

The current situation concerning the number of the students who learn Earth Sciences at Senior Highschool

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In 1999, an average of 41 percent of Senior Highschools per prefecture taught Earth Sciences. The percentage was greater than 50 in only 9 prefectures, with Okinawa the highest at 71 percent. Even at those schools where Earth Sciences were taught, only 20 to 30 percentre students choose it as their science subject. The decrease in the total number of students at Senior Highschool in recent years has been accompanied by a decrease in the number who have taken Earth Sciences. In the near future there will be fewer schools that teach Earth Sciences, not only because of the decline in student numbers but also because of a shortage of teachers. There has been no Earth Sciences teaching vacancy recently, and the number of Earth Sciences teachers has fallen each year in recent years.