

Over half of junior high school teachers risk health through overwork

- 1) TOKYO (Kyodo) -- More than half of junior high school teachers in Japan have worked more than 20 hours overtime per week, a level that could cause serious health problems, according to a government survey released Friday.
- 2) Some 57.7 percent of teachers at junior high schools and 33.5 percent of elementary school teachers said their weekly working hours exceeded 60 hours including extra work of more than 20 hours, the education ministry's survey showed.
- 3) Monthly overtime work of over 80 hours is considered a level that could increase the risk of karoshi or death from overwork.
- 4) These teachers far exceeded two yardsticks -- the 38 hours and 45 minutes of regular working hours per week for teachers at public schools and up to 40 weekly working hours set under the Labor Standard Law. (yardstick 基準、尺度 the labor Standard Law 労働基準法)
- 5) The latest survey on the working hours of teachers for fiscal 2016 highlights anew the issue of long working hours in Japan. (highlight 目立たせる anew[文語的]もう一度、再び=again)
- 6) The entrenched corporate culture of overwork was thrust into public attention following the suicide of an overworked young female employee of advertising giant Dentsu Inc., which prompted the government to step up measures to address excessive working hours. (entrenched (権利や慣習等が)確立した、しっかり根付いた ※entrench = 塹壕を掘る、塹壕で囲む、固定化する thrust into ある状態に追いやる)
- 7) The survey found teachers at elementary schools worked an average of 57 hours and 25 minutes per week, while their counterparts in junior high schools logged on 63 hours and 18 minutes, both an increase from the fiscal 2006 survey. (log 記録する)
- 8) The figures "confirm that the situation cannot be overlooked," Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Hirokazu Matsuno said in a news conference. (overlook 見のがす、許す、見渡す)
- 9) He called on a ministry advisory panel to study measures to reduce the teachers' working hours.
- 10) The ministry surveyed around 20,000 teachers selected from 400 public elementary and junior high schools, respectively, and studied their working hours between October and November last year.
- 11) Education critic Naoki Ogi said the government needs to carry out labor reforms to reduce the "extraordinary" hours worked by teachers. (extraordinary 並外れた、臨時の)
- 12) "If reforms in the way teachers work, such as increasing the number of teachers, are not implemented, education...in the long run could be affected," he said.
- 13) A government panel headed by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe unveiled last month an action plan for broad labor reforms including cutting long working hours. (unveil 明らかにする action plan 行動計画)
- 14) The plan said the maximum overtime work hours a month should not exceed 100 hours, even during busy seasons.
- 15) Calculating the working hours per task on a day, elementary school teachers devoted 4 hours and 25 minutes of their time to classes, 27 minutes longer than the earlier survey, while their counterparts in junior high schools used 3 hours and 26 minutes, up by 15 minutes.
- 16) The longer hours were due in part to the increased hours for classes under the revised guidelines, the ministry said. 【2017-04-28 | Mainichi Japan】

★Ice breaker for active discussion

1. Do you have a memorable experience related to teachers when you were a student?
2. Please describe your ideal teacher.
3. What are the effective measures in order to lessen the burdens of teachers?
4. Teachers are not only busy teaching but also in involving to extra-curricular activities. What can you say about it?
5. Make sentences using the following words: yardstick, entrenched, thrust, overlook and extraordinary.