Discussions first began approximately ten years ago in 2006. What was then called the Ministry of Education, now the Ministry of Education and Culture, began discussions on developing this special education system with a newly appointed steering group. This format of consulting with a steering group and conducting discussions on new policy with the participation of a variety of stakeholders is, in my opinion, quite similar to the Japanese format. This steering group worked to compile a “special education strategy” by the following year, ultimately recommending the expansion of such practices as early intervention, early support, support in stages, and teacher development for special education. There is an extremely broad consciousness and awareness of early intervention and early support at Finnish schools, where such practices are also implemented. This group served to further reconfirm and promote the importance of such practices. On this basis, the Basic Education Act was partially revised in 2011, and then put into action. Previously we had discussed two forms of education: regular learning assistance and special assistance.

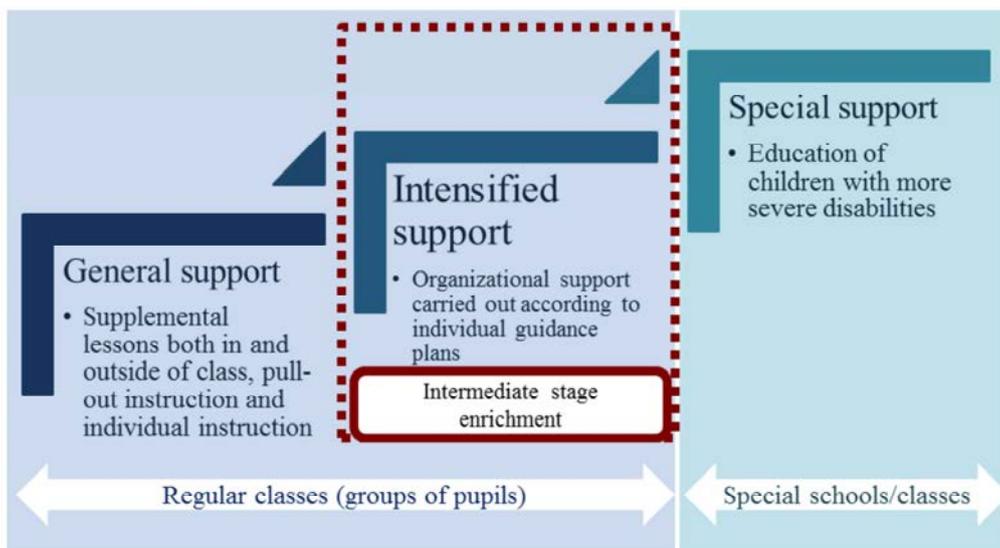
## New system: 3 stages of support

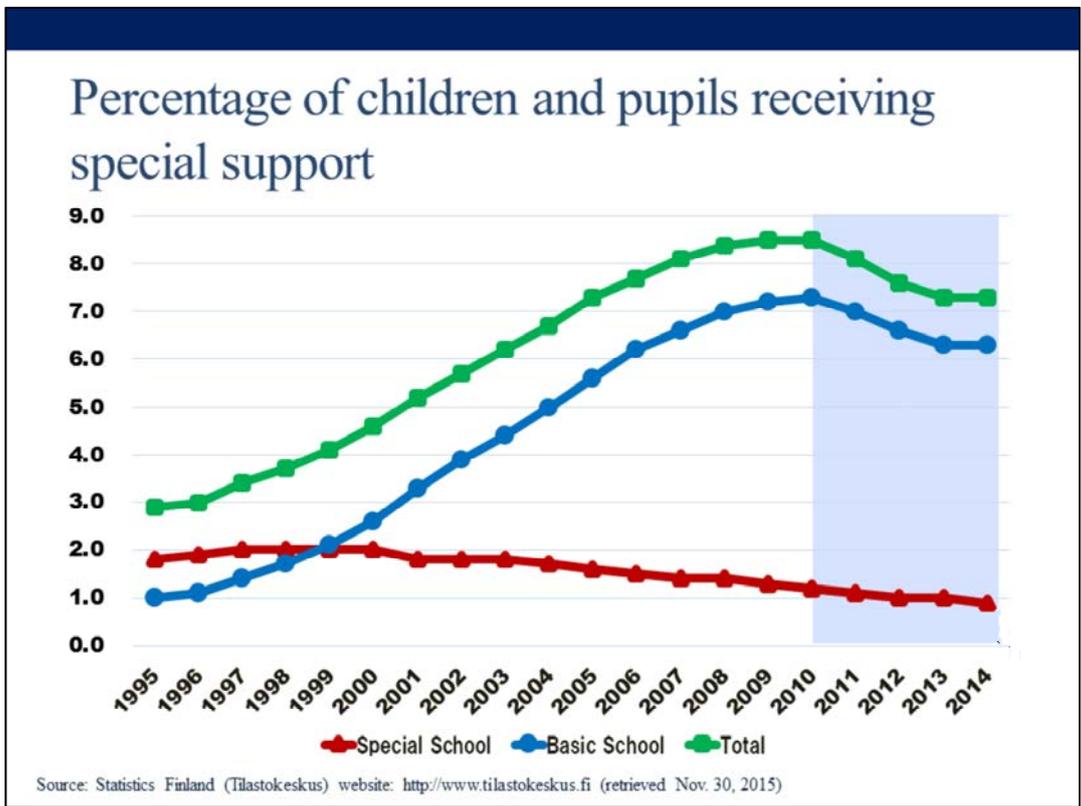


Now we move on to three stages of support: general support, intensified support, and special support. Although I have not been clear in my choice of words, special support and special education are in fact different concepts. "Special support" as used here is *erityistukea* in the original Finnish, which translates to "special support." On the other hand, "special education" is *eritotuennin* in the original Finnish, which translates to "special education" or special instruction. These two terms are thus distinguished in this way. I will do my best to discuss these concepts in an organized manner.

I think that the easiest way to understand special support and its relationship with special education is to think of it as a stricter and narrower sense of the term "special education." Meanwhile, general support includes the learning support described earlier as well as support via teams, making it a very multilateral type of support for children that includes welfare- and wellbeing-related elements as well. This is understood to be a part of the large framework called "special education." Meanwhile, the reform largely focused on installing an intermediate stage between general support and special support. Stage-based support was also one of the recommendations made by the steering group mentioned earlier. This mechanism serves to newly systematize support for children who are in the general support category, but require just a little more support than normal, or who are at a stage wherein they may or may not be moved on to receive special support.

## New system: 3 stages of support





This chart shows the percentage of students who receive special support. These students received special support in the strict, narrow sense. The tendency of this percentage to drop over time is perhaps affected in part by the division of the student population into three groups as shown on the previous slide.

### No. of children/pupils receiving special support: By learning environment (location) (2014)

Location	Pre-primary	1st-6th grades	7th-9th grades	10th grade	Total
Learning entirely in regular classes	219	4,485	2,786	24	7,514 (19.1)
51-99% of class work in regular classes	67	3,175	3,981	1	7,224 (18.3)
21-50% of class work in regular classes	23	2,125	1,954	5	4,107 (10.4)
1-20% of class work in regular classes	19	2,801	1,964	4	4,788 (12.1)
All learning in special classes (excluding special schools)	388	7,158	3,392	38	10,976 (27.8)
All learning in special classes at special schools	202	2,619	1,898	92	4,811 (12.2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>918</b>	<b>22,363</b>	<b>15,975</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>39,420</b>

Source: Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus) website: <http://www.tilastokeskus.fi> (retrieved Nov. 30, 2015)

I would like to take a moment to describe this data. This data pertains to locations at which students receive special support. The chart divides students by learning environment, from children learning entirely in regular classes on down through decreasing percentages of participation in regular classes. Of the three categories of support described earlier, “special support” is reserved for the most severe cases, students who require a variety of different kinds of support. However, even among students receiving “special support,” around 20% of them learn entirely in regular classes.

## No. of children/pupils receiving special support: By type of education (2014)

Subject syllabus/physical function training	1st-6th grades	7th-9th grades	10th grade	Total (percentage)
Carried out based on regular curriculum	12,528	5,671	34	18,233 (47.4)
One subject has a separate syllabus	2,209	3,045	5	5,259 (13.7)
Two or Three subjects have separate syllabi	2,354	2,471	10	4,835 (12.6)
Four or more subjects have separate syllabi	3,954	4,085	63	8,102 (21.0)
Physical function training	1,318	703	52	2,073 (5.4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,363</b>	<b>15,975</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>38,502</b>

Source: Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus) website: <http://www.tilastokeskus.fi> (retrieved Nov. 30, 2015)

This chart divides students by type of educational curriculum. The regular curriculum is used as a general rule, but a unique syllabus is used in some cases. This chart shows the extent that such syllabi are used.

## No. of children/pupils receiving support: By educational stage and gender (2014)

Stage (year in school) Gender	Intensified support	Special support	Intensified support+special support	Population of corresponding age
Pre-primary	187 (1.6)	918 (8.0)	1,105 (9.7)	11,424
Basic school 1st-6th grades	27,573 (7.8)	22,363 (6.3)	49,936 (14.1)	355,139
Basic school 7th-9th grades	12,711 (7.2)	15,975 (9.1)	28,686 (16.3)	175,686
Optional 10th grade	35 (5.1)	164 (24.0)	199 (29.1)	683
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,506 (7.5)</b>	<b>39,420 (7.3)</b>	<b>79,926 (14.7)</b>	<b>542,932</b>
Boys	26,444 (9.5)	27,371 (9.8)	53,815 (19.3)	278,306
Girls	14,062 (5.3)	12,049 (4.6)	26,111 (9.9)	264,626

Source: Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus) website: <http://www.tilastokeskus.fi> (retrieved Nov. 30, 2015)

This chart divides children by their stage of education and gender, this time focusing on the makeup of children receiving intensified support and special support, two categories of the three mentioned earlier. Here, it is clear that there are more male children and students than female ones.

## No. of children/pupils receiving support: By type of support (2014)

Type of support	Children receiving intensified support	Children receiving special support	Children receiving either intensified support or special support
Part-time special support	30,412 (75.1)	15,115 (38.3)	45,527 (57.0)
Supplemental lessons	23,122 (57.1)	13,298 (33.7)	36,420 (45.6)
Special support/interpreter services	16,862 (41.6)	23,273 (59.0)	40,135 (50.2)
Other support	10,240 (25.3)	11,256 (28.6)	21,496 (26.9)

Source: Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus) website: <http://www.tilastokeskus.fi> (retrieved Nov. 30, 2015)

This chart divides children by the type of support received. These categories include part-time special support, supplemental and remedial education, and special support including interpreter and translation services.

## Itemization of part-time support (2009)

Type of support	No. of people	Percentage in applicable age
Difficulty speaking	15,574	2.8%
Difficulty reading and writing	52,214	9.4%
Difficulty learning arithmetic and math	30,536	5.5%
Difficulty in learning foreign languages	11,715	2.1%
Difficulty with emotions and sociability	7,111	1.3%
Other difficulties	11,507	2.1%
Total	128,657	23.3%

Source: Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus) website: <http://www.tilastokeskus.fi> (retrieved Nov. 30, 2015)

However, I think it is difficult to imagine what exactly part-time support entails from a perspective rooted in the Japanese system, so I have provided a breakdown of such support here, although the data is a bit old. This data divides students by the type of support received. The most common types of trouble are with reading, writing, arithmetic, and math, meaning that this table suggests that learning support is more common than other types of support. However, there are of course other types of support, such as support for difficulties with emotions and sociability.

# Education fiscal reform

Changes surrounding inclusive education (2)

2

Next is the second part of my discussion of the changes surrounding inclusive education, this time focusing on fiscal matters.

Changes surrounding inclusive education (2)

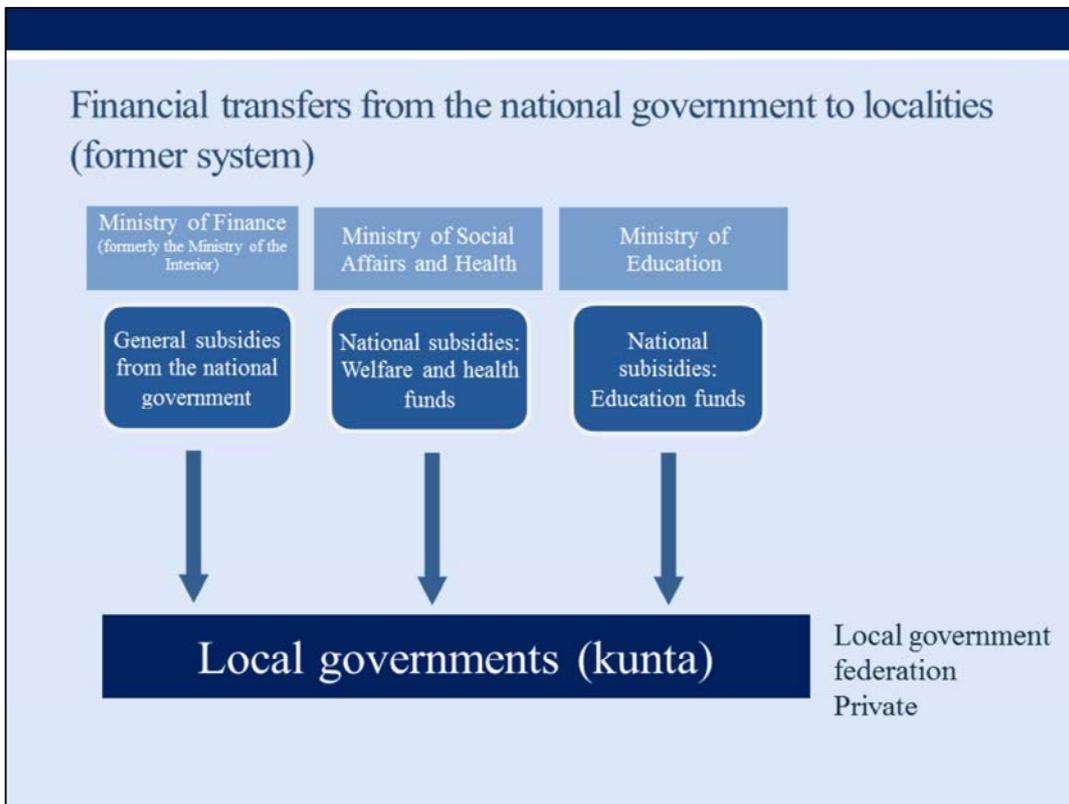
## Educational finance reform

Arrangement for using compulsory education funds for general purposes

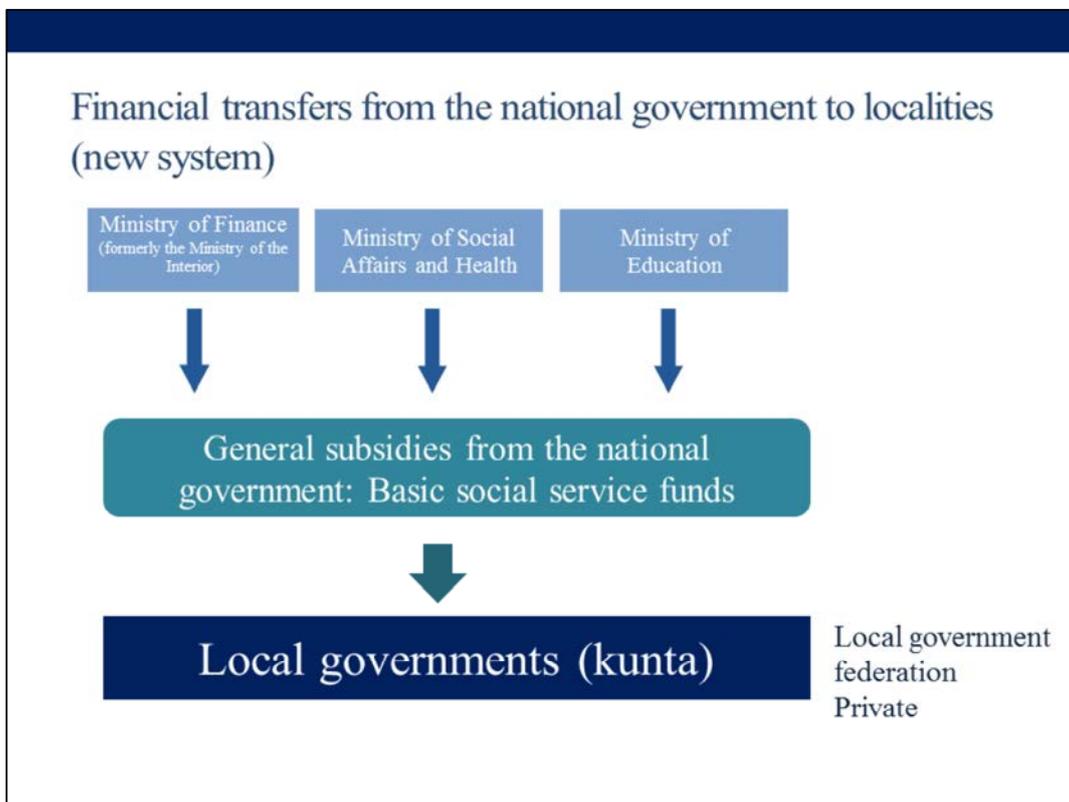
- Since 2010, basic education funds formerly distributed by the Ministry of Education to basic local governments are being allocated centrally by the Ministry of Finance as local basic service funds along with general affairs funds, welfare and health funds and the like.
- Local basic service funds are general subsidies and the way they are used is not restricted.

