

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The prewar Soka Gakkai began as “Soka Kyoiku Gakkai,” literally “Value-Creating Education Society,” and its founders Tsunesaburo Makiguchi (1871–1944) and Josei Toda (1900–58) were teachers dedicated to reform of the Japanese education system.

Based on a belief in the infinite potential of every individual, they worked for the development of an educational approach dedicated to the lifelong happiness of learners. As the Japanese education system was then being used to shape obedient servants of the state at a time of increasing nationalism and militarism, these ideas found little acceptance within the educational establishment. As a result of their outspoken criticism of Japan’s wartime regime, Makiguchi and Toda were arrested in July 1943 together with other leaders of the association and Makiguchi died in prison in November 1944.

In order to further the development of this philosophy of Soka (value-creating) education and put it into practice, Daisaku Ikeda has founded several educational institutions which are implementing student-centered education and aim to empower each student to develop his or her capacity and contribute to society and the building of a peaceful world. All Soka educational institutions are nondenominational and open to all.

Educational institutions founded:

- 1968 Soka Junior and Senior High Schools, Tokyo
- 1971 Soka University, Tokyo
- 1973 Kansai Soka Junior and Senior High Schools
- 1976 Sapporo Soka Kindergarten
- 1978 Tokyo Soka Elementary School
- 1982 Kansai Soka Elementary School
- 1985 Soka Women’s College, Tokyo
- 1992 Hong Kong Soka Kindergarten
- 1993 Singapore Soka Kindergarten
- 1994 Malaysia Soka Kindergarten
- 2001 Soka University of America
- 2001 Brazil Soka Kindergarten
- 2003 Brazil Soka School
- 2008 Korea Soka Kindergarten

Soka University Japan has 7,700 undergraduate students and over 500 graduate students, as well as 21,000 enrolled in correspondence courses. Soka University has exchange agreements with 108 universities in 44 countries and territories. Soka University of America in Aliso Viejo, California, USA, is a four-year liberal arts college with a student body of more than 400 undergraduate students. The students come from some 30 countries, with roughly half coming from the United States. The university’s core curriculum focuses on values such as peace, human rights and the creative coexistence of nature and humanity, and every student is encouraged to spend part of one year studying a foreign language on an overseas exchange.

“Education must also inspire the faith that each of us has both the power and the responsibility to effect positive change on a global scale.”