Understanding Korean Education

Vol. 1 School Curriculum in Korea
CONTENTS

Chapter 1 Preface
   School Curriculum in Korea
Korea has achieved remarkable economic development from the 1960s—known as the "Miracle on the Han River"—through the implementation of growth-oriented economic policy. As illustrated by the 2006 World Bank statistics which showed Korea's GDP to be the 13th largest in the world, the growth has been spectacular.

With few natural resources at its disposal, Korea's achievement in joining the ranks of the high-tech nations of the 21st Century was due to its human resources. The driving force behind the astounding growth of Korea is education.

For this reason, many nations have taken an active interest in sharing in Korea's experience in educational development, resulting in many foreign nationals visiting Korea for this purpose with demand for study tours to Korea's education-related organizations growing every year. The experience of Korea's education that has played an integral part in the nation's rapid economic progress has indeed become a benchmark for many developing nations.

To satisfy this demand, the Korean Education Development Institute (KEDI) has, with the backing of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, published the series "Understanding Korean Education". This series of volumes was published to effectively provide visiting education policy advisors, educations experts, and other education professionals interested in gaining an understanding of Korean education, with a summary and information on the process of Korean educational development.

This series consists of 5 volumes. The first volume is 'School Curriculum in Korea' and presents current school curriculum in
Korea, the development process of national curriculum, and the process of textbook certification.

The second volume is entitled 'ICT in Korean Education'. It describes important aspects of ICT in Korean education and discusses further development of ICT in Korean education.

The third volume entitled 'School Education in Korea', deals with childhood education, primary and secondary education, teacher policy, special education.

The fourth volume, 'Higher Education and Lifelong Learning in Korea', deals with reform in Korean higher education, and lifelong learning systems such as air and correspondence high schools and the academic credit bank system. In addition, it covers social capital and HRD, which are currently prominent issues internationally.

Finally the fifth volume, 'Education and Korea's Development', examines the role education has played in the economic development of Korea. Volumes 3 to 5 consist of literature used for study tours and international seminars that have been edited for the purposes of this series.

As far as possible, I hope this series can go some way into aiding foreign nationals seeking understanding of Korean education. My thanks go to the authors and members of the International Cooperation Team at KEDI, whom in the process of planning, editing and publishing this series, have spared no effort.

Hyung Yeel Koh
President
Korean Educational Development Institute
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Chapter 1

Historical Review of the Development of Korean Education

Located in the easternmost part of the Asian Continent, Korea is a democratic state and a constitutional republic comprising 16 administrative units: the metropolis of Seoul, six metropolitan cities, and nine provinces. Ethnically Koreans are one family that speak one common language and share a strong cultural identity. Korea has a population of over 48 million. More than 10 million people live in Seoul which is the country's capital. Urbanization has become more prominent in other major cities as well, such as Pusan, Taegu, Incheon and Kwangju, despite the government's effort to minimize this trend. Until the 1960s Korea was an agrarian state. To accelerate industrial development the Korean government launched a series of five-year economic development plans. As a result, Korea has emerged as one of the leaders among developing countries.

As the most important factor of the rapid development, no one hesitates to note the role of education, so that before dealing with

1) Most of the content of this chapter came from the text presented in the web-site of MOE. Only very minor changes, including some addition, were made by the author.
the main topic, "curriculum in Korea", the history of the development of Korean education will be briefly described in the order of 1) Pre-Modern Education (Until the 19th Century), 2) Expansion of Democratic Education (1945~1950s), 3) Quantitative Expansion in the 1960s and 1970s, 4) Qualitative Development in the 1980s and 5) Human Education Preparing for Future Society (the 1990s and Beyond).

**Pre-modern education (Until the 19th century)**

The informal education which can be traced back to prehistoric times ended with the establishment of "Taehak" in the year 372 during the Goguyreo era which is known as the earliest form of formal education. Curriculum consisted of ethics education focused on cultivating the morals of the students and educating the general public based on Confucianism and Buddhism. Modern schools first introduced in the 19th century comprised national and private education institutes established by Christian missionaries and members of the independence movement. From this period onward, many private schools founded by Western missionaries began to appear nationwide.

At that time, national leaders who resisted the Japanese intrusion pressed for the "movement to save the nation through education." Their primary focus was on educating future leaders who would achieve national independence. After liberation from 35 years of Japanese colonial rule in 1945, a foundation for democratic education was established. Education in Korea has undergone numerous transformations and development through changing objectives according to the needs of the times. The government set the direction for democratic education, expanding basic education to enhance democracy, quantitative growth in education, education reform, and qualitative growth of education.
Expansion of democratic education (1945~1950s)

In order to lay the foundation for democratic education after liberation in 1945, education policies were directed toward the following objectives within the framework of the Constitution. The Education Law was enacted and promulgated followed by the provision for educational autonomy and the implementation of compulsory education. Some important policies implemented in the early days of the new nation include: The compilation and distribution of primary school textbooks; reform of the school ladder system to a single track system following a 6-3-3-4 pattern; adult education for literacy and supplementary in-service training for teachers; incremental expansion of educational opportunities for secondary and higher education and the creation of teacher colleges.

Even during the Korean war, education continued to play a pivotal role in overcoming the national crisis and also played a leading role in the national reconstruction after the war. The revival of education emphasized the role of Korean education in fulfilling the missions of overcoming the national crisis and leading the reconstruction efforts. The educational actions worthy of note are: Initiation of the curriculum revision project; standard national admission test for applicants to junior high schools; establishment of national public universities and the promulgation of the "Wartime Emergency Education Act".
Quantitative expansion in the 1960s and 1970s

With the rapid economic growth, significant changes took place in many spheres of life. In the management of such changes, efforts were made to achieve rapid quantitative growth in the education sector. The most outstanding feature of educational development in Korea during the 1960s was its quantitative expansion in student population, education facilities, and the number of teachers. Such a rapid growth in student population inevitably resulted in over-crowded classrooms, oversized schools, a shortage of fully qualified teachers and educational facilities, as well as intense competition in the college entrance system. Such shortfalls necessitated the reform of the entrance examination system to normalize education at all school levels.

The important actions taken during this time are as follows: Teacher/Education Reform; establishment of the Graduate School of Education to carry out the functions of in-service training and education for teachers; abolition of the middle school entrance examination; improvement of the local university system and establishment of junior colleges; establishment of broadcast and correspondence colleges and high schools; institutionalization of a standard examination as a preliminary screening mechanism for the college entrance examination in an effort to normalize high school education; upgrading of some general high schools to two-year colleges of education to train primary school teachers and lastly establish four-year teacher colleges for training secondary school teachers.

The following four tables show how rapidly Korean education had been developed quantitatively during the 60 years since the liberation.
### Table 1. Expansion of Primary School Education (1945-2002)

<table>
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<td>4,496</td>
<td>5,961</td>
<td>6,487</td>
<td>6,335</td>
<td>5,267</td>
<td>5,322</td>
<td>5,384</td>
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<td>Teachers</td>
<td>19,729</td>
<td>61,605</td>
<td>101,095</td>
<td>119,064</td>
<td>136,800</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>142,715</td>
<td>147,497</td>
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<td>Students</td>
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<td>3,622,685</td>
<td>5,749,301</td>
<td>5,658,002</td>
<td>4,868,520</td>
<td>4,019,991</td>
<td>4,089,429</td>
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### Table 2. Expansion of Middle School Education (1945-2002)

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<td>Schools</td>
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<td>1,608</td>
<td>2,121</td>
<td>2,470</td>
<td>2,731</td>
<td>2,770</td>
<td>2,809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1,186</td>
<td>13,053</td>
<td>31,207</td>
<td>54,858</td>
<td>89,719</td>
<td>92,589</td>
<td>93,385</td>
<td>95,283</td>
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<td>Students</td>
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<td>1,860,539</td>
<td>1,831,152</td>
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### Table 3. Expansion of High School Education (1945-2002)

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<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>889</td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>1,683</td>
<td>1,957</td>
<td>1,969</td>
<td>1,995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1,720</td>
<td>9,627</td>
<td>19,854</td>
<td>50,948</td>
<td>92,683</td>
<td>104,351</td>
<td>104,314</td>
<td>114,304</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>40,271</td>
<td>273,434</td>
<td>590,382</td>
<td>1,696,792</td>
<td>2,283,806</td>
<td>2,071,468</td>
<td>1,911,173</td>
<td>1,795,509</td>
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### Table 4. Expansion of University (Higher) Education (1945-2002)

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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>1,184</td>
<td>1,261</td>
<td>1,303</td>
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<td>3,808</td>
<td>10,435</td>
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<td>79,136</td>
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<td>7,819</td>
<td>101,041</td>
<td>201,436</td>
<td>601,494</td>
<td>1,490,809</td>
<td>3,363,549</td>
<td>3,500,560</td>
<td>3,577,447</td>
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</table>

#### Qualitative development in the 1980s

The innovative efforts of the previous decade to modernize the educational system were carried over into the 1980s, particularly in those aspects related to the normalization and improvement of educational quality. The government of the Fifth Republic promoted an educational policy which stressed the success of education.

The 1980s was a period of qualitative development and normalization of the education system. Under its education innovation policies, the Fifth Republic was the first to stipulate the need for lifelong education in the constitution, an emphasis on education to raise wholesome citizens of society and education innovation to pursue science and lifelong education.

The following measures were introduced to achieve such goals: Building of a broadcasting system dedicated exclusively to education programs; implementation of college graduation quota system; creation of the educational tax system to finance educational reforms; abolition of the main entrance examination; placing heavier weight on high school achievements on determining qualification; and establishment of the Social Education Act and Early Education Promotion Act.
In the midst of this period, The Commission for Educational Reform was inaugurated as the consultative body for the President in March 1985. Ten education innovation measures were proposed to be implemented by December 1985 for the purpose of "Cultivating Koreans to Lead the 21st Century." They are: Reformation of the education system; improvement in the college entrance system; upgrading of school facilities; securing of high quality teachers; promotion of science education; improvement of the curriculum and methodology; improvement of college education; promotion of autonomy in education administration; establishment of a lifelong education system; and expansion of education investments. These measures had been pursued on a continuous basis. In May 1988, the Advisory Council for Educational Policy for the Minister of Education and Human Resources Development was established.

Some quantitative indices representing qualitative development in Korean education is shown in Table 5 that describe changes between 1965 and 2002 in terms of students per class, students per teacher and transition rate of each level of school.

Apart from the table, another quantitative index is available showing the qualitative development in education, that is 'school enrollment rate'. Enrollment rate for kindergarten is 34.4% (as of 2006), elementary school is 99.9% (as of 2006), junior high, senior high, and college are 98.0% (2001), 95.3% (2001), 83.7% (2001) respectively. Also, newer statistics are available indicating transition rates. In 2006, the transition rate from elementary to junior high school was 99.9%, from junior high to senior high was 99.7%, from senior high to college was 82.1%. In more detail, the transition rate from academic high school to college was 87.5%, but that from vocational high school to college was 68.6%.
Table 5. Number of Students per Class, per Teacher and the Transition rate by Year

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students per Class (person)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students per Teacher (person)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>15.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rate of Entering Higher Schools (Advancement Rate(%))</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary S. → Middle S.</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle S. → High S.</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>99.5</td>
<td>99.5</td>
<td>99.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High S. → Inst. of higher Ed.</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>74.2</td>
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<td>Employment Rate(%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>General High School</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>18.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocational High School</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>90.0</td>
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<td>Junior College</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>56.0</td>
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</table>
Human education preparing for future society
(the 1990s and beyond)

Korean education in the 1990s emphasized human education focused on preparing for the future on the basis of the pursuit of quality in education, that was a key element of education policy in the 1980s. Effective December 27, 1990, the Ministry of Education streamlined its organization with the clarification of its role. New laws for the promotion of local autonomy were enacted.

Through the pursuit of achieving basic value and welfare of education, education policies have largely focused on upgrading the education system since 1990. Expanding the scope of mandatory education, widening the supply of secondary education services, and enlarging opportunities for higher education all contributed to the fulfillment of personal goals and national development.

The 8th Five-Year Plan for Economic & Social Development (1997-2001) focused on the future by producing well-rounded citizens, pursuing efficiency, enhancing independence, and building balance to expand education opportunities. Plans for education reform were first announced on May 31, 1995 which have successfully continued to the present.
Chapter 2

School System in Korea

School ladder system in Korea

A ladder-type school system of 6-3-3-4 is currently in use in Korea, as stipulated by the Education Law, promulgated in 1949. Article 81 of the Education Law provides for the establishment of the types of schools shown in Figure 1.

Kindergarten education is for children of 3-5 years of age and non-compulsory. The curriculum centers on the five areas of physical, social, expressive, language, and life inquiry education. The major educational focus is on the whole development of children rather than on formal studies. As of 2001, 38.1% of the eligible age group were enrolled in kindergarten.

Elementary education intended for children six to eleven years of age is compulsory and free of charge. Its goal is to provide the basic skills necessary for everyday life and to cultivate appropriate attitude as a citizen. Virtually all of the eligible age group attend elementary school.

Education at the middle school level is also compulsory and three years in duration. Until 2002, it was free of charge only for children in rural areas, but this benefit was extended to all eligible
## School Curriculum in Korea

### Pre School
- Kindergarten (1 and 2 years)
- Elementary School (6 years)

### Elementary Education
- Grade 1-6

### Secondary Education
- Grade 7-9
- Middle School (3 years)
- General (Academic) High School (3 years)
- Vocational High School (3 years)
- Special Education for the Handicapped

### Higher Education
- Grade 10-12
- Kindergarten
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Graduate School
- 4 year College and University
- Teacher's College
- Korean Corres. University
- Open College
- Misc. School
- Nursing Junior College

### Enrolment Ratio (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>(98.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>(98.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>(95.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>(83.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(%) = Enrolment Ratio (2001)

**Figure 1. The Current School System in South Korea**
children after 2002. The educational program is a continuation of the elementary school program. As of 2001, 98.0% of the eligible age group is enrolled in middle school.

High school education is divided into two major divisions - academic and vocational education. The curricula of both divisions expand and build upon the middle school education, but lead to different goals. General high schools mainly prepare students for college education; Vocational high schools for employment. About 62.2% of high school students enroll in general high schools and 37.8% in vocational high schools. The high school enrollment rate was 95.3% as of 2001.

Higher education in Korea falls into five categories: 1) colleges and universities, 2) teacher's colleges and colleges of education, 3) Air and Correspondence University and open universities, 4) junior vocational colleges, and 5) miscellaneous schools. A major priority in higher education in Korea is the area of science and technology. The higher education sector is expected to lead in the national effort to outpace the competition in the global economy. As of 2001, approximately 83.7% of the eligible age group attended institutes of higher education.