I hope to intertwine my discussion of educational finance reform with its relevance to the Japanese system. Educational finance reform in Finland has been implemented in a step-by-step manner since the late 2000s. This reform has involved the incorporation of funds for compulsory education into the general budget. There was also a debate in Japan over whether to abolish the system wherein the national government bears the costs for compulsory education, and indeed I think it may be close to accurate to think of this as the Finnish version of the same reforms that were considered in Japan.

Until this point, education funds were handled by summing up the per-student costs of education, adjusting those numbers through various weighting mechanisms, and then passing the resulting sum on to local governments with instructions that they allocate the funds to education.



Here is the old type of system at work.



However, under the new system, money was allocated to local governments not as education funds but lumped into a general administrative services budget together with healthcare funds, social welfare funds, and other types of money. In the pre-reform system, the national government subsidized one-third of the budget for compulsory education. However, with this budget incorporated into the general budget, the money is now distributed to local governments without specifying that it is to be used for education.

Changes surrounding inclusive education (2)

## Educational finance reform

### Arrangement for using compulsory education funds for general purposes

- Since 2010, basic education funds formerly distributed by the Ministry of Education to basic local governments are being allocated centrally by the Ministry of Finance as local basic service funds along with general affairs funds, welfare and health funds and the like.
- Local basic service funds are general subsidies and the way they are used is not restricted.

### Introduction of a new calculation model

- The budget is determined using a base calculated using a nationally decided formula — the unit cost is set based on the actual cost per person in the applicable age (population ages 6 to 15). It is then computed on a weighted basis.
- **Special education-related items are excluded from the weighted index.**

This means that it is now left up to the discretion of local governments to determine how much money to allocate to education funds. Moreover, there were also changes made to the model used to calculate education funds.

## Calculation model (former)

Base unit price: Set based on the cost per child/pupil

Basic amount: unit price  $\times$  0.77

Compulsory educational expenses: Basic amount  $\times$  no. of children/pupils  $\times$  the various weights

Basic amount	0.77 $\times$ UP
When population density is 40 people/km <sup>2</sup> or less	0.1 $\times$ UP
Population density: 4 people/km <sup>2</sup> or less, or a small school belonging to a local government of a minor island (80 people or fewer at the elementary education stage, or 180 people or fewer at the lower secondary education stage)	0.003 $\times$ UP
Pupils at the lower secondary education stage	0.3 $\times$ UP
Children/pupils with severe disabilities	4.0 $\times$ UP
Children/pupils with other disabilities	2.5 $\times$ UP
Children/pupils requiring special support	0.5 $\times$ UP
Children/pupils whose native language is Swedish	0.12 $\times$ UP
Children/pupils whose native language is not Finnish	0.2 $\times$ UP
A resident of a minor island (archipelago)	0.06 $\times$ UP
Residents of islands with local governments half or more of whose residents do not live on the mainland	0.25 $\times$ UP
Bilingual local governments: (local governments with more than a certain number of speakers of two official languages)	0.04 $\times$ UP

Under the previous system, a rate was calculated based on the per-student cost, and that rate was then multiplied by the number of students. This figure was then modified by various weights. These weights included, for example, language or geographic factors such as whether a child lives in a remote area. Finland has two official languages, making it a bilingual country. In localities in which Swedish speakers are present above a certain level, various budgetary burdens are placed on the local government, and weights were implemented to address this.

## Calculation model (new)

Base unit price: Set based on the cost of one person among the residents of the applicable age (6 to 15).

Basic amount: base price  $\times$  0.77

Basic social service funds: Basic amount  $\times$  population ages 6-15  $\times$  the various weights

Basic amount	0.77 $\times$ UP
When population density is 40 people/km <sup>2</sup> or less	0.1 $\times$ UP
When population density is 4 people/km <sup>2</sup> or less	0.017 $\times$ UP
Pupils at the lower secondary education stage	0.3 $\times$ UP
Children/pupils whose native language is Swedish	0.12 $\times$ UP
Children/pupils whose native language is not Finnish	0.2 $\times$ UP
A resident of a minor island (archipelago)	0.06 $\times$ UP
Residents of islands with local governments half or more of whose residents do not live on the mainland	0.25 $\times$ UP
Bilingual local governments: (local governments with more than a certain number of speakers of two official languages)	0.04 $\times$ UP

Note: The weighting of special education-related items has been abolished.

Among these weighted factors were some factors relevant to special education. Under the new system, some of these weights were removed. It was explained to me that there is some debate over whether the percentage of children requiring special support really changes dramatically from region to region, or at least from locality to locality, and hence the removal of these weights was pursued as an effort to streamline the system.

## How do you interpret the education financial reform?

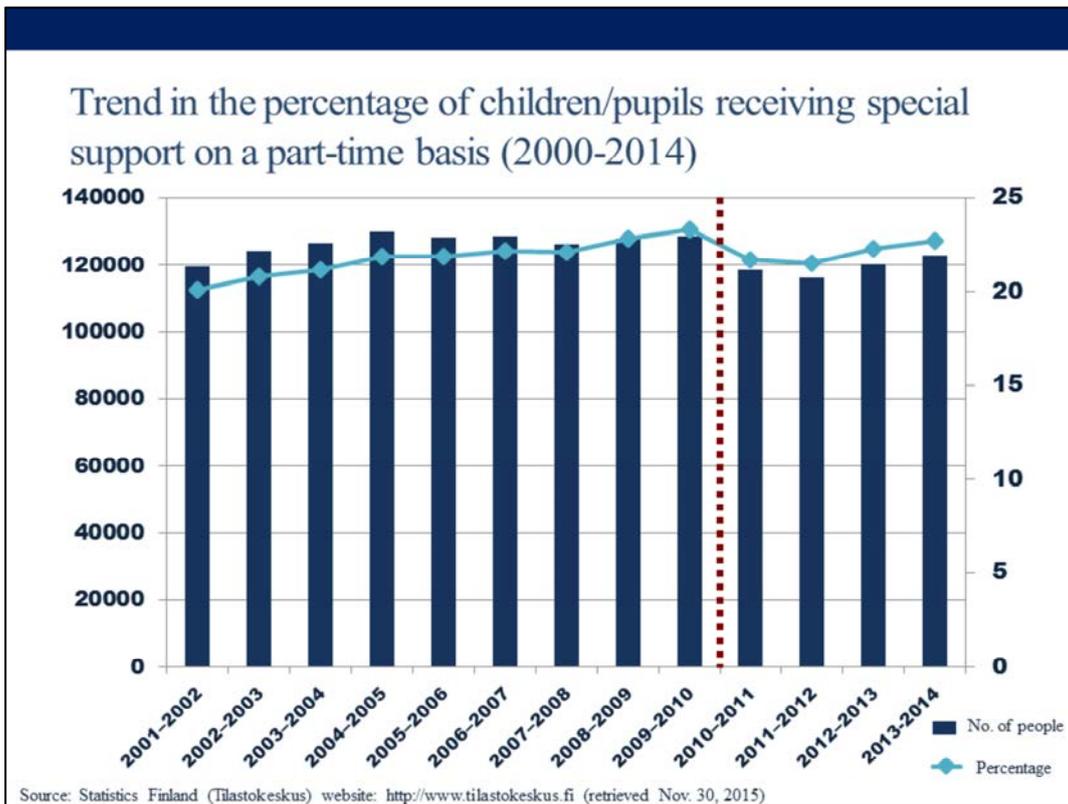
The local government decides the use educational funds are put to and the scale of the budget.

- ⇒ Financial allocation to match local circumstances
- ⇒ Concerns about shrinking educational funds
- ⇒ Concerns about disparities among local governments

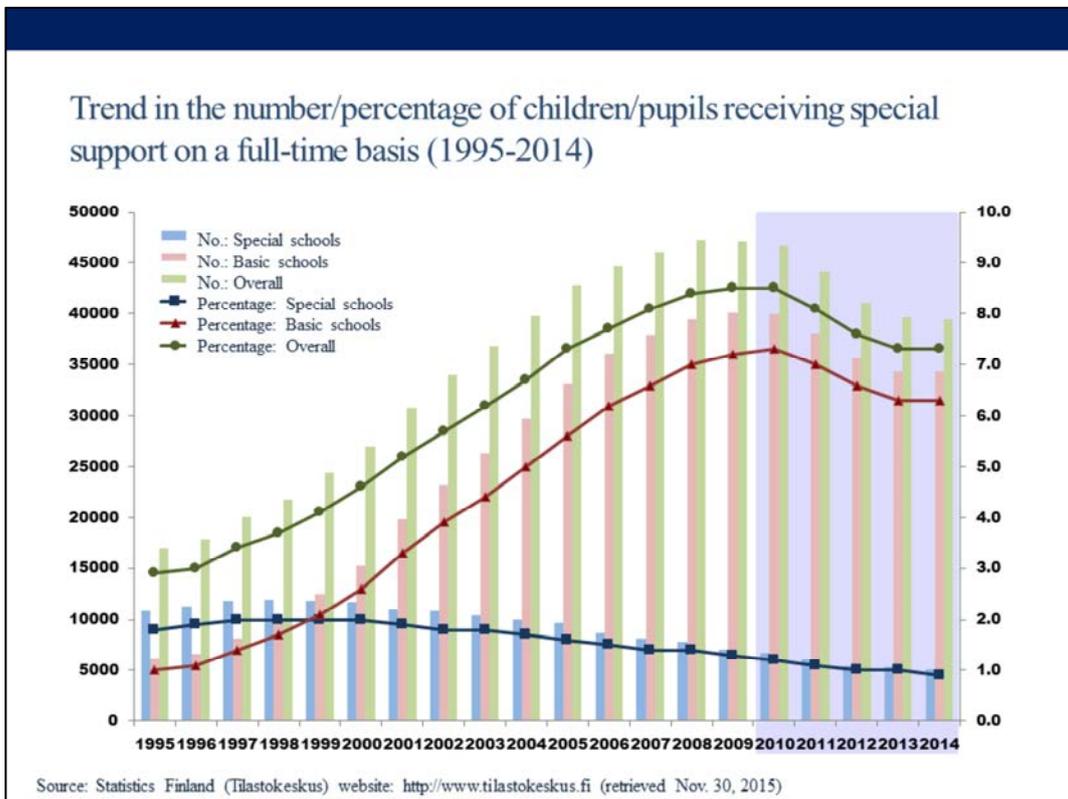
The exclusion of special education items from the computational model and the granting of subsidiary aid in a special budget

- ⇒ Switch from an ordinary budget to an irregular budget
- ⇒ A lack of consideration for special education?
- ⇒ The viewpoint of inclusion?

When this issue is viewed from a perspective focused just on special education, there arises the possibility that the removal of these weights from budget may be having an impact on budgetary provisions.



I cannot state anything definitive on that, but it does seem that there are fewer students receiving special support after the fiscal reforms were implemented, if the numbers of students before and after the reforms are compared. However, we cannot simply accept this at face value. For one thing, the systematic reforms to the special education system described earlier have had a variety of types of impact. Even taking those things into consideration, I believe it is still possible to point out the possibility that the reforms have had an impact on fiscal policy.



# School consolidation: Integration and closure

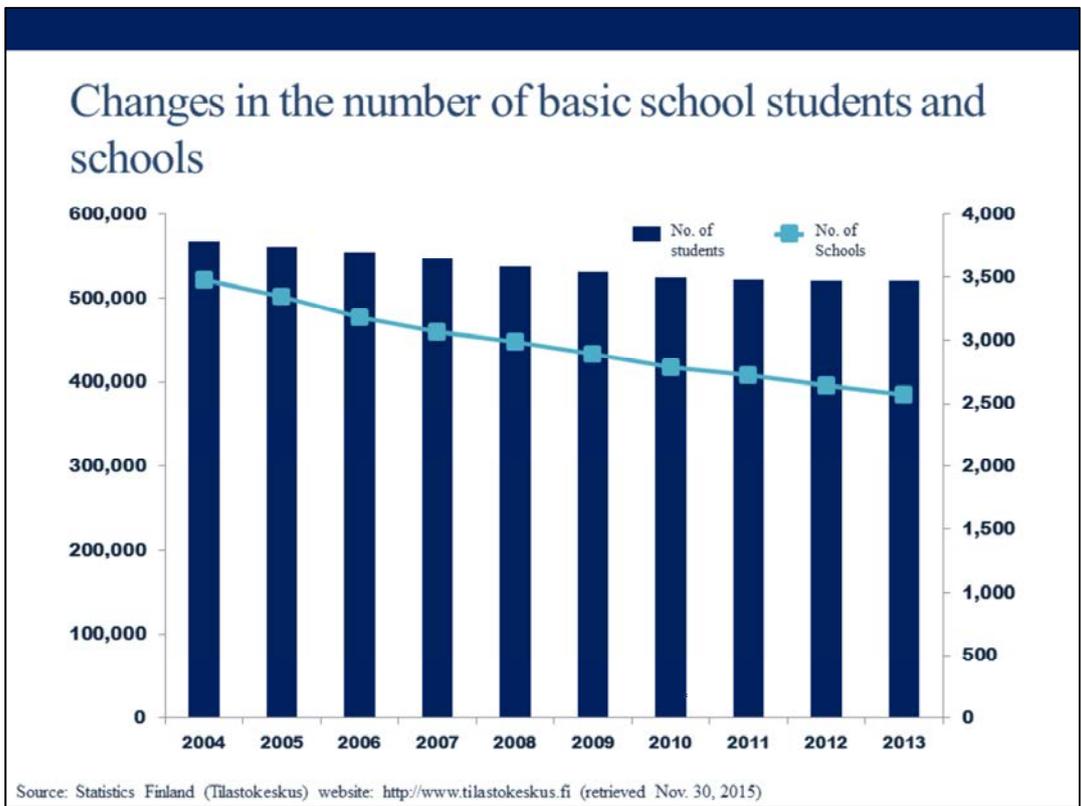
Changes in the situation surrounding inclusive education (3)

3

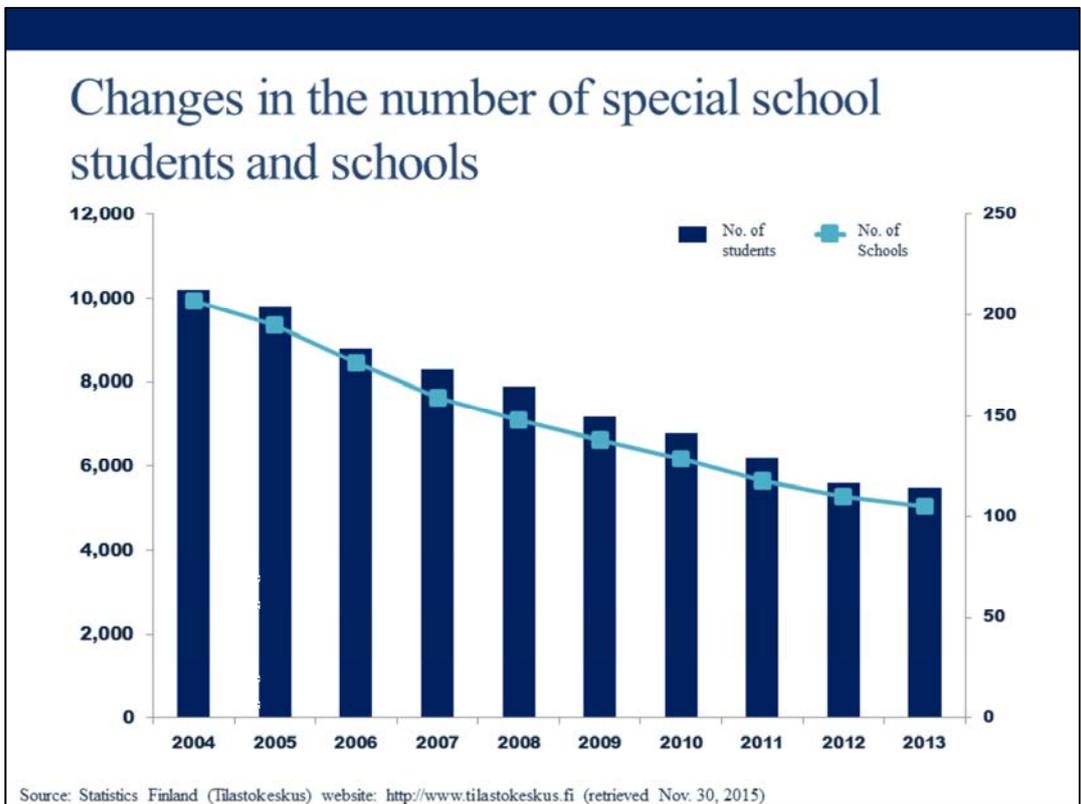
Another change that has taken place is school reorganization. As Mr. Tapaninen explained, schools in remote areas are rapidly being shut down, and indeed schools really are being closed and consolidated.

