Two-year Operation at Professional Graduate School for Teacher Education, NaraUniversity of Education: Its Achievements and Challenges

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Abstract: In this report, we examine the undertaking of Nara University of Education that started its Professional Graduate school for teacher education—one of Japan's professional graduate schools—in 2008, and address their achievements and challenges over a two-year operation period. As solutions to those challenges, we present a 2010 revision in curriculum content and educational approach. Specifically, we will first look into how the following efforts worked out: assuring quality of education through curriculum work, drafting assessment guidebooks for lectures, practicum and seminars, using electronic portfolios and promoting FD, based on the record of electronic portfolios, minutes from staff meetings and class evaluations conducted by graduate students, etc.

Next, we will discuss achievements and challenges of teaching practices, which are intended to improve practical leadership abilities among teachers, finding how they work out and what sort of issues they leave us in the end, while touching on ways to coordinate with the universities, affiliated schools and local board of education. One instance is that mentor/teacher handbooks, as well as other systems and methods for sharing educational theories and teaching environments related to teaching practice at professional graduate school for teacher education, required for systematically teaching trainee students must be refined, with the cooperation of local board of education and affiliated schools.

Keyword: Professional Development, Curriculum Framework, FD, e-Portfolio

1. Introduction

Teacher education in Japan has long involved efforts to improve the sense of expertise and clarification of roles required for each program, and assessing those areas. Accordingly, many educational institutions have come to take accountability in recent years, and some even show outcome accountability.

In order to show the results of efforts with these moves underway, achievable targets must now be clarified and assessment standards be shown. The qualifications and abilities required to become a teacher, or required to be trained as a teacher, must be able to be shown as essential minimum standards that are universally agreed upon.

"Professional Graduate Schools specialized in teacher education for the training of highly specialized professionals (hereinafter referred to as teaching graduate schools)" established in 2008 have naturally also been affected by this move. These efforts have been enacted since the possibility for establishment and following the start of courses, and matters surrounding the clarification of standards for ensuring the quality of educational activities have become a topic of debate.

Then, a total of 19 professional graduate schools for teacher education (15 national universities (571 students) and 4 private universities (135 students)) were established in April 2008, involving 705 graduate students, and an additional five professional graduate schools for teacher education (3 national universities (60 students) and 2 private universities (60 students)) were established in April 2009, catering for an additional 120 students. This means that until now, 24 professional graduate schools for teacher education, catering for approximately 800 students around the country, have been established.

The standard period to complete a course at a teaching graduate school is two years (completion of 45 units or more. 10 units or more must be related to practice in schools), however "short-term courses (for example, one year) and long term courses (for example, the years) may be established according to the decisions and plans of each graduate school and taking into account the courses completed by in-service teachers".

There are also "graduate schools that have started courses allowing graduate students who have not obtained a teaching license to be enrolled in studying at the teaching graduate school while also studying the undergraduate subjects required for obtaining a type 1 license".

The professional graduate school for teacher education in Japan had produced the first graduates in March 2010. This professional graduate school for teacher education differs from existing master's courses in Japan, in that teaching practice is required as part of the course content. Accordingly, how the level of practice at our graduate school differs from other graduate schools, and what areas of teaching should be focused on, have been questioned from the start of the course.

There are some faculty members who believe that teaching practice in undergraduate courses can be better defined by clarifying the degree of practice achievement at professional graduate school for teacher education (systematic teaching practice that applies to six years of learning).

Also, it is expected that the in-service teacher who enter this graduate school would improve own teaching performance through the action research. In addition, it is expected that they would learn the role as the middle leader of the school from both sides of theory and practice. That is, it is up to our educational power whether the teaching graduate school can actually promote the in-service teacher who can contribute to the school research.

However, while practical experience of this type of teaching practice is conducted at graduate schools, reports on practical research in the form of papers outlining this expertise remain rare in Japan.

This paper is created with the aim of reporting the current challenges that are being faced after two-year operating of this teaching graduate school, and what efforts are required to create standards for accountability and outcome accountability for maintaining quality.

2. Revision of Curriculum Framework

Since the launch in April 2008 of the School of Professional Development in Education at Nara University of Education (teaching graduate school), the curriculum framework (see Fig.1), the scheme for curriculum organization, has been stipulated and skills fostered in each course and the scope of that responsibility have been clarified (Oyanagi 2009).

When the school opened, "4 teacher identities" (1. Teacher as a planner and classroom supervisor, 2. Teacher with a high level of expertise in the subject, 3. Teacher as a counselor, 4. Teacher as a leader and coordinator) were established and based on those, the targeted qualifications and abilities (each teacher identity had 4-levels) were described and the curriculum framework determined. They have been implemented for 2 years. Through the initiatives, basic teaching skills were ascertained upon entrance to the graduate school.

As the positioning of the education program that develops those basic teaching skills became clearer (since it became evident there was a greater need to link to undergraduate level studies, especially to ascertain to what extent specific classroom skills were learned, and to implement initiatives for transition measures to graduate school studies), revisions were made because separating teacher identities 1 and 2 proved difficult in the academic instruction. As a way to resolve the first issue (Fig.2), core standards were first stipulated, linked to assessment standards for graduate school education training, and instruction focusing on classroom skills was strengthened.