The schools that are not in the mainstream such as civic schools and miscellaneous schools cater to students who, for various reasons, are unable to have access to regular schools. For the blind, deaf, and otherwise handicapped, special education is provided. Some other related basic educational statistics are shown in Figure 1.

Korea has a single-track 6-3-3-4 system and maintains a single line of school levels in order to ensure that every citizen is able to receive primary, secondary, and tertiary education without discrimination and according to the ability of each student.

The school system described above was stipulated by law. The existing education act was replaced by the Basic Education Act, the
Primary and Secondary Education Act, and the Higher Education Act in 1998. The Primary and Secondary Education Act covers education issues dealing with pre-school, primary and secondary education while the Higher Education Act pertains to matters related to higher education.

Article 9 of the Basic Education Act stipulates that "Schools shall be established to provide pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education." According to Article 2 of the Primary and Secondary Education Act, such types of schools as 1) Kindergartens, 2) Primary Schools, Civic Schools, 3) Middle Schools, Civic High Schools, 4) High Schools, Trade High Schools, 5) Special Schools, and 6) Miscellaneous Schools shall be established for pre-school, primary and secondary education. Article two of the Higher Education Act also stipulates that the following types of schools shall be established for higher education: 1) Universities, 2) Industrial Universities, 3) Teachers Colleges, 4) Junior Colleges, 5) Air & Correspondence Universities, 6) Technical Colleges, and 7) Miscellaneous Schools.

The basic statistics of the schools noted above are shown in Table 6.
Table 6. The Number of Schools, Students and Teachers by the Various Types of School (as of 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergartens</td>
<td>19,258</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>13,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8,292</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Education</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,464</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,370</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Schools</td>
<td>5,463</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>2,865</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Schools</td>
<td>2,850</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic High Schools</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Schools</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>2,095</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Schools</td>
<td>1,297</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational High Schools</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air &amp; Correspondence High Schools</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade High Schools</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Schools</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Schools</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Curriculum in Korea

**Junior College Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Subtotal</th>
<th>162</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>146</th>
<th>927,899</th>
<th>11,998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior Colleges</td>
<td></td>
<td>158</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>925,963</td>
<td>11,974</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Junior College Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colleges attached to industrial firms</th>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>1</th>
<th></th>
<th>67</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance Learning Colleges</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,693</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>176</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**University Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtotal</th>
<th>218</th>
<th>44</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>172</th>
<th>2,357,881</th>
<th>49,014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>1,808,539</td>
<td>45,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers Colleges</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23,552</td>
<td>740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Universities</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>191,455</td>
<td>2,655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Colleges</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcast &amp; Correspondence Universities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>308,290</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance Learning Universities</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24,630</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Schools</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,214</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graduate School Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtotal</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>272,331</th>
<th>1,173</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Schools at Universities</td>
<td>&lt;985&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;158&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;13&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;814&gt;</td>
<td>269,448</td>
<td>896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Schools</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2,883</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Notes:**

1. The number of faculty for graduate schools includes only full-time professors.
2. < > reflects status of graduate schools and is excluded from the total figure.
3. Does not include branch schools.
Education by school level

Pre-primary education

Kindergarten education aims at providing an appropriate environment for nurturing children and promoting the wholesome development of children through various enjoyable activities with diversified content and methods of instruction. The kindergarten curriculum developed by the state is composed of the five life domains of health, society, expression, language, and exploration.

As of 2003, 546,531 children attended 4,281 national/public kindergartens and 4,008 private kindergartens. Before 1976, private kindergartens established by religious groups and private organizations played a key role in the development of early childhood education. A change to this trend came about as a result of the establishment of the first primary-school-affiliated kindergarten, introduced in 1976, and the policy, implemented in 1981, to promote kindergartens. These developments positioned public kindergartens at the forefront of early childhood education.

Based on the Education Act, the government established the Kindergarten Facilities and Standard Ordinance (1962), kindergarten curriculum (1969), Pre-School Education Promotion Act (1982), and the Pre-School Education Act (2004). A total of six amendments have been approved so far. Public kindergartens have increased in number to improve the pre-school attendance ratio, while pre-school educational materials have been developed and distributed to enhance the quality of education. Teacher training programs and administrative assistance systems have also been set up to lay the groundwork for lifting kindergarten education to the level of advanced countries.

The Education Reform Council established education reform measures in 1997 to provide free pre-school education one year
prior to formal education. The establishment of the public kindergarten system is underway to assist children of low-income families with kindergarten tuition, with funds allocated to improve facilities at kindergartens annexed to primary schools, assistance extended for extended programs, and support provided for teaching materials at private kindergartens.

**Primary education**

Primary education in Korea is free and compulsory and provides the general rudimentary education necessary in life. Enrollment rate at primary schools is as high as 99.9%. The quantitative expansion of primary education is due to the high public zeal for education and the educational policies of the government.

The sudden increase in the number of students and the migration of the rural population into cities prompted the government to create an education tax in 1982 to finance the expansion and modernization of physical facilities and to improve the socio-economic status of teachers. As a result, the number of students per class dropped to 34.8 in 1990. Overcrowded schools have been divided into smaller ones and the double shift system of classes has been terminated.

The government continued to strive to improve primary education. With the revision of the regulation that prohibited children under six from entering primary school, even five year olds who were thought to have the ability became eligible to enter primary school if space was available. In addition, with the aim of expanding foreign language education, English has been taught as part of the regular curriculum starting in 1997, one hour per week for third and fourth graders, and two hours per week for fifth and sixth grade students.
Secondary education

1) Middle schools

The purpose of middle schools is to provide standard secondary education built on the foundation of primary education. Since 1969 there has been no limitation placed on entrance to middle school and all who wish to enter middle school have been assigned to the school nearest their residence. Free compulsory middle school education began in 1985 in remote island areas and has been expanded to county areas between 1992 and 1994. All cities across the nation have adopted the compulsory education system since 2002 which spread nationwide from 2004.

2) High schools

High school education is mainly aimed at providing secondary and basic advanced education building on the foundation provided by middle school education. High schools are divided into general high schools, vocational high schools, and others (foreign language, art, and science high schools).

Graduates of middle schools or the equivalent may enter high schools. The period of study is three years and students bear the expenses of education. Admission into high school used to be based on students' performance on entrance examinations, but there has been some variance in the admission process between equalization-applied areas and non-equalization areas since 1974, when the equalization policy for high schools went into operation. In other words, applicants for vocational high schools were given the opportunity to choose their school and to be selected through an entrance examination or based on academic achievement in middle school, while applicants for general high schools were not given the opportunity to select their school but were assigned to
a school in their residential district.

However, the revision of the education law in 1995, stipulated that there be various selection methods and criteria, such as taking into account the "school activities records" - a record of a student's three years of middle school, as well as the entrance test score; subsequently, the choice accorded to students has broadened since 1996.

General high schools provide regular high school education. Students choose their major areas in their 11th grade. Depending on their aptitude and interests, humanities/social studies, sciences, or vocational training are offered as options. Most, however, choose to enter fields that would allow them to enter college.

Vocational high schools offer general secondary education and specialized courses including those in the fields of agriculture, industry, commerce, fisheries/maritime, and home economics. The government is striving to devise measures to develop and support vocational high schools and to expand their roles as industry has become highly sophisticated and science-oriented. Focus of education has been placed on offering a variety of on-site education services to train skilled personnel that can adapt to the rapidly changing industrialization and globalization phenomena that had become prominent from the 1980s.

Foreign language high schools, science high schools, and art high schools were established to train promising students in the respective fields. With active government assistance, such schools are able to identify gifted students at an early age to maximize the students' potentials.
Some other educational statistics in Korea

Korean students attend school 220 days a year. 220 days is the minimum length of the academic year for students in elementary school, middle school and high school. One instructional period in elementary school covers 40 minutes, middle school 45 minutes, and high school 50 minutes.

As of 2007, we are in a transitional period from the six-day school week to the five-day school week; full transition to the five-day school week will be made by around 2010. At present, school attendance is not required on every second and fourth Saturday of the month.

The academic year consists of two semesters. The first one begins on 1st March and ends on 31st August. The second spans from 1st September to the end of February. There are 24~36 instructional periods per week, depending on the school level. In case of elementary schools, there are 32 periods or less per week; in junior high schools, 34 periods per week and in senior high, 36 periods per week.
Chapter 3

Historical Review of Curriculum Development

Since the establishment of the government of the Republic of Korea in 1948, the school curriculum has been revised seven times as of 2007. The revised curricula from the first to the fifth are characterized in terms of five general terms, namely (i) subject-matter centered; (ii) life-centered; (iii) discipline-centered; (iv) humanistic-oriented; and (v) future-oriented curriculum, respectively. For the sixth and seventh revised curricula, no particular term was specified. Although these categorizations do not exactly match curricula content, it is convenient to use these terms in describing the history of curriculum revision (or development) in South Korea.

In Korea, curriculum policy has been centralized since 1945 in that curricula are developed, notified and controlled by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and are applied to all levels of public education including kindergarten, primary school, middle school and secondary school. Details of the curricular change from the first to the seventh revision are summarized in Table 7. Table 7 shows when a particular curriculum was announced and implemented through which law, as well as the basic traits of each curriculum. A more detailed description of each curriculum follows.
Table 7. Some Details of Curriculum Changes Since 1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Announced</th>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Apr. 20, 1954</td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #35</td>
<td>Ordinance on class time assignment</td>
<td>Curriculum centered around school education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug. 1, 1955</td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #44</td>
<td>Primary School Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #45</td>
<td>Middle School Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #46</td>
<td>High School Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Feb. 15, 1963</td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #119</td>
<td>Primary School Curriculum</td>
<td>-Experiential curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #120</td>
<td>Middle School Curriculum</td>
<td>-Chinese letters education(72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #121</td>
<td>High School Curriculum</td>
<td>-Military exercise(69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Feb. 14, 1973</td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #310</td>
<td>Primary School Curriculum</td>
<td>-Curriculum focused on academic enrichment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug. 31, 1973</td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #325</td>
<td>Middle School Curriculum</td>
<td>-Ethics(73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dec. 31, 1974</td>
<td>MOE Ordinance #350</td>
<td>High School Curriculum</td>
<td>-Korean history(73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MOE Notice #442</td>
<td>Primary School Curriculum</td>
<td>-Japanese language(73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Dec. 31, 1981</td>
<td>MOE Notice #442</td>
<td>Middle School Curriculum</td>
<td>-Emphasis on national spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High School Curriculum</td>
<td>-Reduction / coordination of learning content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Integrated curriculum management for 1st and 2nd year primaries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5th     | Mar. 31, 1987 | MOE Notice #87-7 | Primary School Curriculum | -Science high schools and arts high schools 
-Integrated curriculum schools 
-New subjects: Information industry 
-Emphasis on economics education 
-Emphasis on regional characteristics |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jun. 31, 1987</td>
<td>MOE Notice #87-9</td>
<td>Middle School Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 31, 1988</td>
<td>MOE Notice #88-7</td>
<td>High School Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 6th     | Jun. 31, 1992 | MOE Notice #1992-11 | Middle School Curriculum | -Improvement of organization/management system 
-Sharing roles among the government, region, and schools 
-New subjects: Computer, environment, Russian language, career/vocation 
-Specialized subjects on foreign language 
-Primary school English |
| Sep. 31, 1992 | MOE Notice #1992-16 | Primary School Curriculum |                           |                                                                                   |
| Nov. 1, 1995 | MOE Notice #1995-7 | Primary School Curriculum |                           |                                                                                   |
| 7th     | Dec. 31, 1997 | MOE Notice #1997-15 | Primary/secondary curriculum | -Curriculum centered around the students 
-Curriculum on basic national curriculum 
-Selection-based high school curriculum 
-Differentiated curriculum 
-Establishment and expansion of dependent activities 
-Objective(Competence)-based Curriculum 
-Expansion of regional and school independence |
| Jun. 31, 1998 | MOE Notice #1998-10 | Kindergarten curriculum |                           |                                                                                   |
| MOE Notice #1998-11 | Special education curriculum |                           |                           |                                                                                   |
| MOE Notice #1998-12 | Vocational high school curriculum |                           |                           |                                                                                   |
The first, second and third revision

The first revision of curriculum was made in 1955 which was ten years after Korea ceased to be a Japanese colony. This was a turbulent period which witnessed many historic events such as three years of American military administration, the establishment of the Korean government, and the outbreak of the Korean War. Schools did operate during the war but without a unified and well constructed national curriculum. Thus teachers relied on curricula devised by themselves.

From 1945, the year Korea was liberated from Japanese colonialism, up to 1955, all levels of school were managed on the basis of syllabuses that were temporarily constructed by the American Military Administration. Korean educators of that time were, of course, eager to construct new curriculum relevant to the needs of the Korean people, but their wishes had to be postponed due to the outbreak of the Korean War.

In 1955, at the end of the war, Korean educators began to revise the temporarily constructed syllabuses and constructed a new curriculum which was the first designed by Korean educators. At that time, John Dewey's ideas were in great vogue and Dr Chen-suck Oh, a former student of Dewey's, was a leading and influential figure in the field of Korean education. His progressive educational ideals, which emphasized children's lives and interests, were popular among educators and an effort was made to construct a school curriculum which reflected the spirit of Dewey's progressivism.

However, the resulting curriculum is better regarded as one which focused on subject-matter because it was actually developed on the basis of traditional subject boundaries. This is the reason why the first revision is termed a subject-matter centered curriculum rather than a child-centered one.
The second revision occurred in 1963. Around this time, there were major political upheavals such as the April 19 Students' Revolution, which resulted in the collapse of the First Republic, the establishment of the Second Republic, the May 16 Military Coup, the collapse of the Second Republic, and the beginning of the Third Republic. With this turmoil, the military government of the Third Republic felt a need to revise the national curriculum to reflect their political philosophy. Curriculum specialists at that time were still influenced by the educational ideas of John Dewey and the key concepts of his theory were the cornerstones of the second revision. At this time, the Ministry of Education (MOE) officially defined the curriculum as 'the entirety of experiences that the students undergo through the guidance of school'. Thus, the second revision is termed an 'experience-centered' or 'life-centered' curriculum.

The revised secondary curriculum consequently emphasized life experiences as the basis for the selection of content and localization as the principle of curriculum management. The curriculum also stressed anti-communism and moral education in response to the political philosophy of the Third Republic.