## School consolidation

Rapidly progressing integration and closure  
of schools



This is also a big topic in Japan. If we compare the numbers of basic schools and students over time, the number of schools has been dropping faster than the number of students.



Looking at the situation for special schools, the trend is even more striking.

## Changes in number of schools by type (2004-2013)

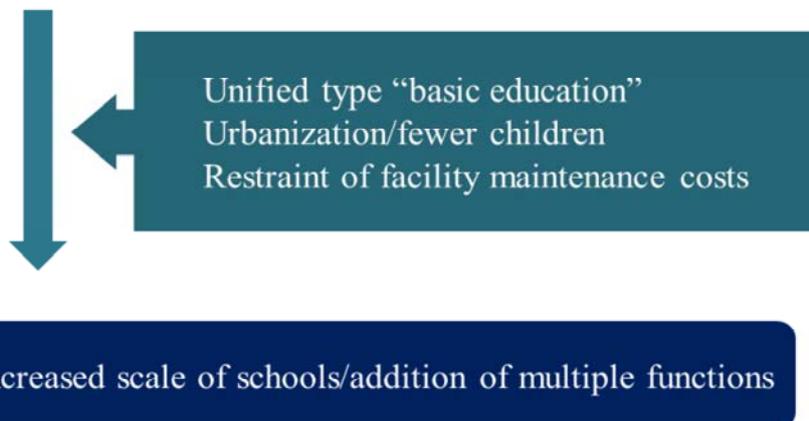
Educational institute	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Decline %
Basic schools	3476	3347	3180	3067	2988	2889	2785	2719	2644	2576	25.9
Special schools	207	195	176	159	148	138	129	118	110	105	49.2
Lukios	436	428	418	406	406	398	395	388	381	374	14.2
Basic schools + General upper secondary schools	37	37	37	37	38	38	38	39	41	41	-10.8
Vocational education and training institutions	187	182	173	161	152	137	132	129	124	120	35.8
Special vocational education and training institutions	13	13	13	12	12	6	6	6	6	6	53.8
Specialist vocational education and training institutions	42	40	38	37	37	35	34	34	34	34	19.0

Source: Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus) website: <http://www.tilastokeskus.fi> (retrieved Nov. 30, 2015)

In reality, the number of schools for all types of educational institutions has dropped over the period from 2004 to 2013, but the rate of reduction has been especially large for special schools.

## School consolidation

### Rapidly progressing integration and closure of schools



It is not so much that special schools are simply closing, but rather the largest factor at work here has actually been the relocation of special schools to special classes within regular basic schools.

This is not a matter limited to special education alone, but rather involves the entire school system. The closure and integration of schools is associated with other phenomena such as urbanization and declining birth rates. Integrated basic schools and basic education were first implemented at the end of the 1990s, and in the early stages schools that were in separate buildings were merged together or integrated when a new school building was constructed. The realization of this integrated or “unified-type” basic education may also be having an impact on this issue. Another factor at play is the desire to streamline maintenance and management costs for facilities located in the harsh climate of Finland. Thus, all of these factors have led to schools becoming larger and more multifunctional, and this has created the context for the issue at hand.

## “School Center” (V city)

New facility combining elementary, lower secondary and special schools



Here are a few of the schools that I have visited. These schools are the product of mergers involving elementary, lower secondary, and special schools. During his presentation, Mr. Tapaninen introduced the “school center.” These schools contain such school centers, called *koulukeskuksen* in Finnish.

## Facilities and equipment for special classes

Finally, I will talk about facilities and equipment for special classes within the context of “reasonable accommodations.”

## Therapy room



Water therapy

K Basic school

Sensory room  
Used to calm pupils who  
have become excited

U Basic school



This is a therapy room. There was an introduction previously of the concept of water therapy. Another type of such a room is the sensory room. These are examples of rooms that are used to calm down excited children.

## Therapy rooms: Examples of use



Uomarinne Basic School

One element that I found to be extremely Finnish in style was this mirror ball. Here in the dark, with a dim light and beautiful illumination, children calm back down and regain their composure.

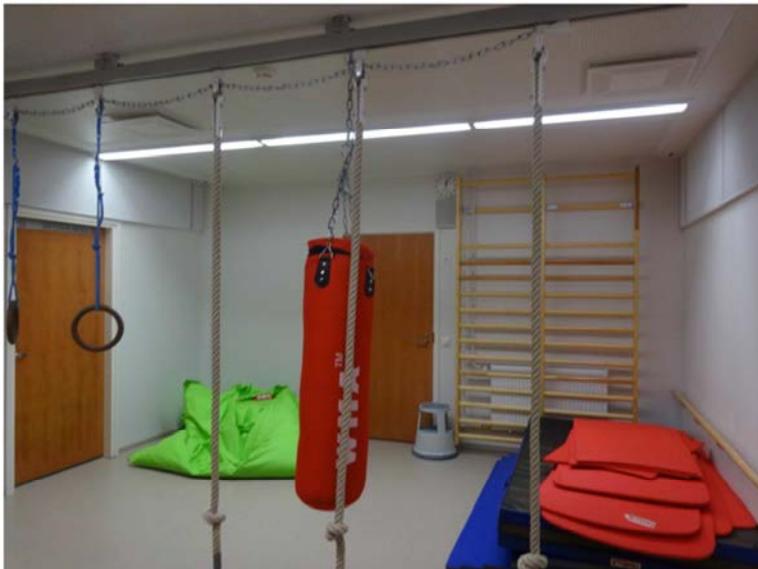
## Class for autistic children



U Basic School

This is an example of a school at which an autistic child learns as part of a regular class. I believe that partitioning screens are often used for autistic children at other schools, but this school uses thick felt instead. This felt is extremely lightweight and easy to carry, and children will not be injured if they accidentally bump into it if it's left lying in the corner of a hallway. For these reasons, I thought this was a quite good idea.

## Facilities and equipment for special classes



U Basic School

Here are some facilities and equipment for a special class.

## Facilities and equipment for special classes

Class for children and pupils with severe disabilities



U Basic School

These are some items pertaining to physical functioning. This class is for students with severe disabilities.

## Individual/small class instruction room



- Special support instructors provide instruction
- Usually 1 to 3 persons
- Also used a space to calm down excited pupils

K Basic School

This is a room for individual or small-class instruction. I mentioned the sensory rooms that are used to help the children regain their composure, and rooms like this one are sometimes used for such cases as well.

## Special support instructors and support staff



Special support instructors and support staff work with extremely small study groups accompanied by a large number of adults. If you visit a Finnish school, you will be told, “There are this many adults in this class” and similar. This expression quite matches reality due to the presence of assistant teachers, special support teachers, and various other adults who watch over the individual students. The photograph on the left shows who is paired up with whom for the day and similar information.

## How the day's activities are displayed



Developmental disorder group  
(given pull-out instruction)

Special classes



This is how the day's activities are displayed. I believe that this schedule is often displayed in a corner of the blackboard.

## Child's desk



One day's schedule:  
Velcro used

Picture book to aid  
communication

The schedule is also affixed to the tops of students' desks. Although this one uses Velcro, the order and content can be changed for each day. The other item in this photo is a picture book used for communication.

## Diversifying, more multilateral needs



U Basic School



I learned a lot and was brought to many new realizations while in Finland. Naturally, each and every thing was a discovery to me, but the most shocking discovery pertained to the increasingly diversifying and multilayered needs that were faced there. It occurred to me that we too must consider these needs in the future. Compared to other European countries, Finland once had relatively few children with international backgrounds, but recently there have been increasingly more such children, especially in the urban areas.

For example, the photograph at bottom-left shows flags on display just inside the entrance of the school. According to the teachers, these flags reflect the backgrounds of all of the students who attend the school. There are forty flags representing forty countries. I thought that this was amazing, and in fact there was a similar flag display in the classroom for students with severe disabilities. This is the level of diversity in the special class alone. I realized that because the students have different religions and cultures, this involves not just the accommodations made for special support—this is not just special support, but also involves cultural and social elements as well. I realized that because of these factors, the way in which support is provided also changes.

## Approaches towards inclusive education

### ■ Creation of a universal “basic school” model

A “school” for everyone : Transition underway

- Special schools→towards basic schools
- Expansion of the “for all” concept

“Classes” for everyone : limited

### ■ Provision of education catering to the needs of each and every child

Taking a broad view of the meaning of special education, and implementing it as just one facet of the comprehensive support measures for children

After those photographs, I would now like to proceed to my summary and conclusion. Reviewing Finland’s approach to inclusive education, its “schools for everyone” are based on a universal “basic school” model called a “comprehensive school.” This “school for everyone” includes a variety of students, and this gradually advancing current state of affairs is clear from the numbers, as well.

As for whether this could be said to be true at the class level, and whether there are “classes for everyone,” the truth is more limited at parts. For example, in comparison to the so-called developed countries of special education like Sweden and Italy who are also pursuing this sort of inclusive education, the state of affairs is more limited.

However, one aspect of Finnish education that I found interesting was that, in the midst of joint cooperative learning, personnel addressed the needs of each individual student. I thought that this was a characteristic of Finnish education in general, but it also applies in the same way to special education, as well. They take an extremely broad view of special education, implementing it as just one facet of comprehensive support policies for children.

## Is Finnish education “inclusive?”

Building off of this, I would like to return to the question of whether Finnish education is “inclusive” or not.

## UNESCO “Guidelines for Inclusion”(2005)

### Inclusion IS about:

- welcoming diversity
- benefiting all learners, not only targeting the excluded
- children in school who may feel excluded
- providing equal access to education or making certain provisions for certain categories of children without excluding them

### Inclusion is NOT about:

- reforms of special education alone, but reform of both the formal and non-formal education system
- responding only to diversity, but also improving the quality of education for all learners
- special schools but perhaps additional support to students within the regular school system
- meeting the needs of children with disabilities only
- meeting one child’s needs at the expense of another child

Source: UNESCO (2005).

In terms of building an inclusive education system, inclusive education in Finland is currently in a developing state, one of many countries that are in a developing state in this respect. One of the distinguishing characteristics of Finland is that it does not limit itself only to special education, but rather provides comprehensive support including learning support and welfare support that addresses the needs of a diverse variety of children. I believe that to be something from which we can learn, or at least to be one interesting aspect of Finland.

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- Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus) website <http://www.tilastokeskus.fi>

This concludes my report. Thank you.



Thank you for your kind attention.





# Creating Schools for Extending the Features of Inclusive Education in Japan



Mr. Jun Ueno

President, Tokyo Metropolitan University



## Creating Schools for Extending the Features of Inclusive Education in Japan

**Jun Ueno**

President, Tokyo Metropolitan University

Beginning in the year before last, I have participated in a foundational research project on school facilities with an aim toward building inclusive education systems. This project is being conducted by the National Institute for Educational Policy Research's Educational Facilities Research Center. Today, I will introduce the outcomes of that research as I explain school-building for inclusive education in Japan, as well as the current state thereof and issues therein.

### Content

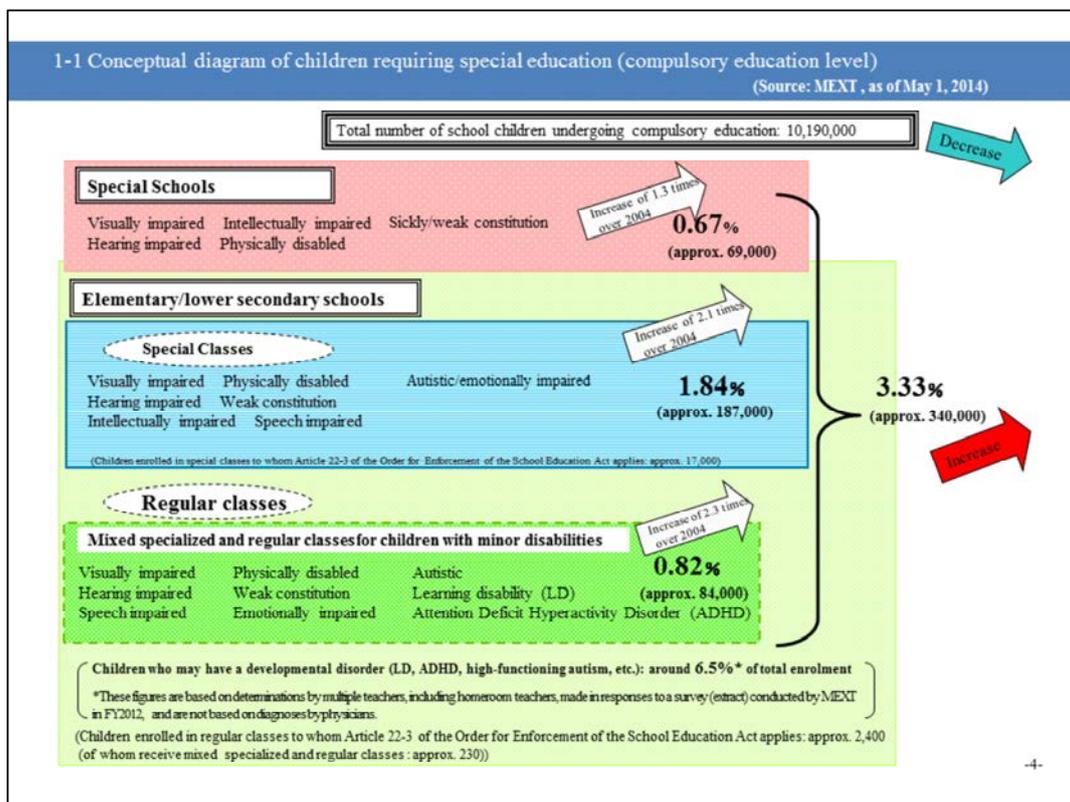
1. What are the characteristics of inclusive education?
2. Examples of school creation in other countries
3. Efforts to construct an inclusive education system in Japan
4. Example of school creation in Japan: "Dream School Creation"
5. Points for creating schools utilizing the characteristics of inclusive education in Japan

Today I will cover these points in the order shown.

# 1. What are the characteristics of inclusive education?

-3-

First I will discuss education for students with disabilities in Japan, including its current state, issues, characteristics, and other topics.



This is a conceptual diagram representing special education in Japan. As everyone here knows, the population of children targeted to receive compulsory education is experiencing a continual decline overall. However, the number of students in need of special education is increasing considerably. The number of students attending special schools has increased by 1.3 times in the last ten years. Similarly, the number of students in special classes has increased by 2.1 times in the last ten years. Moreover, although this is also well-known, survey data tells us that 6.5% of total enrolment are students with development disorders, even in regular classes. In special classes, there are also individuals to whom Article 22-3 of the Order for Enforcement of the School Education Act applies. These are students with disabilities of a level suitable for attendance of a special school, and this survey determined for the first time that there are approximately 17,000 such students in special classes. Similarly, we have recently learned that enrolled in regular classes are nearly 2,400 students with disabilities of a level suitable for attendance of a special school. In other words, students with fairly severe disabilities are learning at so-called regular schools. Whether this is “inclusive education” or not is a valid question, but one can understand from this that it is gradually permeating into the system.

What Is an “Inclusive Education System” under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 24: Education)?

