



Curriculum Center for Teachers
Tokyo Gakugei Univ.

Creative Curricula & Teaching
Newsletter

English Edition
No. 5 July 2011

Evacuation Centers and Teachers Kenichi Tabata Miyagi University of Education

A massive earthquake struck off the east coast of Japan at 2:46 pm on March 11, 2011. It has come to be known as the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake, causing immense damage throughout the Tohoku region, mainly Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima prefectures. Hundreds of thousands of disaster victims immediately evacuated to nearby schools. Given this opportunity to consider the quality of teachers who can overcome a crisis, I interviewed the principals of those schools which accepted disaster victims.

[Example in a coastal area]

Ishinomaki Technical High School, which is located in Ishinomaki city on the Pacific coast, was inundated in a one meter high flood because of a tsunami generated by the earthquake running up the neighboring Kitakami Canal. The high school was not originally designated as an evacuation center. For that reason, no emergency stocks were kept there, such as food, drinking water, and blankets. Nonetheless, a total of some 800 people, including neighboring residents, students, and teachers, spent over two days in school buildings while sharing their own food.

Some teachers rescued residents by immersing themselves chest-deep in water. Teachers' ideas were used in relief activities as follows: carrying evacuating residents to the school using canoes of the school boat club; taking the head of a neighborhood association on board a canoe and moving around while confirming the safety of residents who had evacuated to upper levels of their own homes; sharing and taking glucose that had been stored in a small plant installed in the Department of Chemical Technology; taking distilled water used for experiments as drinking water; carrying goods out of neighboring houses using a high jump mat instead of a raft; and making a bridge to get across stagnant water by arranging desks when making an evacuation.



Kitakami Canal and Ishinomaki Technical High School: Ishinomaki Technical High School was inundated above the floor level by a tsunami running up the canal. The pier which the boat club had used was also destroyed.

[Example in an inland area]

A junior high school located inland in Sendai city opened an evacuation center for four days from the day of the disaster. About 100 evacuees stayed in the martial arts gym. Although nearby buildings showed relatively little damage, lifelines to utilities and communications services were cut off and continuing aftershocks made people anxious. Those were the chief reasons that residents came to the evacuation center.

The school was designated as an evacuation center. However, because operating evacuation centers originally come under the jurisdiction of the city government, two officers came to the school from the city government. Nonetheless, it was teachers who performed the following operations: serving warm meals by cooking emergency rice stocks; and securing light using candles made by students in a special needs class. For the operations, about ten teachers stayed voluntarily in the teachers' room every night.

Here we cited examples of schools that were used as an evacuation center for short-term sheltering. In the event of emergencies, abilities and skills to make use of school facilities and equipment that teachers cultivated by the time must be exercised rapidly. In addition to cultivating these abilities, future teacher training programs must consider the power of administrators who create environments to exercise the abilities and power to engage in longer-term risk management.

A vessel washed up on the quay of the Ishinomaki Port by a tsunami.



A vacant lot of houses near the Ishinomaki Port. Damage varies greatly from block to block. (All photos were taken by the author on April 21, 2011)



Discussion of Master's Degree Requirements in Teacher Training

Yasuko Muramatsu President, Tokyo Gakugei University

"The Special Committee on the Improvement of Teachers' Qualities and Abilities" of the Central Council for Education (CCE) is evaluating a teacher licensing system to improve teachers' expertise and comprehensive measures through teacher training, appointment, and in-service training. The Special Committee was set up in June 2010 and delivered a progress report to the CCE at the end of January 2011. Although a subsequent discussion had been interrupted because of the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake, it was resumed in May 2011 with the same members as before. The Special Committee is said to plan to submit a certain report by the end of this term of the CCE (Jan. 2013).

As a committee member of a teacher-training institution participating in the Special Committee, I introduce discussions in the Special Committee. When regarding teaching life comprehensively, the main issues for consideration are who takes charge to improve the qualities and abilities, when, where, and using what systems. A considerable divergence of opinion was evident between the two sides in the initial discussions in the Special Committee: the university side, which takes on the responsibility of teacher training, and the board of education side, which has responsibility for appointments and in-service training. The latter was critical of conventional university education and advanced the strong opinion that teachers' qualities and abilities should be improved during nearly 40 years of their teaching career after the appointment.

The Teachers License Act was revised in 1998 and subjects related to "school subjects or education studies" were introduced. Subsequently, universities became able to reorganize teacher training at universities flexibly for the purpose of enrichment in subjects related to teacher education. However, recent problems over schools are diversifying and increasing. Training of teachers who can deal with those problems and have high expertise in school subjects for four years at universities has already reached the limit. Even if trying to acquire the abilities through on-site practice, it would be difficult to do so only with short-term or one-off training related to new problems.

