



# Provision of Support for Children through Club Activities at Junior High Schools and Associated Issues

## —A study of Brass Band Clubs at Public Schools Based on Work-style Reform—

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Received: 10, December, 2023

### Abstract

This study investigated the support provided to children through club activities at junior high schools and the associated issues, mainly focusing on brass band clubs at public schools, based on the responses of advisory teacher. The survey results revealed that although several teachers voiced the opinion that club activities are viewed positively because children can receive specialized education, they also pointed out the necessity of conducting these activities based on and utilizing the current local circumstances. There were also several opinions about the work-style reform in schools, including the necessity for reform throughout the school and not just in club activities, as the working hours, including that spent on other duties, are excessive and on the increase. Furthermore, in addition to the relationship between the school and the teachers, another point of contention was regarding the position of these activities within the system and practice of school education, namely whether these activities should continue as school club activities or be conducted as extracurricular activities. Other points were also raised about the relationship with and effects on children, including whether these activities are a financial burden for the children and their families, whether it is possible to support children at varying stages of development, and whether personal information can be thoroughly protected. While dealing with this matter, it is also essential to bear in mind that some children are only able to attend school because of club activities, and consideration is needed to facilitate systems and practices for education and schools that support a diverse range of children.

Keywords : Work-style Reform, Public Schools, Club Activities, Brass Band Clubs, Support for Children

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## I. Preface

Reform of work styles in schools is progressing in Japan<sup>1)</sup>. These changes are occurring in the background of children living in a time of rapid social change, which makes it difficult to predict the shape of society in the future. While schools are expected to foster qualities and abilities to shape society, the issues faced by schools are becoming increasingly complex and difficult as children become more diverse. In these circumstances, reviews of the working style of teachers are progressing intending to facilitate effective educational activities by refining lessons and improving students' humanity and creativity based on a fact-finding survey of teachers' working conditions in 2016 and a report compiled by the Central Council of Education in 2019.

Reform of club activities is considered a practical way of reviewing the working styles in schools<sup>2)</sup>. Club activities in school education are regarded as an opportunity for character building and provide a space for diverse students to engage in activities in groups different to those they are part of during their coursework. However, there are also concerns that these activities are established based on the self-sacrificing work of teachers, such as working for long hours including on holidays, and possibly creating a significant burden for teachers with no experience in such activities. Furthermore, club activities do not always provide the desired education for students.

In response to this situation, club activities are currently transitioning from school-based initiatives to community-based ones, while also undergoing reform to facilitate sustainable club activities and reduce the burden on teachers. In this regard, the following ideas are currently under consideration: building an environment that does not require teachers' involvement in club activities on their days off, based on the concept that being responsible for club activities is not necessarily a task of teachers, and developing an environment where these activities can be performed on holidays as part of local sports or cultural activities. In 2018, the Agency for Cultural Affairs established guidelines for club activities, including limiting the time spent on these activities to approximately two hours on weekdays and three hours on weekends/holidays and allocating at least one day in a weekend as an off day. The length of activities and the number of rest days have been set, and thorough implementation of these guidelines has been requested<sup>3)</sup>. It may be possible in the future to shift culture club activities to being run by local arts and culture groups by gradually shifting school-based cultural activities to community-based activities and through revising the regulations on the government course guidelines on club activities. The possibility of local musicians taking over the teaching of brass band clubs has been presented as a model project. Furthermore, specific measures to be gradually put into place from 2023 have been presented, including gradually shifting non-

school day club activities to the community, such as securing local human resources to lead the club activities on non-school days and promoting rational and efficient club activities.

Previous studies on club activities, particularly focusing on shifting culture club activities to the local community, have investigated the reviews of school club activities and tournaments<sup>4)</sup>, procedures for shifting to local clubs<sup>5)</sup>, trends<sup>6)</sup>, and shifting to the local community based on initiatives<sup>7)</sup>.

This study investigates the issues and measures regarding shifting club activities to the community based on the opinions of teachers who are responsible for school education through club activities. The data were collected through a survey of advisory teachers for brass band clubs in city X, where all public junior high schools have brass band clubs.

## II. Purpose and methods

The purpose of this study is to develop support for children's development by investigating the issues and measures associated with shifting brass band clubs in public junior high schools to community-based activities, based on the opinions of advisory teachers.

The current state of education and the views and anticipated problems of shifting from school-based clubs to community-based ones are discussed below based on a survey of the advisors for brass band clubs in six public junior high schools: Schools A, B, C, D, E, and F. The characteristics of the results and the issues

and measures in light of the results are also presented.