In accordance with the aims of strengthening respect for human diversity and enabling persons with disabilities to develop their mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential, making it possible for them to participate effectively in a free society, an inclusive education system must:

- (1) Provide mechanisms for people with and without disabilities to learn together;
- (2) Provide elementary and secondary education opportunities for people with disabilities in the community where they live ( ensuring that people with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system);  
and
- (3) Provide reasonable accommodation of individuals’ requirements.

-5-

Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities pertains to education. To summarize, the convention states that inclusive education must: provide mechanisms for people with and without disabilities to learn together; provide elementary and secondary education opportunities for people with disabilities in the community where they live; and crucially, it must provide reasonable accommodation as required for each individual.

Inclusive Education is characterized by  
mechanisms for people with and  
without disabilities to learn together!

-6-

Although this may be too simple a summary, I think that inclusive education can be defined as mechanisms for people with and without disabilities to learn together.

## 2. Examples of school creation in other countries

-7-

Next, for my second part, I will first introduce some examples of school-building in other countries before proceeding to a discussion of the current state of affairs in Japan.

### 2-1 Outline of Implementation of Overseas Survey

#### (Purpose of Survey)

With the aim of contributing to deliberations contributing to the improvement of school facilities for the purpose of constructing an inclusive education system\* in Japan at the compulsory education level, a field survey was conducted of school facility improvement policies and schools implementing inclusive education in Finland and Sweden, which are leading countries with respect to inclusive education systems.

\*Mechanisms for people with and without disabilities to learn together in accordance with the aims of strengthening respect for human diversity and enabling persons with disabilities to develop their mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential, making it possible for them to participate effectively in a free society ("Promotion of special support aimed at forming an inclusive education system for building a convivial society (Report)"; Subdivision on Elementary and Secondary Education of the Central Council for Education, July 2012)

#### (Survey Schedule)

\*Feb. 18 to 22, 2013

#### (Finland)

- Central government: Ministry of Education and Culture (Helsinki); Jussi Pihkala (Counsellor of Education) and others
- Espoo: School Board; Ilpo Salonen (Executive Superintendent of Basic Education) and others
- School (Espoo): Päivänkehrän School; Jukka Sarpila (Principal); Marja Riitta Elomaa (architect)

#### (Sweden)

- Central government: The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (SPSM) (Stockholm); Helena Foss Ahldén and others
- School: Manilla School (to be relocated to a building adjacent to SPSM; the relocation site (undergoing repair work) was inspected.
- Stockholm: School Board; Bengt Nilsson (strategist) and others
- School (Stockholm): Matteus School; Jan Aili (Principal)
- School (Nacka): Björknäs School; Lennart Pifålk (Principal)

#### (Research Group)

\*Researchers: Jun Ueno (Formerly Vice-President, Tokyo Metropolitan University)  
Gihei Takahashi (Formerly Dean, Faculty of Human Life Design, Toyo University)  
(+ 3 researchers from the Department of Facilities Planning and Administration, MEXT)

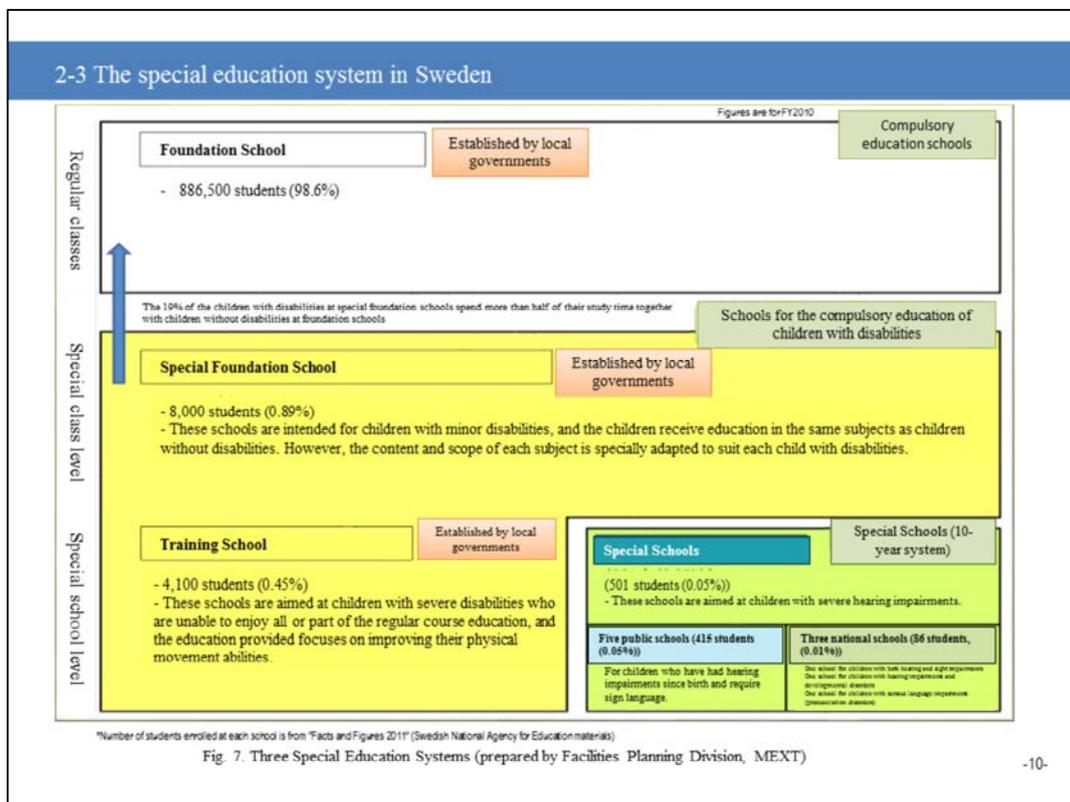
-8-

The Facilities Planning Division of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has recognized issues such as these in the past, and in 2012 it conducted a survey of countries with advanced experience with inclusive education systems. I had the opportunity to visit Finland and Sweden for this survey. Mr. Tapaninen and Ms. Watanabe explained the situation in Finland in great detail, so I will focus on examples from Sweden.

# Example of school creation in Sweden

-9-

What follows are examples of school environments in Sweden created for students with disabilities.



-10-

This is a schematic diagram of Sweden's special education system. This summary may be oversimplified, but there are no very major differences with the Japanese system.

First, the base is formed by foundation schools, which are the regular basic schools in Sweden. 98.6% of students attend these schools. There are also special foundation schools, which correspond to special classes in Japan. Finally, there are training schools and special schools, which both correspond to special schools in Japan. This is the Swedish system.

The schools in the yellow sections of this diagram are the special foundation schools and training schools. These schools are either established in an attached manner with foundation schools, or otherwise learning activities are conducted with a certain level of connection to foundation schools. Over 19% of such children study together with healthy children at these schools. In other words, Sweden can be understood to be implementing inclusive education through mechanisms such as these.

## 2-4 Visit to the Matteus School (Example of a special foundation school attached to a foundation school) (1/3)

- special foundation school attached to a foundation school (in a secluded area of the foundation school building)
- To prevent students with disabilities from panicking when going from special foundation school to foundation school classes, classroom facilities, equipment, and fixtures in the special foundation school have been coordinated as far as possible with those in the foundation school.
- In addition to exchange generated by locating the special foundation school next to the foundation school and by special needs children participating in foundation school classes, mixed (students with and without disabilities) sports days are held twice a year.
- Locating the special foundation school next to the foundation school has the advantages of making it easy for students with disabilities to participate in regular classes, invigorating exchange, and enabling children also to understand living in a convivial society with people with disabilities from the school level.
- There was confusion in schools during the 1990s due to strong emphasis on the concept of all children undergoing education together, but entering the 2000s this thinking changed to focus on what is truly appropriate education for children with disabilities, and educational content/methods/environments came to be adapted to suit various types and degrees of disability.

### 【Basic Information】

- A school where a special foundation school is attached to a foundation school.
- The school has 600 students, of which 13 are special foundation school students (one class has 9 students for grades 6 to 9 (of which 3 are vocational school level) and one class has 4 students for pre-primary school age children)
- Two children with a low degree of disability are enrolled in the foundation school rather than the special foundation school.
- Of the 100 teachers at the school, 8 (including 2 assistants) teach exclusively at the special foundation school.
- The school building was built approx. 100 years ago (see Photos 20 and 21). The building has one elevator, but because it is actually inconvenient for students with disabilities to use the elevator when moving among various classrooms, they frequently use the stairs, and so it is difficult for the school to accept students with disabilities with motor impairment.
- Consequently, no students requiring wheelchairs are currently enrolled at the school, but in the past students who can walk with some form of assistance have been accepted.



Photo 20: Aerial view



Photo 21: External view of the school building

(Prepared by the  
Facilities Planning  
Division)

-11-

My first example from Sweden is a special foundation school attached to a foundation school. In Japanese terms, this is equivalent to a special class established within a so-called regular school. In other words, this can be understood as a special foundation school established in a section of a foundation school.

## 2-5 Visit to the Matteus School (Example of a special foundation school attached to a foundation school) (2/3)

### 【Special foundation school classrooms】

#### ○ Spatial structure

- The special foundation school comprises a single integrated space in a secluded area of the foundation school building surrounded by corridors with tables and chairs along the left-hand side, with foundation school classrooms at the front and an after-school club for children with disabilities at the back (see Fig. 8; Photos 27 and 28).
- Because of the large number of students with disabilities coming from the special foundation school to participate in foundation school classes, to prevent students with disabilities from panicking when going between the special foundation school and foundation school, classroom facilities and equipment in the special foundation school have been coordinated as far as possible with those in the foundation school and arranged in a similar manner, with care given to providing students with disabilities with peace of mind by placing the supplies they need when participating in foundation school classes in the same locations as in the special foundation school classrooms.
- For the same reason, special foundation school classroom fixtures are also the same as those in the regular classrooms, with no special installations such as soundproofing rooms, painting rooms a calming color, or widening doors (see Photos 22-25).
- There are toilets for children with disabilities in the after-school club section, but the students with disabilities do not use these very often, usually using the general toilets.

#### ○ Effective use of corridors

- The special foundation school and foundation school are located next to each other, and in addition the corridor in front of the special foundation school has tables along one side, which facilitates conversation and exchange between students with disabilities and normal students as they relax at these tables during breaks, and as an extension of this, normal students frequently pop their heads into special foundation school classrooms and say hello to students with disabilities. Thus the corridor has become a device for promoting exchange between **students with and without disabilities**. (See Photo 26.)
- Furthermore, at the special foundation school one class is frequently split into two for lessons, with one group studying in the classroom and the other at the tables and chairs in the corridor, and so the corridor also plays a role in providing a diversity of lesson styles in the special foundation school.

#### ○ Exchange between the special foundation school and foundation school

- In addition to exchange generated by the close proximity of the special foundation school and foundation school as well as by students with disabilities participating in general classes in accordance with their degree of disability and comprehension, sports days are held twice a year (one each semester) as official school events, and **students with and without disabilities** participate as part of mixed teams.
- Teachers at the school feel that locating the special foundation school next to the foundation school has the advantages of making it easy for students with disabilities to participate in general classes, invigorating exchange, and enabling children also to understand living in a convivial society with people with disabilities from the school level, and they felt that the arrangement had no disadvantages.

(Prepared by the Facilities Planning Division) -12-

These are the environmental conditions of classrooms in special foundations schools.

## 2-6 Visit to the Matteus School (Example of a special foundation school attached to a foundation school) (3/3)

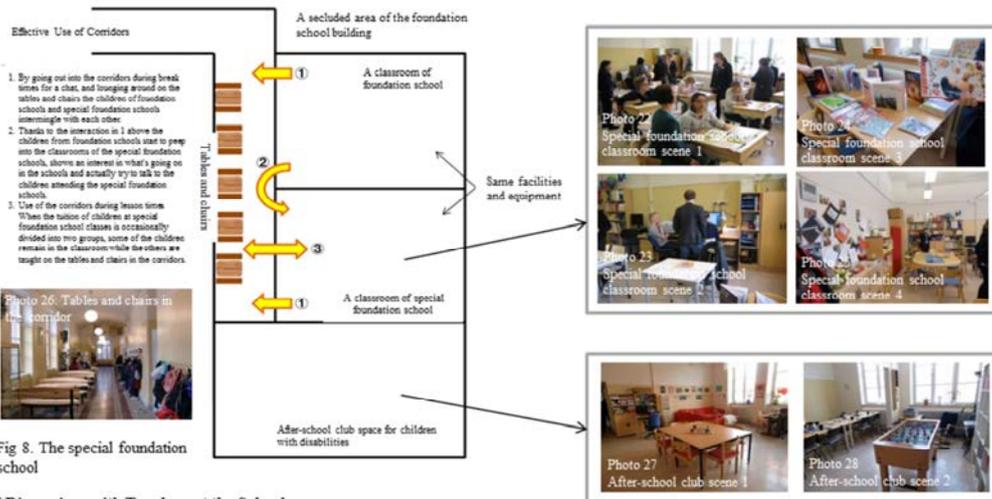


Fig 8. The special foundation school

### ○ Discussions with Teachers at the School

- In order to bring together a certain number of special needs children, Stockholm City has established one special foundation school attached to a basic school for every 15 districts; however, the number of children with disabilities fluctuates from year to year, and some years there may be only one special needs class. Since there is a range of disability levels among students with disabilities, teachers can better facilitate those students when multiple classes are created and divided according to degree of disability.
  - Until FY1990, special education was regarded as a part of healthcare, and the special education system has undergone reform four times.
  - There was confusion in schools during the 1990s due to strong emphasis on the concept of all children undergoing education together, but entering the 2000s this thinking changed to focus on what is truly appropriate education for children with disabilities, and educational content/methods/environments came to be adapted to suit various types and degrees of disability, thereby improving balance.
- (Prepared by the Facilities Planning Division) -13-

This is a special foundation school established within a relatively calm section of a foundation school. Its placement facilitates easy interaction with regular classes and facilities. There are also after-school clubs set up for students with disabilities.

In places like this, children from the foundation school and the special foundation school can interact in a variety of senses. Students also visit the foundation school from the special school on a daily basis.

I have studied Japanese special classes in some depth. In Japan, as well, students who learn in and belong to special classes also belong to "mixed classes," which are regular classes of the same grade level. In these mixed classes, students study some or even many of their subjects, while only in cases that rise to the level of "special education" are subjects studied in special classes. This is universal in Japan. In this way, it is my understanding that Japan is already pursuing inclusive education to a certain extent.

## 2-7 Visit to the Björknäs School (Example of a training school attached to a foundation school) (1/2)

- A training school attached to a foundation school (The training school building is an independent building within the school grounds)
- Because the training school is for students with more severe disabilities, education focuses not on textbook education but on improving students' physical abilities and communication skills, and specialized facilities have been provided for this reason.
- While training school students need to be accompanied by an assistant, they sometimes use school grounds shared by foundation school students, where there is exchange between the training school and foundation school students. There is also a program of exchange events that are held several times during the year.

### 【Basic Information】

- Comprising a foundation school with a training school attached, the school is the largest in Nacka with a student enrolment of 1,000 (including pre-school education)
- The training school has 5 students.
- Because the training school is for students with more severe disabilities, education focuses not on textbook education but on improving students' physical abilities and communication skills (the training school curriculum is completely different from that of the special foundation school.)

### 【Location of School Building】

- Because the degree of disability catered for by the Vocational School is severe, calmness and silence are emphasized, and for this reason, while the training school building is on the same school grounds as the foundation school, it is independent from and located at a distance from the foundation school building. (See Photos 29 and 30.)



(Prepared by the Facilities Planning Division)

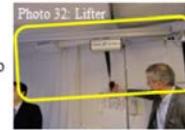
-14-

This is an example of a training school established in a portion of the wide grounds of a foundation school. To translate this into a Japanese context, it can be understood as a special school established on the grounds of a regular school.

## 2-8 Visit to the Björknäs School (Example of a training school attached to a foundation school) (2/2)

### 【Specialized facilities within the training school building】

- There are two classrooms, one for physical training and one for communication skills training, and specialized facilities have been installed in accordance with students' disabilities (designs improved in accordance with students' disabilities).
- (Examples of specialized facilities)
  - (1) Guiding lines for wheelchairs (See Photo 31)
  - (2) Lifters installed in the ceiling to assist students who have difficulty walking (See Photo 32)
  - (3) Mats for physical training (See Photo 33)
  - (4) Videos, etc., for communication skills training
  - (5) For visually impaired students, there is a mechanism in the changing area next to the building entrance that informs students that this is the changing area by using sounds (See Photo 34)
- In addition, there is also a massage room for students who require massages (See Photo 35)



### 【Pre-primary education classrooms】

- The space for pre-primary education contains play equipment that enables children to strengthen their arm and leg muscles while playing (see Photos 36 and 37) as well as play equipment that assists children to use words and/or stimulates the senses (see Photo 38). Accordingly, the room is also spacious.