Therefore, core standards were newly established, efforts (establishing new courses and implementing evaluation tests for classroom skills) were made to be aware of undergraduate level studies of the students (education, subject content, teaching), and changes were made in the curriculum design that would lead to close ties to assessment standards for practical training. The second step was to switch to an instruction structure the culminates in 3 teacher identities. As indicated in Fig.3, that framework is comprised of the core standards and standards related to the 3 teacher identities (targeted

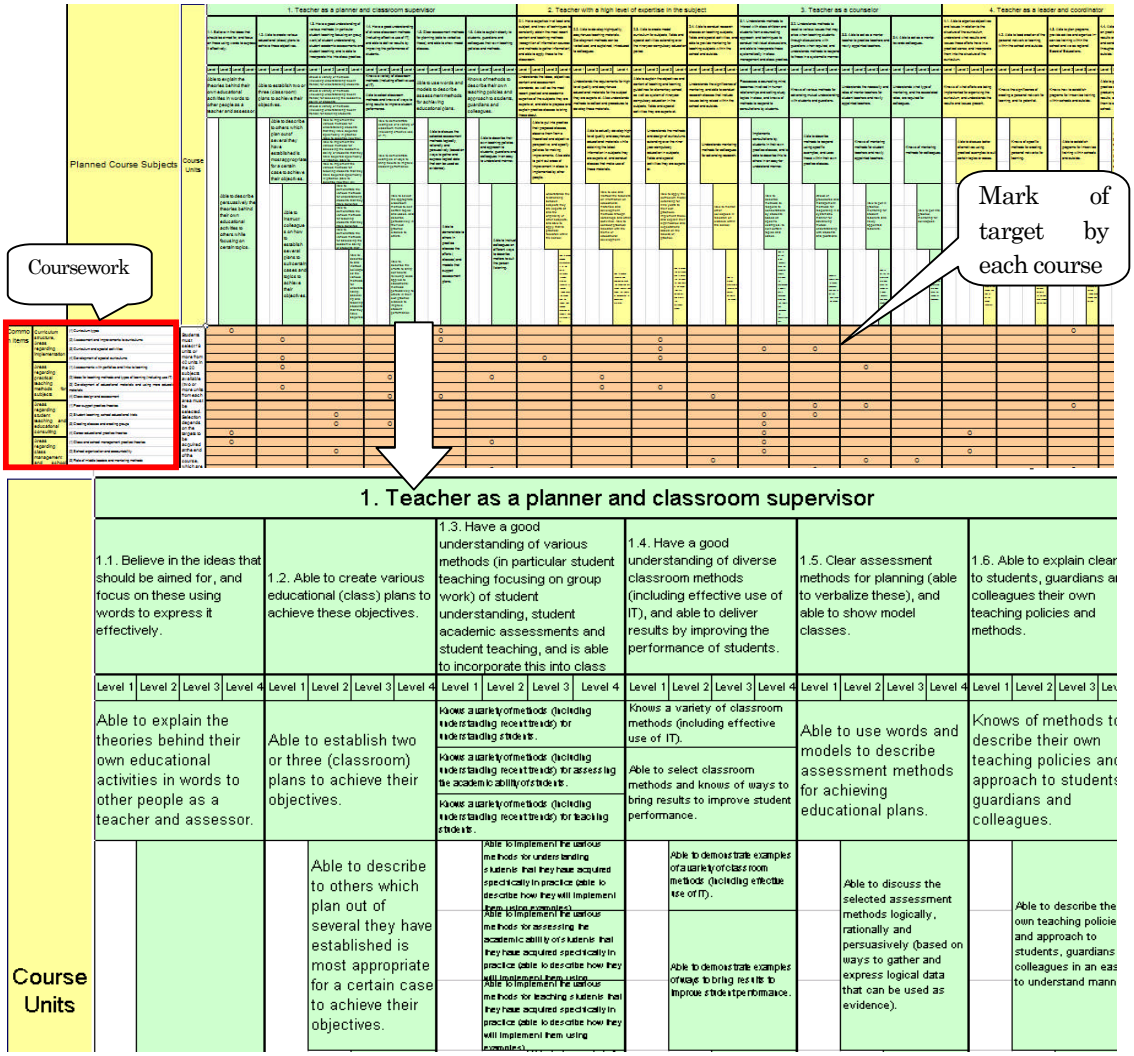

Figure 1 Curriculum framework version 1 (excerpt from a section of teacher identity 1)

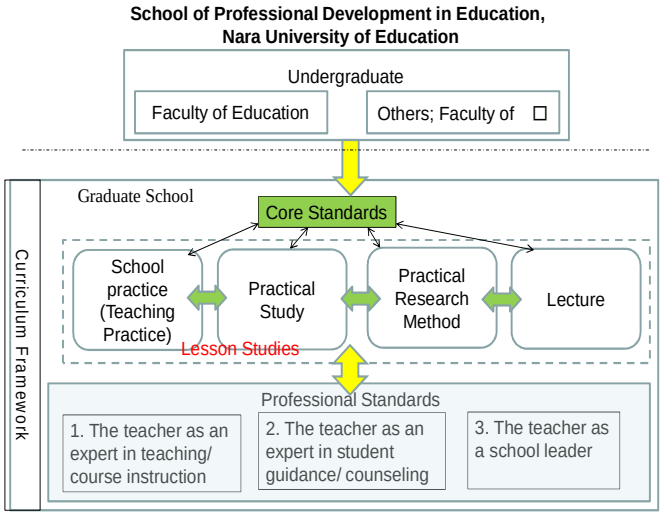

Figure 2 Revision of Curriculum Framework

expertise). The core standards are criteria that link studies in college programs and teaching curriculum. The 3 teacher identities (Teacher Identity 1: a teacher who is an expert in class work and subject instruction; Teacher Identity 2: a teacher who is an expert in student guidance and counseling; Teacher Identity 3: a teacher who is a school leader) describe criteria linked to the topics in which each graduate student is interested and studies at graduate school. When graduate students refer to the course models (contained in the assessment handbook), this helps students look ahead toward what they want to achieve through each course of study and what they want to learn (In terms of the core standards, at present what skill level have I reached? Where do I stand? What teacher identity (standard of expertise) am I aiming for? Where am I now? Where am I heading?) For