The survey was conducted in FY2022 after requesting the cooperation of all nine schools in city X that have brass band clubs to participate in the survey. A telephone interview was conducted with the teacher in charge of advising the brass band club in the six schools that consented to participate. The survey inquired about the current state of education through club activities, views on shifting school-based club activities to community-based ones, and anticipated issues. The study was approved by the Kunitachi College of Music Institutional Review Board in 2022 (Approval No.: 2221).

## III. Results

The responses from teachers who are advisors to brass band clubs in Schools A to F are listed below.

### (1) School A

#### 1) Current state of education

Three people are in charge of club activities, including the community club activity instructors.

Activities are conducted four times a week on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and either Saturday or Sunday once a month. The working time, including that spent on other duties, is excessive.

2) Views on shifting to community-based club activities

Receiving specialized education and expert support for damage to instruments is considered preferable for children.

If these changes are implemented as part of the work-style reform in schools, it may be better to shift the school-based club activities to extracurricular activities, ensuring that this does not create an extra financial burden for the children and their families.

If these activities are implemented as school-based club activities, requiring communication and coordination by the school and responsible teachers, it may further increase the teachers' burden. Education regarding character formation that has formerly been offered through club activities should now be implemented throughout school education.

3) Anticipated issues

Anticipated issues associated with implementing club activities as extracurricular activities include problems in securing a location and musical instruments, lack of protection of the personal information of children and their families, and problems with interpersonal relationships.

(2) School B

1) Current state of education

The community club activity instructor system is currently used for club activities.

Club activities are conducted four days a week only on weekdays, and not on weekends.

The cost of club activities is decreasing as a result of measures such as not permitting the purchase of new instruments.

2) Views on shifting to community-based club activities

Involving many instructors with a high level of expertise seems to be good for the children.

If shifting to community-based club activities would mean implementing club activities also on weekends, the hours spent on club activities during the weekdays are expected to decrease, resulting in progress in the work-style reform in schools.

3) Anticipated issues

In addition to understanding the instruction of wind instruments, instructors will also be required to have the ability to understand diverse types of children and school education.

These changes will also change the position of advisors as support people, which may also affect the interpersonal relationships with teachers.

There is a concern that having different instructors on weekdays and weekends may confuse the students.

If club activities are considered part of school education, teachers would be in charge of the instructors.

There is a concern that engaging highly professional local people as instructors may create financial problems.

### (3) School C

#### 1) Current state of education

Club activities are implemented until around 6:30 pm on weekdays and Saturdays.

Although the community club activity instructors cooperate with the club activities, it would be better to provide adequate financial support to the instructors.

#### 2) Views on shifting to community-based club activities

It is hoped that the work-style reform in schools will progress, which will make it easier for young people to aspire to become teachers.

#### 3) Anticipated issues

Many children start music club activities in earnest in junior high school with no prior experience in learning a musical instrument, such as the piano. Therefore, these children require individual instruction on handling musical instruments and reading sheet music.

Given that some students can attend school because the school offers club activities, it is essential that club activities are implemented in the school and advisory teachers serve a central role as coordinators.

### (4) School D

#### 1) Current state of education

Club activities are conducted on four weekdays—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday—and either Saturday or Sunday.

Club activities are run with the cooperation of community club activity instructors, and teachers are mainly in charge of managing the

activities.

#### 2) Views on shifting to community-based club activities

The school should implement the activities by conducting interviews and making a selection based on the provided information.

#### 3) Anticipated issues

Understanding the experience of children and providing support are essential.

Even if club activities shift to community-based activities, it is still essential to have interactions and meetings regarding the relationships with children and education.

It may be necessary to consider how the educational direction and content are related to the school (education) and whether the school needs to be involved in the use and handling of facilities and musical instruments.

### (5) School E

#### 1) Current state of education

Teachers start their work at around 7:30 am on weekdays. It is only after managing the club activities from 4 to 6 pm that they do their own work, such as lesson preparation.

#### 2) Views on shifting to community-based club activities

Most of the students only start learning a musical instrument from junior high school; therefore, it would be better if they could be provided instruction on general practice, including how to read sheet music and practice parts, as well as on how to assemble, handle, and

clean musical instruments.

### 3) Anticipated issues

Students at diverse ranges of development participate in club activities; therefore, there may be issues regarding whether the instructors understand the children and can practice education to be involved as school education, and how they will respond when problems arise.

## (6) School H

### 1) Current state of education

Activities are implemented on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and two Saturdays in a month.

It is difficult to participate in all the allocated timeslots.

The community club activity instructor system is currently used for club activities such as handling musical instruments, reading sheet music, and learning parts.

Currently, no budget has been secured for the repair or replacement of musical instruments damaged during transportation.

### 2) Views on shifting to community-based club activities

It is considered preferable for children to receive specialised education.

At present, club activities are not

considered to be much of a burden. Work-style reform in schools requires a reduction in the ever-increasing overall workload of teachers rather than shifting club activities to community-based activities.