Photo 36: Toys enabling children to strengthen their muscles through play (1)



Photo 37: Toys enabling children to strengthen their muscles through play (2)



Photo 38: Toys that can stimulate the senses



Photo 33: Room for physical training



Photo 35: Room with beds for providing massages

### 【Exchange with other types of schools】

- When accompanied by an assistant, training school students are permitted to use school grounds shared by foundation school students, where exchange between the training school and foundation school students. In particular, training school students enjoy watching other children play, and some children with disabilities are reluctant to return to the school building when breaks are over.
- While the foundation school and training school basically conduct classes independently, there is also a program of exchange events that are held several times during the year.
- Although this school does not include a special foundation school, there are students who attend a special foundation school 2km away twice a week with an assistant or who have transferred to this special foundation school.

(Prepared by the Facilities Planning Division) -15-

This is a learning environment for students with relatively severe disabilities. My personal impression is that Japanese special schools are designed with a fair amount of thought in a variety of senses, so I do not think that the learning environment at Swedish schools is extremely advanced relative to Japanese special schools. By my understanding, the environments are extremely similar. There are a variety of environments, scrupulously and meticulously customized for the disabilities of each individual child. However, this site is distinguished by the placement of the school on a section of the campus of a foundation school. Thus, for example, students with all manner of disabilities can interact with regular students on the campus during breaks and other such opportunities. Moreover, it is possible to visit the regular school building from the training school and vice-versa.

## 2-9 Summary of case examples from other countries

- School systems exist in both Finland and Sweden that are equivalent to special classes/special schools in Japan.
- Even when students with disabilities are enrolled in a school/program equivalent to a special class/special school in Japan, the inclusive education systems enable them to participate as far as possible in general classes, even on a partial basis, in accordance with their type and degree of disability.
- Amongst schools that are equivalent to special classes/special schools in Japan, there are cases in which the special school is attached to a normal school, and in such cases, mechanisms and innovations aimed at facilitating exchange between disabled and normal children were observed.
- In the case that the special school is attached to a normal school, the system has the advantages of making it easy for students with disabilities to participate in regular classes, invigorating exchange, and enabling children also to understand living in a convivial society with people with disabilities from the school level.
- In the case that the special school is attached to a normal school, special considerations were made to ensure that the special school area maintained an atmosphere of calm, such as locating the special school in a secluded place.
- Furthermore, especially in the case of schools equivalent to special schools in Japan, specialized facilities/equipment were installed in order to cater to students' needs in accordance with the severity of their disability.
- In Sweden there was confusion in schools during the 1990s due to strong emphasis on the concept of all children undergoing education together, but entering the 2000s this thinking changed to focus on what is truly appropriate education for children with disabilities, and educational content/methods/environments came to be adapted to suit various types and degrees of disability.

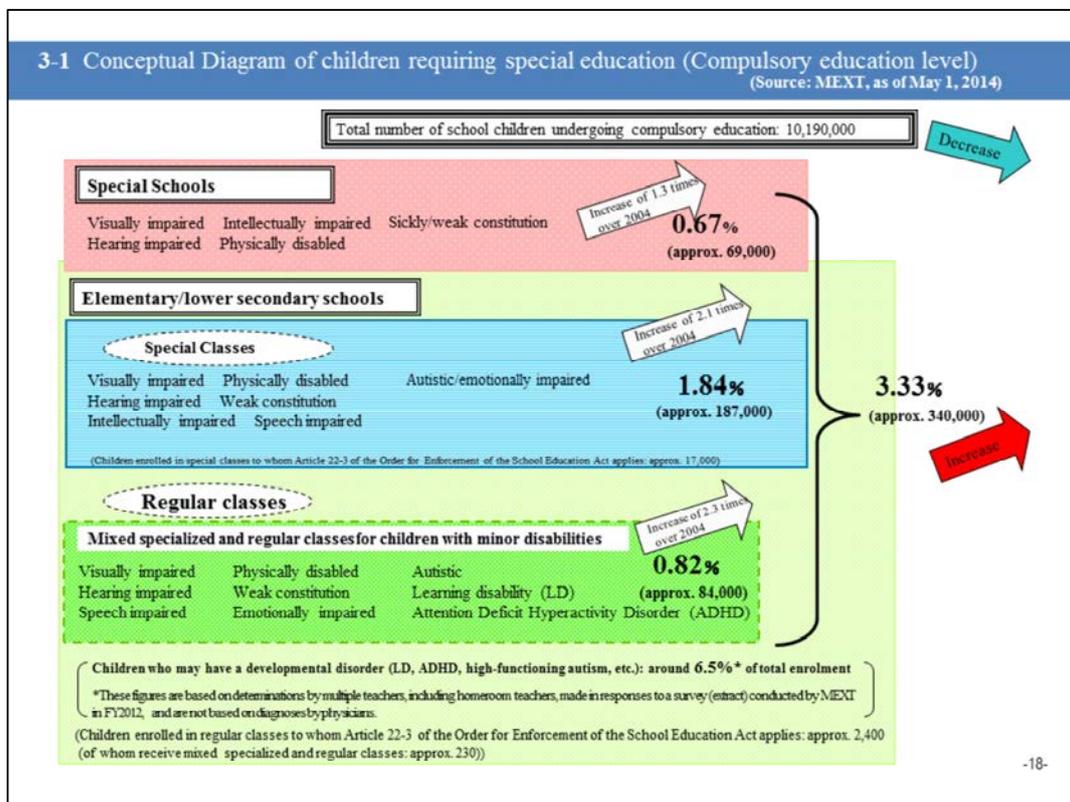
(prepared by the Facilities Planning Division) -16-

This slide is a summary of other surveys conducted in Finland and Sweden. I do not think there is a large difference between Japanese special education and the way in which education is provided for students with special education needs in Finland and Sweden. In my opinion, because there was too much emphasis placed on providing education for all children in the same equal environment in the 1990s in Sweden, I think this resulted in a bit of confusion. There was a somewhat similar situation in Japan, as well. However, in the 2000s there was a shift in thinking to trying to determine what education environments, methods, and curricula are really needed for children with disabilities, and applying educational content, methods, and environments suited to or the type and extent of each child's disability.

### 3. Efforts to construct an inclusive education system in Japan

-17-

Let's return to Japan. I will explain once again the current state of the Japanese exclusive education system and facilities.



This is the same diagram as shown earlier. There are several cases of students to whom Article 22-3 of the Order for Enforcement of the School Education Act applies—in other words, children with disabilities sufficient for enrolment in a special school—who live and learn at regular elementary and junior high schools. I want to point out once again that such cases are increasingly common.

### 3-2 Recent trends in Japan regarding school facilities for forming an inclusive education

(1) Sep. 2007 Japan becomes a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Domestic laws formulated and implemented; convention ratified in January 2014)

Mar. 2011 Revision of policies regarding creation/improvement of Special Needs Schools facilities: "Efforts Following Systematic Change/Revision of Curriculum Guidelines and Responses to Changes in the Social Environment (with the Aim of Improving Special Needs Schools)"

(2) Jul. 2012 "Promotion of special support aimed at forming an inclusive education system for building a convivial society (Report)"; Subdivision on Elementary and Secondary Education, Central Council for Education

(3) Jun. 2013 Establishment of the Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (enforced on Apr. 1, 2016)

(4) Sep. 2013 Partial revision of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the School Education Act (regarding school attendance)

Jan. 2014 Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Apr. 2014 In Order to promote "Basic Survey Research Regarding School Facilities for Forming an Inclusive Education System" a research group is established within NIER.\*

Mar. 2016 The research group is scheduled to release a "Report on Research Results" and "Inclusive School Facility Database (Case DB)"\*

\*Sections in blue are efforts currently being carried out as "project research" by project teams organized through the cooperation of many researchers, both within and outside NIER, on research topics determined by NIER to require examination.

-19-

These are the trends in recent years pertaining to school facilities for the education of children with disabilities. I will look at the general trends only. In 2007, Japan became a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In 2012, the Central Council for Education's Subdivision on Elementary and Secondary Education issued a report entitled "Promotion of special support aimed at forming an inclusive education system for building a convivial society." In June 2013, the Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities was established. What is important here is that it will begin to be enforced this April, just around the corner. Following this, in September 2013, the Ordinance for Enforcement of the School Education Act was partially revised. This revision focused primarily on the attendance system, and I will explain this in more detail later.

### 3-3 What is an "Inclusive Education System" under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 24: Education)?

An Inclusive Education System must

(1) Provide mechanisms for people with and without disabilities to learn together;

(2) Provide elementary and secondary education opportunities for people with disabilities in the community where they live (ensuring that people with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system); and

(3) Provide reasonable accommodation of individuals' requirements.

-20-

Here is another slide I showed earlier. It is stipulated that inclusive education must provide mechanisms for people with and without disabilities to learn together; provide elementary and secondary education opportunities for people with disabilities in the community where they live; and crucially, it must provide reasonable accommodation as required for each individual.

◇Definitions (Extract from the “Report” by the Subdivision on Elementary and Secondary Education, Central Council for Education)

1) Reasonable accommodation

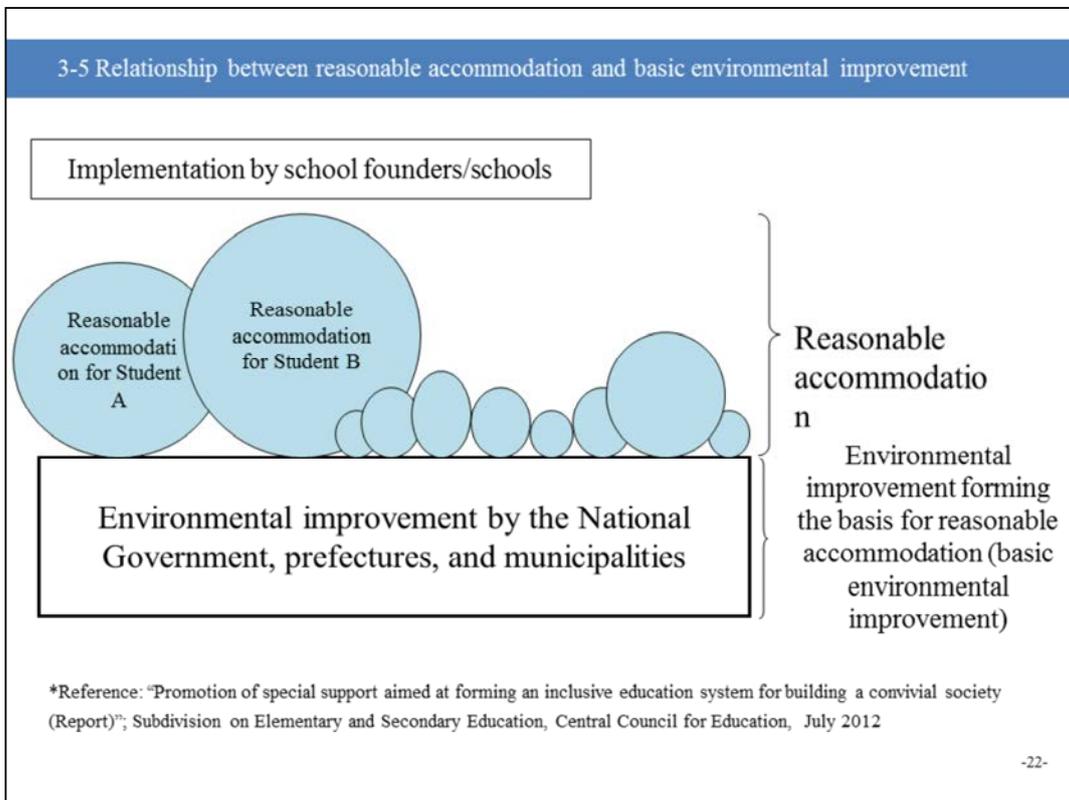
“Reasonable accommodation” is defined as “Necessary and appropriate modification and adjustment of facilities by school founders or schools not imposing a disproportionate or undue systematic or financial burden on the school founder/school, where needed in a particular case to facilitate children with disabilities undertaking education in accordance with the circumstances, in order to ensure children with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with other children of their “right to education”.”

2) Basic environmental improvement

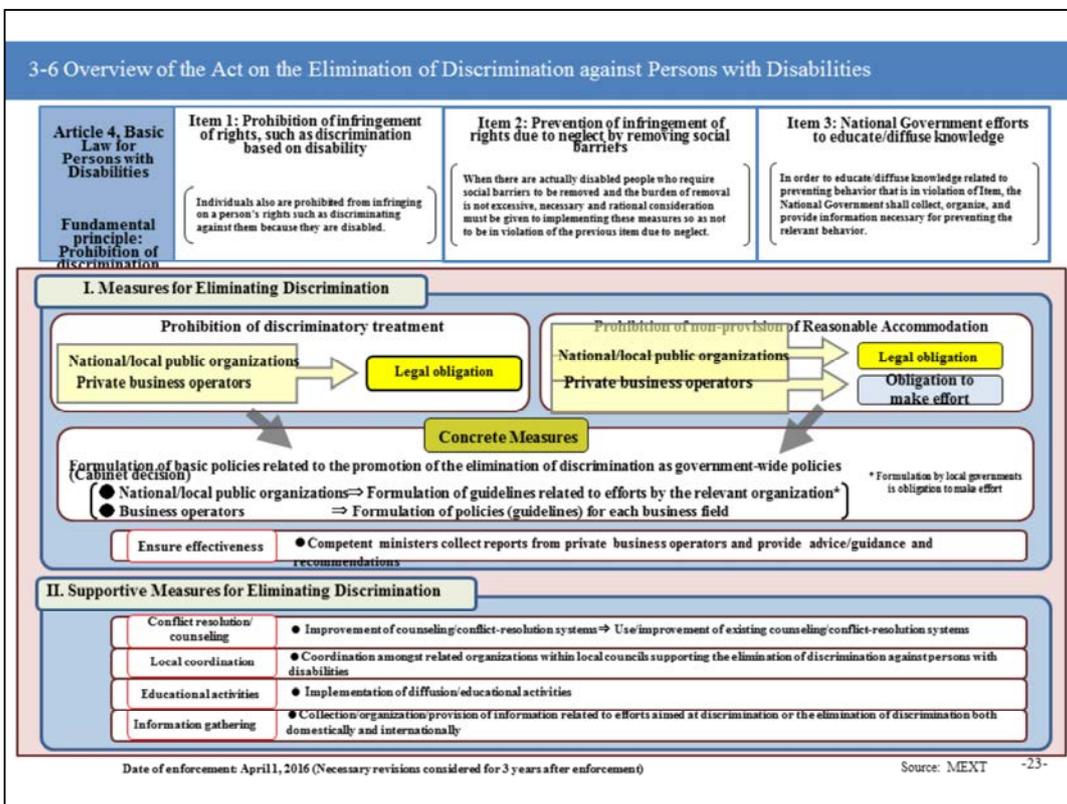
With regard to support for children with disabilities, the educational environment shall be enhanced in accordance with relevant laws/ordinances and funding by the National Government on a nationwide scale, individual prefectures on a prefectural scale, and individual municipalities on a municipal scale. These measures comprise the environmental improvement that forms the basis for “Reasonable Accommodation” and shall be referred to as “Basic Environmental Improvement”.

