

# Safety Promotion School Initiative: Concept and Procedures



**Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools**



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**学校安全推進センター**

National Center for School Safety Promotion

# 1. What is a Safety Promotion School?

The Safety Promotion School (SPS) initiative was established to promote comprehensive school safety and revolves around the core principles of "self support, community support, and public support", which were specified in the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education, approved by the Cabinet of Japan in May 2012. The initiative is based on an approach to school safety unique to Japan but also draws upon the International Safe School (ISS) concept endorsed by the WHO Collaboration Centre on Community Safety Promotion (WHO-CCCSP) at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, and the Child Friendly School (CFS) concept promoted by UNICEF.

Specifically, this initiative aims to certify as a "Safety Promotion School", a school that has established well-defined medium-term goals and plans to promote school safety (community safety, disaster safety, and road safety) based on "7 indicators" that constitute the tenets of Safety Promotion Schools (see Table 1 below). Moreover, the school must have developed an organizational framework to realize these goals and plans ("Plan"), and in accordance with the S-PDCAS cycle, implemented and collaborated with others ("Do"), and have consistently shared evaluations that are grounded in objective evidence derived from analysis ("Check", "Share"). Notably, this program emphasizes the notion of "empathy and collaboration", advocating the sharing of school safety promotion practices and outcomes from the school to the home, with the community, as well as with neighbouring schools.

**Table 1 7 Indicators of Safety Promotion Schools**

<b>Indicator 1</b> (Framework)	A "school safety committee" has been set up in the school to promote school safety, overseen by a "school safety coordinator" or similar.
<b>Indicator 2</b> (Strategy)	"Medium-term goals and plans (around 3 years)" have been established in the school for each of the safety fields of "community safety", "disaster safety", and "road safety", that are consistent with safety promotion concepts.
<b>Indicator 3</b> (Plan)	Based on the "medium-term goals and plans", the school safety committee has formulated concrete "annual plans" that are specific to the school, for the promotion of school safety in the aspects of "safety education", "safety management", and "safety collaboration".
<b>Indicator 4</b> (Do)	Based on the "annual plans", activities to promote school safety are undertaken on an ongoing basis throughout the year coordinated by the school safety committee and other school-related parties.
<b>Indicator 5</b> (Check)	The school safety committee periodically reports on the outcomes of school safety promotion activities, and evaluates each activity based on clear reasoning and analysis.
<b>Indicator 6</b> (Act)	In formulating the "annual plans" for the following year, the school safety committee works to highlight and address practical issues faced by the school in relation to school safety, as well as improve the "annual plans", utilizing the analyses and evaluations of activities undertaken to date.
<b>Indicator 7</b> (Share)	The outcomes of school safety promotion activities are communicated and shared with relevant parties related to the school and local community. Furthermore, in accordance with the ethos of "collaboration", the outcome of such activities is pro-actively communicated and shared with schools nationally and internationally, and new information is gathered on an ongoing basis.

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It is important to note that the standard to be certified as a Safety Promotion School is not that the school is a "fully safe school where safety has been perfectly ensured". Rather, the school must be assessed to be "a school where teachers/staff, learners (including students, pupils, and young children) and caregivers, as well as local institutions and people involved in children's safety, share the importance of school safety, and where, as a "team school", the necessary framework is in place for coordinated and sustainable school safety initiatives to be steadily and collaboratively implemented and developed. Therefore, a "Safety Promotion School" can be said to be a school positioned at the starting point of a journey toward the goal of comprehensive and collaborative school safety promotion.

A school that is certified to be a Safety Promotion School is required to conclude a Safety Promotion School agreement with the "Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools" and make a pledge to work continuously to promote future-oriented, collaborative safety promotion initiatives that are based on analyses and evaluations of school safety. We encourage your school to join our network of Safety Promotion Schools, which was established to promote safety through collaboration between schools certified as Safety Promotion Schools. We hope that participation in the network will enhance the mutual promotion of safety in schools, not only in Japan, but also in the Asia-Pacific region, the USA and Europe, where many issues related to school safety are held in common. Guided by Safety Promotion School principles, we aspire to see schools communicate and share their most successful school safety promotion initiatives, fostering a mutual enhancement in the effectiveness of school safety promotion.

