

# Possibilities of Education in Remote Areas

– Community and educational characteristics on Aka Island –

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The author, a teacher at a high school, visited Aka Island to research and devise teaching materials geared toward “thinking of peace.” At one point, the author was surprised by the words of a local resident, who said, “School is a treasure of Aka Island.” Aka Island is registered as a level-4 remote area according to the *Act on the Improvement of Education in Remote Areas* and regarding the operating regulations of such. Aka Island consists of mainly tertiary industry, and the population has not been declining, but this is paired with the perception that the island consists mainly of people native to the area, is thus a bit of a closed community, and that it is host only to primary industry in remote areas. In addition, most parents of students moved to Aka Island from elsewhere, and almost all local residents, including those native to the area, provide assistance to the activities of the Aka elementary & junior high school. Generally, there are certain characteristics to education in remote areas, which include obvious remoteness, small numbers of students or teachers, classes of different grades being combined together, ease in holding classes focusing on nature, and helpful local residents and parents.

Thus, what is the relationship between the school and the community or parents of Aka Island, a unique place, when compared to other remote areas, and how does this affect children? Resolving this issue is thought to be valuable as a case study in the characteristics of remote areas and when pondering the recent lack of relationships between schools and communities or parents.

Therefore, in this study, the results of surveys with teachers and junior high students at the Aka elementary & junior high school, parents, and local residents were analyzed. As a result of the analysis, it was found that the school and community were connected in a relationship of mutual trust and cooperation for education. Further, this relation is believed to influence the personality of local children, instilling in them good public conduct, a sense of gentleness, and the ability to be very personable.