-21-

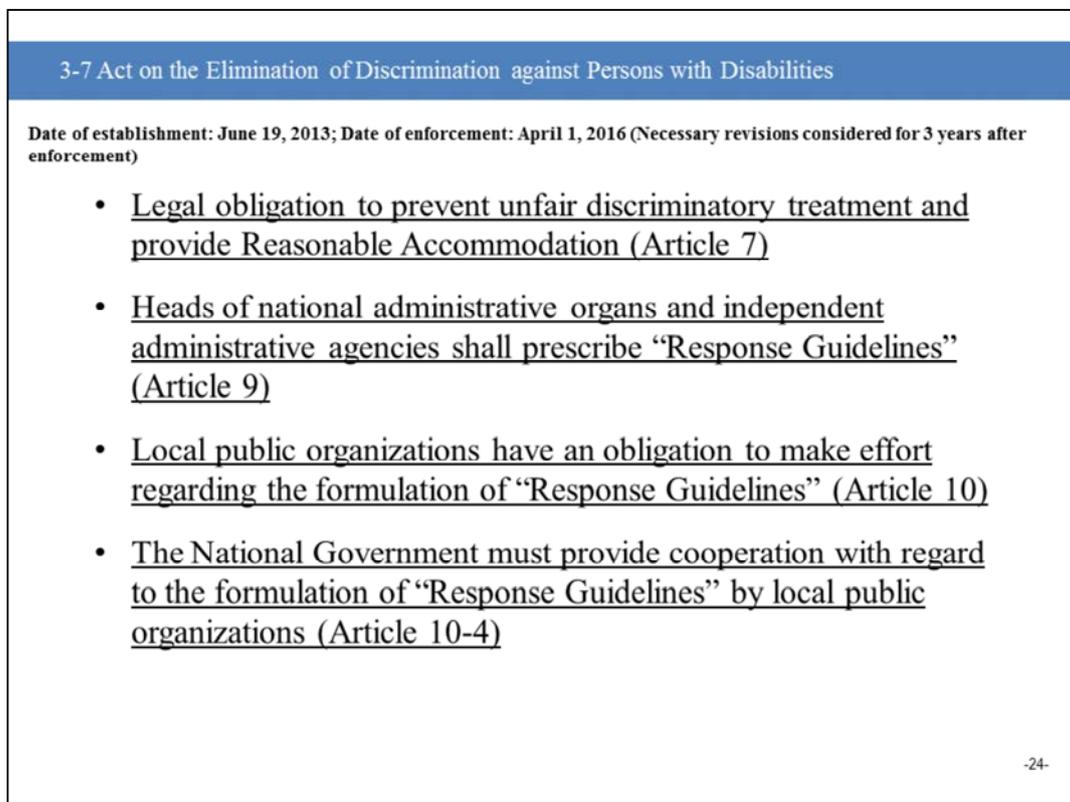
I am still uncertain about the term “reasonable accommodation” and the idea of basic environmental improvements, but in 2012 the aforementioned Central Council for Education’s Subdivision on Elementary and Secondary Education, the following concepts were introduced. “Reasonable accommodation” is defined as something that is individually necessary for the school education of children with disabilities but does not impose a disproportionate or excessive burden on the school or establishing party. For basic environmental improvements—whether improvements of regular elementary or junior high schools, whether for newly built structures, or renovations, or deterioration-focused repairs, or building life-prolonging repairs, or any other school construction work—the concepts of barrier-free design and universal design are fundamentally important. These concepts are important not only because they give children with disabilities the potential to learn, but also because a school is fundamentally desired to be a place at which the elderly, infants, and a wide range of other local residents and community members can also engage in lifelong learning and further education. Moreover, in disaster situations, schools also fulfill an extremely important role as community shelters, as goes without saying from examples such as the Great East Japan Earthquake. From this, we see that the ideas of barrier-free design and universal design are extremely important in school architecture especially. Hence what I would like to say here is that, as the level of that basic environment increases, we are able to improve the environment substantially for children with all different kinds of disabilities, naturally and through small reasonable accommodations.



This is a conceptual diagram displaying the relationship between reasonable accommodation and basic environmental improvement. This diagram is used in a relatively wide variety of reports, so I have decided to use it here. What should be understood from this is that basic environmental improvements are made for the purpose of handling a variety of disabilities, whereas what is called “reasonable accommodation” is environmental design customized for the individual needs of individuals A, B, and C whose needs are not addressed by basic environmental improvements.



Next, I discuss the Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, which was signed into law in 2013. This is a conceptual diagram for that law. What I would like to emphasize is that this law will begin to be enforced in April of this year, so we are in urgent circumstances. Moreover, the non-provision of reasonable accommodation is prohibited under this law. Put in another way, it is now obligatory to provide reasonable accommodation. This is what I would like everyone to learn from this.



Here are the main points of the Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities. I will repeat: under this law, unjust discrimination is prohibited, there is a legal obligation to provide reasonable accommodation, and national administrative organs and independent administrative agencies must establish “Response Guidelines”. Local public organizations are legally obligated to make an effort regarding the formulation of such guidelines.

**1. Overview of Revisions**

**(1) Revision of mechanisms for determining which schools children with disabilities attend**

For individual students, municipal boards of education determine when schools students with disabilities attend in accordance with viewpoints based on the status of their disability.

**(2) Change of schools based on changes in status of disability**

Provisions were amended to enable consideration of a change in school to commence based on the status of improvements in the local educational system or other circumstances.

**(3) Visually impaired students attending schools outside their education district**

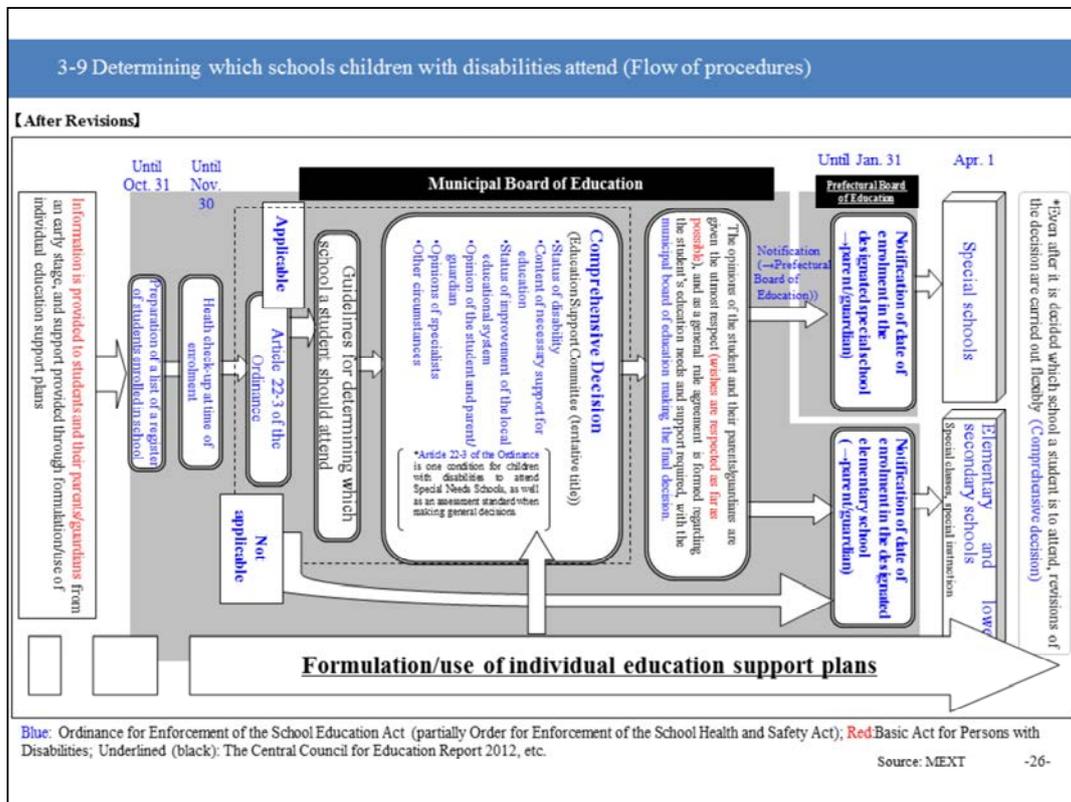
Provisions were amended with regard to the attendance of visually impaired students at elementary schools, lower secondary schools or secondary schools other than those established by the municipality where the students reside.

**(4) Expansion of opportunities for hearing the opinions of parents/guardians and specialists**

With regard to hearing of the opinions of parents/guardians and specialists by municipal boards of education, provisions were amended so that such hearings are also held when students advance from elementary school to lower secondary special school, etc.

**2. Date of Enforcement:** Sep. 1, 2013

This next slide discusses the 2013 partial revisions made to the Ordinance for Enforcement of the School Education Act. This was a revision of the mechanisms for determining which schools children with disabilities attend. For individual students, municipal boards of education determine which schools a student with a disability will attend after a comprehensive determination based on the status of their disability (or disabilities).



Please examine this flowchart on school attendance determinations. From an early stage, perhaps from infancy, the student themselves and their parents and guardians should be provided with sufficient relevant information. A comprehensive determination regarding the school to be attended shall ultimately be made by the municipal board of education. This is an important point. Respecting the opinions and intentions of the individual themselves and their parents to the greatest extent possible, working to build consensus, the municipality shall make the final determination regarding the school to be attended. This means that also in the case of children with disabilities of a level sufficient for attendance of a special school, the final determination regarding whether the student will gradually begin to study in a special class at a regular school or in a regular class shall be made in accordance with the individual's desire and the final determination of the municipal board of education.

Article 22-3 of the Order for Enforcement of the School Education Act, which is mentioned frequently here, established a requirement for the attendance of special schools and furthermore serves as an evaluation criterion by which the comprehensive determination is made.

### 3-10 Case example of elementary school A

Year School Building was Constructed and Year of Major Renovations	Built: 2000s
Status of Enrolment of Eligible Students	Elementary School (Special classes) Grade 1 students
Type of Disability of Eligible Students	Physically disabled
Degree of Disability of Eligible Students (Applicability of Article 22-3 of the Order for Enforcement of the School Education Act)	Applicable (Physically-disabled)

**Legend**  
**B:** Basic environmental improvement  
**R:** Reasonable accommodation

**B:** Special classrooms are located near the elevator on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor in consideration of evacuation in the event of a tsunami.

**R:** Special desk in the exchange classrooms (that can be used by students in wheelchair)

**R:** Walker in a special classroom and special chair for physically disabled persons

**B:** Entrance slope enabling vehicles to drive up close to the building

**R:** Water taps with adjustable-length levers

-27-

Next, I will provide four specific examples of reasonable accommodations taken from field surveys conducted as part of our research at the National Institute for Educational Policy Research's Educational Facilities Research Center. Here, for the purposes of this seminar, I will limit my description to the facilities and equipment themselves. My first example involves a physically disabled child who is a first-year elementary school student attending a special class at a regular school. The box at the top notes that the child is "applicable," which means that he is considered disabled under Article 22-3 of the Order for Enforcement of the School Education Act. In other words, this is an example of a child—who is a first-year elementary school student with a disability sufficient for attendance of a special school—and this child attends special classes for their everyday school life. The blue text on this slide indicates basic environment improvements. Meanwhile, the red text indicates reasonable accommodations made for this student. To repeat, this student has a physical disability sufficient for attendance of a special school. For example, in terms of basic environment improvements, there is a slope in place at entrances that can be approached via wheelchair, and there is an elevator next to the classroom where the student studies. The reasonable accommodations made include, for example, specialization and customization that enable the student to study in a wheelchair, and the placement of the special class and mixed class next to one another so that students with disabilities can interact and learn together with so-called regular students. In other words, the placement of this special class right next to a class with which it will interact is what is called a reasonable accommodation. Other reasonable accommodations include toilets suited for the student's disabilities, creative flushing solutions, and so on.

### 3-11 Case Example of Elementary School B

Year School Building was Constructed and Year of Major Renovations	Built: 1970s Major Renovations: 2010s
Status of Enrolment of Eligible Students	Elementary School (Special classes) Grade 2 students
Type of Disability of Eligible Students	Intellectually impaired emotionally impaired
Degree of Disability of Eligible Students (Applicability of Article 22-3 of the Order for Enforcement of the School Education Act)	Not applicable

**Legend**  
**B:** Basic environmental improvement  
**R:** Reasonable accommodation

**B:** A multi-purpose room for use for education counseling and one-on-one lessons in the case that a student cannot calm down and is unable to study with other students.

**B:** Special classrooms are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the 3-floor school building; by locating these classrooms in the center of the building both vertically and horizontally, emphasis is placed in exchange activities amongst students, generating exchange throughout the entire building.

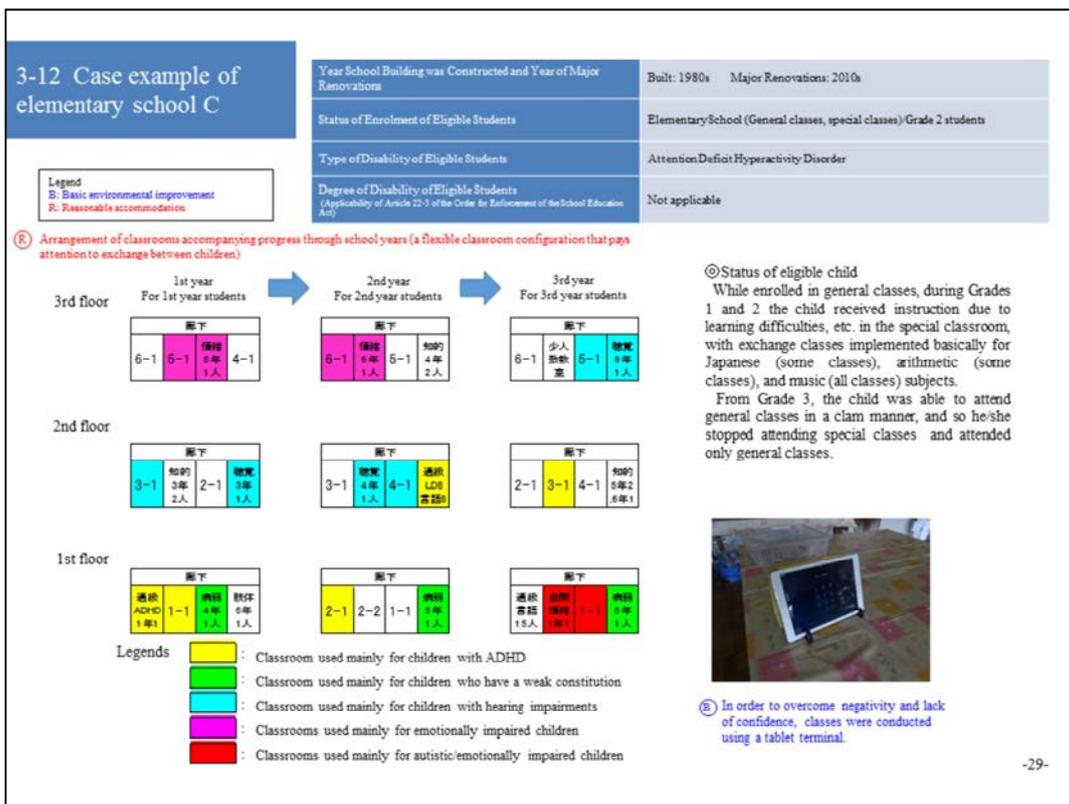
**B:** Multi-purpose toilets are located near the center of the building in horizontal terms, enabling easy access from any classroom.

**R:** White boards and magnet sheets displaying the day's schedule

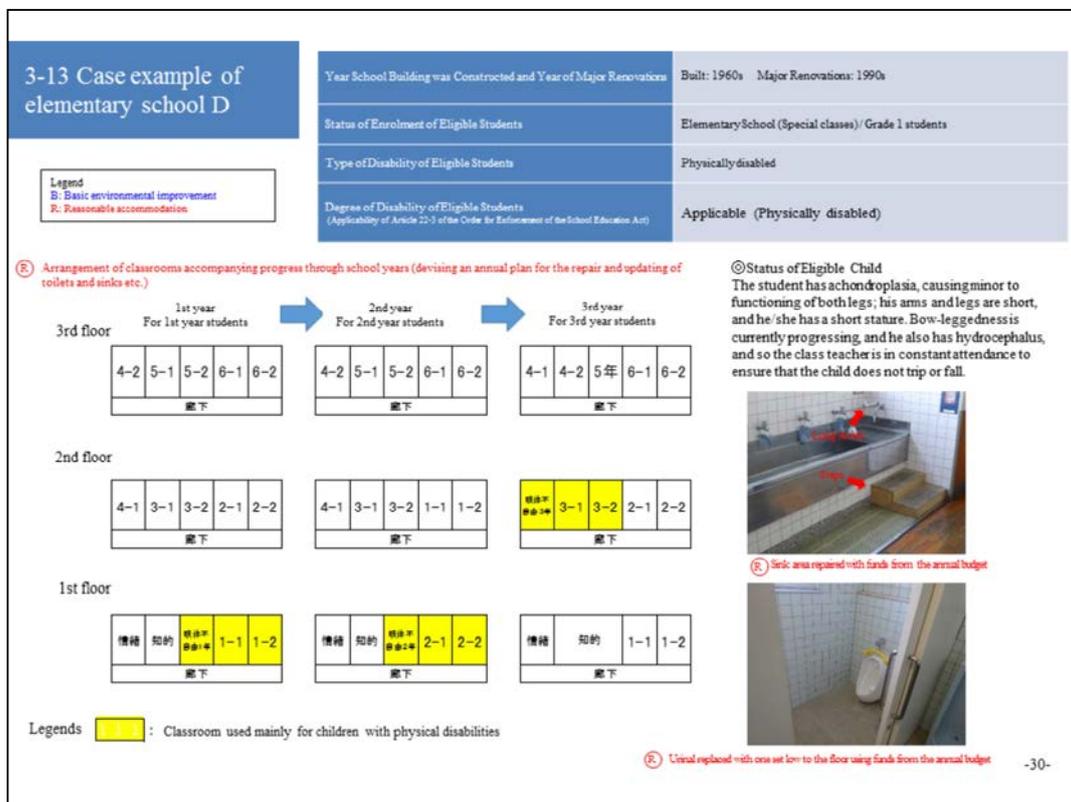
**R:** Special classrooms for intellectually impaired and autistic emotionally impaired students are equipped with shelves next to each desk that both acts as a sign indicating each student's place and creates partial privacy.