With a view to promoting the further expansion of Safety Promotion Schools throughout Japan and providing sustained support to the development of their activities, Osaka Kyoiku University established the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools on 11 October 2014 as part of the School Crisis Mental Support Center (renamed the "National Center for School Safety Promotion" in April 2020). Activities to promote Safety Promotion Schools began after a "Safety Promotion School Agreement" was concluded between Ikeda Elementary School attached to Osaka Kyoiku University, Ikeda Junior High School attached to Osaka Kyoiku University and Kinryu Elementary School in Taito Ward, Tokyo, on 6 March 2015. As a result of subsequent promotional activities, there were 55 certified Safety Promotion Schools in Japan (including 20 re-certified schools) and 35 schools overseas (including China, Thailand and the UK), as of 1 July 2024. Additionally, there were 11 schools in Japan and 63 schools overseas (including China, Thailand and the UK) working towards Safety Promotion School certification, bringing the total number of Safety Promotion Schools worldwide to 164. Moreover, 10 years after the establishment of this system, three schools that have continued to develop new Phase IV activities (Ikeda Elementary School attached to Osaka Kyoiku University, Ikeda Junior High School attached to Osaka Kyoiku University, and Kinryu Elementary School in Taito Ward, Tokyo) have been certified as Advanced Safety Promotion Schools (ASPS).

## 2. Safety Promotion School Certification Process

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In order to receive Safety Promotion School certification, schools interested in certification must follow the process described in (1) to (7) below and undertake the initiatives related to Safety Promotion School activities. (Refer to Figure 1 and Figure 2)

**1** Under the leadership of the school principal, the commencement of initiatives aimed at achieving the aforementioned 7 Indicators of Safety Promotion Schools (Table 1) must be communicated to teachers/staff, learners (including students, pupils, and young children), PTAs and representatives of institutions and activities groups involved in child safety in the local community. If necessary, when deciding to start SPS certification activities, the school principal can submit a request to the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools to hold an SPS preliminary meeting (SPS preliminary training) and, with the cooperation of the Council, a preliminary training on the implementation of SPS activities can be held for teachers and other staff at the school.

**2** The principal of a school interested in certification as a Safety Promotion School should submit an application for Safety Promotion School certification support and a Safety Promotion School registration form to the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools. Upon submission of this document, the school will be designated an "SPS Supported Candidate School".

**3** After receiving the above application for certification support, the "Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools" will dispatch a "Director" or a "Safety Promotion School Nomination Committee Member" to the school concerned to conduct an "**on-site verification**". Schools that have received the on-site verification, will prepare an "Activity Matrix" (see Table 2) that is based on the "7 Indicators of Safety Promotion Schools" with the guidance, advice and cooperation of a "Director" dispatched by the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools or a "Nomination Committee Member". Moreover, the school shall integrate Safety Promotion School-related work into the existing allocation of duties and responsibilities at the school, as well as into their annual school safety plan.

**4** Preparing the "Activity Matrix" at the Supported Candidate School shall involve the school management and a teacher/staff qualified to be a "school safety coordinator" etc. (approved by Osaka Kyoiku University), working together to prepare a matrix, which takes into consideration what is realistically achievable over 3 years (duration of the medium-term plan). It is not necessary to implement all activities in all cells of the "Activity Matrix" within the 3 year period of the first medium-term plan. It is not an issue if the matrix encompasses the next medium-term plan. To reiterate, the Safety Promotion School initiative is not a system for certifying "schools with perfect safety". Accordingly, it is not necessary for an applicant school to have established and be implementing content for all 45 cells of the "Activity Matrix" (Table 2) when first preparing an application for Safety Promotion School certification. At a minimum, if an initiative based on the S-PDCAS (Strategy - Plan, Do, Check, Act, Share) cycle can be identified among the 15 cells of at least one of the safety fields of "Community Safety", "Disaster Safety", or "Road Safety" (each comprising 3 aspects: "Safety Education", "Safety Management" and "Safety Collaboration"), the school is eligible for "nomination" by the

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"Safety Promotion School Nomination Committee". Another important aspect of this initiative is that it must be confirmed that teachers, staff or "team school"-related parties certified as "Safety Promotion School Promoters" (described in detail below), are participating collaboratively in the Safety Promotion School certification activities at the school.



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After approximately one year after initiating Safety Promotion School-related activities, the Supported Candidate School shall prepare an application for Safety Promotion School certification, which summarises the outcomes of the activities. This application for certification will generally be based on the outcomes of activities (achievements) geared toward "Safety Promotion School" certification about one year after their commencement and their evaluations. However, if the school has any previous achievements in promoting school safety that were made prior to the start of this initiative (generally within the last 3 years), these can be included in the application for certification as prior achievements. Moreover, the application for certification should be prepared in the language of your country.