The third major change was made in 1973, ten years after the second revision. The Third Republic regime changed its characteristics in October 1972, an occurrence called 'October Yoo-shin' (make things new). The main characteristics of the new Third Republic were the emphasis on economic development, the pursuit of a strong anti-Communist policy, and an emphasis on the inculcation of a 'national identity and national spirit'. From a curricular point of view, this resulted in an increased importance for subjects such as science, technology, national ethics and national history. Overall this resulted in a move towards a more 'discipline-centered curriculum' that was advocated by Brunerians in the 1960s in the USA. Following Bruner's lead the 'structures'
and 'basic concepts' of each subject were emphasized and 'discovery and inquiry' were promoted as the main teaching methods. For example, the concept of sets was introduced into first grade mathematics in primary school, and the science textbook focused on problem solving. In addition, moral education was included as a new subject in the curriculum and there was a greater emphasis on Korean history than there had been in the previous curriculum. The moral education curriculum emphasized national identity, anti-communism and validity of the 'October Yoo-shin' doctrine of the government.

The fourth, fifth and sixth revision

In 1981, the fourth curriculum change was carried out by the government of the Fifth Republic that came into being in 1980. This revision was characterized by the fact that the whole process of curriculum change was entrusted to a professional curriculum research institute, namely the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI). This resulted in the introduction of integrated subjects in the lower grades of elementary school. This revision was directed towards achieving a 'humanistic-oriented curriculum.'

Although the fourth curriculum has been described as humanistic-oriented, it is difficult to identify a leading curriculum theorist or any leading curriculum theory which influenced this change. However Korean curriculum scholars describe the fourth curriculum as humanistic due to its emphasis on the education of the whole person and the integration of subjects.

The fifth revision occurred in 1987-88. Unlike the former revisions, the fifth occurred in a politically stable climate and was an attempt to adjust the curriculum to the future needs of society. During this period Korea hosted the Asian Games and the 24th Olympic Games (1988 in Seoul). As a developing country
increasingly involved in world events, there was a very strong demand for students to learn content geared towards the needs of the future. This led to the fifth revision which was similar to that of the fourth but which focused more on the needs of an information society of the future.

The fifth change cannot be easily associated with any single leading curriculum scholar. Some curriculum specialists thought that some parts of the new curriculum were made in preparation for the future and this was to an extent true. For example, mathematics and science were emphasized as essential preparation for future challenges. Computer education was also emphasized; some text book chapters of 'practical art' (an elementary school subject) dealt with computer education and a new subject, 'information industry,' was established in the upper-secondary school curriculum. This was done to meet the needs which it is anticipated will arise in a future information society.

In 1992, five years after the fifth revision, the sixth revised curriculum was announced. This revision was driven not by any particular social or political necessity, but by the existing curriculum policy which stipulated revision of school curricula every five to six years.

Even though the political and social conditions of that period did not play a direct role in effecting curriculum change, they greatly affected the direction of the curriculum revision. One of the principles emphasized by the government of that period (the latter period of the Sixth Republic and the early period of the succeeding government often called the "Moon-Min Government" literally 'literate civil service government' as opposed to a military government) was to change decision making patterns in many fields from a centralized structure to a decentralized one. According to this principle, "localization" or "local autonomy system" was introduced in the political area, and "educational
autonomy system" was also begun to practiced. This trend of decentralization formed the most salient trait of the sixth revised curriculum. Decision making power in curriculum was transferred in some degree from government (Ministry of Education) to the local board of education and also to the schools. In the case of 3rd to 6th grades in elementary school, one hour a week was allocated as "free time" during which any subject considered necessary by the school could be taught; at the middle school level, the variety of elective subjects and time allocated to them were increased; and in case of high schools, about 60% of the right to determine the subjects to be taught at high school level was conferred upon the local board of education, with less than 10% of this right given to the individual schools.

Apart from decentralization there were some changes in school curriculum worthy of mentioning. 'English' was introduced as a new subject-matter in elementary school from the 3rd to the 6th grades. In middle school, 'Home economy' and 'Technology and practical art' became compulsory subjects for both boys and girls, and 'Environment Study' and 'Computing' formed part of the electives. At the high school level, the number of electives was increased from 29 to 54, with 'Career and Occupation' and 'Environmental Science' introduced as new subjects.

The seventh and 2007 revision

The seventh revised curriculum was notified on December 30, 1997, 5 years after the announcement of the sixth revision. The most salient characteristic of the seventh curriculum was that it was constructed in the framework developed and established by the "Presidential Commission of the Educational Reform" that was formed and active during the period of "Moon-Min Government." The basic direction of the Education Reform was to effect a change
from 'the closed educational system' to 'the open system' and from 'the producer-centered educational system' to 'the consumer-centered one.' Under these two principles the Committee proposed a wide range of educational reform items, some of which were concerned with school curriculum.

In order to reflect the spirit of the Educational Reform, the seventh revised curriculum took into consideration, as far as possible, the demands of the schools, students and parents. These efforts were manifested in the form of an increase in the number of hours for optional activities on the part of the school; thus, the number of hours allocated to be at the school's discretion increased from 0-1 hours a week to 2 hours a week at elementary level, from 1-2 hours a week to 4 hours a week at the middle school level. Schools were permitted to utilize the extra discretionary hours for activities deemed educationally appropriate for their students.

Respect for the demands of the consumer, in the classroom context, meant that students of differing ability should be given an opportunity to learn where learning tasks or contents are suitable to their levels of ability. Thus, in the seventh revision a new form of curriculum, the so called, 'differentiated curriculum' was introduced in which different learning contents and objectives were prepared for the different groups of students. For students between the 1st grade and 10th grades, the differentiated curriculum was to apply only to five subjects, namely Mathematics, English, Korean language, Science and Social studies. For students of the 11th-12th grades, greater latitude was given in the choice of subjects appropriate to their ability.

At present, the 7th revised curriculum, promulgated in 1997 in the form of a proclamation from the Ministry of Education, is still in use. The 7th revised curriculum was partially changed and notified as the "2007 New Curriculum" on February 28, 2007. Basic characteristics of the new curriculum are the same as the 7th
curriculum, but some minor changes were made. The changes are the following: First, one instructional period per week was removed from the school week for all school levels; second, the number of instructional periods for History and Science was increased by one per week for the 10th grade; third, a distinction between 'General elective subjects' and 'Intensive elective subjects' was made for the 2nd and 3rd grades of high school; and lastly some subject names were changed, along with the lower level of structure.

The following is a detailed description of the curriculum currently in use, the 7th revised version. Since the 7th curriculum is currently being applied to all schools, an understanding of the 7th curriculum is critical in the understanding of Korean school education or Korean school curriculum. In that context, the 7th curriculum is described in detail in the next chapter, and a description of the guidelines of the entire 7th curriculum is included in the Appendix.
Chapter 4

General Description of the Current Curriculum

To reflect on the current curriculum critically, and to envisage its future prospects, detailed understanding of the present status of the current curriculum is needed, which necessitates the presentation of an epitome of the 7th curriculum. Thus, some essential parts of the 7th curriculum such as what it presents as the ideal image of the educated person, educational goals of schooling, basic structure and the major traits are presented below.

Ideal types of the educated person

The objectives of Korea's education are, under the ideal of "Hong-ik-in-gan," to assist all people in perfecting their individual character, in developing the ability for an independent life, in acquiring the qualifications of a democratic citizenry, in acquiring the ability to participate in the building of a democratic state, and in promoting the prosperity of all humankind.

On the basis of the stated ideals of education, the well-educated person targeted by this curriculum is defined as follows:
1) A person who seeks to develop his/her own individuality on the basis of well-rounded and wholesome development.
2) A person who demonstrates creative ability on the basis of a solid grounding in basic knowledge and skills.
3) A person who explores career paths on the basis of broad intellectual knowledge and skills in diverse academic disciplines
4) A person who creates new values on the basis of an understanding of the national culture.
5) A person who contributes to the development of the community where he/she lives on the basis of democratic citizenship.

**Education goals by school level**

To develop the well-educated person targeted by this curriculum, the educational goals by school level are specified as follows.

**The goals of elementary school education**

Elementary school education puts emphasis on helping students acquire basic abilities, skills, and habits essential for learning and daily life. The goals are:

1) To provide a variety of experiences for the balanced development of the mind and body.
2) To help students develop the basic abilities to recognize and solve problems in daily life and to provide them with rich experiences of expressing their own feelings and ideas in various forms.
3) To provide students with a wide range of learning experiences conducive to the understanding of the diverse world of work.
4) To develop attitudes for the understanding and appreciation of
tradition and culture.
5) To develop basic life habits necessary for a daily life and to foster love for neighbors and country.

The goals of middle school education

Middle school education puts emphasis on helping students acquire basic abilities essential for learning, daily life and democratic citizenship on the basis of successful completion of elementary school education. The goals are:

1) To promote the well-balanced development of the mind and body and to offer opportunities for the students to discover their potentials by themselves.
2) To help students cultivate basic and problem-solving abilities necessary for learning and daily life and to provide them with the experience of expressing their thoughts and feelings creatively.
3) To enable students to attain knowledge and skills in diverse fields so that they will be able to actively explore their own career paths.
4) To develop and foster an attitude of pride for tradition and culture.
5) To cultivate an understanding of basic values, the principles of free democracy and the democratic way of life.

The goals of high school education

High school education puts an emphasis on helping students acquire abilities essential for progressing into their chosen career paths and on developing the qualifications of a world citizen, on the basis of successful completion of middle school education. The
purported goals are as follows:

1) To help students develop a well-harmonized character along with a sound body and mind and a mature sense of self-identity.
2) To help students develop the abilities and attitudes of logical, critical, and creative thinking required for academic pursuits and daily life.
3) To enable students to attain knowledge and skills in diverse fields so that they will be able to carve out a career in accordance with their aptitudes and interests.
4) To encourage students to develop our traditions and culture in a way appropriate for the global setting.
5) To help students in endeavoring to build and develop the national community and to develop the awareness and attitude of global citizens.

Curriculum structure

1) The curriculum comprises of the national common basic curriculum and the high school elective-centered curriculum.

2) The national common basic curriculum consists of subject matters, optional activities and extracurricular activities as shown in Table 7.

   a) The subject matters are divided into ten areas: Korean Language, Moral Education, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Practical Arts (Technology, Home Economics), Physical Education, Music, Fine Arts, and Foreign Language (English). However, subject matters for grades 1 and 2 are differentiated
into Korean Language, Mathematics, Disciplined Life, Intelligent Life, Pleasant Life and We Are the First Graders.

b) Optional activities are divided into subject matter optional activities and creative optional activities.

c) Extracurricular activities comprise student government activities, adaptive activities, self-development activities, social-service activities, and event activities.

3) The high school elective-centered curriculum consists of subject matters and extracurricular activities.

a) The subject matters are divided into general subjects and specialized subjects.


- Specialized subjects include courses of study in the areas of agriculture, industry, commerce, fishery & marine transportation, home economics and vocational education, science, physical education, the arts, foreign languages, and international affairs.

b) Extracurricular activities comprise student government activities, adaptive activities, self-development activities, social-service activities, and event activities. Apart from the structure of the 7th curriculum, the effective years of the 7th curriculum are as Table 10.
Table 8. The National Common Basic Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subject</th>
<th>grade</th>
<th>Elementary School</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td>238 (7)</td>
<td>204 (6)</td>
<td>204 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplined Life</td>
<td></td>
<td>34 (1)</td>
<td>34 (1)</td>
<td>34 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>102 (3)</td>
<td>102 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>136 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>102 (3)</td>
<td>102 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>102 (3)</td>
<td>102 (3)</td>
<td>102 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FineArts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>60 (2)</td>
<td>68 (2)</td>
<td>68 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GrandTotal</td>
<td>830 (25)</td>
<td>850 (25)</td>
<td>986 (29)</td>
<td>986 (29)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number in each cell is the minimum number of total instructional periods by subject and grade level, over a 34 school week year with the exception of grade 1 where the standard number of school weeks per year is 30.
One instructional period is 40 minutes in Elementary Schools, 45 minutes in Middle Schools, 50 minutes in High Schools.

In the case of grade 1, 70 out of a total 830 instructional periods should be allocated to an orientation program in March.

Table 9. Subject Matter Structure in the 2nd-3rd Grades in High School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>National Common Basic Subjects</th>
<th>Elective Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Elective Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Korean Language Life(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td>Korean Language(8)</td>
<td>Moral Education(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Education</td>
<td>Mor al Education(2)</td>
<td>Social Studies(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Social Studies(10) (Korean History 4)</td>
<td>Human Society and Environment(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Mathematics(8)</td>
<td>Practical Mathematics(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Science(6)</td>
<td>Life and Science(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Home Economics</td>
<td>Technology Home Economics(6)</td>
<td>Information Society and Computer(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>National Common Basic Subjects</td>
<td>Elective Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Elective Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intensive Elective Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Physical Education(4)</td>
<td>Gymnastics and Health(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Music(2)</td>
<td>Music and Life(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Fine Arts(2)</td>
<td>Art and Life(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>English(8)</td>
<td>German I (6), French I (6), Spanish I (6), Chinese I (6), Japanese I (6), Russian I (6), Arabic I (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English I (8), English II (8), English Conversation(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English Reading, Comprehension(8), English Composition(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>German II (6), French II (6), Spanish II (6), Chinese II (6), Japanese II (6), Russian II (6), Arabic II (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Classics</td>
<td>Chinese Classics(6)</td>
<td>Chinese Classical Literature(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>Military Training(6), Philosophy(4), Logic(4), Psychology(4), Education(4), Life Economy(4), Religion(4), Ecology and Environment(4), Future Career and Occupation(4), Others(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Units</td>
<td>(56)</td>
<td>over 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>below 112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Activities</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular Activities</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total Units</td>
<td>216</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10. Effective Years of the 7th Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Elementary School</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>grades 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>grades 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>grade 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>grades 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>grade 8</td>
<td>grade 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
<td>grade 9</td>
<td>grade 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>grade 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures in parentheses are the numbers of units to be completed, and one unit represents the amount of school learning undertaken in a 50 minute period of instruction per week for one semester (equivalent to 17 weeks).

The number of units allocated to the national common basic courses and optional activities. 4 units for extracurricular activities are to be completed in Grade 10.

The in-depth programs of Physical Education, Music, and Fine Arts courses followed by an asterisk (*) should be selected from such specialized subjects as Physical Education and Arts in Table 3 below.

If an in-depth elective program as a free optional is deemed necessary, the school may either select from the specialized subjects in Table 3 or create a new course in accordance with the MPBE (Metropolitan or Provincial Board of Education) operating guidelines.
Major traits of the current curriculum

The seventh national curriculum was planned for introduction in the year 2000. The major characteristics of this curriculum are as follows.

