

Education in Korea

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Structure of Educational Administration

Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (MEST)

**Metropolitan & Provincial Offices
(Metropolitan: 7, Provincial: 9)**

Regional Offices (180)

Schools (More than 10,000 schools)

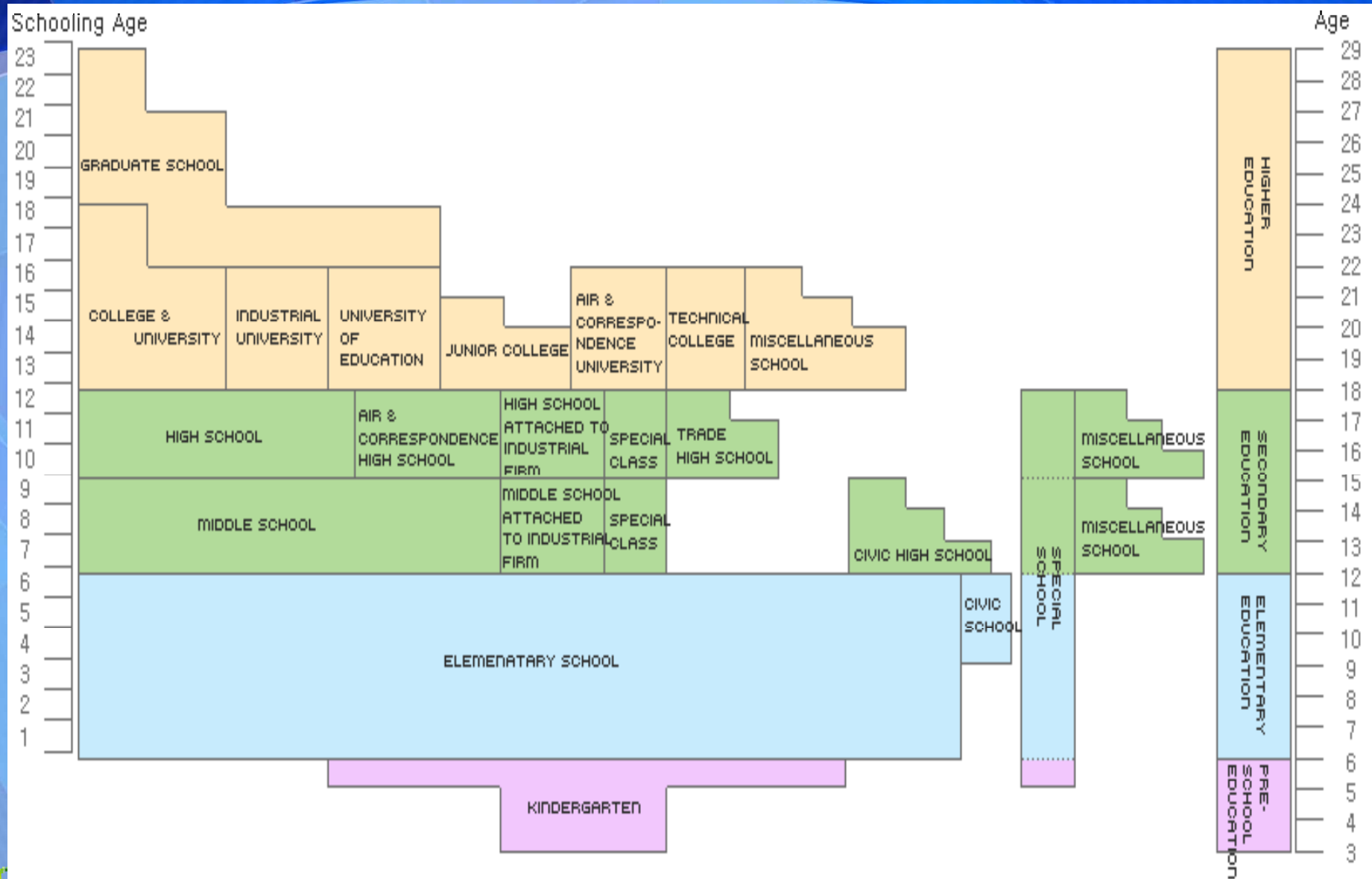
Administrative Structure of High Schools

School Types	Number of Schools	Finance	Financial management	Teacher employment	Curriculum management
Public	1209 (54.0%)	Tuition & government support	School (Except personal & facility cost)	Metropolitan and Provincial offices	School (Based on the national curriculum)
Private	1028 (46.0%)	Endowments, tuition, government support	School	School-based	School (Based on the national curriculum)
Total	2237 (100%)				

School Ladder System

- **6-3-3-4 single track ladder system**
 - ➔ **6 years of primary school, 3 years of middle school, 3 years of high school, 4 years of college or university**
- **New school year starts at the beginning of March.**
- **Most 15-year-old students are in the 10th grade and take the PISA tests in June, near the beginning of the new school year.**

School Ladder System



Types of High School Programs

Schools	Number of schools
General High Schools	1, 382 (61.8%)
Vocational High Schools	713 (31.9%)
Science High Schools	17 (0.01%)
Specialized High Schools (Foreign language high schools, art high schools, physical education high schools)	125 (0.06%)
Total	2,237 (100%)

Types of High School Programs

Schools	Admission
General High Schools	Applicants are not given the opportunity to select their school but are assigned to a school in their residential district.
Vocational High Schools	Applicants are given the opportunity to choose their school and to be selected through a competitive examination or based on achievement in middle school.
Science High Schools	Schools select their students based on their own admission criteria.
Specialized High Schools (Foreign language high schools, art high schools, physical education high schools)	Schools select their students based on their own admission criteria.