	Threshold	Basic	Standard	Advanced	Expert
(C1) Sense of mission/ aspiration/ professional potential as a teacher	Recognizes responsibilities/ sense of mission as a teacher and can express that in words. Perceives the importance of aspiration for personal growth.	Understands the content/ significance of what responsibilities/ mission/ professional growth mean as a teacher through basic case examples.	Can objectify and discuss the responsibilities/ sense of mission as a teacher, and is familiar with methods of personal growth as a teacher.	Can communicate the methods for fulfilling responsibilities/ sense of mission as a teacher with behavioral examples, and can talk about methods of personal growth as a teacher.	Can evaluate colleagues' and student teachers' responsibilities/ sense of mission as a teacher and point out areas of improvement, and can demonstrate an image of personal growth as a teacher.
(C2) Understanding of school education issues/ ability to gather information/ management skills	Recognizes there are a variety of issues in school education.	Understands school education issues and knows effective methods of gathering information.	Can effectively gather information on school education issues, and understands the importance of cooperation among colleagues/ guardians/ community.	Can organize issues and information concerning school education and communicate them to colleagues. Understands cooperative methods among colleagues/ guardians/ community.	Relates school education issues/ information to school management and possesses knowledge that becomes an organizational foundation. Also knows relevant methodologies.
(C3) Ability to understand children/ student guidance/ classroom management skills	Recognizes the importance/ necessity of understanding children/ students and classroom management.	Knows basic methods for understanding children/ students and classroom management.	Knows basic methods for understanding children/ students and classroom management and can utilize them.	Can communicate to colleagues basic methods for understanding children/ students and classroom management.	Can demonstrate to colleagues a model for understanding children/ students and classroom management.
(C4) Class planning/ teaching methods/ class assessment skills	Recognizes the importance/ necessity of class planning/ teaching methods/ class assessment.	Possesses the basic knowledge necessary for class planning/ teaching methods/ class assessment.	Can utilize the basic knowledge necessary for class planning/ teaching methods/ class assessment.	Can communicate to colleagues the basic knowledge necessary for class planning/ teaching methods/ class assessment.	Can demonstrate to colleagues a model of class planning/ teaching methods/ class assessment.

Figure 3 Core Standards

1. The teacher as an expert in teaching/ course instruction	2. The teacher as an expert in student guidance/ counseling	3. The teacher as a school leader
1.1. At minimum, has expertise in one subject, is always aware of the latest subject/ discipline content and education methods, and can execute them in class. 1.2. Can develop materials of high quality that are easy to use. 1.3. Knows information regarding children/ students (academic skills/ personal relationships/ personality traits/ special needs) and can incorporate it into classroom lessons. 1.4. Can draw up various educational (course) plans for achieving goals and can actually execute them. 1.5. Knows methods for evaluating planning and can actually execute them. 1.6. Can explain to students, guardians, and colleagues his/ her own teaching policies and procedures in an easy-to-understand manner. 1.7. Can create a curriculum model for subject/ discipline, etc.	2.1. Possesses basic knowledge about school counseling and knows methods of acquiring relevant information. 2.2. Knows basic methods for coming into contact with classroom children/ students and basic techniques for handling individual counseling. 2.3. Possesses basic knowledge to be involved in and think through career guidance and career education for children/ students. 2.4. Knows effective classroom management methods and can systematically and flexibly incorporate them into classroom management. 2.5. Knows methods of resolving issues that emerge during student counseling through discussion when it is necessary to speak with guardians, etc. (including contacting other facilities, organizational response methods). 2.6. Knows ways of coming into contact with colleagues with a counseling mindset and individual counseling techniques. 2.7. At minimum, can design a case example for coping that utilizes school counseling knowledge.	3.1. At minimum, is involved in forming forward-looking curriculum for all years at one type of school, organizes aims and issues, knows the kinds of outcomes and issues related to different initiatives, and can compile a curriculum. 3.2. Is involved in instruction of subjects/ disciplines/ special activities, demonstrates models in own research classes, and can lead in-school teacher training. 3.3. Can exercise mentoring as a mentor teacher to student education teachers and new teachers. 3.4. Can gather information on practices that yield positive results and research outcomes, and can communicate information inside and outside of school. 3.5. Can lead the formation of a human learning network inside and outside of school. 3.6. Can plan organizational initiatives (also related to school management) to achieve school education goals (ability to take part in planning). 3.7. Is familiar with external links (guardians/ community/ board of education, etc.) and the state of cooperative action.

Figure 4 Selective Professional Standards

teaching staff, as well, it is a resourceful tool that allows them to clarify and incorporate the organizational scope of instruction for each subject and their responsibilities (fig 4 and fig5)

With regard to study courses for each subject, the school is also attempting to clarify the start and end point

