

## **Development of structure for local education administration in the provincial governments——Japanese Experience**

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This article presents an overview of the development of educational administration system in a local government in Japan, showing how the system was put in place and how it has changed over time. Japan is said to have a centrally controlled educational administrative system, but in fact Japan had established a local educational administration structure even before World War II, with the division of responsibility arranged essentially on the basis that the compulsory education was a municipal responsibility, secondary education was a prefectural responsibility, and higher education was a national responsibility. Japan had already established a fairly efficient education administration system in prewar period. For the most part, it has been corresponded with the establishment of the local government system (prefecture, county, and municipalities). Local governments were placed under the strong control by the Ministry of Home Affairs and their autonomic power concerning education affairs was limited. Local inspectors had carried out a central and authoritarian role in the educational administration in the provinces.

In postwar period, the democratization and decentralization of education was identified as a core issue of educational reform. The central pillars were the reduction of the authority of the Ministry of Education and the introduction of a local educational administration structure which took the U.S. system of boards of education as its model. The independence of the board of education from general administration, the election of board of education members directly by residents, the execution of policies by the superintendent of education who should be a professional educationist, the independent preparation of an education budget by the board of education and the abolishment of system of the local inspectors and the placement of democratic supervisors, were all matters representing a radical reform in local education administration. The local board of education system has now become a well-established system in Japan. However, the board of education system has been adapted to Japanese conditions and experienced some modification.