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Upon receiving an application for certification from a Supported Candidate School, the "Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools" will dispatch a "Nomination Committee Member" to the school to conduct a "**progress check**" based on the application.

Following the "progress check" conducted by the Nomination Committee Member, a nomination letter shall be submitted to the "Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board". The Board shall contact the Supported Candidate School to arrange an "**on-site assessment (final assessment)**".

Furthermore, with the school's consent, the application for certification submitted to the "Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board" may be shared among certified Safety Promotion Schools, in consistency with the aforementioned perspective of "sharing" outcomes, and made publicly available through the website of the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools or other means.



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Following the "on-site assessment (final assessment)" based on the submitted application for certification, conducted by a "Director" dispatched by the "Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools", a Safety Promotion School agreement shall be concluded between the Supported Candidate School and the "Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools". In addition to an explanation by the school principal of the background to and outcomes of activities geared toward Safety Promotion School certification, and an on-site inspection of the school, interviews with representatives of pupils and students who have participated in Safety Promotion School activities, as well as representatives of the PTA, local authorities and residents, are an important part of the "on-site assessment".





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The Safety Promotion School agreement, concluded between the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools and the certified school, shall be valid for 3 years. Therefore, in order for a certified Safety Promotion School to maintain its status as a Safety Promotion School, it must be re-certified every 3 years by the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools and consistently work to promote school safety on an ongoing basis.

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For schools certified as Safety Promotion Schools, important post-certification activities include, in addition to the consistent pursuit and development of the activities in the "Activity Matrix", the communication and sharing of outcomes of successful safety promotion initiatives at their school and the ongoing gathering of information on activities at other schools.

Furthermore, a new system has been established whereby the Safety Promotion School Nomination Committee nominates "SPS Supporters" from among pupils/students at a newly certified Safety Promotion School. Through this system we endeavour to foster the human resources for sustaining the continued development of Safety Promotion School activities at the school. It is hoped that pupil/student-led Safety Promotion School activities will be developed as part of the activities of these pupil/student associations.

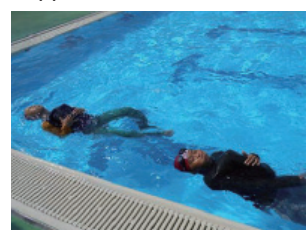


Surrounding the certification flag at the Safety Promotion School certification ceremony

Awarding of the certification plaque and certification flag at the Safety Promotion School certification ceremony



Mutual sharing and communication of activities by certified and supported candidate schools