1) From grade 1 to 10, students take the National Common Courses based on national standards. From grades 11 to 12, they follow the Elective-Courses Curriculum.

2) The concept of differentiated curriculum was introduced for Korean, English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. For the 1st to 10th grades, curriculum was differentiated on the basis of students' academic capability. For the 11th to 12th grades, curriculum was differentiated on the basis of students' interests and intended future careers.

3) The school discretionary activities were expanded. The main reason for this was to offer schools more opportunity to enhance their ability in handling curriculum related affairs. It was also expected to be used to encourage students' self-directed learning and students' independent studies or other creative activities within schools.

4) The concept of elective-course programs was introduced. For the 11th to 12th grades, students are to choose, within certain guidelines, some courses they want to take, and they are to prepare for their future without any strings attached from outside.

5) To reduce the amount of subject content students have to cover over a year, the total curriculum content was to be reduced by 30%. Redundant content was to be minimized, and the organization of contents was to be in an orderly sequence that would maintain integrity.

6) Curriculum quality was to be controlled through the
systematic curriculum evaluation procedures using the performance standards that would be established.
Chapter 5

Process of National Curriculum Development

This chapter deals mainly with the process of development of the Korean national curriculum, together with the processes of curriculum implementation. Curriculum monitoring and evaluation are also briefly described.

The process of curriculum development

The manner in which the Korean national curriculum is developed has been changed, and the changes can be categorized into two modes; one is the development without research, the other is development through research. Amongst the 7 revisions, 3 revisions, specifically the 1st to 3rd revisions, were carried out by MOE without research. In the case of the 4th to the 7th revisions however, the so called R & D model were applied. In this chapter, the case of the 5th revision, to which the R & D model was strongly applied, and of the 7th revision, are presented.

The case of the 5th curriculum

As already stated, the procedures of curriculum decision-making
in Korea are very centralized; thus, key decisions about curriculum policy are determined by the MOE. However, as criticism of the centralized system of decision-making has increased, the MOE is trying to change the approach to decision-making. The MOE still makes the decision as to whether or not a change to a curriculum is deemed necessary, what changes are needed, and in what manner these changes are implemented. However, since the fourth revision, the MOE has entrusted KEDI with a substantial role in the process of curriculum revision and development. It is therefore essential to look at the different roles performed by the MOE and KEDI in order to clearly understand how school curricula have developed.

1) Division of tasks

Figure 2 shows the procedures, major tasks, time schedule and the institutions involved in the fifth curriculum revision. It can be seen that the tasks of policy-making (for example, basic work plan, basic direction of revision), reviewing and finalizing the draft confirmation and promulgation of a new version of the curriculum were performed by the MOE, while research and development was undertaken by KEDI.

One thing to note here is that the figure describes the curriculum development processes of kindergarten, primary, and middle school. High school curricula were developed in the same manner but one year later.
Figure 2. Work Plan of the Fifth Curriculum Revision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedures</th>
<th>Major tasks</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Institution in charge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy-making</td>
<td>● Basic plan to revise the fifth curriculum</td>
<td>1985. 6</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Work plan</td>
<td>1985. 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Establishment of the direction of revision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic research</td>
<td>● Analysis of the relevance and effectiveness of the current curriculum</td>
<td>1982. 6</td>
<td>KEDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Needs assessment</td>
<td>1986. 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● International comparative study of curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Analysis of the research trend of curriculum and subject education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Research on elementary integrated curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of the fifth curriculum</td>
<td>● Study on the improvement of the textbook system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>draft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberation of the draft</td>
<td>● General guidelines</td>
<td>1986. 1</td>
<td>KEDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Organization Principles</td>
<td>1986. 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Educational objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Organization and time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Allocation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Management guidelines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Specific guidelines</td>
<td>1986. 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teaching objectives of subjects and extra-curricular activities</td>
<td>1986. 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Cautions in teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation and notification</td>
<td>Deliberation of General guidelines</td>
<td>1986. 7</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1986. 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deliberation of Specific guidelines</td>
<td>1987. 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1987. 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final substitution of the Draft</td>
<td>1987. 6</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Deliberation</td>
<td>1987. 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) Curriculum and textbook revision

The task of curriculum revision (or development) undertaken by the MOE also involves textbook revision, the provision of teachers' guides and teacher training. This is a complicated, time-consuming process. The complexity is exacerbated when the revision involves various school levels. The schedule for textbook revision in kindergarten, elementary, middle and high school, which was made by MOE, is presented in Figure 3.

3) KEDI: Research team organization

It is also necessary to understand how KEDI proceeded with the task of providing basic research and the actual development of curriculum drafts. The tasks and the sequence in which they were performed are shown in Figure 4. In this section, the way in which research was organized by KEDI, is described.

To proceed with the curriculum development plan that was depicted in Figure 3, KEDI organized a Curriculum Research and Development Team. This team was mainly composed of staff from KEDI, but also included personnel from schools, universities and other concerned professionals, some of whom joined as members of the advisory professorial team. The form of team organization at KEDI for developing the fifth revised draft for school curricula is shown in Figure 4.
Figure 3 Plan of the Fifth Curriculum and Textbook Revision
The KEDI team also worked in close cooperation with other organizations. The MOE made decisions on the scope and objectives of curriculum revision after discussion with the Council for Education Reform, which provided the ideology and directions on which the revision was based. This body of seventy eminent persons was established in 1987 by Presidential Decree. It provided a broad plan for educational reform until its dissolution in 1989.
The personnel of the Council have participated in various activities to elicit views from a wide cross section of the community. Institutions of teacher education (Colleges of Education, Teachers' Colleges) and related personnel of universities and colleges participated actively in the many tasks related to curriculum revision. In addition, KEDI was assisted by parents, academic societies and other social organizations that expressed concern over the fifth curriculum revision.

**The case of the 7th curriculum**

The national curriculum is developed and implemented, in principle, by the Ministry of Education, though in practice the research for curriculum development is conducted mainly by government funded national research institutes. The Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI) formerly assumed this role, but in 1998, the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE) was set up to take over the research work required in the development of curriculum and student assessment.

In the case of the most recent curriculum revision, it was the Presidential Commission for Educational Reform that set up the basic principles and directions of curriculum revision. The following example of the seventh revision of the national curriculum may illustrate the general process of curriculum development in Korea.

1) R & D Institute was commissioned to develop the (7th) National Curriculum.
2) The R & D Institute formed the Curriculum Revision Research Committee, that included experts from the R & D Institute, universities, schools, and ordinary citizens.
3) The R & D Institute carried out two-step research
carrying out basic research for curriculum revision
developing general frameworks of school curriculum
- analysis of the relevance and effectiveness of the
current curriculum.
- needs assessment of teachers, students, parents and citizens.
- international comparative study of curriculum.
- study of how improvements can be made to the
  integrated subject curriculum and textbooks.

developing general frameworks of school curriculum
- general curriculum frameworks for all primary and secondary schools.
- curriculum differentiation on the basis of students' academic capability
- curriculum frameworks for vocational high schools
- curriculum frameworks for high schools with special purposes, such as science, sports, foreign language, and arts high schools.

4) The R & D Institute developed the general frameworks of the (7th) National Curriculum Proposal and reported it to the MOE.

5) MOE formed the Deliberation Committees for the (7th) National Curriculum Proposal.
- deliberated on and revised the National Curriculum Proposal several times in cooperation with the R & D Institute.

6) MOE decided on the frameworks of the (7th) National Curriculum and made it public.
- including major characteristics of the (7th) National Curriculum and time allotment by subject matter and grade level.

7) MOE commissioned the R & D Institute and several
universities to develop subject curricula.

· In the 7th revision, R & D Institute was commissioned to develop subject curricula in English, Korean Language, Physical Education, Fine Arts, Second Foreign Languages.

8) The R & D Institute formed subject curriculum revision research teams and developed subject curricula. It was compiled by MOE and deliberated on several times in cooperation with the research teams.

9) The R & D Institute had done several follow-up studies of the (7th) National Curriculum, including ones concerned with how to implement the differentiated curriculum, how to use school discretionary time, and how to articulate the meaning of the educated person, educational objectives, and educational content. In addition, the R & D Institute developed the detailed version of the 7th National Curriculum Guidelines for MPEAs and Schools.

10) MOE proclaimed the (7th) National Curriculum at the end of the year 1997.

11) The R&D Institute was commissioned to do R & D works for the textbooks of the 7th National Curriculum.

### The process of curriculum implementation

The process by which the 7th curriculum was developed can be also viewed in terms of the hierarchical structure. In Korea, there have been three different levels of school curriculum development and implementation activities:

- national curriculum;
- metropolitan/provincial guidelines for school curriculum making;
- and handbook of school curriculum.

The Ministry of Education has overall responsibility for the control of the curriculum. The national curriculum establishes different goals and objectives respectively for each subject and for
elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. The national curriculum does become and function as the criteria for educational programs, textbook development and student assessment.

Superintendents at both metropolitan and provincial levels are advised to make use of the basic guidelines of the national curriculum framework in their respective organizations and in the implementation of the curriculum, in order to meet the needs of students in the local area. Schools themselves then prepare their own curriculum implementation plan in accordance with the national curriculum and the Metropolitan and Provincial Educational Authorities (MPEA) guidelines. That is to say that the MPEA set up operating guidelines for the organization and implementation of the school curriculum, based on the needs and circumstances of the school and local communities and the interests of students, teachers and community leaders. The school then prepares its own curriculum implementation plans, based on its situation and in accordance with the appropriate government decrees, the MPEA guidelines and the national curriculum.
Monitoring the curriculum implementation is taken usually at regional and local level. Inspectors from the regional and local educational authorities regularly visit individual schools and check whether the legal requirements of the national curriculum frameworks, e.g., minimum number of school days, provision of the subjects to be offered at each grade, time allocation for each subject, etc. are being met.

At the national level, there is no official procedure or system of monitoring curriculum implementation. However, national research institutes such as KICE often conduct research related to curriculum implementation and instruction.

A more systematic monitoring system was introduced in 1996. From that time, MOE began to carry out evaluations of the MPEA. The MPEA in turn, evaluates individual schools in their area.
Although the MPEA evaluation covers every aspect of education, curriculum implementation is regarded as one of the more important evaluation areas. Also, in 1998, the MOE nominated 8 schools throughout the nation, including both elementary and secondary schools, to conduct a pilot study on the procedures and methods of self-evaluation of school curriculum implementation. It was expected that such a monitoring system would become widespread in the future.

Since the Seventh National Curriculum was applied to the school, curriculum evaluation has been mandatory across the country. The MOE, in cooperation with KICE, planned to develop the instrument and methods of curriculum evaluation. KICE had done basic research on curriculum evaluation in 1998. Since then, quite a few studies on curriculum evaluation have been made. However, compared to some other areas, the area of curriculum monitoring and evaluation has received less attention.
Chapter 6

Process of Textbook Certification

Textbooks are the main media through which the spirit of the newly revised curriculum is realized in real school teaching situations. A mention of textbooks, therefore, is unavoidable in a discussion on curriculum. In this chapter, matters such as the varieties of textbooks in Korea, the criteria and the process of textbook certification, and the textbook selection process are presented.

Varieties of textbook

The publication and distribution of school textbooks have been administered by the Ministry of Education. School curricula are the criteria for education programs and textbook development. The MOE's control over school textbooks standardizes educational content, which results in uniform delivery. Since textbooks have been regarded as the single most important curricular material in Korean schools, very few additional materials have been developed and provided. The current policy on textbooks sometimes results in a one-sided, textbook-centered teaching style.

School textbooks in Korea are classified into three types; Type-
I, Type-II, and Type-III. Type-I textbooks are those which are compiled by, and whose copyrights are preserved by the Ministry of Education. Type-II textbooks are those which are certified by the Ministry of Education, as being relevant and usable. Type III books are those which are recognized by the Ministry of Education or by the Superintendents.

Type-I textbooks include nearly all the primary school textbooks, and those for Korean, Korean history and Moral education at secondary level. Type-II textbooks apply to most textbooks used in secondary education. Type-III textbooks are rarely used.

The textbooks for middle and high schools, which had been Type-I, are now being changed to Type-II in stages. Improvements to the textbook certification system, which aims for openness and facilitation of the change of Type-I textbooks to Type-II, is now under study and development. Presently, KICE is responsible for development of Type-I textbooks and for certification of Type-II textbooks.

The criteria of textbook certification

In Korea, all kinds of textbooks are changed whenever a change in curriculum occurs, since curriculum is the blueprint of "content to be taught and learnt in school," and textbooks are the "main teaching and learning material to be used in school." The nature of the relationship between the two means that textbooks are changed according to the change of curriculum.

In general, curriculum forms the basis for textbook writing; all textbook writers must conform to the details of the curriculum. In case of Type-II textbooks, these must go through a very rigorous certification procedure, and pass, in order to be approved for use as textbooks. Adherence to curriculum is always one of the more important criteria for certification.
Criteria for textbook certification are of two kinds; common criteria and subject criteria. Common criteria, which apply to all textbooks, are general minimum criteria, such as 1) agreement with the Constitution, 2) agreement with educational law and curriculum, 3) compliance with copyright regulations, and 4) universality and validity of content. Candidate textbooks which fail to comply with any one of these criteria will not be certified.

Subject criteria, which apply to subject-matter textbooks including the teacher's manual, are made up of 6 domains with 15 criteria. The domains are: 1) observance of curriculum, 2) selection and construction of contents, 3) teaching-learning methods, 4) expressions and spelling, 5) editing system, and 6) originality.

The process of textbook certification

Among the three kinds of textbooks mentioned above, Type-Ⅱ and Type-Ⅲ textbooks maintain the title through the long process of textbook certification. Two organizations are involved in the certification process - MOE and KICE (Korean Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation).

MOE is the main organization responsible for textbook certification. MOE establishes a basic plan for certification, publicizes it, sets the certification criteria, appoints commissioners, and finally determines whether a textbook has passed or failed the inspection. KICE plays subsidiary roles such as registering the books presented for certification, recommending the commissioners to the MOE, performing basic research for detecting rudimentary errors in the books, and providing various forms of clerical support.

The entire process of textbook certification is summarized in Figure 6.
Figure 6. The Process of Textbook Certification
The process of textbook selection

Schools are required to observe Article 3 of the Regulation on the textbooks in selecting textbooks, which states that "If there is one certified textbook (for a particular subject), the use of this textbook is compulsory. Where several certified textbooks are available, each school must select one amongst them." Usually there is more than one textbook that is certified for each subject-matter, and this allowseach school to select one textbook amongst the several certified.