In the progress report, the Special Committee determined a direction of future discussions beyond the initial divergence of opinion depending on the standpoint: training for professional teachers requires master level education. The teacher licensing system led to a plan to grant a basic teaching license (tentative name, used hereinafter) to those who completed an undergraduate degree and the general teaching license (tentative name, used hereinafter) as a qualification at the master level.

It is not yet time to clarify our university policy, but

based on discussions in the Japan Association of Universities of Education, we fundamentally approve of requiring a master's degree as a teaching qualification. Of course it is important how we make use of undergraduate and graduate programs, including practice teaching effectively, as well as



extending a training period. Another important matter is how to modify the contents of education along with qualitative enhancement of teacher training at universities.

In Japan, more than 20,000 individuals were newly appointed as teachers of public elementary, junior-high and senior-high schools in 2010. What could be regarded as a plan for teacher training of this size? The open system at the undergraduate stage should be maintained firmly in order to secure various human resources, even though program approval must be more actualized.

However, to obtain the general teaching license, a curriculum that differs from the curriculum for the current advanced class certificate should be required. On the assumption that some people proceed directly to graduate school from university and others enter graduate school after some years of in-service experience, appropriate accommodations for both groups must be prepared, even if not all of those who obtain the basic teaching license would expect to obtain a general teaching license. Such accommodations might include any of the following: enabling students to obtain a general teaching license from the master's programs of general universities by imposing a certain curriculum; and improving the M. Ed. programs and the master's programs of teacher-training universities. Considering the fact that many teachers are women, it is necessary to consider relations between life stages, such as a time of giving birth, and master's degree requirements. It should be a system under which graduate schools of teacher-training universities play a certain role in specialized licenses (tentative name), which are expected in addition to the general teaching license.

In any case, the fundamental reform of the teacher training system is an important issue for general universities as well. Nonetheless, insufficient attention seems to have been devoted to it. Publicity and public discussion will be needed.

Sites Where Teachers Are Nurtured

Rao Congman The Academy for Research in Teacher Education, Northeast Normal University



The Academy for Research in Teacher Education of Northeast Normal University is an organization under the direct control of the Committee for the Development of Teacher Education of Northeast Normal University (NENU) in China, which was officially established in January 2009. The first and current Dean of the Academy is Professor Liu Yichun, Vice-President of NENU. The Academy mainly addresses the study of teacher education and management of teacher educators. It also functions as an organization to conduct pre-service and in-service teacher education in cooperation with the Department of Educational Affairs and other colleges of NENU. The Academy has three institutes: the Institute for Research on Teacher Education, Institute for Research on Subject Matter Education, and Institute for Research on Higher Education. These institutes develop their respective activities centering on comprehensive studies of theories, policies, and practices of teacher education, theoretical and practical studies of school subject education, and theoretical and practical studies of faculty development. The Academy aims "to study teacher education and serve school education based on higher education." For those purposes, the Academy is undertaking efforts to construct an open platform at a high level, promoting a high level of studies of teacher education by teacher education researchers within and outside the University, and providing a high level of services to school education. Efforts are being made by gaining support from "The Teacher Education Innovation Platform Project" with the backing of subject groups for teacher education in the whole university.

The Academy is now mainly developing the following three projects.

1. Studies of teacher education

With attention devoted to the forefront of teacher education study, theoretical studies of teacher education aim to achieve a high level of teacher education study not only with Chinese characteristics but also with international perspectives. Theoretical studies of teacher education actively provide a theoretical basis and technical guidance to teacher education within the University

with close relation to teacher education practices in NENU. Through this, it improves the standards of teacher education subjects. Policy studies of teacher education provide consulting for policy decisions related to education in the central and local governments after fully perceiving the actual needs of reform and development in teacher education.

2. Faculty development of teacher educators

Success or failure of teacher education depends on teacher educators. The Academy aims to form a team of teacher educators who have good knowledge of school sites with an adequate size and a rational structure. It aims to foster leaders of influential teacher education subjects in the country to the greatest extent possible. Through research projects, research seminars and training meetings, and exchange activities with school teachers, it promotes faculty development of teacher educators in the universities.

3. Establishment of "the Northeast China Experimental Zone for Innovations in Teacher Education"

In December 2007, NENU concluded agreements with Jilin Province Education Department, Liaoning Province Education Department, and Heilongjiang Province Education Department for the joint establishment of "the Northeast China Experimental Zone for Innovations in Teacher Education" in three provinces of Northeast China. "The Northeast China Experimental Zone for Innovations in Teacher Education" functions not only to secure time and quality of practice teaching by student teachers sent from NENU. It also functions to promote teacher professional development and school improvement in the experimental zones and faculty development of teacher educators and improvement of educational research standards in NENU. That is to say, goals for "the Northeast China Experimental Zone for Innovations in Teacher Education" are the integration of pre-service and in-service teacher education, of educational research and educational practice, of teachers' development and students' development, and the integration of education (teacher education), research (educational research), and service to society (service to schools). Currently, NENU is innovating teacher education in over 100 schools in 23 counties (cities) in northeast China based on "the partnership between normal universities (U), local governments (G), and schools (S)". Tasks for the Academy for Research in Teacher Education include promoting the establishment of "the Northeast China Experimental Zone for Innovations in Teacher Education" and making it fully functional. "The Northeast China Experimental Zone for Innovations in Teacher Education" of NENU is now increasingly attracting attention throughout China.