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
1.1. At minimum, has expertise in one subject, is always aware of the latest subject/ discipline content and education methods, and can execute them in class.	At minimum, has expertise in one subject and is always aware of the latest subject/ discipline content and education methods.	At minimum, has expertise in one subject, is always aware of the latest subject/ discipline content and education methods, and can incorporate at least 1 part of them in class.	At minimum, has expertise in one subject, is always aware of the latest subject/ discipline content and education methods, and can execute them in class.	At minimum, has expertise in one subject, is always aware of the latest subject/ discipline content and education methods, and can demonstrate them in class to colleagues.
1.2. Can develop materials of high quality that are easy to use.	Possesses basic knowledge of materials development.	Possesses knowledge necessary to develop materials of high quality that are easy to use.	At minimum, can develop 1 material of high quality that is easy to use.	Can develop materials of high quality that are easy to use, and can explain that methodology to colleagues.
1.3. Knows information regarding children/ students (academic skills/ personal relationships/ personality traits/ special needs) and can incorporate it into classroom lessons.	Knows basic methods for gathering information regarding children/ students (academic skills/ personal relationships/ personality traits/ special needs).	Knows basic methods for gathering information regarding children/ students (academic skills/ personal relationships/ personality traits/ special needs) and can incorporate at least 1 part of them in a classroom lesson.	Knows effective methods for gathering information regarding children/ students (academic skills/ personal relationships/ personality traits/ special needs) and can incorporate them into a classroom lesson.	Knows effective methods for gathering information regarding children/ students (academic skills/ personal relationships/ personality traits/ special needs) and can demonstrate and explain them to colleagues in a classroom lesson.
1.4. Can draw up various educational (course) plans for achieving goals and can actually execute them.	At minimum, can draw up 2 educational (course) plans for achieving goals.	Can at minimum draw up 2 educational (course) plans for achieving goals and can actually execute them.	Can draw up various educational (course) plans for achieving goals and can actually execute them.	Can draw up various educational (course) plans for achieving goals and can explain them to colleagues.
1.5. Knows methods for evaluating planning and can actually execute them.	Knows basic methods for evaluating planning.	Knows basic methods for evaluating planning and can actually execute them.	Knows effective methods for evaluating planning and can actually execute them.	Knows effective methods for evaluating planning and can explain them to colleagues.
1.6. Can explain to students, guardians, and colleagues his/ her own teaching policies and procedures in an easy-to-understand manner.	Knows ways to explain to students, guardians, and colleagues his/ her own teaching policies and procedures.	Can explain to students, guardians, and colleagues his/ her own teaching policies and procedures.	Can explain to students, guardians, and colleagues his/ her own teaching policies and procedures in an easy-to-understand manner.	Can explain to colleagues ways to explain to students, guardians, and colleagues his/ her own teaching policies and procedures in an easy-to-understand manner.
1.7. Can create a curriculum model for subject/ discipline, etc.	Knows basic methods for creating a curriculum model for subject/ discipline, etc.	At minimum, can create 1 curriculum model for subject/ discipline, etc.	Can create an effective curriculum model for subject/ discipline, etc.	Can explain to colleagues methods for creating an effective curriculum model for subject/ discipline, etc.

Figure 5 Levels of Selective Professional Standards

for each subject so that graduate students can proactively study with a vision of the future by helping the students to understand what type of skills they first need to gain on their own, at what point they are in currently in their curriculum studies, and what kind of skills they must show they have gained at the end of each course. The specifics are listed .

As indicated in Fig.1 of the curriculum framework, each subject selects around target criteria for qualifications and abilities aimed for in lectures and practical lessons (marked with a circle). Those criteria overlap with indicators of different levels shown in Fig.3 Fig 4 and Fig.5, and goals aimed for in those lectures are established.

3. Coordinated Use of "e-Portfolios" and "Assessment Guidebooks"

Goals and content covered are set in consideration of class characteristics, such as when there are many in-service graduate students, or when many are regular graduate students (they are shown in a rubric so that graduate students can visualize the skills targeted at the start of a course, up to the image of the ideal to be obtained). The assessment guidebook was compiled to fulfill that role, describing a rubric for each subject (see Fig.6). In the course, faculties explain the significance of activities in each subject and content necessary to attain the ideal image written in the rubric, and when making assessments, they confirm whether that image has been achieved. To prove they have attained that defined image, graduate students are required to complete each topic and demonstrate to university teachers and other graduate students an achievement of evidence-based value that is evaluated. This is an innovative way to implement integration of instruction and assessment, and a resourceful method that allows the school to provide graduate students with active learning.

Thus, university teachers (collectively) and graduate students mutually confirm the skills attained in each lecture/practical class while referring to the assessment guidebook mentioned earlier that describes guideposts for moving ahead with their education. In addition, an electronic portfolio is used to summarize learning points during the learning process and for learning outcomes. There are 2 types. The first is a portfolio for each class (each subject; a portfolio with a formative recap/evaluative function, see Fig.7), which recounts and describes what was studied after every class.

To even more effectively implement instruction in this learning process, all university teachers at need give comments about the graduate students' writings in an attempt to further promote the integration of instruction and evaluation. The second is a portfolio for each term (a portfolio that encourages periodic, general reflection and has an evaluative function; see Fig.8). It is an endeavor to comprehensively look back on the skills attained in each lecture/practical class/exercise (in accordance with the evaluation standards determined by the core standards and general outlines of the 3 teacher identities) together with instructors at the end of each term.

1. The teacher as an expert in teaching/ course instruction

1.4.Can draw up various educational (course) plans for achieving goals and can actually execute them.

Level 2 (S) : Can at minimum draw up 2 educational (course) plans for achieving goals and can actually execute them.

S1: Show examples of diverse classroom methods put into practice.
S2: Show examples of effective use of ICT put into practice.
S3: Show examples of methods to obtain results with regards to improving performance of children and students.

Standard / Index	Performance (study): criteria			
	Start	**Close**	**Achieved**	**Exceeded**
S1: Show examples of diverse classroom methods put into practice.	Able to provide examples of diverse classroom methods.	Able to explain the characteristics of each example of diverse classroom method.	Able to provide examples of what classroom methods are best used when.	Able to explain from the perspective of selecting classroom methods to suit various objectives or conditions, and the reasoning behind this, using examples of methods put into practice to other people in an easy to understand manner.
S2: Show examples of effective use of ICT put into practice.	Able to provide examples of various situations using ICT in classrooms.	Able to explain the characteristics of various situations using ICT in classrooms.	Able to provide examples of what ICT is best used when.	Able to explain from the perspective of selecting effective ICT methods to suit various objectives or conditions, and the reasoning behind this, using examples of methods put into practice to other people in an easy to understand manner.
S3: Show examples of methods to obtain results with regards to improving performance of children and students.	Able to clearly defined issues with regards to improving performance of children and students.	Understands various initiatives for improving performance, and can explain those characteristics.	Able to provide examples of what initiatives are best used when with regards to improving performance of children and students.	Able to explain from the perspective of selecting initiatives for improving performance to suit various objectives or conditions, and the reasoning behind this, using examples of methods put into practice to other people in an easy to understand manner.

