

Email Newsletter from Mayor of Okayama City (79) January 13th, 2017 Issue

【Results of the questionnaire on the municipal administration of Okayama City】

Hello, I'm Mr. Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

Today, questionnaire results of Okayama City's municipal administration have been released. This was conducted by the Sanyo Shimbun (a newspaper company) with corporate managers and intellectuals in Okayama Prefecture.

Firstly, an evaluation of me (the mayor) was as follows;

| | 2014 | | 2015 | | 2016 |
|---------------|-------|---|-------|---|-------|
| Satisfied: | 54.7% | ⇒ | 64.6% | ⇒ | 67.3% |
| Dissatisfied: | 12.8% | ⇒ | 10.6% | ⇒ | 8.9% |

The survey in 2014 was carried out when a year had passed after taking office as the mayor. And the result was fairly good then too. After that our steady efforts must have been highly evaluated. I am so happy about the growing percentage of "Satisfied".

Secondly, the top five things which citizens put the highest priority on were;

1. Revitalizing the central area of the city
2. Reconstructing industries
3. Enhancing education
4. Supporting an environment for raising kids
5. Enhancing medical and welfare

As you may be aware, there are some of the most important and immediate challenges for City of Okayama. One is education issues about academic ability and problematic behaviour. The other is to develop the environment for raising kids such

as ensuring enough nursery institutions, which is what I announced at a press conference yesterday.

As for the issue in academic ability, that of Junior-high students is especially sluggish so it ranks between 40th and 50th amongst all prefectures. It is essential for us to set a goal first, and then take actions to achieve the goal. I believe this may help children to make a career choice and play an important role in society with confidence. The goal will be disclosed in an outline of education which is to be formulated this fiscal year.

Regarding the issue of children on waiting lists, by having reviewed its definition last year, the existence of 729 waitlisted children was revealed. As a solution, we focused on ensuring nursery institutions and space for 919 children has come in sight. However the number cannot solve everything. As there are 700 children newly applied for nursery schools, waiting lists cannot be eliminated as of April this year.

The number of applicants for nursery schools is;

FY2007 to FY2015 (8 years): Approximately 200 children/year

FY2015 to FY2017 (2 years): Approximately 800 children/year

With an evocation of latent needs, the number increased by four times. However I, as a supporter of women's success, would rather regard this fact as a good thing. I will do my very best to eliminate waiting lists for children.

Although there are still many challenges ahead, I would like to exert all of my effort to meet citizens' expectations. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.