### 3) Anticipated issues

There needs to be support in line with the size of the school and club activities, the range of activities, and the content and extent of teacher instruction.

If club activities are implemented within the school, advisory teachers would also be involved, and it is unclear whether this would promote work-style reform in schools.

If activities are implemented by local community centres, there are concerns that families will be burdened with the cost of the instructors and costs such as that incurred for the transportation of the musical instruments.

It is difficult to judge because of a lack of details about the system, but situations may arise where children cannot participate in activities for financial reasons when there is an increased financial burden on the children and their families.

Depending on the area, there may be ways to expand the existing system and budget for community-based club activity instructor systems.

Table 1 summarizes the survey results.

Table 1: Survey results

	Current state of education	Views on shifting club activities to community-based club activities	Anticipated issues
A	<p>Three people are in charge of club activities, including club activity instructors.</p> <p>Activities are conducted four times a week on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and either Saturday or Sunday once a month.</p> <p><u>The working time, including that spent on other duties, is excessive.</u></p>	<p>Receiving specialised education and expert support for damage to instruments is considered preferable for children.</p> <p>If these changes are implemented as part of the work-style reform in schools, it would be better if the club activities shift from school-based to extracurricular activities, <u>ensuring that this does not create an extra financial burden on the children and their families.</u></p> <p>If these activities are implemented as school-based club activities that require communication and coordination with the school and responsible teachers, it may further increase the teachers' burden.</p> <p>Education regarding character formation that has formerly been offered through club activities should now be implemented throughout school education.</p>	<p>(Relationship with children)</p> <p>Anticipated issues associated with implementing club activities as extracurricular activities include problems in securing a location and musical instruments, lack of <u>protection of the personal information</u> of children and their families, and <u>problems with interpersonal relationships.</u></p>
B	<p>Club activities are conducted four days a week on weekdays only, and not on weekends.</p> <p>The club activity instructor system is used for club activities.</p> <p>The cost of club activities is decreasing as a result of measures such as not permitting the purchase of new instruments.</p>	<p>Involving several instructors with a high level of expertise seems to be good for the children.</p> <p>If shifting to community-based club activities would also mean implementing club activities on weekends, the hours spent on club activities during the week are expected to decrease, resulting in progress in the work-style reform in schools.</p>	<p>(Relationship with children)</p> <p>In addition to understanding the instruction of wind instruments, instructors will also be required to have the ability to <u>understand diverse types of children</u> and school education.</p> <p>There is a concern that having different instructors on weekdays and weekends <u>may confuse students.</u></p> <p>There is a concern that engaging highly professional local people as instructors may create <u>financial problems.</u></p> <p>(Relationship with the school/ teachers)</p> <p>If club activities are considered part of the school education, teachers would be in charge of the instructors. This will also change the position of advisors as support people, which may also affect their interpersonal relationships with teachers.</p>

C	<p>Club activities are implemented until around 6:30 pm on weekdays and Saturdays.</p> <p>Community club activity instructors cooperate with the club activities, but it would be better to have adequate financial support for the instructors.</p>	<p>It is hoped that work-style reform in schools will progress, making it easier for young people to aspire to become teachers.</p>	<p>(Relationship with children) Many children start music club activities in earnest in junior high school. Therefore, they require individual instruction on handling musical instruments and reading sheet music.</p> <p>(Relationship with the school and teachers) <u>Given that some students can attend school because the school offers club activities, it is essential that club activities are implemented in the school and advisory teachers serve a central role as coordinators.</u></p>
D	<p>Teachers are in charge of the club activities on four weekdays—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday—and either Saturday or Sunday.</p> <p>Club activities are run with the cooperation of community club activity instructors; therefore, the main responsibility is managing the activities.</p>	<p>The school should implement the activities by conducting interviews and making a selection based on the provided information.</p>	<p>(Relationship with children) <u>Understanding the experience of children and providing support are essential.</u></p> <p>Even if club activities shift to community-based activities, it is still essential to have interactions and meetings regarding the relationships with children and education.</p> <p>(Relationship with the school and teachers) It may be necessary to consider how the educational direction and content are related to the school (education) and whether the school needs to be involved in the use and handling of facilities and musical instruments.</p>
E	<p>Teachers start their work at around 7:30 am on weekdays. It is only after managing the club activities from 4 to 6 pm that they do their own work, such as lesson preparation.</p>	<p>It would be greatly appreciated if students could be provided instruction on general practice, including how to read sheet music and practice parts, as well as education on how to assemble, handle, and clean musical instruments.</p>	<p>(Relationship with children) <u>A diverse range of students</u> participate in club activities; therefore, there may be issues regarding whether the instructors understand children and can practice education and how they will respond when problems arise.</p>
F	<p>Activities are held on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and two Saturdays in a month.</p> <p>The club activity instructor is in charge of handling musical instruments, reading sheet music, and learning parts.</p> <p>Currently, no budget has been secured for the repair or replacement of musical instruments.</p>	<p>It is preferable for children to receive <u>specialised instruction</u>.</p> <p>Work-style reform in schools requires a <u>reduction</u> in the ever-increasing <u>overall workload</u> of teachers rather than shifting club activities to community-based activities.</p>	<p>(Relationship with children) Situations may arise where children cannot participate in activities for financial reasons if there is an increased <u>financial burden</u> on the children and their families.</p> <p>(Relationship with the school and teachers) Depending on the area, there may be ways to <u>expand the existing system and budget</u>.</p>