In general, no specific rule or regulation is imposed on schools with regard to the selection of textbooks. Instead, each school receives an official document containing the list of available textbooks from the City or Provincial Office of Education prior to commencement of the new semester. After receiving the document, each school organizes a 'Textbook Selection Committee' to select a textbook for each subject-matter to be used next semester. In this process, teachers of each subject-matter as well as parents exert some influence.

In the event of curriculum change, MOE has to certify textbooks prior to the application of the new curriculum and distribution of textbooks to schools. School principals are in charge of selecting textbooks with the assistance of Textbook Selection Committees and through approval of the commissioners of School Management Committees.
Chapter 7

Perceived Problems of the Curriculum in Korea

An analysis of issues and problems in the 7th curriculum is highly subjective, for it is obviously dependent on both the focus and the criteria selected by the analyst. In this chapter, the problems selected are divided into two parts- problems embedded inherently in the system of the 7th curriculum, and problems that are indirectly related with, but seriously influence the 7th curriculum.

Problems directly related to the current curriculum

Dissention regarding the validity of the basic structure of the 7th curriculum

As was described above, the basic structure of the 7th curriculum consists of two parts: the "National Common Courses Curriculum," applied for 10 years from grade 1 to 10, and the "Elective-Courses Curriculum," pertaining to the grades from 11 to 12.

The problem lies in the discrepancy between this system and the 6-3-3-4 school system currently applied in Korea. The curriculum
system for general education in Korea is made up of two parts as shown above, but the school system for general education consists of three parts, that is, elementary school, middle school, and high school. Here, the 10th grade pertains to the 1st year in high school and the 11-12th grades to the 2nd and 3rd year in high school.

Thus, the problem here is that high school education, an independent and separate unit of general education which should be managed as a homogeneous entity, is divided into two different parts, the "National Common Courses Curriculum" and the "Elective-Courses Curriculum." It is true, in some measure, that this discrepancy creates some problems in managing high schools effectively, especially in some specialist schools.

Low level of feasibility of the differentiated curriculum

Introduction of the differentiated curriculum (DC), with the purpose of raising the effectiveness of teaching and learning by considering individual differences in learning ability, was the most salient trait of the 7th revised curriculum which has been regarded as a kind of 'reform.' But this measure has faced many obstacles.

First of all, most teachers were not in favor of this measure. In order for this measure to be implemented in the school setting, teachers should exert much more effort than has been the case up to now. Even though they did not oppose the spirit of that measure, teachers voiced criticism of the fact that it could not be put into practice under the current poor school conditions.

Another obstacle was the conflict between the DC and the evaluation system in schools. According to the evaluation system in Korean schools, all students are required to learn the same contents and be tested with the same test instrument, composed of the same test items. But the DC system required differing test measures for different groups of students, that is, tests of low-level
difficulty for students of lower academic ability and high-level tests for academically strong students. But this conflict was not successfully resolved.

Finally, the Teachers' Union was strongly opposed to the DC, arguing that the spirit of the DC is based on the philosophy of "Neo-liberalism" which should not be the theoretical basis of the National Curriculum. The Teachers' Union asserted that the DC must be replaced with the Cooperative Learning Curriculum.

Misuse of the "School Discretionary Activities"

Expansion of the number of periods set aside for "School Discretionary Activities" was also one of the major traits of the 7th revised curriculum, but the misuse of this new measure on the part of schools, was an important problem.

The "School Discretionary Activities" was introduced, as a new measure of the educational reform package of the 7th curriculum, the main purpose of which was to enhance the ability of schools to make decisions on curriculum affairs. It was expected, through the 7th curriculum, that by providing schools with the opportunity to make decisions on curriculum related affairs, that the schools' professional ability in determining school curriculum would be enhanced.

However, according to the survey research, most schools are reported to have used this measure in an undesirable way. In most cases, the School Discretionary Activities are operated by teachers whose teaching hours fall short of the criteria set by law, regardless of the professionalism and enthusiasm of the teaching. This leads to a low quality of teaching performed within this period, which, in turn, gives rise to mistrust for this measure on the part of students as well as parents.
Low level of feasibility of the "Elective-Courses Programs"

The concept of elective-courses programs was introduced for the 11th and 12th grades, where students are able to choose, within certain guidelines, some courses they want to study, considering their ability, interest, and intended future career. This measure was held as the core of the reform package of the 7th curriculum.

However, as with the case of "differentiated curriculum," this measure has been faced with strong antagonism for several reasons. First, teachers were strongly against it. They felt this system might weaken the security of their employment, particularly for teachers in charge of less popular subject-matters who felt that this measure could lead to their discharge. Second, there was a prevailing tendency for students to choose subject-matters that were favorable for the college entrance examination, disregarding all the other important factors. This tendency is very much at odds with the original aims of the introduction of "Elective-Courses Programs." Finally, it was very difficult in general for schools to implement this measure which is very new and innovative. Almost all of the high schools felt a heavy burden in implementing this scheme.

Failure of 30% reduction in subject contents

One of the issues that has been continually targeted for reform was the reduction of subject contents. Survey result always show that teachers, students and parents feel that the amount of teaching content is too heavy, and therefore should be reduced.

Thus, a strong attempt to reduce the teaching content was made in the 7th revision of the curriculum. Reduction of teaching content by 30% was held as one of the main principles of the revision, but
the result was not successful. In reality, reduction of content did not come about as per the principles set out in the 7th revision; in some subjects, content was reduced, but in others, no change was made.

Two reasons are presented for this failure. First, the direction of reduction was not clear. Even though the direction of reduction by 30%, expressed in quantitative terms, seems clear in its meaning, it was not clear at all for the subject curriculum developers. It was difficult for them to determine exactly how much was actually meant by a 30% reduction. Second, subject content developers had no real intention of following the direction of 30% reduction; on the contrary they felt it was in their interests to increase content. They felt that increasing content could function as a vehicle to obtaining more instructional time in the "Table of Time Allotment" in the national curriculum.

Problems indirectly related to the current curriculum

The cyclic, total and simultaneous mode of curriculum revision

Since liberation in 1945, national curriculum in Korea has been revised seven times with an average interval of 7 years. The mode of revision differed each time in its detailed aspects, but some common traits have been preserved to date: revision has been essayed periodically; revision was made in all aspects of the curriculum; revision was carried out within very short periods of time. These traits of revision can be termed "cyclic (or periodic), total and simultaneous" modes of change.

This form of curriculum change has some positive aspects but it also has many problems. First, under this kind of revision system, changes can only be made during the subsequent curriculum
revision even though changes may be necessary in the interim period. Second, many unnecessary changes are made in subsequent curriculum revisions. Third, due to the short period of time in which all aspects of the curriculum have to be revised together, budgets become scattered, and there is insufficient skilled man-power and time for research. All of these factors combined lead to the low quality of the revised new curriculum.

The 7th curriculum was also developed in accordance with this mode, but after the 7th revision, criticism of the traditional revision mode became so strong that alternative modes of revision have been actively pursued.

Revision based on the narrow concept of curriculum

As noted above, curriculum has been revised seven times in Korea, and each time, revision was made in all subjects and for all levels of schools. Thus, revisions made up to present are said to have been 'total.'

The problem, however, is that although the revision was made across all subjects and of all levels of school, it was made on the basis of a very narrow concept of curriculum. During the periods of revision, curriculum had been defined as 'content' only. Within this conceptual framework, the work of curriculum revision was considered as a revision of 'content' only. Thus, curriculum revisions focused on developing so called "content standards," disregarding other important aspects of curriculum, such as "teaching standards", "assessment standards," "professional development standards," "education systems standards," etc. New curricula with only the content revised have always faced difficulties in the process of implementation, giving rise to the impression that 'curriculum changed often, but schools remain unchanged.'
Another erroneously held concept of curriculum revision, which severely influenced its entire process, was that 'revising work' was thought to be a process of adding new subjects or subtracting some old subjects or increasing or decreasing the hours allocated for each subject. Most curriculum developers focused their energies in this area, neglecting other important areas of curriculum revision. The seventh revision was not entirely free of this narrow and erroneous concept of curriculum and curriculum revision.

**Discrepancy between 'General Guidelines' and 'Specific Guidelines'**

The official curriculum in Korea is composed of two basic parts: the 'General Guidelines' and 'Specific Guidelines by subject.' The general guidelines describe the ideal human characteristics to which all levels of school education should be directed, the educational goals of each level of schooling, the scope and the range of subjects to be included in school education, and the general rules or guidelines for managing the school curriculum. The subject specific guidelines provide a detailed description of the objectives, contents, instruction and evaluation method for each school subject.

In general, the general guidelines were developed first by the educational curriculum specialist, while the subject specific guidelines were developed later by subject-matter specialists. This two-step developmental process and the differentiation of the work between two groups of curriculum developers caused serious problems of consistency in curriculum development.

The most serious problem was the appearance of a gap between the 'spirit' of the general guidelines and the actual subject-matter curriculum. The core of the problem is that the intentions specified in the general guidelines are not faithfully reflected in each
subject-specific curriculum mainly because each subject-specific curriculum is constructed with reference to its own academic tradition, disregarding the demand of the general guidelines.

This phenomenon is a long standing one. From the first revision to the seventh, the problem has hung over the educational system like a dark cloud. The problem is evident, but it is not fully understood as to why it happens and how it should be dealt with it. At present, this problem remains unresolved, and will emerge again as a serious problem in the next revision of the curriculum. For the sake of both efficiency and consistency of school curriculum, it is necessary for this problem to be addressed and resolved.

**Low level of teacher professionalism**

Teacher passivity and a low level of professionalism were previously mentioned as a possible consequence of the centralized system of curriculum control. As with the tenets of the self-fulfilling prophecy with regard to the effect of expectations on students' performance, teachers will also only achieve what is expected of them. If we believe that teachers are professionals, we must give them the means to act professionally, and then they will meet those expectations.

The success or failure of a curriculum is completely dependent upon the teacher's understanding and utilization of that curriculum. It is self-evident that curriculum revision does not succeed without the participation of teachers. There have been cases of innovative new curricular programs which were developed at great expense, but were completely unsuccessful. This reinforces the importance of teacher participation in educational development.

It is important then that curriculum revision must reinforce a
teacher's desire to innovate, as well as address and offer solutions for practical problems experienced by all teachers. It may be far sighted and more effective if we have teachers develop revised drafts of school curricula at local levels. Issues related to curriculum revision should be presented to teachers to allow them to air their concerns and to give them an opportunity to participate in the developmental process. After the new curriculum is confirmed and promulgated, a far reaching teacher training program should be planned and implemented.

Curriculum problems should be presented to teachers so that they can realize that these problems will also be theirs. Teachers must have an understanding of the curriculum, and should be equipped with the ability to identify and solve problems. It is important, therefore, that a cooperative working relationship be established between the curriculum development authority, professional research institutions, and teacher education institutions.

The influence of the College Entrance Examination

Finally, the most serious problem in curriculum development in Korea is the dominating influence of the College Entrance Examination (CEE) on school curriculum. This is the case not only with high school education but also with middle school and even elementary school education.

On the surface, the CEE might seem to have nothing to do with the curriculum of schools. In practice, it exerts a far-reaching influence in the way the curriculum is implemented. It is no exaggeration to say that the CEE determines everything in schools which is related to the curriculum. Splendid goals and objectives described in the official "curriculum" are either totally disregarded or distorted. Principals, teachers, parents and even the students
teach and learn mainly for the purpose of obtaining high scores on the entrance exam. Subject content, teaching methods, and evaluation practices are all determined with reference to the CEE. In this sense, CEE-centered school education nullifies all the expected effects of educational innovation. The school curriculum is managed to reflect the demands of the CEE. Subjects such as music, drawing, and physical education are not taught or disregarded so as to devote time to other subjects that are important in the CEE. Extra-curricular activities are usually displaced with supplementary lessons designed to prepare pupils for the CEE.

Examination-centered education is the most critical of the educational problems in Korea. The problems ensuing from CEE-centered education permeates through all areas of education (including curriculum management and curriculum development), causing all educational practices to move in an undesirable direction. Currently, many innovations are being prepared and proposed for solving this problem.
In this last chapter of the paper, the future direction toward which the 7th curriculum as well as Korean curriculum in general should be revised is briefly discussed.

**The desirable direction of curriculum revision**

1) It is desirable to maintain the basic structure of the 7th curriculum. Even though some conflict exists between the school and curriculum systems, it is not a critical problem, and is not a cause of major problems in schools. The structure of the 7th curriculum fits relatively well into the future school system of '5-3-4-4.'

2) The concept of "differentiated curriculum" should be strengthened through the entire process of curriculum revision. In the case of the 7th curriculum, this idea was not successfully implemented, but that does not mean that it should be abandoned. Alternative ways of "differentiated curriculum" that would fit well into classroom teaching, should be continuously devised.
3) The idea of "School discretionay activities" should be expanded. National curriculum does not consider the characteristic conditions of each school, and it is essential to allow a degree of latitude to schools in implementing their own systems. This idea is linked to the 'school based curriculum,' a key objective of national curriculum.

4) "Elective courses program" should also be emphasized. Within this conceptual framework, the concept of 'selection' on the part of provincial boards of education, schools and students can be objectified, and this forms the core of 'decentralization of the curriculum decision making,' another key objective.

5) Reduction of subject content by 30%, one of the guidelines specified in the 7th revision, is not the desired direction. The term(or expression) should be replaced with 'optimization of content,' which could be a permanent feature in curriculum revision.

6) The 'cyclic, total and simultaneous' mode of revision must be combined with the 'continual and partial' mode of revision. Of the two, the latter should be the main mode of revision and the former should take a supplementary role.

7) The concept of 'curriculum' employed in the process of curriculum revision should be broadened from the narrow concept of 'content standard only' to a wider concept covering several standards, such as 'teaching standard,' 'assessment standard', etc.
8) Curriculum has to be revised to minimize the discrepancy between 'General Guidelines' and 'Specific Guidelines.' Future revisions should be made focusing on the specific guidelines of each subject matter, and not on the general guidelines.

9) It is necessary for teachers to have more opportunity to join the curriculum revision process and to develop their professionalism. It will always hold true that revisional reform is doomed to failure without the participation of highly professional teachers.

10) The college entrance examination (CEE) system must be revised continually in a manner which will allow the normal operation of school curricula. Up until now, the CEE has influenced operation of the new curriculum in a way that nullifies its positive aspects. To date, no method which guarantees success in this regard has been proposed, but a continued search must be made for it.