-28-

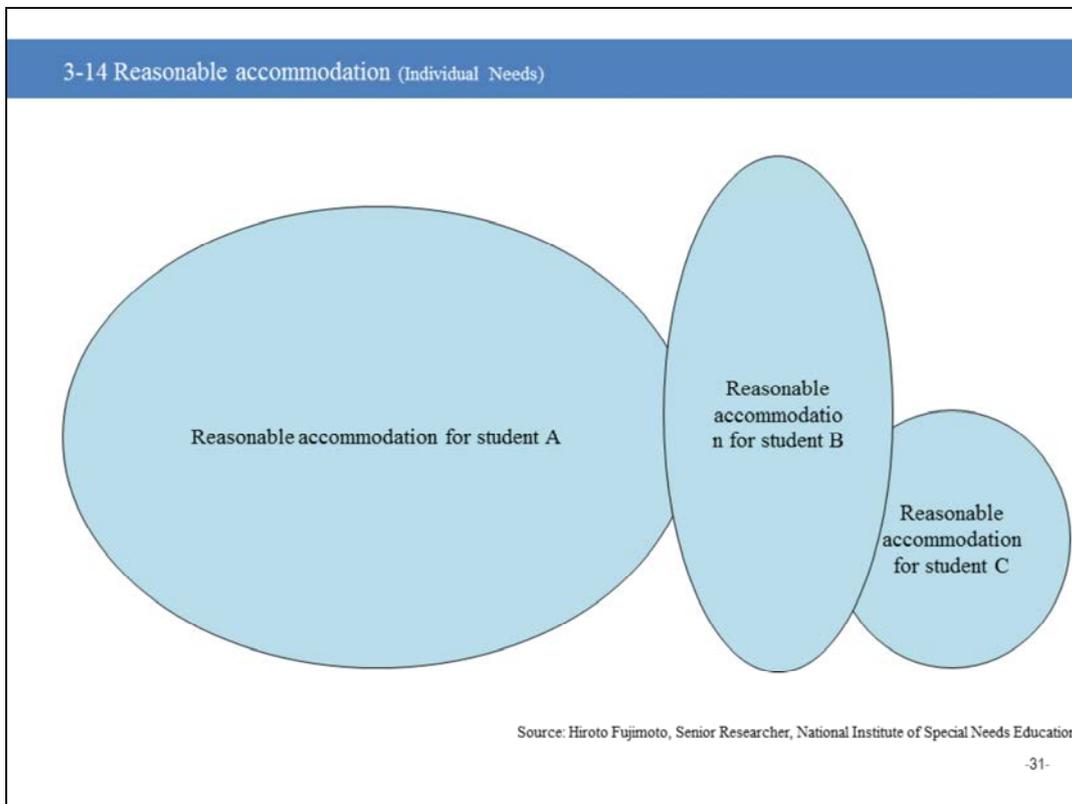
Here is a second example, in which an intellectually impaired second-year elementary school student is enrolled in a special class. As touched on earlier, although a student may be enrolled in a special class, it is relatively common in Japan for that student to nonetheless study some or many subjects in a regular class of the same grade level. Therefore, so-called basic environment improvements are made in the sense that, for example, special classes are placed next to classes with which they can interact, enabling easy movement between classes and further encouraging joint learning. Additionally, in this example, in the event that the intellectually and emotionally impaired child cannot settle down and learn together with other students, a multi-purpose space is prepared for the child nearby where individual instruction and educational counseling can be provided. As a reasonable accommodation, whiteboards and magnet sheets listing the day's plans are placed in classrooms to help students who become uneasy when unable to foresee the day's activities. Finally, this is the interior of the special class in which students study. The students' stationery and writing utensils are stored in colored boxes. These also serve as partitions that set aside calm, half-secluded places for students to study. Architecturally, spaces are structured in this example as in the cases described by Ms. Watanabe, in which the spaces are surrounded by felt and other such means are used to help calm down children with autistic tendencies.



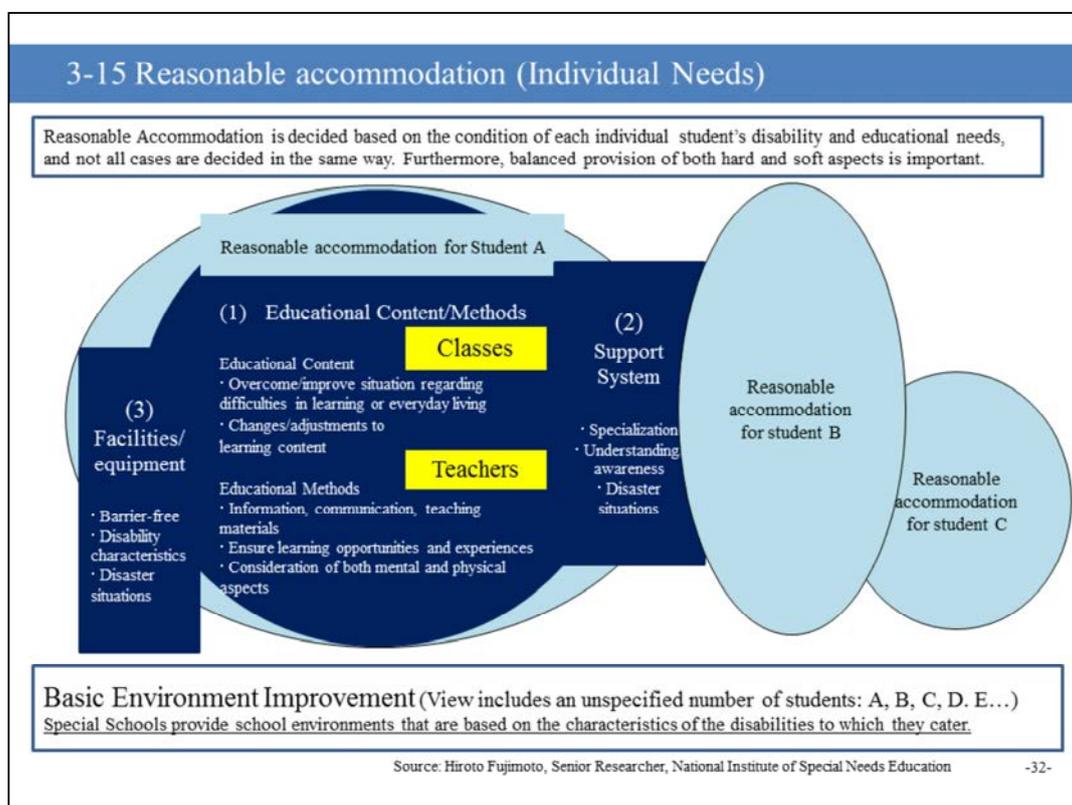
Now on to my third example. This case involves a second-year elementary school student with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) who is enrolled in a regular class. This diagram shows the placement of classrooms for first-year students, second-year students, and third-year students. The relevant student spent his first year in a regular class, but a special classroom for ADHD education was established next to the regular class. When the student advanced to his second year, he belonged to a regular second-year class, and the special class he also attended was located directly above that classroom. In his third year, this sort of instruction had contributed considerably to the student's education and he had become able to behave in a calm, composed way. Thus, he ceased to receive special education and continued to attend regular classes. This constitutes so-called "reasonable accommodation." In other words, children's disabilities, like adult disabilities, are not the same every year, but rather they can improve if the children receive education and care. Such children must be watched over a long span of time, and it may be important to change environmental conditions for the child in the course of that long span of time.



Now for my fourth example. In this example, a first-year elementary school student with a physical disability sufficient for attendance of a special school was enrolled in a special class. This student has difficulty with movement due to short arms and legs, short stature, and bow-leggedness. The school here is a small school with two classes per grade. In his first year at the school, the special class in which the student was enrolled was located on the first floor of the school building, with a first-year class right next door with which the student could interact. When he advanced to his second year, his special class remained on the first floor, and the placement of grades was changed such that the second-year class with which he would interact was placed right next door again. When he advanced to his third year, the special class was placed on the second floor of the building, and both third-year classes with which he would interact were placed next door again. These were the reasonable accommodations made for this child. Other examples include the easy-to-use restroom that was initially on the first floor and then moved to the second floor for his third year, as well as the sink area used by this child, which was modified for his use on the first floor during his first two years, then modified for his use on the second floor in his third year. Our research has involved our visiting a variety of schools in a national survey and accumulating many examples of this nature. In the future, we plan to organize this information into a database and release it to the public.



As this diagram shows, the provision of reasonable accommodations is determined based on the individual disabilities and needs of each individual.



Reasonable accommodations are not limited to facilities and equipment. Such accommodations also include the content of education provided to students and the personal or human environment provided, beginning with support teachers. Accommodations should be comprehensive in nature and conducted in a comprehensive, multilateral way. However, today we will limit our discussion to facilities and equipment, so please understand this moving forward.

## 4. Example of school creation in Japan: “Dream school creation”

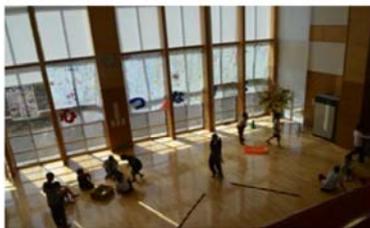
-33-

Next I will introduce what I think is a rather advanced case study even in Japan. In this example, a regular elementary school and a special school have been built together in an integrated manner.

### 4-1 Example of school creation in Japan: "Dream school creation"

Tokamachi City, Niigata Prefecture  
Tokamachi City Tokamachi Elementary School  
Tokamachi City Fureai-no-Oka Special School

- Elementary School: 12 classes/291 students  
(Special classes: 2 classes/7 students)
- Special school: 9 classes/29 students
- Complex Facilities (Floor Area):  
Elementary school (4,393m<sup>2</sup>)  
Special school (1,645m<sup>2</sup>)  
Development Support Center (402m<sup>2</sup>)  
After-school care (77m<sup>2</sup>)
- Improvement Period: 2012
- Structure: Reinforced concrete; 2 floors above ground



The Fureai ("interaction") Plaza, where elementary school and special school students interact naturally



-34-

When I was discussing Sweden earlier, I gave an example of a training school located on a portion of the grounds of a foundation school. This example I will provide now is a case in which an elementary school and special school are built in an integrated manner in the city of Tokamachi in Niigata Prefecture.

I participated in the process of building this school for an extremely long period of time, serving as a consultant supervisor for its preliminary and actual designs. The building was completed in 2013, but the campaign behind its construction dates back to 1992, 20 years before its completion. Local residents and the PTA took the lead in a persistent campaign involving school teaching staff and the broad of education, the campaign eventually bearing fruit in this project to build this school that integrates a special school and elementary school into one.

This process experienced significant impact from, for example, the 2002 establishment of a prefectural school for the handicapped as a branch school on a portion of the campus of the municipality-established Tokamachi Elementary School. As a result, in the course of this long campaign, the idea that children with and without disabilities should be educated at the same school penetrated well into the thought process of the committee in charge of school construction, and they began to appeal very strongly to the municipal and prefectural boards of education. After such persistent negotiations, this school was finally realized.

Recently, a graduate student at my laboratory suggested volunteering to work with local residents to create designs in a workshop-style format, and since then the entire laboratory has provided support to that end.

#### 4-2 Example of school creation in Japan: "Dream school creation"

##### Management/operation system

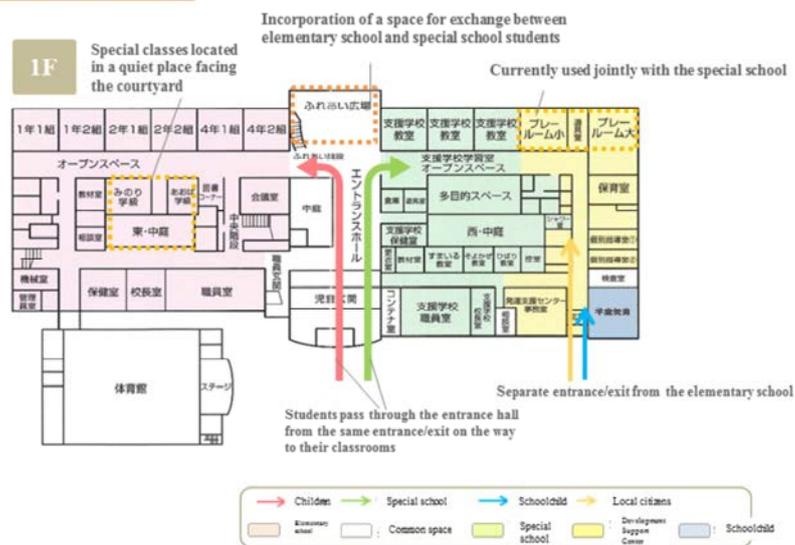
Facility	Utility time (weekday)		Governing body	Management/operation
	8	22		
Elementary school	← Utility time (weekday) →		Board of education	Board of education
Special school	← Utility time (weekday) →		Board of education	Board of education
Development Support Center	← Utility time (weekday) →		City administrative bureau	City administrative bureau
After-school care	← Utility time (weekday) →		City administrative bureau	City administrative bureau

-35-

This integrated school offers four functions: an elementary school, a special school, a development support center, and an after-school care center.

#### 4-3 Example of school creation in Japan: "Dream school creation"

##### Characteristics shown on floor plan



-36-

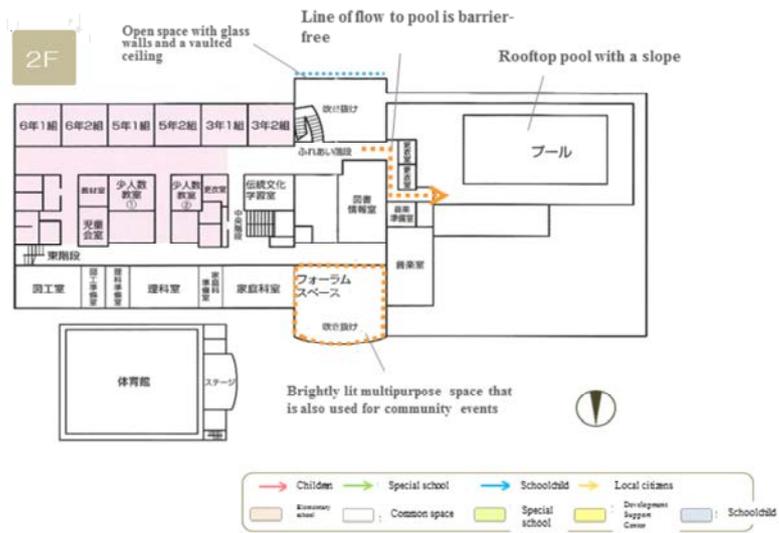
This is the floor plan for the school's first floor. On this map, up is the southern direction and down is north. The elementary school is located on left side of the school with two classes per grade. On the right side of the school are the special school, the development support center, and the after-school care center.

Both students of the special school and the elementary school share the same entrance to the building. Heading left from the entrance takes you to the elementary school, while heading right takes you to the special school. We insisted that the school be designed such that students would use the same entrance.

Between the two areas is a "Fureai Plaza," or interaction plaza. Here, elementary school students and special school students interact with one another in a variety of ways.

