

Reorganization and Problem of Local Educational Governance in the United States – Ideal and Reality of the School Boards System –

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This article is a part of research on local educational governance in the United States. It focused on the concept and the reality of local school board systems. In fact, Japanese school boards are modeled in American school boards. This system was introduced by Japanese educational reformers after the Second World War. By studying U.S. school boards system, important suggestions can be gained for the Japanese system, as currently the reorganization or abolition of Japanese school boards is being considered in Japan. This paper discuss the following issues: the legal framework and historical conditions of school districts; demographics of and compensation paid to board members; methods of board members election, activity of members, working time spent on boards, and training as boards members; and the relationship between members of the board of education and the superintendent of education. In order to fulfill their business people hope, the relationship between board members and superintendents is important; in particular, smooth and efficient communication between them is the key to public school performance.

The suggestions for Japanese educational governance reforms that it was possible to derive are as follows. We should understand the historical context to the development of school boards. In the United States, local educational governance systems precede state ones, but Japan is the other way around. The relationship between politics and education has been characterized as separation in the U.S, but an historical analysis show politics often influence or intervene in education. It is not scientific consideration both firmly fixed to the myth the neutrality of education and do not see the reality of political intervention.