Figure 6 Rubric in Assessment Guidebook

In line with the revised core standards and 3 established teacher identities, the reference evaluation indicators were revised for the assessment guidebook mentioned earlier that describes indicators for moving ahead with education. It has been referred to by university teachers (collectively) and graduate students as they mutually confirmed the skills attained in each lecture/practical class. The electronic portfolio has played a role to summarize the learning points during the learning process and for learning outcomes. In addition, it was confirmed that 1) all faculties return comments at need regarding graduate students' writings to even further effectively promote instruction in the learning process and to further advance integration of instruction and assessment, and 2) at the end of each term, together with faculties, students comprehensively look back on the skills attained in each lecture/practical class/exercise (in accordance with the evaluation standards determined by the core standards and general outlines of the 3 teacher identities) (Oyanagi 2010).

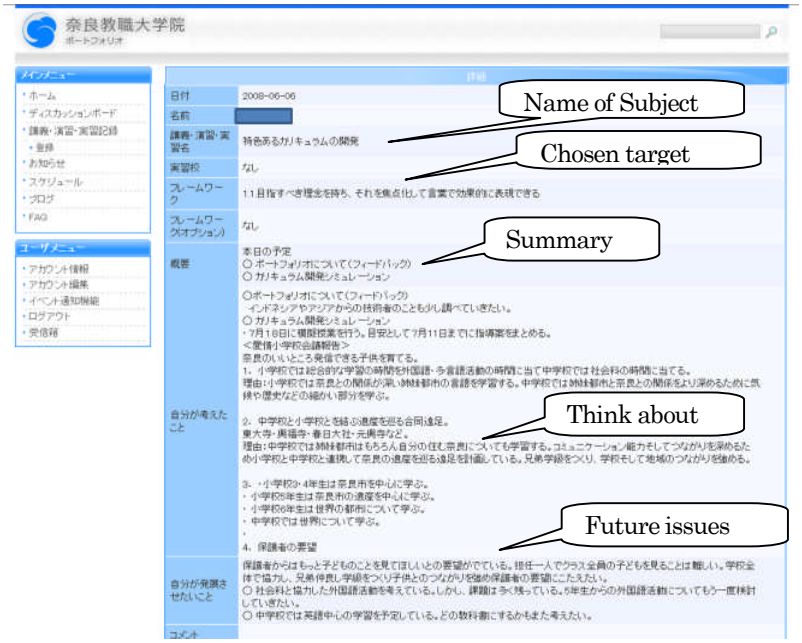

Figure 7 Formative Portfolio

Figure 8 Summative Portfolio

4. Overview of Practical Coaching at the School of Professional Development in Education, Nara University of Education in Japan

In 2008, the school provided three subjects related to teaching practice; School Practice Class 1(SPC1 hereafter) (seven week practice course focusing on class observations during a day visit to elementary schools every Thursday), School Practice Class 2(SPC2 hereafter) (seven week practice course focusing on class observations during a day visit to junior high schools every Tuesday) and School Practice Class 3(SPC3 hereafter) (120 hour intensive practice course focusing on research issues). In addition to School Practice Class 1, 2 and 3, School Practice Class 4(SPC4 hereafter), a 120

hour practice course focusing on ways to resolve issues, was also provided from 2009 (for second-year students (M2)).

Regular graduate students took all courses, and in-service graduate students participated in four weeks of SPC1 and in four weeks of SPC 2 each. In-service graduate students could be exempted from SPC3 according to the results of an examination and various required procedures.

By taking SPC1 and SPC2, regular graduate students were able to apply the experiences they gained in the undergraduate teacher training curriculum and topics they learned at the graduate school, analyze the class itself, and develop their perceptive outlooks on classrooms and school life (the skills to think over practice classes and theory, and to hold relevant discussions). When in-service graduate students also participate, their outlook was further refined as they analyze the class together (as seen in comments written in electronic portfolios and from presentations recorded during observations).

Yet, with the start of SPC3 in October, 2008, both supervisor teams at the teaching graduate school and mentor teachers at affiliated schools pointed out that although the students could analyze classes, there were some who could not put that into practice and had insufficient classroom skills (in particular skills in subject content at junior high schools). This made it difficult for them to acquire any practical leadership skills.

Students who have completed teaching practice in the undergraduate teacher training curriculum, acquired the units required for obtaining the teaching license and maintained a certain level of performance in micro teaching classes as part of entrance examinations are considered to have the right character for practice skills and classroom ones. Yet an issue arose where there was insufficient opportunity for graduate students to integrate where they could observe their own practical skills by looking back on the practice and theory through training into their classroom skills in activities.

Before SPC1 and SPC2 were run in 2009, a supplementary course title “Basics of Classroom Skills” was made available (run two weeks immediately following entry to the school) for all regular graduate students taking the course (in a new course called “Fundamental Training for Classroom Skills” from 2010). This course will allow students to recap on methods for observing classes and researching educational materials, as well as observing children, while making all students run micro teaching classes. This training was provided to create a starting point for students entering SPC1 and SPC2.

The following changes were made in 2009 in an attempt to improve SPC1 and SPC2, which had until the end of 2008 focused on observations. The courses are now such that regular graduate students would have to run four classes in front of children after observing them for three class hours. The graduate students discuss the class (research, development and design of educational materials) as a group using information received from their supervising university teacher at the affiliated school, and conduct preliminary micro teaching classes with the support of the teaching graduate school supervisor teams and in-service graduate students. Efforts were made to hone classroom skills before taking SPC 3, the 120 hour intensive course focusing on research issues, in an attempt to assure quality.

