

History and Development of the Senior High School at Sakado, University of Tsukuba

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Eleven laboratory schools are attached to the University of Tsukuba—six ordinary schools, including Senior High School at Sakado, and five special needs education schools. Established in 1946 as the Sakado Business School and the Sakado Women's Business School, the name Sakado Senior High School, University of Tsukuba, was adopted in 1978. At that time, the school incorporated departments of agriculture, technology, home economics, and environmental studies. In 1994, Sakado Senior High School was reorganized as an integrated course school. As the Ministry of Education's prototype for the promotion of education reform, it also was the first high school in Japan with an integrated course in science. Sakado Senior High School was subsequently designated a research collaboration school by the Ministry of Education. Practical research in various aspects of integrated course education then began on a continuing basis, as did development of courses, such as the Industry course and the ICT information and communication technology Human Resources Development Project. While its basic focus is on education for career development, the integrated course Sakado Senior High School pursues research topics in experimental practice.

Key words: integrated course school, career guidance, collaboration between the university and its affiliated schools, respect for individuality

Introduction

Eleven laboratory schools are attached to the University of Tsukuba—six ordinary schools, including Senior High School at Sakado, and five special needs education schools. The Education Bureau of the Laboratory Schools effectively unifies the 11 laboratory schools. Heading the Education Bureau is a director, who is supported by two deputy directors, professors, and office staff (Fig. 1). Each of the 11 laboratory schools, including Senior High School at Sakado, share exchange classes, (Figs. 2 and 3).

A principal, who is also a professor at the University of Tsukuba, heads each laboratory school. The principal is assisted by a vice principal selected from among the teachers of the school. The principal and vice principal of each school meet monthly

with the Education Bureau to discuss educational matters and exchange information. Although each school is essentially responsible for its own management, the Education Bureau supervises and advises on almost all matters, including annual education plans, curricula, teaching staff, and use of the school budget.

The Senior High School at Sakado is described briefly in the next two sections, followed by an outline of the cooperation between the Senior High School at Sakado and the University of Tsukuba.

A Brief History of the Senior High School at Sakado

In 1946, the Sakado Business School and the Sakado Women's Business School were established in a consolidated school district including Sakado and adjacent towns and villages. The school be-

Received: October 18, 2010, Accepted: November 26, 2010

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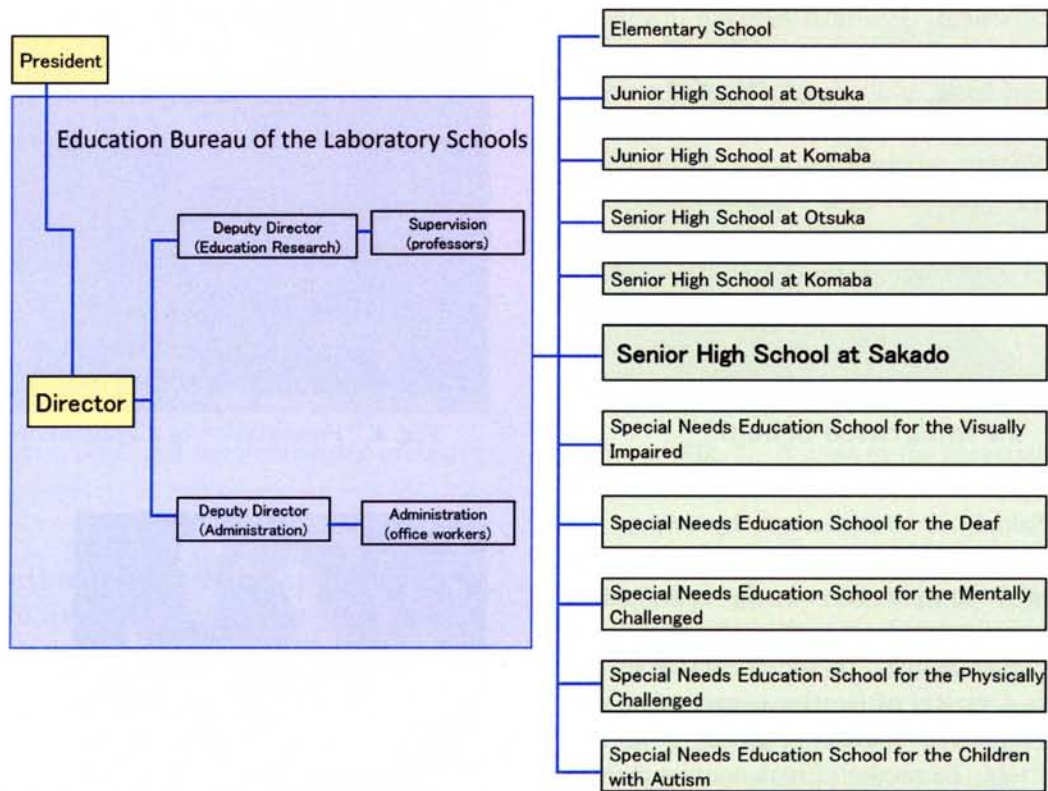


Fig. 1. Structure of the Education Bureau of the Laboratory Schools, University of Tsukuba.