The Academy's website

<http://arte.nenu.edu.cn>

The Second Stage of Full-scale Joint Research with Northeast Normal University of China

The Center has invited international visiting professors to conduct research exchanges related to the latest trend of teacher education in foreign countries. It has been an important opportunity to consider problems in teacher education in Japan and in Tokyo Gakugei University seen from abroad. To date, we have invited Professor Don Gyuqui and Professor Rao Congman from Northeast Normal University (NENU) of China. With the help of the two professors, we were able to learn outlines and examples of teacher training and in-service training systems and challenges in higher education institutions and universities in China.

As another article in this issue contributed by Professor Rao shows, NENU is moving forward with a dynamic idea to unify practice and research at a high level by teaming up with universities, boards of education, and schools. NENU is also accumulating teacher education-like researches related to the development of teacher abilities at the undergraduate stage, the master's (professional) stage, and the leader's stage and their standards. These activities are present-day challenges for Tokyo Gakugei University in Japan as well. The meaning of research consultation with mutual visits is becoming increasingly significant. In other words, it has become a common recognition to conduct specific and individual studies in accordance with more specific themes

and domains, not to end it with merely information exchange and research exchange between the two universities. It might be regarded as an expectation for the second stage of joint research.

Based on such a background, we have exchanged views on themes, research organizations, and schedules of a project research since last year. The research theme was determined as "The Joint Research on Systems of Teacher Training and In-service Training in Knowledge-based Society and Their Contents and Methods". It has sub-themes: "Development of a teacher training program and model for practical ability formation" and "Development of a program and model to support the professional development of teachers". More specifically, we have the following vision: organizing a working group in both universities; placing milestones of the 3-year research project at the research consultation meetings with mutual visits; and holding a Japan-China international research symposium on teacher education in 2013. Both universities and both countries will be able to learn from each other through teacher education-like researches in accordance with concrete examples which extend the commonality and individuality of teacher education in the eastern Asian region. (Hatsuo Mitsuishi)

Terminology of Teacher Education

Practitioner Educators

To establish a professional graduate school, it is necessary to have a certain ratio of teachers who possess "practical experience" and "high practical ability" in a particular field. In the Graduate School of Professional Teacher Education started in 2008, the ratio is stipulated as "over 40%", and teachers with more than 20 years of practical career are regarded as desirable. In many cases, based on an agreement between the university and a board of education, individuals with a long career at an educational site (mainly administrative work) take responsibility for practical teacher training programs in

the graduate school in cooperation with scholar faculty staffs. Since before the establishment of the graduate school, there have been quite a few individuals with great careers at educational sites in university teachers who have coordinated practice teaching at the undergraduate stage. "Practitioner educators" are a collective term which includes those teachers.

The presence of practitioner educators generates positive effects when practically advancing teacher training programs. However, from the standpoint of criticizing schools, some have pointed out that "bringing people from troubled school sites does nothing but reproduce the problems on an enlarged scale." Attention will be devoted to changes in the future. (Yasuyuki Iwata)

Events Calendar

Wednesday, November 23, 2011
Workshop for Practicing
Teacher Education

Saturday, December 3, 2011

The 12th Annual Symposium "The
future curriculum of school and
teacher education"

Staff of Curriculum Center for Teachers

Director SAKAI, Toshiki
(Professor, History Education and Korean Education)
Center Researchers
[Division of Curriculum Research and Development]
MITSUISHI, Hatsuo (Professor, Curriculum Studies)
KANEKO, Mariko
(Associate Professor, Educational Sociology)
[Division of Teacher Preparation Research and Development]
IWATA, Yasuyuki
(Associate Professor, Historical Studies of Teacher Education)
UESUGI, Yoshimi
(Associate Professor, Media Education)
[Division of Research and Development for In-Service Teachers]
MAEHARA, Kenji
(Associate Professor, Educational Administration)

The CCT is produced by the Curriculum Center for Teachers,
Tokyo Gakugei University.
Editor: Yoshimi Uesugi
Designer: Tsukasa Aoyama and Xiaohui Zhang
(Aoyama Lab., Calligraphy and Arts, Tokyo Gakugei University)
Curriculum Center for Teachers, Tokyo Gakugei University
4-1-1 Nukui-kitamachi Koganei, Tokyo 184-8501 Japan
Tel: 81-42-329-7776 Fax: 81-42-329-7786
E-mail: curriect@u-gakugei.ac.jp
Website: <http://www.u-gakugei.ac.jp/~curriect/english/index.html>