

Introduction to upper secondary schools in Osaka Prefecture

Note 1: The data used here are mainly those for FY2020 (as of May 1, 2020).

* Japanese schools commence on April 1 as the beginning of school year. Thus, the annual statistical survey, which treats matters such as the number of students, has been conducted as of May 1.

Note 2: The text is prepared by Tsuguo Kataoka, a member of the "Osaka Liaison Committee on Upper Secondary School Issues."

1. The number of upper secondary schools in Osaka Prefecture

- Full-time national upper secondary school: 1
- Full-time public upper secondary schools: 155
- Full-time private upper secondary schools: 96
- Total of full-time upper secondary schools: 248

Reference 1: The population of Osaka Prefecture is 8,842,523 and the number of students at the 248 upper secondary schools in Osaka is 214,155.

Consisting of: public schools: 121,055; private schools: 91,730; and national schools: 1,330

Reference 2: Part-time Schools

The number of students at 21 public part-time schools in Osaka is 3,181.

* Osaka Prefecture deems part-time schools and full-time schools as single upper secondary schools. Therefore, such 21 schools are included among the 155 full-time upper secondary schools.

School entrance exams for upper secondary schools and school lives including lessons are conducted completely separately. Thus, full-time schools and part-time schools should be counted as totally different types of upper secondary schools.

* Upper secondary schools in a broad sense: Full-time public upper secondary schools, part-time public upper secondary schools, upper secondary special training schools, correspondence credit-based upper secondary schools, upper secondary department of special needs schools, etc.

Upper secondary school in a narrow sense: Full-time public upper secondary schools and part-time public upper secondary schools.

In this text, "upper secondary school" is used in a narrow sense.

* Many upper secondary schools and schools for special needs education in a narrow sense are under the jurisdiction of the prefectural government (shared throughout the country), while many elementary and lower secondary schools are under the municipal government (shared throughout the country).

2. Entrance exam for upper secondary schools in Osaka Prefecture (schedule/process)

* The "entrance exam systems" differ from one prefecture to another.

The dates are related to entrance exams for upper secondary schools in Osaka Prefecture implemented in February and March 2021.

Entrance exams given on February 10th

At all private upper secondary schools, the entrance exams start on February 10th and continue for several days.

* The methods for school entrance exams, such as the nature of subjects to be tested, differ from one school to another.

Entrance exams given on February 17th

Some public upper secondary schools and departments offer entrance exams as a special selection process.

Five-subject exams including Japanese language, mathematics, English language, social studies, and science and practical skill tests, interviews, and other types of selection processes are given to select successful applicants.

Entrance exams for the vocational course at upper secondary schools for (*special*) needs education, social independence courses for students with intellectual disabilities, and co-living promotion classes are also given in a special selection process.

At vocational courses at upper secondary schools for (*special*) needs education, written tests called an "aptitude tests" interviews, and other types of selection processes are given to select successful applicants.

In social independence courses for students with intellectual disabilities and co-living promotion classes, no written tests are given, but interviews and other types of selection processes are given to select successful applicants.

Entrance exam to be given on March 9th

Most public upper secondary schools give entrance exams in the general selection process.

At full-time schools, entrance exams are given for the five subjects of Japanese language, mathematics, English language, social studies, and science along with other test processes to select successful applicants.

At part-time schools, entrance exams are given for the three subjects of Japanese language, mathematics, and English language along with other test processes to select successful applicants.

- * Public school entrance exams for upper secondary schools (a special selection process, a general selection process, and a secondary selection procedure) are implemented in a uniform method for school entrance exams established by the Osaka Prefectural Board of Education.
- * Osaka Prefecture implements the nationwide peculiar school entrance exams for upper secondary schools. That is, an entrance exam can be only taken once if the relevant department is limited.
- * Public upper secondary schools have a strict limit on the number of students per class, which is 40, and the student quota should be a multiple of 40 (shared throughout the country).
- * One example in which the same upper secondary school implements school entrance exams held twice: Osaka Prefectural Matsubara High School has both a social independence course for students with intellectual disabilities and a general course. Through a special selection process, four successful applicants are selected for the social independence course and students to fill the predetermined quota (240) for the general course set for a corresponding year are selected through the general selection process.
- * One example of the same upper secondary school implementing entrance exams twice: Osaka Prefectural Otsuka Senior High School implements a school entrance exam for physical education through a special selection process and a school entrance exam for a general course through a general selection process.
- * When Yutaro took an entrance exam for upper secondary school, the school entrance exam generally implemented nationwide was applicable. When a first round school entrance exam was not passed, through a second round school entrance exam, it was acceptable to take an upper secondary school regarding which a first round school entrance exam had not been passed. Moreover, it was acceptable to take another upper secondary school.