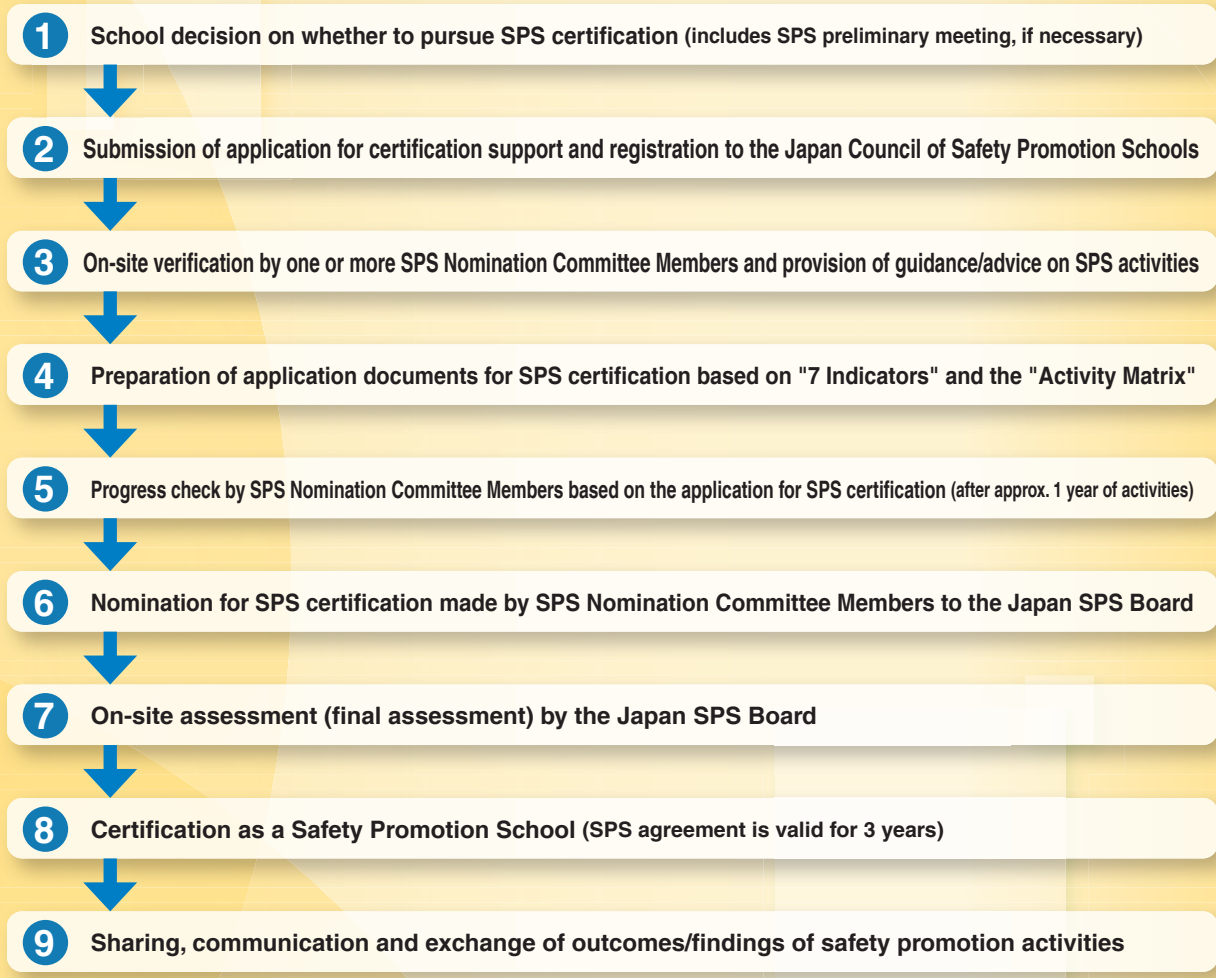


Figure 1: Steps to Safety Promotion School (SPS) Certification

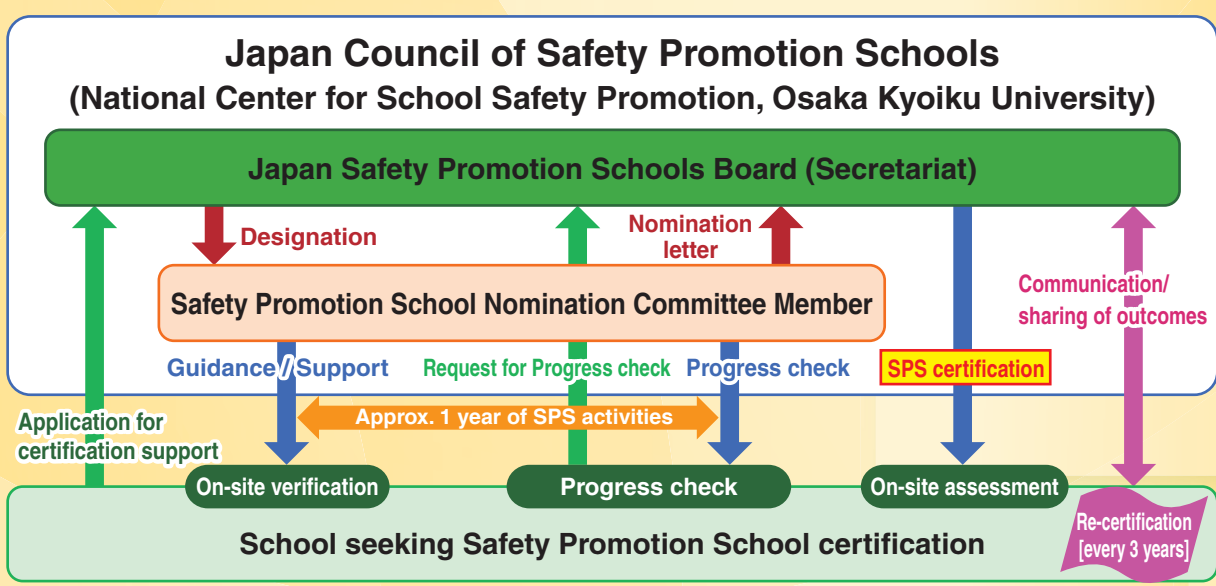


Figure 2: Overview of SPS Certification Process

**Table 2: Safety Promotion School "Activity Matrix"**

Safety Field	Aspect	Plan	Do	Check	Act	Share
<b>Community Safety</b> • Injury Prevention • Crime Prevention	Safety Education					
	Safety Management					
	Safety Collaboration					
<b>Disaster Safety</b> • Earthquake Action Plan • Wind/Rain/Snow Action Plan • Volcano Action Plan • Fire Prevention	Safety Education					
	Safety Management					
	Safety Collaboration					
<b>Road Safety</b> • Victim Prevention • Perpetration Prevention	Safety Education					
	Safety Management					
	Safety Collaboration					

### 3. Organizations and Supporting Roles in the Safety Promotion School Initiative

Osaka Kyoiku University established the "Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools" as part of the National Center for School Safety Promotion, as mentioned above, for the purpose of sustaining and developing the activities of Safety Promotion Schools, and established the Safety Promotion School (SPS) Certification Support Office in April 2020 to support the activities of the Council. The Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools consists of the Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board and the Safety Promotion Schools Nomination Committee, where the staff of the National Center for School Safety Promotion serve as Directors of the Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board.

Meanwhile, to support activities at the school, there are 3 specialized positions - "Safety Promotion School Promoter", "School Safety Coordinator" and "Safety Promotion School Nomination Committee Member" - with qualification processes for each. Additionally, a new system was established whereby pupils/students enrolled at certified schools can be appointed as "SPS Supporters". The Osaka Kyoiku University is responsible for the training, certification, and appointment of these specialists.



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### **(1) Safety Promotion School Promoter**

As members of the "Team School", "Safety Promotion School Promoters" cooperate with the "School Safety Coordinator" of the relevant school and work to promote the Safety Promotion School certification activities of the school. After the school has been certified a Safety Promotion School, they are expected to work with the "School Safety Coordinator" in gathering information relevant to the Safety Promotion School initiative, and assist in communicating and sharing outcomes/findings both nationally and internationally.

As with the Safety Promotion School certification, Safety Promotion School Promoter certification is valid for 3 years. In order to retain the position of "Safety Promotion School Promoter", the holder must attend the "Safety Promotion School Promoter Training Seminar" held by the National Center for School Safety Promotion of Osaka Kyoiku University, every 3 years to get re-certified.

