Preservation and Sustainable Utilization of Hizuchi Elementary School as the Representative Work of Wood-frame Modern Architecture

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Hizuchi Elementary School (Yawatahama City, Ehime Prefecture) is a representative work of Masatsune Matsumura, a modernist architect who worked for the Yawatahama Municipal Office. It is composed of two buildings which were constructed in 1956 and 1958 respectively. This school has a special meaning as a fine example of modern architecture which embodied the new ideas of postwar education in Japan, and it also represents the development of a uniquely Japanese modernism based on wood-frame structure.

The prize winners have continued the campaign to conserve the building for more than ten years and succeeded in restoring it into an excellent school of the day without losing its value as a cultural asset. The two existing buildings were repaired in such a way to restore the original design, while a small change was added to meet the functional demand of modern buildings. Additionally, a small building was newly constructed which contained four classrooms. Consequently, a very rich environment for study and education filled with plural history has been created.