Even in SPC3, students were taught of the importance of research issues and interests, and encouraged to participate in all practice at schools. Practical teaching was conducted with a focus on honing classroom skills by experiencing school practice first-hand (improving on skills for actually running a classroom by looking back on their own classroom skills they thought they had acquired as a graduate and undergraduate student, making the most of the lectures and practice provided at the graduate school, and content learnt in SPC1 and SPC2, and combining this with classroom management skills).

In SPC4, students have been given practice on resolving certain issues. In-service graduate students have been instructed to look for solutions to issues they outlined in their first year in the actual classes they teach or at the school they work at, and to apply those results to the entire school. Regular graduate students have participated in training while including elements of finding and resolving issues for improving classroom skills. They were, in a way, given practice while focusing on the class itself.

The first course, “Basics of Classroom Skills,” uses assessment indices that have been created to clarify the skills and issues that graduate students have learned up to this point. SPC1 and SPC2 ensure that graduate students can better understand their own position within classes. To better refine their efforts on the program itself, the perspectives (observation perspective, practice perspective) learned in each course are made clear to each student in the way of individual investigations and assessments. SPC3 and SPC4 both allow individual assessments, as well as obtaining assessments from others, based on assessment items that have been standardized for practice listed in the teaching graduate school’s assessment guidebook.

Table 1　Item of evaluation regarding to teaching

Perspectives for Evaluation			Items for Evaluation
I Disposition/Attitude			Has adopted a receptive manner.
			Has a sense of purpose and enthusiasm as a teacher.
			Can understand and predict risk management in educational activities.
			Knows about the forms of collaboration with guardians and the local area.
			Knows about school organizations.
			Faces his or her own issues (including stress) and continues to make efforts to solve these.
			Can make efforts to develop requisite abilities.
			Knows about the forms of collaboration with those in charge.
			Is cooperative and can deal with things in a systematic manner.
II Pupil Understanding/Comprehension			Is aware of human rights, social norms and has a sense of ethics and can deal with these.
			Has a knowledge of how to handle personal information.
			Can deal with the responses of a wide range of children.
			Understands the issues of dealing with children with special needs.
			Understands the forms of classroom management (grade management) for building relationships between children.
			Can maintain order among children in a range of teaching and learning activities.
			Knows about teaching environments in which children can feel at ease and concentrate on study.
			Knows about such things as issues in instructing children and the mechanisms that generate problematic behaviour.
III Lesson Structure			The aims, introduction, development and conclusion of lessons are clear and consistent.
			Understands the areas in which students have difficulty studying.
			Can set precise targets based on the circumstances of the children.
			Can analyze teaching materials based on the circumstances of the children.
			Can clarify the educational value of teaching content based on the purpose of curriculum guidelines.
			Can prepare appropriate print outs, worksheets and materials for the whole unit.
			Can make detailed proposals that take into account such things as asking questions and writing on the blackboard, foreseeable reactions of children and study patterns.
			Can make plans by writing on the blackboard.
			Allocates an appropriate amount of time for learning activities during class.
			Can structure units as a whole and learning processes and formulate teaching plans.
IV Content/Teaching Methods			Can understand and analyze the content of textbooks and has mastered methods of employing these effectively.
			Is able to treat children's comments sympathetically and can create an atmosphere in which comments can be made.
			Is able to make use of the diverse comments and opinions of children and deploy these in learning activities.
			Pays attention to pitch and intonation and can speak in a way that conveys the content of instructions clearly.
			Understands the circumstances of each child and is able to able to appoint tasks with intent and purpose.
			Can ask questions and give instructions in a way that is accurate and easy to understand.
			Can write on the board accurately (ease of reading, accuracy, coherence).
			Knows about national trends relating to curricula and the content of curriculum guidelines (including general rules).
			Can give support to suit learning patterns through such things as walking around the classroom and checking how students are doing.
			Can use learning patterns such as the whole class, groups and individuals in response to aims and circumstances.
			Can share the purposes of teaching.
			Understands about the content of presented and distributed materials and methods of presentation and can use materials.
			Can use information technology and instruments.
			Can make appropriate comments regarding ways of taking notes.
V Evaluation	Lesson Evaluation		Can give a simple explanation of the relationship between the aims and teaching processes of observed lessons.
			Can analyze and give a simple explanation of observed lessons from the perspectives of teaching content and skills.
	Self Evaluation		Can self-diagnose teaching content and skills.
			Can review whether the perspectives and designs of class observation were appropriate.
			Has a basis to analyze whether teaching and evaluation plans were appropriate.
			Can organize perspectives for the self-improvement of classes through comparing and analyzing evaluations from before and after lessons.
	Study Evaluation		Can indicate teaching goals analytically from the perspective of the evaluation of learning circumstances by perspective.
			Knows about methods of evaluating the learning circumstances of children analytically and generally.
			Knows about the forms of integrating teaching and evaluation.
			Can make evaluation plans for units.
			Can accurately set evaluation and judgment standards per unit of time.
			Can formulate evaluation problems following teaching goals.
			Can link methods of self evaluating children with teaching content.

Based on these results, assessment indices that define the degree of systematic practice achievement are currently under development for practice that connects Basics of Classroom Skills with SPC1 and SPC2, and S PC3 and SPC4, in an effort to assure quality (for an outline of research results on systematic practical teaching, refer to 2009 summary of the 2008/2009 Grant-in-Aid for University Reform (University Reform Promotion) Professional Talent Development Program for Professional Graduate Schools "Practical teaching and assessments for clarifying the degree of practice achievement") (refer to Table 1).

Meanwhile, a connected teaching system has been implemented between affiliated schools, the Nara Board of Education and this teaching graduate school for practice, as shown in Figure 9.

