

# **Current Trends for Science and Technology Education in Japan**

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## **Abstract**

In order for Japan to continue to be vibrant, affluent, secure and safe in the 21st century, an indispensable prerequisite is the further promotion of science and technology and the realization of a nation based on scientific and technological creativity, which will lead the world in the creation of advanced knowledge and technological innovations. Intellectual creativity is one of Japan's most precious resources. For the Japanese nation, an extremely important item on the national agenda is how to cultivate public interest, especially among the younger generation, in science and technology, and how to build up a wide range of human resources for science and technology in the future. The foundation of science and technology is composed of science and technology education. The achievements of Japanese students in the international surveys, such as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) in 1995 and the supplementary survey of 1999 and the Trend in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 2003 and the first results from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2000) and the second results (PISA 2003) in 2003, were ranked in the top group. But "the drift away from science and technology" is one important issue with regard to re-evaluation of how science and technology education has been carried on in Japan.

My presentation aims to clarify the characteristics of science and technology education (STE), national policies and support for STE, the strength of the current STE program, the New Curriculum, systematic evaluation of learning achievements, training of teachers, the challenges faced in implementing STE programs, and conclusions & recommendations to improve & strengthen the STE program.