## IV. Discussion

The results of the survey revealed that several teachers who serve as advisors for brass band clubs positively viewed the specialized education available for children. This finding suggests that shifting brass band clubs to community-based activities would provide a more specialized education than the current situation of music teachers being in charge of education. However, respondents also indicated the need for implementing this change according to and utilizing the current local circumstances, such as expanding the existing systems and available budget.

Several respondents indicated the need for reform of the entire system for implementing work-style reform in schools, rather than limiting the reform to club activities, because of the ever-increasing excessive working hours required of teachers, including the time spent on other duties.

Furthermore, in addition to the relationship between the school and the teachers, another point of contention was regarding the position of these activities within the system and practice of school education, namely whether these activities should continue as school club activities or be conducted as extracurricular activities.

All responses included concerns about interactions with children. The main issues were concerns about whether these activities would become a financial burden

for the children and their families, whether it is possible to support children at varying stages of development, and whether personal information can be thoroughly protected. Given that some students can attend school only because the school offers club activities, some respondents were of the view that it is essential to implement club activities in the school. Respondents expressed the need for the school's involvement in interviews and selection when implementing these activities as club activities to ensure that the diverse range of children is provided with appropriate support. These responses suggest that even when implementing club activities as extracurricular activities, support is needed for children who are only able to attend school because of the club activities.

## V. Conclusion

This study investigated the support provided for children through club activities at junior high schools, as well as associated issues, by examining brass band clubs at public schools based on work-style reform.

In response to the current situation and concerns about activities and children, when activities are implemented as club activities, it may be necessary to position these activities within the system and practice, with due consideration of the effects on and relationship with school education, namely adjusting the role of advisory teachers and the school.

In contrast, when activities are

implemented as extracurricular activities outside the school, it is essential to adopt measures to deal with anticipated issues such as ensuring these changes do not create a financial burden for the children or their families, providing adequate support for a diverse range of children, protecting personal information, and determining how to respond to any trouble that arises, while taking into consideration the relationship with existing systems and practices specific to the local community. The impact of these changes to the systems and practices on children is of particular concern. All the advisory teachers who cooperated in the survey on shifting brass band clubs in public junior high schools to community-based activities raised anticipated issues regarding relationships with children, which suggests that the relationship with children and their development is considered to be the most important aspect of brass band clubs as club activities within school education. It is essential to facilitate a system and practices that will continue to support a diverse range of children, including children with developmental issues and children who are only able to attend school because of the club activities offered, which have conventionally been addressed through brass band club activities.

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#### Annotation

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経営論集

Vol. 10, No. 6, March 2024, pp. 1-10

ISSN 2189-2490

## 中学校における部活動を通した子ども支援と課題

—学校の働き方改革をふまえた公立校の吹奏楽部の検討に基づいて—

山本 智子

### 概要

本稿では、顧問を担当される教職員による回答の結果を基に、公立校の吹奏楽部を中心とする中学校における部活動を通した子ども支援と課題に関して検討した。回答では、子どもにとって専門的な教育を受けられることが肯定的に評価される一方、地域の現状をふまえたり特性を活用したりした実施の必要性が指摘された。また、学校の働き方改革に関して、他の職務を含め勤務時間が過多で増え続けていることから、部活動に限らず全体を通した改革が必要であるという見解が示された。さらに、論点として、学校や教職員との関係に加え、部活動として継続するのか、校外の活動として実施するのかといった、学校教育に関わる制度や実践における位置づけが問われた。あわせて、子どもや家庭に経済的な負担が生じないか、発達等にかかわる多様な子どもたちに対応できるか、ならびに、個人情報の保護を徹底できるか等といった、子どもへの影響や子どもとの関係に係る論点が挙げられた。部活動があるから登校できる生徒がいることをふまえた対応の必要性が指摘されたことに留意し、多様な子ども支援を発展させる検討が求められる。

(投稿日 2023年12月10日)

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**経営論集** Vol.10, No.6

ISSN 2189-2490

2024年 3月31日発行

発行者 文教大学経営学部 石塚 浩

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