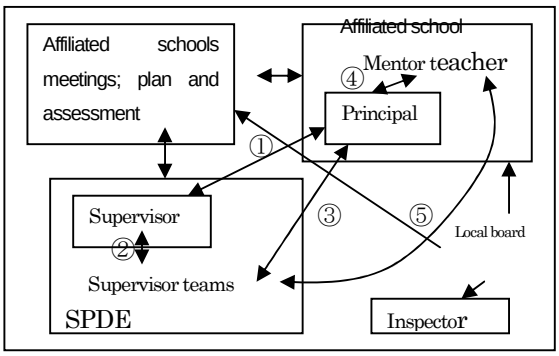

Figure 9 Management system of teaching practice

By observing efforts taken over the last two years, the following three items have become major problems. (1) It is necessary to explain more clearly to affiliated schools the difference (where teaching is continued in some places, and not in others, points that are emphasized etc.) between practice at an undergraduate level, and "SPC3" & "SPC4" at graduate schools with 120 hour intensive courses for pure graduate students, and it is necessary to obtain an agreement (2) In order to effectively achieve (1) above, the significance of a management system that leads to organized efforts, rather than individual efforts, needs to be clarified to both affiliated schools and universities (3) The development of tools is required to better explain the roles and relationships of teaching staff at affiliated schools (mentors, teachers) and teaching teams (supervisors, faculties) at universities for integrating the research interests of students into practice.

From 2010, in order to carry out action research in School Practice 3 efficiently, a new system has been put in place, in which students go to affiliated schools to provide support every Friday. By doing this, as well as learning about school culture and building relationships with the children and teaching staff, it also enables them to conduct ongoing action research after they have finished their practice 3.

Also, as this graduate school is collaborating in training seminars held by local board of education (cram school for teachers: held from October to January every Saturday morning), students are encouraged to participate in these, which provide a chance to receive instruction on such things as lesson planning and classroom management from teacher consultants. Students can also participate in the practical programs that this seminar organizes at schools, thus providing a chance to receive instruction from schools and teachers specified by local board of educational. These are the kinds of chances for collaboration and instruction that are available to regular graduate students.

5. Issues regarding teaching practice that are common professional graduate school for teacher education

Our school was selected as part of the "Professional Talent Development Program for Professional Graduate Schools "Practical teaching and assessments for clarifying the degree of practice achievement" 2008-2009. "Accordingly, the school has been involved in creating indices for the degree of practice achievement,

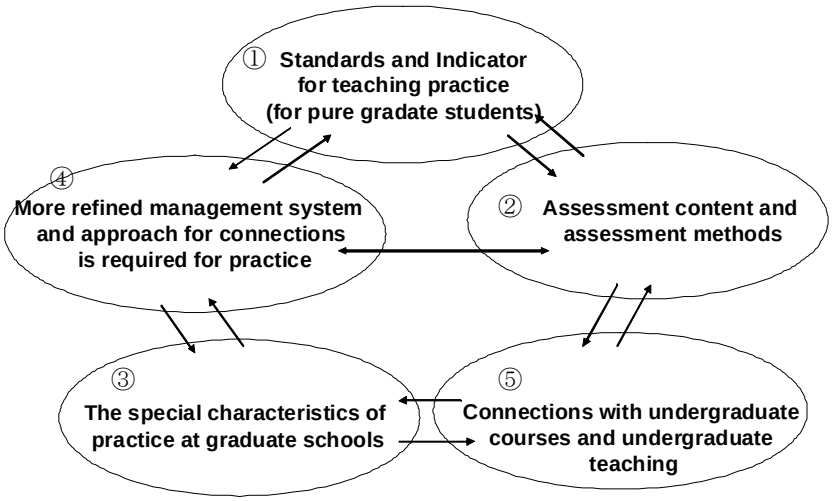

Figure 10 Five problems in teaching practice in graduate -level

research and study, and theoretical research for professional graduate school for teacher education. Specifically, this involved selecting subjects that students had learned during their practice over past two years, with the aim of creating a bottom-up type index. Next, we conducted a survey of the skills that are required of teachers in a classroom when they first start teaching, as well as the skills required of them in two to three years into their career. Reviews of research on results from research in Japan and overseas were also made, with investigations made into results of theoretical research. These investigations were made to look at practical teaching and assessment methods that clarify the degree of practice achievement.

Additionally, while this program was being carried out, exchanges with other professional graduate school for teacher education were conducted, uncovering the five issues related to teaching practice as shown in figure 10.

①The first issue is that the potential range of skills that can be acquired through practice content and practice itself must be made clear. This is required to outline the degree of practice achievement and its direction, allowing items that must be achieved and other goals to be shared with affiliated schools. ② The second issue is that assessment content and assessment methods must be put into practice. This provides the drive for developing assessment tools required for practical assessment, distinguishes “assessments of practical results” and “assessment of efforts made”, and finally allows efforts made for improvements to be enacted. ③The third issue is that better investigations must be made into the teaching skills of continuous teaching arrangements (connections with undergraduate courses and undergraduate teaching), for improving classroom skills. This is because better education and expertise is required for classroom teaching in order to improve classroom skills. ④The fourth issue is that the special characteristics of practice at graduate schools must be made clear. While practice suited to the graduate student’s research topic is ideal for practice at graduate school, affiliated schools also have their own ideas when it comes to research subjects. An agreement must be reached between affiliated schools, graduate students and graduate schools to achieve an effective level of practice and for better teaching. Finally, ⑤the fifth issue is that a more refined management system and approach for connections is required for practice. This means that if teaching practice is to be conducted in a systematic manner, the management and teaching organization must be made clear, including assessments from third parties. A list of common items that outlines roles, teaching methods and other factors that can be checked by the teacher in charge of teaching practice at the affiliated school (mentor teacher) and the supervisor at the graduate school is required for each form of teaching practice. These were the five issues that have been raised.

When the aforementioned issues of this teaching graduate school are included, the following looks at how connections should be made, and the various models available, between affiliated schools and universities to achieve effective teaching practice, using Professional Development Schools in America as a reference, owing to the fact that they were one of the early adopters of initiatives aimed at teaching practice, to reach a proposal for the solution to these issues (Kuzugami 2006, Yoshimura and Oyanagi 2006).