### **(2) Safety Promotion School Nomination Committee Member**

With the aim of encouraging the enhancement and development of Safety Promotion School activities in Japan at the school ground level, the Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board invites schools to nominate teachers and staff whose work in Safety Promotion School certification activities is recognized (usually teachers/staff from schools certified as Safety Promotion Schools who took a leading role in Safety Promotion School certification activities), as candidates to become "Safety Promotion School Nomination Committee Members" upon approval of the Board. Those appointed as "Safety Promotion School Nomination Committee Members" will be asked to perform the following 3 tasks at the request of the Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board. The term of the appointment shall be 3 years from the date of commissioning.

- ① Visit SPS Supported Candidate Schools and work with the "Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board" to verify the status of activities at the school ("on-site verification"). Provide guidance and advice to ensure the effective and successful implementation of activities related to the Safety Promotion School initiative and ensure that such activities are consistent with Safety Promotion School principles.
- ② Visit SPS Supported Candidate Schools that have submitted their application documents for Safety Promotion School certification to the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools, at the request of the Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board, for the purpose of checking the progress and outcome of the SPS activities detailed in the application documents ("progress check").
- ③ Prepare and submit nomination letters for those schools whose activities are assessed, during the "progress check", to be appropriate for Safety Promotion School certification. (Nomination letters are to be submitted to the Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board together with the Safety Promotion School application documents prepared by the school.)

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### **(3) School Safety Coordinator**

To qualify as a "School Safety Coordinator", a candidate must attend the training course for safety officers held by the National Center for School Safety Promotion at Osaka Kyoiku University for basic qualification, and then, in principle, must attend the "School Safety Coordinator Training Course" within the same year to be certified as a "School Safety Coordinator". However, if a candidate has attended the school safety instructor training course organized by the National Institute for School Teachers and Staff Development, or has such experience as work as a safety officer in a school already involved in Safety Promotion School activities, it is possible for this to serve as a substitute for the aforementioned basic qualification.

