

**EDUCATING HEARTS AND MINDS: EXPLORATIONS OF JAPANESE
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION**

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- 1. Emphasis on the Whole Child.** 1/3 of instructional time for arts, etc; 30 days a year for whole-school events
- 2. Caring, Stable Relationships (among students and between students and teachers).** 2 years together; explicitly highlight values of friendship, plan joyful experiences, etc.
- 3. Family-like Small Groups: Mixed Ability, Cross-Curricular, Enduring, and Non-Competitive.** Stay together for 1-2 months, reflect on strengths and areas that need improvement, teachers put children with others who will nurture their development
- 4. Student Involvement in Classroom Management.** Daily monitors call class to order (all children serve in daily rotation), chore groups manage many aspects of classroom life, twice-daily class meetings.
- 5. Reflection (*Hansei*) rather than extrinsic rewards/consequences.** Reflect as individuals, groups, class, on areas to improve, set goals and revisit them.
- 6. Standard Curriculum that Welcomes Children's Ideas.** Textbooks concentrate on fewer topics (for example, levers are the only simple machine studied in elementary school, but devote 10-12 lessons.)

List based on Lewis, Catherine, *Educating Hearts and Minds: Reflections on Japanese Preschool and Elementary Education* (Cambridge Univ. Press: 1995)

Further information at:

Mills College Lesson Study Group www.lessonresearch.net

Oakland History Collaborative: Teaching American History in an Urban School District www.teachingamericanhistory.us/lesson_study/index.html

Developmental Studies Center. [Www.devstu.org](http://www.devstu.org) (Nonprofit organization devoted to academic, ethical & social development)