#### 4-4 Example of school creation in Japan: "Dream school creation"

##### Characteristics shown on floor plan



-37-

This is a floor plan of the school's second floor. The second floor contains classrooms for the higher elementary school grade levels, special classrooms, and a barrier-free pool installed on the rooftop that is usable by both students of the special school and the elementary school.

#### 4-5 Example of school creation in Japan: "Dream school creation"

##### Improvement process

\*At Tokamachi, efforts led by the PTA been carried out under the concept of "Dream School Creation Activities" for the past 15 years with the aim of improving the school to create a convivial education environment, such as creating a special school and development support center.

\*In realizing this concept, not only have school facilities been improved, but a municipal special school has been established as an alternative to the branch school of the prefectural special school that was available at the time, implementing preparations/improvements with regard to both hard and soft aspects.

##### Core of special education

\*A special school, development support center, and special classrooms were established, enabling the provision of welfare support and educational opportunities continuously, from infants to the compulsory education level.

\*Although each facility is operated separately, since they are all within the same building, it is easy to implement mutual use of facilities and create a coordination system amongst the facilities.



Facilities for counseling, training, and family support—such as the playroom (photograph on left) and one-on-one study room (photo on right)—have been provided.

➔ A close coordination system utilizing the environment—3 facilities within the same building/school grounds—makes high quality support possible.

-38-

This slide summarizes the history that led to the construction of this school at which support can be provided seamlessly for both children with and without disabilities, containing as it does a development support center, special classrooms, and a special school.

#### 4-6 Example of school creation in Japan: "Dream school creation"

##### Conviviality and exchange

All school facilities are shared, and both soft and hard measures to enable students and teachers of both schools to spend their daily lives in the same facilities and learn together can be observed.

##### <Hard aspects>

- Establishment of space for interaction  
Centered on the Fureai Plaza, spaces and lines of flow have been considered to enable students of both schools to meet face-to-face and speak to one another on a daily basis.
- Making the building barrier-free  
Different floor levels have been eliminated and elevators, multi-purpose toilets, stairs with two rows of railing, and a pool with slopes have been installed.

##### <Soft aspects>

- Daily exchange, exchange through classes, and exchange through school events have been incorporated into both schools' annual plans.
- Joint staff meetings and workshops are also held amongst teachers of the two schools with the aim of lightening the burden on homeroom teachers and enhancing specialization.

→ **Through exchange at school, students—regardless of whether or not they have disabilities—develop a humanity that enables them to support each other in their daily lives.**



Rooftop pool that is easy for children with disabilities to use also

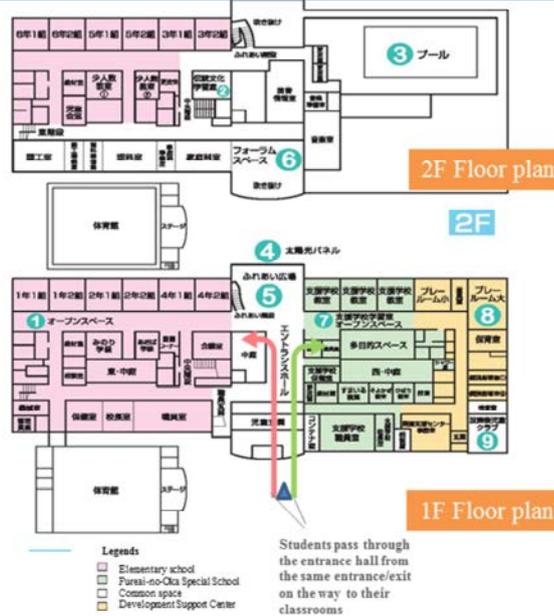


Stairs have two rows of railing

-39-

On the school rooftop is a barrier-free pool usable by both students with and without disabilities. Moreover, although it goes without saying for a school like this, it also features adequate basic environmental improvements, such as mandatory thorough barrier-free design and universal design.

#### 4-7 Floor plan of Tokamachi Elementary School/Fureai-no-Oka Special School building (Main Facilities/Equipment)



Floor plan source: School Brochure

-40-

Here is a combined floor plan of the entire building. To repeat, this is the elementary school section, while the other section contains the special school, development support center, and student clubs.

#### 4-8 Main facilities/equipment at Tokamachi Elementary School/Fureai-no-Oka Special School 1



#### 1 Open spaces

- Spaces enables corridors to also be utilized broadly as classroom spaces
- It is also possible to partition the spaces.

#### 2 Traditional culture study room

- This room is used for distinctive educational activities, such as “Kimono Club Activities”.



Photo source: School Brochure

-41-

These images show the elementary school section of the building. This section is an open environment centered around an open space that enables the flexible variation of study groupings and styles. This area of Japan is home to a local industry focused on traditional Japanese textiles, and hence there is also a room at the school for studying traditional Japanese culture.

#### 4-9 Main facilities/equipment at Tokamachi Elementary School/Fureai-no-Oka Special School 2



#### 3 Rooftop pool

- The pool has a universal design that makes it easy for anyone to use.
- The design pays careful attention to safety, enabling students to enter the water safely via a slope along the side of the pool that has a handrail.

#### 4 Solar panels

- The outside of the Fureai Plaza is installed with solar panels, promoting environmental education for the students.



Photo source: School Brochure

-42-

Here are the school's pool and solar panels.



Entrance shared by the two schools



View of the Entrance Hall from the Fureai Plaza (multi-purpose space)



Fureai Plaza (multi-purpose space)

5 Scenes of Exchange in the Fureai Plaza (Multi-purpose space)

• The Entrance is shared by the two schools; from there, the line of flow passes through the Entrance Hall and Fureai Plaza (multi-purpose space) to classrooms. These spaces were innovatively designed centered on the Fureai Plaza to enable students of both schools to meet face-to-face and speak to one another on a daily basis.



Exchange photo source: School Brochure

This is the Fureai Plaza, a multipurpose hall established between the two schools in the building. It has floor heating installed and is used as a space for both schools to interact in a variety of ways. In practice, it is also used for a variety of events and activities.



6 Forum space  
(Scene of students making *Chinkoro*)

• One wall is made of glass, creating a space with a sense of openness  
• Designed as a space for school events and community exchange

7 Study rooms, open spaces, and multi-purpose spaces in the special school

• Utilizing study rooms, open spaces, and multi-purpose spaces, the special school has been designed as a space for undertaking independent activities, providing guidance for everyday living, and life unit learning.



Photo source: School Brochure

This is the special school zone of the building. Class sizes are small at the special school, but in some years a particular grade may have a particularly large or small number of students, and hence the makeup and organization of study groups and classes may change dramatically. With that in mind, we proposed a design that is as flexible as possible and can be partitioned for use as necessary.



### 8 Playroom

- The Playroom was designed as a space for infants for whom there are concerns about their language or physical/mental development and their parents/guardians to experience activities in groups.



Photo Source: School Brochure

-45-

### 9 After-school club

- This facility was designed as a space providing a place for appropriate play and living activities for children who have no-one to look after them after school.

These are the school's playroom and after-school club spaces. Examples such as these will likely become gradually more common in Japan over time. Although it may be difficult to make all spaces like this, I have worked with local community members for an extended period of time, and I personally feel that "inclusive" thinking in a basic sense, i.e. the idea that children with and without disabilities should learn together in an integrated environment, has taken root among regular community residents.

## 5. Points for creating schools utilizing the characteristics of inclusive education in Japan

-46-

In summary, the research conducted by the National Institute for Educational Policy Research's Educational Facilities Research Center is scheduled to have its findings collected in a report in March of this year. This report has largely taken shape already, and thus I would like to introduce a few points, scheduled for inclusion in the report, concerning the construction of school facilities for inclusive education.

Inclusive Education is characterized by

mechanisms for people with and without disabilities to learn together!



©Preconditions enabling the provision of reasonable accommodation, which supports these mechanisms

- (1) Understanding of local residents in aiming to realize a convivial society
- (2) Substantial human accommodation, such as teachers and class support
- (3) Accommodation regarding facilities/equipment supporting school operation and student mobility, learning, daily living, and safety aspects

Today's presentation focused on Number (3), "Accommodation Regarding Facilities/Equipment". However, these 3 items comprise a trinity enabling support for mechanisms for children both with and without disabilities to grow through learning and playing together for the first time.

Needless to say, building an inclusive educational environment ought to be achieved through a synthesis of factors including educational methodology, educational content, support systems including the personal or human, community understanding as a whole, and finally facilities and equipment. Here, however, for the most part, I will limit my commentary to the main points pertaining to facilities and equipment.

### Key points for building schools to make effective use of inclusive education characteristics\*

1. Consensus building among the people involved
2. Take organizational and financial aspects into account
3. Set up of annual plans and review of plan and design with passage of time
4. Consideration for barrier-free environment on school grounds
5. Consideration for facilities and equipment that allow for instruction according to state of development and disability, special characteristics, etc.
6. Consideration for facilities and equipment required in case of emergency
7. Stratagems for classroom layout to foster collaborative learning
8. Consideration of space for exchange and movement

\* NIER is presently conducting "Basic Survey Research Regarding School Facilities for Forming an Inclusive Education System," for which I am a committee member, and the gist of the interim report findings on this research will be presented under the above headings. These matters will be pursued in further discussion in future, and the "Report on Research Results" of this study group together with an "Inclusive School Facility Database (Case DB)" are scheduled for public release in March 2016.

I will comment on these eight points in the order listed here.

## 1. Consensus building among the people involved

In providing "reasonable accommodation" in school facilities, it is desirable that:

1. Determinations be made according to the state of disability and educational needs of each individual
2. Determinations be made with provision for sufficient consensus building among the people involved

(The people involved: The principals and their guardians, the people involved in public administration, the people involved in the schools, people with experience or academic standing, etc.)



Source: MEXT, "A Collection of Exemplary Design of School Facilities for Special Education" report (May 2012)

-49-

First is consensus-building among the people involved in the matter. In the preceding discussion, I have discussed this process that begins with providing the individual and their parents or guardians with sufficient information, then forming a consensus while paying as much respect as possible to the opinions of the individual and their parents or guardians, and finally arriving at a comprehensive determination as made by the board of education. Therefore, it is of course also important for reasonable accommodations pertaining to facilities and equipment to be taken through meticulous consensus-building among the people involved in the matter.

## 2. Take organizational and financial aspects into account

In providing "reasonable accommodation" in school facilities:

1. It is necessary that the school founders and the school itself take organizational and financial aspects fully into account, and that they judge the substance of the burden taken on.

<Elements to Take into Account>

- Extent of impact on administration and programs  
(Whether or not the purpose, substance, and function of administration and
- Extent of feasibility  
(Physical and technical constraints, personnel and organizational constraint
- Extent of expense and burden taken on
- Size and scope of administration and programs
- Financial status and situation



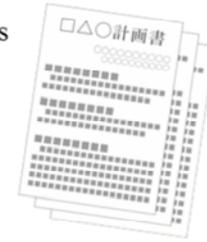
-50-

Next, it is stipulated that reasonable accommodations provided should be balanced in nature. Local governments and schools are required to make comprehensive determinations that consider financial and organizational aspects of matters, including human or personal support measures.

### 3. Set up of annual plans and review of plan and design with passage of time

In providing "reasonable accommodation" in school facilities:

1. It is important that the school founders and the school itself set up and promote annual plans for providing "reasonable accommodation" involving school facilities and related matters.
2. It will be effective for plans and designs to be reviewed over the passage of time in accordance with the stage of development and the growth of the school children and others with disabilities.



-51-

Next, as discussed in the previous examples, accommodations will not necessarily remain unchanged forever once they are made. Reasonable accommodations are not single-year temporary measures, but rather the accommodations that are needed change over time, and hence medium- and long-term planning is necessary.

### 4. Consideration for barrier-free environment on school grounds

1. It is important to give consideration to ramps, hand railings, toilets, elevators, and so on, when planning to improve facilities.
2. In converting existing school facilities to make them barrier free, it is effective to formulate an improvement plan and to implement it systematically.



Provide ramps to eliminate steps and level differences



Provide hand railings at two levels on stairs

-52-

As stated earlier, it is extremely and fundamentally important that school facilities adopt universal design and barrier-free design, so that they not only are capable of handling children with disabilities but also serve more broadly as places for lifelong learning for local community members.

## 5. Consideration for facilities and equipment that allow for instruction according to state of development and disability, special characteristics, etc.

1. It is effective to improve facilities with consideration for the learning, living, and safety aspects of the school children and others according to the state of their individual disabilities.
2. It is important to give consideration to ease of understanding and other such factors in terms of learning and living, and to give consideration to the classroom environment.
3. It is important to provide cool-down spaces for school children and others who require mental health care.



Make effective use of ICT to augment weaknesses in seeing, reading, writing, and so on, in order to facilitate understanding.



Alcove (cool-down space)

-53-

Reasonable accommodations obviously differ completely depending on the nature and extent of students' disabilities. They must be implemented as appropriate for and with sufficient consideration paid to such individual special characteristics.

## 6. Consideration for facilities and equipment required in case of emergency

1. It is important to address difficulty of movement by stratagems for classroom layout and location and other such means to assure the shortest evacuation routes.
2. It is important to provide hand railings, ramps, and other such necessary facilities.
3. It is important to have wheelchairs, stretchers, emergency power sources, and other such necessary items in readiness.



A wheelchair for use in evacuation is kept always in readiness at the bottom of stairs



Hand railings are installed along evacuation routes

-54-

Children with disabilities are vulnerable to disaster and evacuation situations. Needless to say, sufficient consideration is needed in establishing evacuation routes as well as facilities and equipment for evacuation purposes.

## 7. Stratagems for classroom layout to foster collaborative learning

1. It is effective to plan classroom location and layout flexibly, for example placing special needs classes and ordinary classes in adjoining rooms.
2. It is important to give full consideration to safety aspects when planning classroom location and layout.



Scene of collaborative learning  
(Provided by Hisui-no-Sato Integrated School, Itoigawa Municipal Elementary School)

-55-

To repeat, inclusive education aims to have students with and without disabilities living and studying in the same integrated environment, to the greatest extent possible. For that reason, it is extremely important that thoughtful measures be taken such as classrooms placement that enables such students to learn together.

## 8. Consideration of space for exchange and movement

1. It is important to take particular design measures regarding spaces that naturally encourage exchange in the normal course of school activities in order to foster an attitude of mutual help and mutual learning.
2. It is important that the size and facility functions of exchange spaces be planned with a concrete sense of the lines of flow and activities in them.
3. It is important to plan spaces for movement (lines of flow) so as to assure safety and functionality, to configure layout and size, and to take due care to allow for diverse methods of movement.



Scenes of exchange in "Fureai Hiroba" (multipurpose space for contact)  
Photo of exchange on right is from the school pamphlet

-56-

Finally, as explained in the earlier discussion of the elementary school in Tokamachi, it is possible that there will be increasingly more cases in which regular elementary schools are established together with special schools in an integrated manner, or special schools are established on the campus of a regular school. Additionally, as described on previous slides, it is also likely that we will increasingly see special classes established in regular schools or, in some cases, students travel from regular schools to special schools for interaction and exchange. Such interaction and cooperation are also important.

In this respect, I personally do not believe there is any major difference between the examples from Sweden I supplied and the current state of affairs in Japan.



Thank you for your attention.

### III. Closing address

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Thanks to so many of you for participating in today's Seminar on Educational Facilities Research and for staying so many hours to listen until the very end.

From Mr. Reino Tapaninen we heard about Finland's inclusive school architecture, regarding which he provided distinctive and unique examples of initiatives placed within a policy context. I believe that the concepts and designs in these examples are rich in their implications for our own school facilities planning here in Japan.

From Ms. Watanabe, we heard about Finland's inclusive education system, following its changes throughout history with a focus on institutional reforms and financial systems. This provided valuable perspective in thinking about the "soft" or more abstract side of the issue that is prerequisite to building the "hard" physical facilities.

Finally, from Mr. Ueno, a man who has designed a great many school facilities, we heard about approaches toward creating inclusive school facilities and related topics. In his lecture, he drew on specific precedents, including cases in which elementary schools and special education schools have been integrated with one another.

As Mr. Ueno also mentioned in his lecture, the National Institute is currently pursuing research on inclusive education and school facilities, and we plan to compile our results by April of this year. I hope that this, in addition to today's lecture, will prove to be a valuable resource for school facility construction in the future.

In closing, I would like to extend our deepest thanks to Mr. Reino Tapaninen, Ms. Watanabe, and Mr. Ueno for their participation. This concludes the seminar. Thank you.





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