The plan of curriculum revision in future

The 7th revised curriculum, which is currently applied to all levels of school, was revised, and publicized in February 28, 2007 as the "2007 New Curriculum." It took two years to revise the 7th curriculum. The newly revised curriculum will be applied to the 1st-2nd years of elementary school from 2009, and its coverage will be extended up to the 3rd year of high school by 2013. During the years of non-application of the new curriculum, textbooks that reflect the changes of the curriculum will be developed.

The newly revised curriculum is not called the 8th revised
curriculum, because the new one is essentially the same as the current 7th curriculum, in terms of the basic philosophy, fundamental framework and main characteristics. In fact, one of the basic principles adopted in this new revision was "partial revision," and minimal revision was effected.

The government, however, expects to make a fundamental change in the next revision, the so called 8th revision. With the next revision being several years ahead, the Ministry of Education started to prepare for it, establishing and operating a committee named "National Curriculum Forum" whose main tasks are to discuss and formulate well coordinated positions on the many important issues relating to national curriculum changes.

Since October 2007, the Forum has been active, holding several large scale seminars throughout the country on many critical issues. Presidential elections will be held in Korea this coming November. A new government will be installed in power, and this will give impetus to dynamic change in many areas, including that of curriculum change. Discussions on the change of national curriculum are expected to become more heated than ever.
[Appendix] Description of the general guidelines of the 7th curriculum

The direction of curriculum design

The ideal profile of educated person

The objectives of Korea’s education are, under the ideal of hongik-ingan (contributing to the overall benefit of humankind – the founding spirit of the first kingdom in Korean history), to assist all people in perfecting their individual character, to develop the ability to achieve an independent life and acquire the qualifications of democratic citizens, and to be able to participate in the building of a democratic state and promoting the prosperity of all humankind.

On the basis of the stated ideals of education, the well-educated person targeted by this curriculum is defined as follows:

1) A person who seeks to develop his/her own individuality on the basis of well-rounded and wholesome development.

2) A person who demonstrates creative ability on the basis of a solid grounding in basic knowledge and skills.

3) A person who explores career paths on the basis of broad intellectual knowledge and skills in diverse academic disciplines.

4) A person who creates new values on the basis of an understanding of the national culture.
5) A person who contributes to the development of the community where he/she lives on the basis of democratic citizenship.

**General framework of the curriculum**

In keeping with its goal of developing the well-educated person, the curriculum is designed within the general framework as follows:

1) To design the curriculum to help students acquire basic abilities which will enable them to lead the trends of social change.

2) To introduce a system of a national common basic curriculum and elective-centered curriculum.

3) To optimize the volume and level of the content of learning and to introduce the differentiated curriculum so as to provide students with in-depth education.

4) To diversify the contents of the curriculum and methods of instruction in consideration of each student's ability, aptitude, and career choice.

5) To broaden the autonomy of individual schools in organizing and implementing their own curriculum.

6) To reinforce the quality control of education by establishing the curriculum evaluation system.
Educational goals by school level

To develop the well-educated person aimed at this curriculum, the educational goals by school levels are specified as follows.

The goals of elementary school education

Elementary school education puts emphasis on helping students acquire basic abilities, skills, and habits essential for learning and daily life. The goals are:

1) To provide a variety of experiences for the balanced development of the mind and body.

2) To help students develop the basic abilities to recognize and solve problems in daily life and to provide them with rich experiences of expressing their own feelings and ideas in various manners.

3) To provide students with a wide range of learning experiences conducive to the understanding of the diverse world of work.

4) To develop attitudes for the understanding and appreciation of tradition and culture.

5) To develop basic life habits necessary for a daily life and to foster love for neighbors and country.

The goals of middle school education

Middle school education puts emphasis on helping students acquire basic abilities essential for learning and daily life and democratic citizenship on the basis of the success of the elementary
school education. The goals are:

1) To promote the well-balanced development of the mind and body and to offer opportunities for the students to discover their potentials on their own.

2) To help students cultivate basic and problem-solving abilities necessary for learning and daily life and to provide them with experience of expressing their thoughts and feelings creatively.

3) To enable students to attain knowledge and skills in diverse fields so that they will be able to actively explore their own career paths.

4) To foster an attitude of taking pride in and of developing tradition and culture.

5) To cultivate the understanding of the basic value and principles of free democracy and the democratic way of life.

The goals of high school education

High school education puts an emphasis on helping students acquire abilities essential for progressing along their chosen career paths and on developing the qualifications of world citizens, on the basis of the success of middle school education.

1) To help students develop a well-harmonized character along with a sound body and mind and a mature sense of self-identity.
2) To help students develop the abilities and attitudes of logical, critical, and creative thinking required for academic pursuits and daily life.

3) To enable students to attain knowledge and skills in diverse fields so that they will be able to carve out a career in accordance with their aptitudes and interests.

4) To encourage students to work to develop our traditions and culture in a way appropriate for the global setting.

5) To help students endeavor to build and develop the national community and to develop an awareness and attitude as global citizens.

**Organization of the curriculum and time allotment standards**

**Organization of the curriculum**

1) The curriculum comprises the national common basic curriculum and the high school elective-centered curriculum.

2) The national common basic curriculum consists of subject matters, optional activities and extracurricular activities. See Table 1.

a. The subject matters are divided into ten areas: Korean Language, Moral Education, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Practical Arts (Technology, Home Economics), Physical Education, Music, Fine Arts, and Foreign Language
(English). However, subject matters for grades 1 and 2 are integrated in Korean Language, Mathematics, Disciplined Life, Intelligent Life, Pleasant Life and We Are the First Graders.

b. Optional activities are divided into subject matter optional activities and creative optional activities.

c. Extracurricular activities comprise student government activities, adaptive activities, self-development activities, social-service activities, and event activities.

3) The high school elective-centered curriculum consists of subject matters and extracurricular activities.

a. The subject matters are divided into general subjects and specialized subjects.


- Specialized subjects include courses of study in the areas of agriculture, industry, commerce, fishery & marine transportation, home economics and vocational education, science, physical education, the arts, foreign languages, and international affairs (See Table 13).

b. Extracurricular activities comprise student government activities, adaptive activities, self-development activities, social-service activities, and event activities.
## Time Allotment Standards

The National Common Basic Curriculum

### Table 1. The National Common Basic Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Schools Grades</th>
<th>Elementary School</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td>10 11 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Korean Language</strong></td>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td>238 204 204 204</td>
<td>170 136 136 136</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210 238</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>34 34 34 34</td>
<td>68 68 34 34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moral Education</strong></td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>102 102 102 102</td>
<td>102 102 136</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Studies</strong></td>
<td>Disciplined Life</td>
<td>120 136</td>
<td>60 68</td>
<td>(Korean History 68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intelligent Life</strong></td>
<td>Disciplined Life</td>
<td>102 102</td>
<td>136 136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pleasant Life</strong></td>
<td>Disciplined Life</td>
<td>102 102</td>
<td>102 136</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>We are the first graders</strong></td>
<td>Disciplined Life</td>
<td>102 102</td>
<td>102 136</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Optional Activities</strong></td>
<td>Disciplined Life</td>
<td>60 68</td>
<td>68 68</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extracurricular Activities</strong></td>
<td>Disciplined Life</td>
<td>30 34</td>
<td>68 68</td>
<td>8 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>Disciplined Life</td>
<td>830 850</td>
<td>986 986 1,088</td>
<td>1,156 1,156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a. The above table shows the minimum numbers of total annual instructional hours by subject and grade level (grade 1 through grade 10) during the period of the national common basic education; during 34 school weeks a year.

b. For the Grade 1, the standard number of school weeks assigned to subject matters, optional and extracurricular activities is 30. The number of instructional hours allocated to 'We Are the First Graders' represents the number of instructional hours in March.

c. In principle, one instructional period covers 40 minutes for elementary schools, 45 minutes for middle schools, and 50 minutes for high schools. However, the school is entitled to adjust the duration of each instructional period depending on the weather and seasonal changes, individual school situations, the developmental level of the students, the nature of learning, and so forth.

d. The numbers in the cells of extracurricular activities and the annual grand total rows for the Grade 11 and 12 columns represent the number of units to be completed for those two years.
High school elective-centered curriculum

General subjects

Table 2. General subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>National Common Basic Subjects</th>
<th>Elective Courses</th>
<th>Intensive Elective Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Elective Courses</td>
<td>Intensive Elective Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td>Korean Language (8)</td>
<td>Korean Language Life (4)</td>
<td>Speech (4),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading (8),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Composition (8),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar (4),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Literature (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Education</td>
<td>Moral Education (2)</td>
<td>Civic Ethics (4)</td>
<td>Ethics and Thought (4),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional Ethics (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Social Studies (10)</td>
<td>Human Society and Environment (4)</td>
<td>Korean Geography (8),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Korean History 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>World Geography (8),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Geography (6),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Korean Modern and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contemporary History (8),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>World History (8),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Law and Society (6),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Politics (8),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Economics (6),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Society and Culture (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Mathematics (8)</td>
<td>Practical Mathematics (4)</td>
<td>Mathematics I (8),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics II (8),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Differentiation and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Integration (4),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Probability and Statistics (4),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discrete Mathematics (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>National Common Basic Subjects</td>
<td>Elective Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Science (6)</td>
<td>Life and Science (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology-Home Economics</td>
<td>Technology-Home Economics (6)</td>
<td>Information Society and Computer (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Physical Education (4)</td>
<td>Gymnastics and Health(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Music (2)</td>
<td>Music and Life (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Fine Arts (2)</td>
<td>Art and Life (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General Elective Courses**
- Physics I (4), Chemistry I (4), Biology I (4), Earth Science I (4), Physics II (6), Chemistry II (6), Biology II (6), Earth Science II (6)

**Intensive Elective Courses**
- Agricultural Science (6), Industrial Technology (6), Enterprise Management (6), Ocean Science (6), Home Science (6)
- Gymnastics Theory (4), Practice in Physical Education (over 4)*
- Music Theory (4), Practice in Music (over 4)*
- Art Theory (4), Practice in Art (over 4)*
Description of the general guidelines of the 7th curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>National Common Basic Subjects</th>
<th>Elective Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Elective Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Languages</td>
<td>English (8)</td>
<td>German I (6), French I (6), Spanish I (6), Chinese I (6), Japanese I (6), Russian I (6), Arabic I (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Training</td>
<td></td>
<td>Military Training (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td>Philosophy (4), Logic (4), Psychology (4), Education (4), Life Economy (4), Religion (4),</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Curriculum in Korea

#### Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Common Basic Subjects</th>
<th>Elective Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Elective Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ecology and Environment (4), Future Career and Occupation (4), Others (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Units</th>
<th>(56)</th>
<th>over 24</th>
<th>below 112</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optional Activities</th>
<th>(12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular Activities</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grand Total Units</th>
<th>216</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Notes

a. The figures in parentheses are the numbers of units to be completed, and one unit means the amount of school learning undertaken by a 50 minute period of instruction per week for one semester (equivalent to 17 weeks).

b. The number of units allocated to the national common basic courses and optional activities and 4 units for extracurricular activities are to be completed in Grade 10.

c. The in-depth programs of Physical Education, Music, and Fine Arts courses followed by an asterisk (*) should be selected from such specialized subjects as Physical Education and Arts in Table 13 below.

d. If an in-depth elective program as a free optional is deemed necessary, the school may either select from the specialized subjects in Table 13 or create a new course in accordance with the MPOE (Metropolitan or Provincial Office of Education) operating guidelines.
## Specialized subjects

### Table 3. Specialized subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Departments</td>
<td>Plant Resources, Agricultural Management, Food Processing, Landscaping, Environmental Preservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animal Resources, Agricultural Civil Engineering, Agricultural Machinery, Agricultural Products Distribution, Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Areas</td>
<td>Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Description of the general guidelines of the 7th curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metallurgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Industrial Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ceramics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Textiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Automobiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ship-building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aeronautical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Fishery &amp; Marine Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Fishery &amp; Marine Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fisheries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Managing Fisheries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seafood Circulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refrigeration Machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ocean Civil Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ship Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Subject Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Departments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Subject Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Departments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Description of the general guidelines of the 7th curriculum 101

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>• Experiment in Physics, Experiment in Chemistry, Experiment in Biology,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiment in Earth Science, History of Science, Electronics Science,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computer Science I, Computer Science II, Advanced Mathematics, Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physics, Advanced Chemistry, Advanced Biology, Advanced Earth Science,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project Study I, Project Study II, Environmental Science, Modern Science &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technology, Reading of Original Texts, Workshop, Philosophy of Science,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Physical Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>• Introduction to Physical Education, Sports Science, Athletics, Gymnastics,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aquatics, Ball Games, Dancing, Athletics Competitions, Gymnastics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competitions, Aquatics Competitions, Ball Game Competitions, Fighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matches, Shooting, Archery, Weightlifting, Skating, Cycling, Golf,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yachting, Boating, Bowling, Skiing, Fencing, Badminton, Canoeing,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Areas</td>
<td>The Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Courses       | - Music Theory, Music History, Singing and Listening, Practice in Major Studies, Chamber Music, Chorus and Orchestra, Performance, Computer and Music, Musical Impression  
|               | - Art Theory, Art History, Design, Painting, Printing, Sculpture, Design, Industrial Art, Calligraphy, Image Art  
|               | - Dance Theory, Dance History, Motion Analysis, Korean Dance, Ballet, Modern Dance, Folk Dance, Dance Music, Dance Creation, Dance Impression  
|               | - Introduction to Literature, History of Literature, Syntax, Classical Literature, Modern Literature, Poetry Writing, Novel Writing, Drama Writing  
|               | - Introduction to Plays, Introduction to Movies, Play History, Movie History, Art of Conversation, Basic Performance, Stage Techniques, Radio & Television, Practice in Major Studies  
|               | - Introduction to Photograph, History of Photography, Practice in Basic Photographing, Practice in Intermediate Photographing, Practice in Darkroom, Practice in Lighting, Photograph Editing  
|               | - Others |
| Departments   | Music Fine Arts  
|               | Dancing Literary Writing  
|               | Drama & Movie Photography |
### Description of the general guidelines of the 7th curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Foreign Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• English Reading Comprehension I, English Reading Comprehension II, English Conversation I, English Conversation II, English Composition I, English Composition II, English Listening Comprehension, English Grammar, Culture of English-speaking World, Practical English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• German Reading Comprehension I, German Reading Comprehension II, German Conversation I, German Conversation II, German Composition I, German Composition II, German Listening Comprehension, German Grammar, German Culture, Practical German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• French Reading Comprehension I, French Reading Comprehension II, French Conversation I, French Conversation II, French Composition I, French Composition II, French Listening Comprehension, French Grammar, French Culture, Practical French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Spanish Reading Comprehension I, Spanish Reading Comprehension II, Spanish Conversation I, Spanish Conversation II, Spanish Composition I, Spanish Composition II, Spanish Listening Comprehension, Spanish Grammar, Spanish &amp; Latin-American Culture, Practical Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Chinese Reading Comprehension I, Chinese Reading Comprehension II, Chinese Conversation I, Chinese Conversation II, Chinese Composition I, Chinese Composition II, Chinese Listening Comprehension, Chinese Grammar, Chinese Culture, Practical Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Areas</td>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Russian Reading Comprehension I, Russian Reading Comprehension II, Russian Conversation I, Russian Conversation II, Russian Composition I, Russian Composition II, Russian Listening Comprehension, Russian Grammar, Russian Culture, Practical Russian  
- Arabic Reading Comprehension I, Arabic Reading Comprehension II, Arabic Conversation I, Arabic Conversation II, Arabic Composition I, Arabic Composition II, Arabic Listening Comprehension, Arabic Grammar, Arabic Culture, Practical Arabic  
- Others |
| Departments | English, German, French, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Arabic |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Foreign Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
- Russian Reading Comprehension I, Russian Reading Comprehension II, Russian Conversation I, Russian Conversation II, Russian Composition I, Russian Composition II, Russian Listening Comprehension, Russian Grammar, Russian Culture, Practical Russian  
- Arabic Reading Comprehension I, Arabic Reading Comprehension II, Arabic Conversation I, Arabic Conversation II, Arabic Composition I, Arabic Composition II, Arabic Listening Comprehension, Arabic Grammar, Arabic Culture, Practical Arabic  
- Others |
| Departments | English, German, French, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Arabic |
a. The high school aiming at specialized education should offer students at least 82 units as required courses from the specialized courses in Table 3.

b. The high school aiming at specialized education should offer the following courses as compulsory for different tracks.