Public upper secondary schools' secondary selection procedures on March 23rd

- Public upper secondary schools strictly adhere to the preannounced quota.
- If the number of applicants exceeds the quota, the number of students making up the quota will be selected.
- If the number of applicants falls below the quota, all applicants will be selected as successful applicants and then a

secondary selection procedure will be performed to select the number of students to fill the gap.

* In general, many public upper secondary schools reject some applicants even if the number of applicants falls below the quota.

In Osaka Prefecture, all applicants will succeed if the number of applicants falls below the quota.

3. How students with intellectual disabilities advance to upper secondary schools

When receiving elementary or lower secondary school education under the current compulsory education system, students with intellectual disabilities are now able to choose to attend regular schools. Especially in Osaka Prefecture, their enrollment rate in regular elementary school is higher than it is in other prefectures.

For upper secondary schools, however, students have to pass the entrance exam, and hence, the upper secondary school entrance exam is a strict gate for students with intellectual disabilities. In Osaka Prefecture, a range of efforts have long been made to create an environment for such students to attend regular upper secondary schools.

Separately from "Special courses offered to students who have an intellectual disability certificate," upper secondary school students with disability to which certain considerations have been given exceed 3,000 persons roughly in 170 public upper secondary schools (i.e., the total of full-time schools and part-time schools). Osaka Prefecture is the only prefecture for which such statistics have been publicly announced.

4. "Special courses" offered to students who have intellectual disability certificates

—System applicable only to Osaka Prefectural upper secondary schools—

a. Vocational course at upper secondary school for (*special*) needs education

- Of a total of seven upper secondary schools for (*special*) needs education, five schools have a vocational course.
- Quota of students per grade: 64 students at Tamagawa, 48 at Naniwa, and 32 each at three other schools.
- Since the ratio of applicants at the course is higher than at regular public schools, many of them are rejected.
 - * In Osaka, applicants for upper secondary departments of (*special*) needs school (without vocational courses) are not required to pass entrance exams and all are admitted (however, there are some prefectures that give an entrance exam, and not all applicants may be successful).
 - * Students without intellectual disability certificates can enroll in the upper secondary department of (*special*) needs schools.

b. Co-living promotion class

- Co-living promotion classes are offered in ten regular upper secondary schools.
- An upper secondary school for (*special*) needs education with vocational courses manage two regular upper secondary schools with a co-living promotion class, respectively.
- The co-living promotion class is like a branch class of the vocational course of an upper secondary school for (*special*) needs education.
- Students who study in the class are awarded diplomas upon graduating from the vocational course at an upper secondary school for (*special*) needs education, and at the same time they are given a certificate of completion to prove that they studied together with students at a regular upper secondary school.
- Students are given an interview at the regular upper secondary school and the school makes the decision as to who will be admitted and who will not.
- Daily basis, students spend school life attending and studying at the school.
- One day each week, they attend the main school (the upper secondary school for (*special*) needs education) to

receive "vocational training."

- The number of students per year is three in each co-living promotion class.

c. Social independence courses for students with intellectual disabilities

- Eleven regular upper secondary schools have this course.
- Students are given an interview at the school, and the school makes the decision as to who will be admitted and who will not.
- Those who are successful are enrolled in the school and awarded a diploma from the school.
- The number of students per year is three at eight schools and four at three schools.

* The co-living promotion class and social independence course are programs established by Osaka Prefecture independently, in order to promote education for "learning together and living together" even at upper secondary education, and these programs were officially introduced in 2006. For both of these programs, student achievements are evaluated based on how each student attained the goals (intra-individual absolute evaluation).

* Generally, schools for (*special*) needs education in Osaka and other prefectures have all of elementary, lower, and upper secondary departments. There exist many lower secondary students with disabilities who are not able to advance to upper secondary schools due to the barrier of school entrance exams for upper secondary schools. Many (*special*) needs schools only for upper secondary departments have been established for such students. As is the case with elementary and lower secondary departments, upper secondary schools for (*special*) needs education in Osaka allow all desired applicants to enter them. Five upper secondary schools for (*special*) needs education that specialize vocational education and implement school entrance exams are distinguished from other upper secondary schools for (*special*) needs education.