6. Development of standards for practice and quality assurance at Professional Development Schools

Darling-Hammond (2005) was involved in establishing these types of Professional Development Schools, and has actually organized projects and efforts to support Professional Development Schools. The positioning of Professional Development Schools, which are not the same depending on the region and features of the school itself, has been outlined using case studies for considerations as to what is required for the development of these schools. Tunks and Neaplitan (2007) also looked into the background of the establishment of Professional Development Schools at the same time, and checked the standards developed for quality assurance of Professional Development Schools defined by AERA and NCATE. They ran a series of case studies, and from the various circumstances that they discovered were required for the development of Professional Development Schools, outline the features of each stage.

This indicates that the same is required for the growth and development of Professional Development Schools as the regional base school for education, research and teaching practice (there were a large number of cases where Professional Development Schools were involved in supporting schools with a large number of children with poor living conditions or poor academic abilities were selected through organized connections between Boards of Education and universities). Development needed to be measured using self-inspection and self-assessment methods, requiring the development of tools such as indices to obtain an outlet of quality development. Meanwhile, these tools could be used to increase educational effectiveness at schools in the region with

connections between Professional Development Schools, Boards of Education and universities, and create systems that were responsible for systematically making use of research results.

This type of Professional Development School has been actively developed in the State of Maryland, where a consortium has been established in an organized manner between a number of universities, Boards of Education and schools, with the aim of further developing Professional Development Schools as an official system which also includes the development of tools to check how the teaching skills of a Professional Development School could be systematically improved through creation of mentor/teacher handbooks, ways to involve teacher training as an organization and what relationships should be made with colleagues (Teitel 2003, Fujimoto 2008, Oyanagi 2008).

Figure 11 outlines the organizations of universities, Boards of Education and Professional Development School, the roles of respective personnel and the management system that is in place.

The necessity of these connections is important, as indicated by Shinohara (2009). In the future, this organizational chart will be important for effective practice between Professional graduate school for teacher education in Japan and affiliated schools, as well as for affiliated schools taking on roles similar to that of Professional Development Schools in America, if Figure 11 is used to outline current efforts made by a number of professional graduate school for teacher education.

For instances, (1) The roles of Supervisor and Liaison within the university structure overlap, with certain educational staff overloaded by the work required to fulfill that role, making it difficult to achieve an organized education system throughout the entire university. (2) Management works as the Site Coordinator, making bottom-up efforts difficult with only a certain number of staff involved. (3) There is no system connecting organized nations that are in charge of school improvement teams such as the governing body within local boards of education, schools that are currently in charge of practice, or universities (this may be because the system lies with affiliated schools in charge of practice, rather than Professional Development Schools).

7. Findings acquired as part of proposals for teaching graduate school

So far, this research has examined the background and issues related to various efforts conducted at this teaching graduate school, as well as outlining issues surrounding basic efforts that should be made in the future through examples of teaching connections between Professional Development Schools and universities in America.

Finally, we would like to look at what efforts are required for more effective operations of professional graduate school for teacher education, and make some proposals based on pointers acquired through the investigations made above.

The first is, if standards are being developed for quality assurance, the development of more clearly integrated standards for the levels and structure of skills developed at teaching graduate school is required. This is in addition to standards for the qualifications and skills required before completion of the course, standards for practice related to development of classroom skills, and standards for research issues related to the development of skills as a leader contributing to school research in an attempt to return results back to the children and the school.

The second is that to ensure that these standards function properly, attempts to improve and enhance

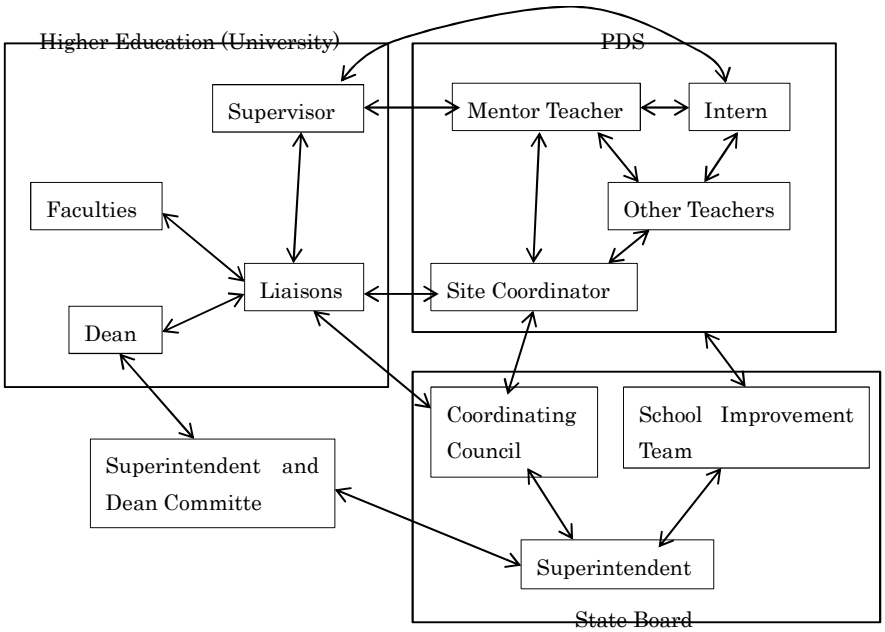

Figure 11 The role map on PDS, University and Local Board

existing teaching practice systems are required, all while learning from efforts made at Professional Development Schools in America and referring to the way management systems have been created.

Finally, the third is that mentor teacher handbooks, as well as other systems and methods for sharing educational theories and teaching environments related to teaching practice at professional graduate school for teacher education, required for systematically teaching trainee students must be refined, with the cooperation of Local Board of Education.

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