The "School Safety Coordinator" plays a central role in promoting school safety at his/her school. As the central figure responsible for the Safety Promotion School certification activities of the school, the School Safety Coordinator shall prepare the application documents for Safety Promotion School certification and cooperate during the on-site verification and progress checks conducted by a Safety Promotion School Nomination Committee Member, as well as the on-site assessment by the Japan Safety Promotion Schools Board. Furthermore, after the school has been certified as a Safety Promotion School, the School Safety Coordinator is expected, as part of his/her duties, to continue to gather information on Safety Promotion School activities and to communicate and share the outcomes/findings of activities both nationally and internationally.

As with the Safety Promotion School certification, School Safety Coordinator certification is valid for 3 years. In order to retain the position of "School Safety Coordinator", the holder must attend the "School Safety Coordinator Training Course" held by the National Center for School Safety Promotion of Osaka Kyoiku University, every 3 years to get re-certified.

### **(4) SPS Supporter**

Through the "SPS Supporter" system we seek to foster the human resources for the sustainable development of Safety Promotion School activities at the certified school via student council activities etc. Pupils/students enrolled at the school may be appointed to become "SPS Supporters". These "SPS Supporters" are appointed by the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools upon nomination by the Nomination Committee Member for the school, and are appointed for a period of one year.

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## **4. Expenses Related to Safety Promotion School Certification**

The following 7 tasks/events and their related expenses (incl. travel expenses) are considered necessary when obtaining Safety Promotion School (SPS) certification under the guidance of the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools. However, 3 of these events (items 1, 6 and 7 below), may not be necessary depending on the circumstances of the school.

1. Consultation meetings prior to commencement of SPS activities (travel expenses and remuneration for the dispatch of Directors)
2. Commencement of SPS activities (travel expenses and remuneration for dispatch of Nomination Committee Members)
3. On-site verification (including preparation of application documents) (travel expenses and remuneration for dispatch of Nomination Committee Members)

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4. On-site assessment (travel expenses and remuneration for the dispatch of Directors)
  5. Certification conferral (travel expenses and remuneration for the dispatch of Directors)
  6. SPS-related on-site teacher and staff training (travel expenses and remuneration for the dispatch of instructors)
  7. Training courses held by Osaka Kyoiku University (designed to support the effective expansion/development of SPS activities): training course for school safety officers, "School Safety Coordinator Training Course", "Safety Promotion School Promoter Training Seminar" (travel expenses for SPS teachers/staff)

For schools in Japan, the expenses for these 7 items can be covered by the MEXT Education Policy Bureau's funding for the development of regional systems for school safety promotion under its comprehensive school safety support project. Therefore, if a school that is considering commencing Safety Promotion School certification activities consults with the relevant section of the board of education for their prefecture/government-designated city and utilizes the aforementioned project funding, the school will not have to bear these expenses. However, travel and other expenses incurred during such activities as the sharing and communication of the outcomes of Safety Promotion School activities and the gathering of information carried out by the school's "School Safety Coordinator" and/or "Safety Promotion School Promoter" cannot be funded out of the aforementioned project budget, and must therefore be accounted for under the school's own budget.

Expenses associated with the agreement and certification plaque will be borne by the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools.

If you have any questions about specific costs involved in Safety Promotion School certification/re-certification, please contact the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools.

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## 5. The Outlook for Safety Promotion Schools

The National Center for School Safety Promotion of Osaka Kyoiku University established the Safety Promotion School (SPS) Certification Support Office in April 2020 with a view to further promoting and advancing school safety in Japan, in collaboration with schools that endorse the Safety Promotion School cause, through the certification support activities of the Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools.

Since the certification of Ikeda Elementary School attached to Osaka Kyoiku University, Ikeda Junior High School attached to Osaka Kyoiku University, and Kinryu Elementary School in Taito Ward, Tokyo, as Safety Promotion Schools in March 2015, 85 schools in Japan and around the world have been certified as Safety Promotion Schools, and a further 74 schools have applied for Safety Promotion School certification support, as of the end of January 2024.

The Japan Council of Safety Promotion Schools will continue to pursue through Safety Promotion School activities, in collaboration with schools that endorse the cause of SPS, the further reinforcement and development of school safety in Japan, drawing upon the reflections and lessons learned from the 2001 incident at Ikeda Elementary School attached to Osaka Kyoiku University.

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