

Future and Current Status of Earth Science Education at Senior High School

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A brief survey of the earth-science enrollment rate was taken that covered a number of earth-science teachers and the demand for earth-science textbooks. Five percent of the science teachers in Kanagawa prefectures were classified as 'earth-science teachers'. Other science teachers were classified as: 40% chemistry, 30% biology, 20% physics, 5% earth science and 5% general science. This distribution was the same in 1995 and 1999. One third of the high schools offered an earth-science course. The total demand for earth-science textbooks was 7% for both 1996 and 2000. This rate is a bit higher than the science/teacher ratio which implies a hidden demand for earth science at senior high schools. Hence, we should increase the number of earth-science teachers and curricula. The national science curriculum has been reduced by 30% for elementary and junior-high schools. There has been little change at the university level and the senior-high school curriculum had little improvement. However, the reforms of the college science education and entrance exam will save the senior-high schools' earth-science curriculum.