- Track in Agriculture: Understanding of Agriculture, Techniques in Basic Agriculture, Agricultural Information Management
- Track in Industry: Introduction to Industry, Basic Drafting, Basic Information Technology
- Track in Commerce: Commercial Economy, Principles of Accounting, Introduction to Computers
- Track in Fishery & Marine Transportation: General Oceanography, Fishery & Shipping Information Processing, General Fisheries (Track in Fishery), General Marine Affairs (Track in Marine Transportation)
- Track in Home Economics & Vocational Education: Human Development, Introduction to Computers
- Track in Foreign Languages: Subject I in Foreign Language Department and Listening
- Track in International Affairs: English Reading Comprehension, Understanding Communities, Korean Tradition and Culture

c. Metropolitan and provincial superintendents will make a decision on the maximum number of units for a specialized course in each subject area. In the case of foreign languages and international affairs, the maximum number of units should be less than 8 units.

d. Foreign languages courses offered by high schools in the track of international affairs can be selected among the track of foreign languages.
Guidelines for the Organization and Implementation of the Curriculum

Basic guidelines

The national common basic curriculum

The national common basic curriculum is designed to be implemented for ten years from grades 1 to 10.

1) The number of instructional periods for the subject matters, extracurricular activities, and optional activities by grade levels, as indicated in the time allotment standards of the national common basic curriculum, represents the standard annual total number of instructional periods which all students should complete during the period.

2) The following subject matters in the national common basic curriculum shall be organized and implemented as differentiated curriculum.

a. ‘Level differentiation’ shall be used for Mathematics and English. Ten levels of Mathematics courses shall be offered from grades 1 through 10, while 4 levels of English courses are offered from grades 7 through 10. Each level is divided into two sub-levels which are respectively operated on a semester basis.

b. ‘In-depth and supplementary differentiated curriculum’ shall be offered from grades 1 through 10 for Korean Language courses, from grades 7 through 10 for Social Studies and Science courses, and from grades 3 through
6 for English.

3) With respect to optional activities, optional activities of subject matters are designed for the study of elective courses at secondary schools and the in-depth and supplementary study of the national common basic courses, while creative optional activities are designed for the integrated and self-directed study of students to meet the unique educational needs of school and the demand of the students.

a. While elementary schools are given some flexibility in allocating optional activities according to the school's situation, an emphasis should be placed on creative optional activities, rather than the in-depth and supplementary study of subject matters, in order to foster the student's self-directed learning abilities.

b. For middle schools, at least 102 instructional hours should be allocated to optional activities of subject matters. In allocating instructional periods, priority should be given to the study of such elective subjects as Chinese Characters and Classics, Computer Science, Environmental Studies, Practical Foreign Language (German, French, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, and Arabic), and other elective courses. At least 34 instructional hours should be allocated to creative optional activities per year.

c. The total number of units of optional activities to be completed during the first year of high school should be 10 units, of which 4~6 units should be allocated to the in-depth and supplementary study of subject matters in the national common basic curriculum and 4~6 units should be allocated to the elective subjects in the elective-centered
curriculum. However, optional activities of subject matters may be substituted for specialized subjects in the case of vocational high schools. Two units should be allocated to creative optional activities.

4) Extracurricular activities should be organized and implemented as follows:
   a. The instructional hours (units) for extracurricular activities should be allocated by the school at its discretion, considering the demands of the students and the characteristics of the community and the school. Special care is needed to maintain the balance between areas.
   b. The school may arrange a separate schedule in accordance with its ability to conduct certain activities that are not specified in this curriculum.
   c. If necessary, the school may allocate more instructional hours (units) to extracurricular activities than those specified in the time allotment standards and operate the programs flexibly by integrating or splitting the units.

The high school elective-centered curriculum

The elective-centered curriculum shall be implemented for two years from grades 11 through 12.

1) The total number of units to be completed during the elective-centered curriculum should be 144 units: 136 units allocated to elective courses and 8 units allocated to extracurricular activities.
2) The organization and implementation of the curriculum of the general high school
   a. Elective courses for general subjects shall be divided into general elective courses and in-depth elective courses.
   b. General elective courses are organized around liberal arts and daily life, and in-depth elective courses are designed to help students develop individual aptitude and interests and progress along career paths.
   c. To ensure balanced course distribution, general elective courses shall be divided into five groups:
      - Humanities & Social Sciences
        · Korean Language, Moral Education, Social Studies
      - Science & Technology
        · Mathematics, Science, Technology & Home Economics
      - Arts & Physical Education
        · Physical Education, Music, Fine Arts
      - Foreign Languages
        · Foreign Languages
      - General Studies
        · Chinese Characters and Classics, Military Training, and other general studies courses

Each student shall take at least two courses from the group of general studies and at least one from each of the other four groups stated above. Students may be exempt from taking a general elective course in the group in which he/she wants to study intensively according to his/her career choice.
a. Students are required to complete the corresponding course I before taking course II in in-depth elective courses, but the school may exempt or substitute the required course depending on its situation, the demands of the student, and the characteristics of the subject.

b. The MPOE and the schools are given the option to select 28 units from the 136 units in elective courses respectively. Students may eventually select up to 50 percent of the elective courses themselves. This will start at schools where it is possible on a gradual basis depending on the conditions of the schools and local communities.

c. The standard number of units of each course in general elective subjects can be extended or reduced within 2 units. However, the courses in 4 units cannot be reduced.

d. ‘Others’ (4) in the column of general elective courses can be selected from the specialized subjects, or new subjects can be developed for it.

3) The organization and implementation in the curriculum of the vocational and other specialized high schools.

a. The high school, aimed at vocational and specialized education, should offer students more than 82 units of general elective courses of which 56 units should be from the national common basic subjects.

b. When students take courses from elective subjects as a preparation for specialized subjects, these can be regarded as the national common basic subjects.

c. The school may offer part of the national common basic subjects in Grade 11 in consideration of teaching
staff, physical facilities, and the demands of the students.
d. Each subject in general elective courses can be extended or reduced by 2 to 4 units.
e. Elective courses in general subjects can be substituted for specialized subjects with similar or related content.
f. If necessary, specialized courses may be substituted for specialized subjects in other tracks.
g. Specialized high schools and technical high schools that implement the '2·1' system, which require intensified specialized education, may adjust the total number of units to be completed in the general subjects and specialized subjects with the approval of superintendents at both the metropolitan and provincial levels.
h. The school may expand the total number of units to be completed by 10 percent with the approval of superintendents at both the metropolitan and provincial levels whenever the occasion arises.

4) With respect to the 8 units allocated to the extracurricular activities in grades 11-12, the school may determine the number of units to be completed for each category of the extracurricular activities according to the given condition of the school and local community.
Organization and implementation of the curriculum at the local community and school level

Metropolitan and Provincial Office of Education (MPOE)

Organization

1) In accordance with this curriculum, the MPOE shall offer community education authorities and schools within their jurisdiction a set of operating guidelines for the curriculum organization and implementation by school levels, which include the following provisions:
   a. Provisions for ensuring time allotment standards for subject matters, optional activities, and extracurricular activities in the national common basic curriculum
   b. Provisions for the educational focus of subject matters, optional activities, and extracurricular activities in the national common basic curriculum
   c. Provisions for the organization and implementation of differentiated curriculum: level differentiation, in-depth and supplementary differentiation, and elective courses
   d. Provisions for ensuring time allotment standards for the middle school optional activities
   e. Provisions for the organization and implementation of the high school elective-centered curriculum
   f. Provisions for the procedures of implementing new subjects not included in the curriculum
   g. Provisions for the creation and operation of tracks and departments in the high school curriculum
   h. Provisions for the creation and operation of courses in the general high school curriculum
i. Provisions for the number of units to be completed for specialized subjects in vocational and other high schools
j. Provisions for the experiment and practice of specialized subjects in the vocational high schools
k. Provisions for the field training of vocational high schools
l. Provisions for the extension of the total number of units to be completed in the high school curriculum
m. Provisions for the educational evaluation of subject matters, optional activities, and extracurricular activities
n. Provisions for the approval, development, and distribution of textbooks
o. Provisions for early admission into a school, accelerated grade advancement, and early graduation
p. Provisions for education of students with special educational needs and children who have returned from abroad
q. Provisions for the procedures of curriculum development and the format of curriculum at the school level
r. Provisions for making and utilizing the recommended reading list of required readings
s. Provisions for the evaluation and quality control of the organization and implementation of the curriculum
t. Provisions for supporting the operation of optional activities and extracurricular activities
u. Provisions for the operation of specialized high schools and technical high schools with the ‘2·1’ system
v. Other necessary provisions
2) The MPOE shall establish a committee for research and consultation regarding the organization and implementation of this curriculum. The committee should include teachers, educational administrators, curriculum experts, parents, community members, and industrialists as its members.

3) The MPOE shall set up operating guidelines for the organization and implementation of this curriculum based on circumstances of schools, local communities, and the need and interests of students, teachers, and community members.

4) The MPOE shall conduct research on the organization and implementation of this curriculum in collaboration with schools, research institutions, colleges, universities, and industry and use the results in improving the guidelines for the organization and implementation.

5) The MPOE shall develop and distribute materials for the organization and implementation of the curriculum and carry out timely deployment of teachers so that each school may draw up plans for the organization and implementation of its curriculum prior to the start of the school year.

Implementation

1) The MPOE shall regularly supervise the organization and implementation of curriculum at school sites and provide appropriate support, guidance, and advice required for the effective operation, improvement, and
quality control of the curriculum.

2) The MPOE shall plan and implement in-service teacher training programs in order to improve the efficiency of teachers in dealing with subject matters, optional activities, and extracurricular activities.

3) The MPOE shall draw up and implement a long-term plan for a stable supply of teachers so that the elective courses of the middle schools and the elective-centered curriculum of the high schools can be operated normally. The MPOE shall take note of the fact that Korean History in Social Studies of the middle school may be taught with independent textbooks, which may have bearing on the placement of Social Studies teachers.

4) The MPOE shall develop and distribute various teaching and learning materials for the implementation of subject matters, optional activities, and extracurricular activities. It shall also provide schools with administrative and financial support for the maintenance and expansion of educational facilities, equipment, and materials.

5) The MPOE shall provide schools with administrative and financial support for the efficient operation of a differentiated curriculum.

6) For the normal operation of the curriculum in small schools, the MPOE shall provide administrative and financial support for the effective deployment of
teachers and for the expansion of the opportunity of students to learn.

7) The MPOE shall provide vigorous support to schools by operating research and experimental schools for the improvement of the organization and implementation of the curriculum and by employing research teachers for the improvement of instruction.

8) The MPOE shall provide appropriate opportunities for students with outstanding talent in special areas and those with learning impediments.

9) The MPOE shall consider the characteristics and background of the learning experience of the Korean children who have returned from overseas and support them in completing the curriculum.

10) The MPOE shall offer secondary schools a set of guidelines for the establishment of any subjects not included in this curriculum and provide support for taking necessary steps in advance.

11) The MPOE shall provide students who want to take courses not included in the high school curriculum with a wide variety of opportunities and come up with ways to grant credits earned at approved institutions of education in the local community.

12) The MPOE shall check the whole process of ‘objective-content-method-evaluation,’ in subject matters, optional activities, and extracurricular activities and
utilize the results in maintaining the quality of education.

Local Office of Education (LOE)

Organization

1) On the basis of the MPOE operating guidelines for the organization and implementation for each school level, the LOE shall organize and offer supervision guidelines to elementary and middle schools within their jurisdiction, which include the followings:
   a. Materials related to the main focus of education derived from the special characteristics of the local community
   b. Materials related to educational resources and support for the organization and implementation of the school curriculum
   c. Provisions for inter-school cooperation on the organization and implementation of the school curriculum
   d. Provisions for inter-school cooperation on the rotation and supply of teachers
   e. Provisions for the inter-school joint utilization of educational facilities and equipment
   f. Provisions for the operation and implementation of the small-sized school curriculum including multiple classes
   g. Provisions for the evaluation and quality control of the school curriculum
   h. Other provisions
2) The LOE shall establish a curriculum committee for guidance and support of the organization and implementation of the curriculum of each school which can meet the needs of community. The committee shall be composed of teachers, educational administrators, curriculum experts, parents, and community members.

3) The LOE shall provide support for the inter-school consultation concerning the organization and implementation of school curriculum.

**Implementation**

1) The LOE shall make plans for school supervision and regularly carry out the plan to ensure that each school will implement its curriculum faithfully.

2) The LOE shall offer local-level teacher training programs for the organization and implementation of the school curriculum.

3) The LOE shall develop and distribute various materials for the organization and implementation of the school curriculum.

