

## BASIC ACT ON EDUCATION

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2006. Available at <http://www.mext.go.jp/english/lawandplan/1303462.htm>

### Rationale of the law

The act supports the further development of the democratic and cultural state of Japan and will contribute to peace and human welfare. To realize these ideals, it is important to cultivate people who long for truth and justice, honour the public spirit, and are rich in humanity and creativity. The Basic Act on Education promotes education that transmits tradition and helps create a new culture. It has been enacted in order to establish the foundations of education and promote education that opens the way to Japan's future.

### Concept of lifelong learning

The Basic Act on Education incorporates the concept of lifelong learning as a principle of education: Japanese society will enable all citizens to continue to learn throughout their lives, on all occasions and in all places, and to apply the outcomes of lifelong learning in order to achieve their potential and lead fulfilling lives.

### Main regulations

The act includes the principle of equal opportunities in education: all citizens will be given equal access to education according to their abilities, irrespective of their race, creed, sex, social status, economic position or family background.

The basics of education provision rest on the following principles:

- The objective of **compulsory education** is to cultivate the foundations for an independent life within society. No tuition fees will be charged in public schools.
- **School education** will provide structured education in an organized way suited to the mental and physical development of the recipients. It will strengthen students' own motivation to learn. The schools prescribed by law shall be of a public nature.
- **Universities** will cultivate advanced knowledge and specialized skills. They will create new knowledge while contributing to the development of society by broadly disseminating the results of their activities. They will be autonomous and independent.
- The national and local governments will promote **private schools** through appropriate means while respecting school autonomy.
- The status of **teachers** will be respected and their fair and appropriate treatment ensured. Measures will be taken to improve their education and training.
- The national and local governments will endeavour to take necessary measures supporting **education in the family** while respecting family autonomy by providing guardians with opportunities to learn and relevant information.
- **Early childhood education** is the basis for the lifelong formation of one's personality. Therefore, the national and local governments will provide an environment favourable to the healthy development of young children.
- The national and local governments will promote **social education** by providing opportunities to learn and establishing libraries, museums, community halls and other social education facilities.
- **Partnership and cooperation: schools, families and local residents** will be aware of their respective roles and responsibilities regarding education, and will endeavour to develop partnership and cooperation.

- **Political education** is regarded as necessary for good citizenship. However, the schools prescribed by law will refrain from political education or other political activities for or against any specific political party.
- **Religious education** will value religious tolerance, general knowledge on religion and the position of religion in social life. Public schools will refrain from religious education or other activities for or against any specific religion.

*Stakeholders involved in the development of the strategy:*

- [Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology](#)

*Further readings and web links:*

- [Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education](#)
- Law concerning the Establishment of Implementation System and Other Measures for the Promotion of Lifelong Learning, 1990