5. New system at the national level

Currently, calls are being made to promote admittance of children with intellectual disabilities to upper secondary schools. When nearly 100% of graduates of lower secondary schools advance to upper secondary schools in Japan at present and following the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the establishment of the Act for Eliminating Discrimination against Persons with disabilities, it has become less and less permissible to leave out children with intellectual disabilities from education due to the reasoning that "they do not have sufficient qualifications for upper secondary school education." Under such circumstances, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has recently come to pay attention to admission of those with disabilities to upper secondary schools.

Since 2018, upper secondary schools have been able to establish resource rooms for special needs services.

Providing special needs services in resource rooms began in 1993 in elementary and lower secondary schools. Children who need the service attend classes held either in schools they attend or other schools for several hours per week.

In the case of upper secondary schools, the condition that students must pass school entrance exams has not been changed. Thus, there has been only remarkably minor reform. However, this is the prerequisite system through which students requiring special guidance have been admitted to upper secondary schools.

6. School registration (shared throughout the country)

- School registration is divided into registration for elementary schools, that for lower secondary schools, that for upper secondary schools, as well as those for elementary, lower and upper secondary departments of (*special*)

needs school.

- Upper secondary schools for (*special*) needs education, the vocational courses at upper secondary schools for (*special*) needs education, and the co-living promotion classes are registered for upper secondary departments of (*special*) needs school.
- Social independence courses for students with intellectual disabilities are registered for regular upper secondary schools.
- Elementary schools and lower secondary schools are further divided into register for regular classes and for special needs classes.

Specified children belonging to regular classes also uses resource rooms for special support services and go to such resource rooms established within their own schools or in other schools.

Cases in which children belonging to special needs classes are elementary school students

- Children spend their whole time in special needs classes from when they enter schools until they leave.
- Children spend all of their time in special needs classes and join regular classes during school lunch and certain events only.
- Children spend their time studying main subjects including Japanese language, arithmetic, social studies and science in special classes. They take other subjects in regular classes.
- Children receive special guidance in special needs classes for Japanese language and arithmetic and take other subjects in regular classes.

As such, there many different class patterns.

* Although students belong to special needs classes, they spend all of their time in regular classes. That is, Osaka education—"learning together and living together" is continuously declining.

- Furthermore, schools for (*special*) needs education are divided into school commuting registration, visiting registration, and in-hospital classes.

Children in school commuting registration commute to schools for (*special*) needs education every day.

Children in visiting registration commute to schools on limited days, spend most of their times at home, and are taught lessons by teachers who visit at preset dates and times.

Children who are admitted to hospitals for long periods of time and belong to in-hospital classes commute to schools established in single rooms in hospitals that are branch classrooms of schools for (*special*) needs education.

7. Schools for special needs education in Osaka

* Terms used by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology are "special needs school" and "special needs class." Osaka Prefecture uses the names "needs school" and "needs classes."

- For students with visual impairments: 2
- For students with hearing impairments: 4 (of those, schools only having elementary and lower secondary departments: 2; schools only having upper secondary departments: 1)
- For students with intellectual disabilities: 34 (of those, schools having only elementary and lower secondary departments: 2; schools only having lower and upper secondary departments: 1; schools only having upper secondary departments: 10)
- For students with physical/motor disabilities: 13 (of those, schools only having elementary and lower secondary departments: 1)
- For students with health impairments: 3 (of those, schools only having elementary and lower secondary departments: 2)

Reference: The number of students attending elementary departments: 2,242; those attending lower secondary departments: 2,506; and those attending upper secondary departments: 4,353

8. Career paths for 15 year-old students graduating from lower secondary schools (All students graduated from lower secondary school in Osaka Prefecture.)

- Percentage of students advancing to upper secondary school: 98.7 %
 - Percentage of students to get a job: 0.2%
 - Other schools to advance: Private upper secondary special training schools, private correspondence credit-based upper secondary schools, upper secondary departments of schools for special needs education, and others.
- * The situation indicated by the above figures is not limited to Osaka. Similar situations can be seen all around Japan.