Korean National Curriculum

- Sets strict regulations for the number of school days, the subjects to be taught for each school year, and the time allocation for each subject in each school year.
- Allows some room for modification by local education authorities and schools.
- Provides criteria for the development of textbooks and general guidelines for teaching-learning activities and methods of assessment
- Has been revised regularly in accordance with a 5-10 year cycle.
- Starting in 2008, it is revised whenever revisions are needed.

National Assessment of Educational Achievement

■ Changed in 2008:

- Assessment method changed from sample-based survey to entire population-based survey.
- Achievement results by 180 regions started to be publicized from the last year.
- Achievement results by only 3 regions- city, metropolitan, and rural areas- were reported publicly before then.

New National Assessment of Educational Achievement

■ Purposes:

- Diagnose the educational achievements and the trends of the achievements
- Provide reliable and fair information that will help educators and policy makers develop effective educational policies.
- Provide information for improving teaching and learning

■ Yearly survey

■ Subjects: Korean, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, English

■ All students in grades 6, 9, and 10

■ Test results provide:

- Students with their scores and achievement levels
- Information showing achievement levels by 180 regions
- Basic information to improve teaching and learning

Major Education Issues

- **High family expenditures on private tutoring**
 - Excessive competitiveness for prestigious universities
 - Low confidence in school education
- **Enlargement of school autonomy**
 - Centralization vs. decentralization
- **Debate over excellence versus equity**

Current Reform Initiatives (I)

1. Strengthening accountability

- Disclose School Information : School administration system and policy, budgeting and planning process

2. Enhancing English education

- Hire TEE (Teaching English in English) Teachers, Revise Elementary School Curriculum, establish English-friendly Education Environment

Current Reform Initiatives (II)

3. Diversifying high schools – 300 Project

- 150 Public Boarding Schools
 - Select schools in rural areas to become public boarding schools: 88 in 2008 -> 150 in 2011

- 50 Professional “Meister” Schools
 - Designate 50 specialized vocational schools to meet the needs of industry: 20 in 2008 -> 50 in 2011

- 100 Autonomous Private Schools
 - Designate 100 private schools by 2011 with autonomy in school administration
 - Started with schools in rural areas and small towns in 2008

How We Teach Reading

Grade	Course types	Korean Language Subjects	# of Hours per Week
7	Core	Korean Language	5
8	Core	Korean Language	4
9	Core	Korean Language	4
10	Core	Korean Language	4
11~12	Elective	Speech Communication(6), Writing(6), Grammar(6), Literature(6), Media Language(6)	Students can choose 132 credits among elective courses for 2 years.

How We Teach Reading

- **The national Korean language curriculum places more emphasis on critical and creative thinking skills through reading and writing.**
- **Reading assessment focuses on thinking ability.**
- **The Korean language is one of the most important subjects for university entrance.**

How We Teach Mathematics

Grade	Course types	Mathematics Subjects	# of Hours per Week
7	Core	Mathematics	3
8	Core	Mathematics	4
9	Core	Mathematics	4
10	Core	Mathematics	4
11~12	Elective	Applied Mathematics(6), Mathematics I (6), Pre-Calculus and Pre- Statistics(6), Mathematics II (6), Integration and Statistics(6), Geometry and Vector(6)	Students can choose 132 credits among elective courses for 2 years.

How We Teach Mathematics

- The national mathematics curriculum:
 - Emphasizes basic mathematical knowledge and application of mathematics in the aspect of practical mathematics.
 - Emphasizes processes more than products.
 - Focuses on students' understanding of a problem and the problem-solving process as well as its results and students' interests, curiosity and attitudes toward mathematics.
- Mathematics is one of the most important subjects for university entrance.

How We Teach Science

Grade	Course Types	Science Subjects	# of Hours per Week
7	Core	Science	3
8	Core	Science	4
9	Core	Science	4
10	Core	Science	4
11~12	Elective	PhysicsI(6), PhysicsII(6) ChemistryI(6), ChemistryII(6), BiologyI(6), BiologyII(6) Earth ScienceI(6), Earth ScienceII(6)	Students can choose 132 credits among elective courses for 2 years.

How We Teach Science

- **The national science curriculum emphasizes understanding basic concepts of science through inquiry and by encouraging their interest and curiosity in natural phenomena and objects.**
- **The number of students taking science in grades 11 and 12 is decreasing.**
- **Science is important for university entrance, but not as much as reading and mathematics. Science is an elective subject in the university entrance examination.**

Thank you !