4) The LOE shall provide special education for the physically or mentally handicapped children and Korean children who have returned from overseas.

5) The LOE shall build a cooperative system between schools and local offices of education with respect to the assignment of students, the smooth interchange of
teachers, the joint utilization of school facilities and equipment, and the joint development of materials for the effective operation of the school curriculum.

6) The LOE shall operate research and pilot programs in schools for the improvement of the organization and implementation of the curriculum and support research teachers and the activities of the research society by subject.

7) The LOE shall evaluate the subject matters, optional activities, and extracurricular activities in practice and utilize the results in the quality control of education.

Schools

Organization

Common guidelines

1) The school shall make its own curriculum organization and implementation plans based on its situation and in accordance with this curriculum, the MPOE's as well as LEO's supervision guidelines for the curriculum organization and implementation.
   a. The school shall meet the minimum instructional requirement hours of 34 weeks a year to cover the subject matters, optional activities, and extracurricular activities.
   b. The school shall adjust weekly and monthly instructional plans within the total number of instructional hours for the year, with reference to seasonal change, variation of school conditions, needs
of the students, and other educational situations.

c. With respect to the time allotment in weekly and daily instructional plans, balance should be maintained between days of the week and subjects. Teaching hours can be flexibly and consecutively operated, depending on the characteristics of subjects, optional and extracurricular activities.

2) The school shall establish a curriculum committee to serve as a consulting body for the principals regarding the decision-making for the rational organization and efficient implementation of the curriculum. The committee shall include teachers, educational administrators, curriculum experts, and parents.

3) The school may organize the curricula by grade, class, and subject on the basis of the general frameworks for the organization and implementation of the school curriculum.

4) The school shall strive to consider the organizational structure of the teachers, the condition of the students, the demands of the parents, and educational environment, such as instructional facilities and equipment in organizing and implementing the curriculum.

5) If and when additional units are required for the in-depth and supplementary study of subjects in the differentiated curriculum, the school may utilize the units allocated to optional activities.
6) If the school wishes to offer and implement a course not included in this curriculum, it shall take necessary prior steps in accordance with the MPOE's operating guidelines for curriculum organization and implementation.

Guidelines by School Level

1) Elementary Schools

a. If a subject is offered in more than 3 instructional hours per week, the school may reduce the instructional hours by less than one hour and replace the hour with creative optional activities which can meet the needs of the school and the demands of students. In this case, the instructional hour should be incorporated into field trips directly related to the learning of the subject.

b. In principle, the learning group of the elementary school shall be organized within the classroom for the implementation of the differentiated curriculum. However, the school may utilize various other approaches in accordance with its situation and the needs of the students and teachers.

c. In the case of running multiple classes, where students including two or more different grades learn together under one teacher, schools may reorganize the content of learning or select common topics across the grade levels.

d. The school may operate its optional courses as diverse programs, such as project-work, small-group joint research, learning how to learn, or learning of integrated subjects, in accordance with the needs and demands of the school, teachers, and students.

e. The school shall help students create, through all its
programs, a disciplined way of life and provide a foundation for the correct use of the Korean language.

2) Middle Schools
   a. The school may organize learning groups in various ways, according to its situation, for the implementation of differentiated curriculum.
   b. The school shall organize and implement optional activities with due consideration for the following matters:
      - The school shall allocate instructional hours allotted to optional activities flexibly in accordance with the demands of the students and its situation.
      - In the case of subjects where the differentiated curriculum is applied, proper care should be taken lest a main focus be given to the subjects in which in-depth and supplementary courses are offered.
      - In establishing an elective course, the school shall take care to ensure the students' rights to choose a subject by offering more than two subjects simultaneously.

3) High Schools
   a. General high schools shall organize a curriculum that offers courses in the national common basic curriculum up to grade 10.
   b. The school may organize learning groups in various ways, according to its situation, for the implementation of a differentiated curriculum.
   c. For students of grades 11-12 who fall short of the level of expected competency in Mathematics and English,
the school shall establish separate differentiated courses (i.e., Mathematics 9-b, 10-a, English 9-b, 10-a, 10-b, etc.) or allow them to enroll in differentiated courses offered in Grade 10. In this case, a maximum of 16 units can be regarded as the units for general elective courses.

d. In principle, general high schools do not have a separate curriculum related to students' career concern but offer a comprehensive curriculum which will allow students to design individual programs tailored to their goals and interests. The school can organize and implement courses to assist students who wish to go on to some form of higher education or prepare for the world of work so that they may select the appropriate courses. The school shall follow the MPOE guidelines with respect to these matters.

e. The school shall operate optional activities, including creative optional activities, in conjunction with the elective-centered curriculum of grades 11-12 in consideration of the student's aptitude and career goals.

f. The school shall offer elective courses considering its situation and the demands of its students. If more than a certain number of students specified by the MPOE demand the establishment of a specific elective course in this curriculum, the school should comply.

g. The number of subjects to be completed per semester should be within the boundary of the number specified by the superintendents of both the metropolitan and provincial levels, and less than 10 subjects are recommended.

h. When religious study is offered as a free elective, the school must provide other subjects as well as religious
study so as to give options to the students.

I. Students may select general elective courses regardless of prerequisites.

j. The school principal shall grant credits for courses completed at other schools if the courses are not offered by the school. If he/she deems it more effective for students to take courses in a certain subject at an institution other than the school, the principal shall also allow students to enroll in such courses. The school shall follow the MPOE guidelines with respect to these matters.

k. The principals of vocational and other specialized high schools may determine the required subjects for each department, if necessary. In the case of elective courses, students should be allowed to select courses within the ratio set by the superintendent.

l. The classroom instruction of specialized subjects may be replaced by on-the-job practice. This learning experience should have direct relevance to the school curriculum. If possible, the on-the-job practice is advised to be implemented in the final year under the teacher's supervision.

m. Special-purpose high schools specializing in foreign languages shall organize specialized courses including at least two foreign languages other than the major.

n. The curriculum for tracks not specified in this curriculum should follow the patterns of a similar track of this curriculum. The creation of curriculum for a new track is subject to necessary procedures based on the MPOE guidelines.
Implementation

1) School curriculum shall be organized and implemented through a democratic procedure and process with the full participation and professional input of all teachers.

2) The school shall develop students' personality development in an integrated and systematic way through the entire school education activities.

3) The school shall operate differentiated curriculum in consideration of the following matters:
   a. The school shall draw up and implement differentiated curriculum on an annual basis.
   b. In implementing the differentiated curriculum by level, the school shall set forth specific qualification standards for the advancement to the next level in accordance with the situations of the subject, grade, and school, as well as the achievement standards prescribed in the objective of each level.
   c. The school shall operate the differentiated curriculum oriented toward in-depth and supplementary programs in consideration of the following matters:
      · The school shall operate with a focus on the basic educational content in instructional hours by subject as shown in the time allotment standards, along with the simultaneous operation of in-depth and supplementary programs. If necessary, the school may plan a separate schedule for in-depth and supplementary programs by replacing optional courses.
      · The school may use in-depth and supplementary
materials developed by offices of education or schools themselves in addition to textbooks.

In the case of subjects in the differentiated curriculum, the school may offer ‘special supplementary courses’ to help students with learning deficits. The school may make an autonomous decision concerning the organization and implementation of the special supplementary courses.

4) The school shall organize and implement its curriculum taking the following matters into consideration:
   a. The school shall implement this curriculum in such a manner that a consistent emphasis be given to the sequential learning of the basic elements of each subject.
   b. The school shall help all students with deficits or decreased motivation of learning attain the prescribed objectives by grade levels by providing ample learning opportunities and teaching methods in accordance with the abilities of students.
   c. Emphasis should be given to the understanding of basic concepts and principles and the application of them to new situations, by means of inquiry learning rather than rote memorization. In particular, the school shall place emphasis on information processing abilities by using various materials.
   d. The school shall allow students to have opportunities for problem solving by emphasizing cooperative learning activities as well as individualized instruction.
   e. The school shall encourage the active participation of students in such activities as experimentation,
observation, survey, data collection, handicrafts, discussion, presentation, and the like.
f. If necessary, the school can rearrange the content of the subject matters and extracurricular activities with regard to the sequence, emphasis, and instructional methods in accordance with the special needs of the local community, its own circumstances, seasonal changes, and the demands of the students, and the needs of the teachers.
g. The school shall utilize the human and physical resources of the community for the effective operation of subject matters, optional activities, and extracurricular activities.
h. In the case of experimental activities and practices, special attention should be paid to safety in using machines and instruments.
i. Instruction should bring learning experiences that help students depart from a stereotyped thinking of sex roles.

5) The school shall make an effort to operate the extracurricular activities in a balanced way, while it may lay emphasis on certain core areas that may develop into a unique tradition of the school.
a. The school shall utilize the human and physical resources of the community and help students build up their individuality, hobbies, and own special interests and skills.
b. Extracurricular activities should consist of independent group activities which build up the students' cooperative spirit and abilities for democratic citizenship.
c. Extracurricular activities may take the form of an intensive training course, suited to the unique needs of the school, communities, and the characteristics of the content. In addition, it can be operated flexibly in various ways.

d. The school shall provide career guidance programs for students who seek advice about future careers best suited to their abilities and aptitudes.

6) The school shall make every effort to utilize multimedia programs and materials such as radio / television programs, audio-visual materials, and computers, in combination with textbooks.

7) The school shall invigorate computer-aided education such as edunet and multimedia, in a departure from textbook-based instruction.

8) The school shall give emphasis to such areas as democratic citizenship education, personality education, environmental education, economic education, energy-conservation education, work-oriented education, health and safety education, sex education, consumer education, career education, unification education, cultural identity education, international understanding education, marine education, and information / information ethics education in the instruction of subject matters and optional activities concerned through an integrated approach of the whole school program and mutual cooperation between the school and the community and homes.
9) The school shall prepare a list of required reading to encourage students to read good books, utilizing it in the instruction of subject matters such as the Korean Language, optional activities, and extracurricular activities.

10) In the case of running special classes for handicapped students, the school shall adjust this curriculum or use the curriculum and textbooks for a special school according to the abilities of students.

11) The school may offer after-school, summer, or winter school programs on the basis of demand from students and parents, provided that students participate voluntarily.

12) The school shall facilitate the improvement of teachers' instructional activities through the meeting of teachers in the same grade, meeting of teachers of the same subject, field research, and in-service training programs.

13) The school shall self-assess its curriculum organization and the appropriateness, validity, and effectiveness of its implementation every year and utilize the results in planning for curriculum organization and implementation for the next school year.

Evaluation and quality control of the curriculum

1) To ensure quality control over this curriculum, students' scholastic achievement tests, an evaluation of schools and
educational institutions, and an evaluation of the organization and implementation of the curriculum shall be conducted regularly on the national level.

a. The school shall conduct evaluations of the attainment level of students by grade and of the subject matters by using various assessment tools and methods. They will utilize the results of the evaluation in securing the adequacy and improvement of the curriculum.

b. Regular evaluation of schools and the offices of education shall be conducted to examine the actual condition of the organization and implementation of the school curriculum and the quality of support of educational authorities for the curriculum.

c. Research shall be conducted to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the organization and implementation of the school curriculum and the support of educational authorities for the curriculum. Starting in the first year of its application, the adequacy of the curriculum for the relevant school, grade level, and students shall be inspected and assessed through a broad range of procedures with an emphasis on the adequacy and effect of the organization of the curriculum, instructional time allotment, and the guidelines for the organization and implementation of the curriculum.

2) Various measures shall be prepared and offered to schools on the national level to ensure smooth evaluation activities to realize the spirit of the
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curriculum.

a. ‘Standards for criteria referenced evaluation’ for each subject shall be developed and distributed so that schools may conduct an evaluation pertaining to the goals of the curriculum for each subject.

b. A test item bank shall be established on the national level through computer networks such as the edunet so that schools may use the questions in the evaluation of students.

c. Various evaluation tools, methods, and procedures shall be developed and distributed to schools so that schools may use them in the evaluation activities for each subject.

3) Schools shall conduct evaluations in consideration of the following:

a. Evaluation should be regarded as part of an educational process to help all students achieve their educational objectives successfully.

b. The school shall assess the progress of students' achievement by using various evaluation tools and methods, and will utilize the results of the evaluation in improving the quality of instructions.

c. The school shall try to measure students' achievement in subject matters in a balanced way, putting emphasis on such methods as essay-type tests and observational evaluation of students' in-class presentation and attitude instead of the conventional multiple-choice tests.

d. The school shall develop and apply specified standards based on the characteristics of the courses in the assessment of experiment and workshop activities.
e. The school shall develop and apply a set of valid assessment standards and scales, especially in evaluating students' attitude, expression, and the skills in subject matters where the important objectives are to facilitate the psychomotor, and creative development.

f. The school and teachers shall take care to evaluate what is actually taught at school, excluding such content and skills that can be only learned through means of education outside school.

g. In principle, the elementary school shall report the evaluation record of individual students in the form of written documents in terms of the student's activities, personal traits, and progress in their subject matters.

h. With respect to the evaluation of optional activities, the school shall prepare and utilize the main focus of the evaluation in consideration of the characteristics of the optional activities in subject matters, creative optional activities, and the students. The results of the evaluation of creative optional activities, however, shall be in the form of a written statement.

Organization and implementation of the curriculum in special schools

1) The curriculum of special schools equivalent to elementary, middle, and high schools shall be in accordance with this curriculum.
2) The principals of schools under direct control of the MPOE shall organize their curricula in reference to the MPOE's guidelines for the organization and implementation of the curriculum.

3) Civic schools, civic high schools, trade schools, and special classes for working youth, schools attached to the industrial organizations, and other special schools may organize the curriculum in accordance with their own circumstances and the characteristics of the students on the basis of this curriculum and its implementation with the approval of the superintendent of offices of education at the metropolitan and provincial levels.

4) Schools with night classes shall comply with this curriculum. However, the length of an instructional hour can be reduced to 40 minutes.

5) The air and correspondence high schools shall comply with the high school elective-centered curriculum as specified in this curriculum, and they can adjust the curriculum and unit allotment standard with the approval of the superintendent of educational authorities at the metropolitan and provincial levels.
   a. The structure of the curriculum and unit allotment standard should be based on those of the high school elective-centered curriculum with a minimum of 172 units required to be completed.
   b. Instructions can take the form of radio and correspondence instruction, classroom instruction, and correction and editing instruction.
   c. The hours of class attendance should be more than 20
days per year.

· Schools that wish to take a new approach in the organization and implementation of the curriculum for curriculum research may organize and implement their curriculum differently from the standards of this curriculum with the approval of the Minister of Education.