Fig. 2. Exchange class with students from the Special Needs Education School for the Physically Challenged.



Fig. 3. Exchange class with students from the Special Needs Education School for the Mentally Challenged.

came a national high school in 1953 and was re-named the Affiliated Sakado Senior High School, Tokyo University of Education. When the university moved its base from Tokyo to Tsukuba and changed its name to the University of Tsukuba in 1978, the school adopted the name Senior High School at Sakado, University of Tsukuba. It included departments of agriculture, machinery, home

economics, and environmental studies. In 1994, Senior High School at Sakado was reorganized as an integrated course school. As the Ministry of Education’s model school for the promotion of education reform, it became the first high school in Japan with an integrated science program.

Since that time, the Ministry of Education designated Senior High School at Sakado as a research

collaboration school. Practical research in various aspects of integrated course education then began on a continuing basis, as did development of courses, such as the Industry course and the ICT information and communication technology Human Resources Development Project. Although its basic focus is on education for career development, Senior High School at Sakado—as an integrated course school—also pursues research topics in experimental practice.

Senior High School at Sakado as an Integrated School

As an integrated course school, Senior High School at Sakado is characterized by respect for individuality and emphasis on career guidance. The school's goal is to open the way for independent learning that accommodates each student's individuality and career choice. To achieve this goal, the school offers a variety of elective courses that support and complement various academic goals and courses of study. Examples of such courses include Biological Resources and Environmental Sciences, Engineering Systems and Information Sciences, Life and Human Sciences, and Humanities/Social Science and Communication.

In their first year at Senior High School at Sakado, all students study “Industrial Society and Humanity”, where they learn to first question, “who am I?” Students endeavor to discover and explore their own characteristics, personality, abilities, and aptitudes. They then learn about society, its structure and systems, and the wide variety of occupations. At end their first year, students decide on their career goals and which subjects to pursue in their second year. An important feature of an integrated course school is that students determine their own timetable for study.

In their third year, students prepare a graduation thesis just as university students do in their final year of study. Following their own interests, students themselves choose the issues they wish to pursue and tackle them in their theses (Fig. 4).

The integrated course school system is challenging, with a wide range of subjects on offer, a broad scope of expertise among teaching staff, and appropriate guidance provided for each student. In addition, a considerable amount of cooperation is required from outside the high school. Private com-

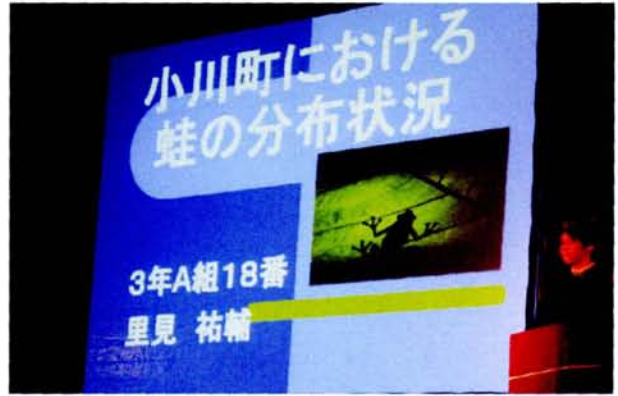


Fig. 4. Presentation of a graduation thesis.



Fig. 5. International student exchange program.

panies, for example, are needed to help students see the meaning and importance of work in society, their role in society, and the part played by technology. The university helps students appreciate the advantages and attractiveness of continuing their education after high school. Good relations and a constructive environment with cooperating institutions are critical to support students' efforts to maximize their achievements.

The subjects offered by the school vary, depending on students' needs, abilities, and aptitudes. Every effort is made to demonstrate that school lessons can be enjoyable and interesting, especially lessons that are rich in experience for students. An active international exchange program with Indonesia; Thailand; Taipei, China; and other countries supports these efforts (Fig. 5).



Fig. 6. A class presented by a university professor.



Fig. 7. A class in the university.

Collaboration between Senior High School at Sakado and the University of Tsukuba

Collaboration between the two educational institutions takes many forms. The high school contributes to the university education program. University students practice teaching at the high school, and the high school cooperates in career development for university professors. The high school also offers research opportunities for university professors and students, particularly graduate students.

The university also contributes to the high school's education program. The university regularly offers classes for high school students (Fig. 6) at the high school as well as at the university (Fig. 7). The university also provides high school students advice on their graduate theses and opportunities for consultations concerning their education.

University professors and high school teachers collaborate on research on aspects of high school education. Such research benefits not only high school teachers, but also high school students.