The National Curriculum of Korea:
Focusing on the 2009 Revised Curriculum

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2. General Directions of the 2009 Revised Curriculum

3. Characteristics of the 2009 Revised Curriculum at School Level
Key words for how to read the national curriculum in Korea

- accountability
- autonomy
I. The Basic Information of the National Curriculum Development in Korea
The history of the national curriculum development

**the Advent of Modern Curriculum Era**
- since 1894
- Elementary School, Teachers College, Foreign Language School, etc.

**the Japanese Colonial Era**
- 1910 - 1945

after the Restoration of Independence (1945.8.15)
- Since 1946
- Kindergarten, Elementary School, Middle School, High school
- From early 1990’s: Autonomy of provinces and schools / Globalization
The level of the curriculum development

National curriculum
- By the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Arrangement and implementation guidelines
- By Local Education Administration

School-based curriculum
## Textbook system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>초등학교</th>
<th>중등학교</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government –</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Designated Books</strong></td>
<td>Korean,</td>
<td>Korean history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the Ministry of Education holds a copyright)</td>
<td>Social studies, Moral education, Math, Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authorized Books</strong></td>
<td>Other subjects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(by the Ministry of Education)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Korean,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social studies, Moral education, Math, Science, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approved Books</strong></td>
<td>(extra-curricular activities)</td>
<td>Other subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(by the locals and principals of a school)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(extra-curricular activities)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Education System in Korea

- **Compulsory Education (9 years)**
  - Kindergarten: 3 years
  - Elementary school: 6 years
  - Middle school: 3 years
  - High school (academic/vocational): 3 years

- **National Curriculum (15 years)**

- **Elective – centered curriculum (3 years)**
- **Elementary and middle school**
  - No exam

- **High school**
  - Record
    - Exam (according to the locals)

- **University**
  - College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT)
  - Admission Officer System
## Tests and Subject for CSAT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics (Select 1)</td>
<td><strong>Math A</strong>: Math I + Math II + + (Select 1 out of 3 area-specific subjects: Calculus, Probability &amp; Statistics, &amp; Discrete Mathematics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Math B</strong>: Math I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language (English)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies /Sciences /Vocational Educa-</td>
<td><strong>Social Studies</strong>: Up to 4 out of 11 subjects can be selected: Ethics (Ethics and Thought + Traditional Ethics), Korean History, Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Languages/ Chinese Characters and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classics: 1 subject can be selected among</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German I, French I, Spanish I, Chinese I,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese I, Russian I, Arabic I, and Chinese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters and Classics.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Subjects in the National Assessment of Educational Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test for Whole Students</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle School (year 3)</td>
<td>Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School (Year 2)</td>
<td>Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher Selection System for public school

Teacher's license:
- the university of Education: elementary school
- The college of education in the university: middle and high school
- Teacher training course in the university: middle and high school

1st Exam:
- Essay writing about the education
- Curriculum

2nd Exam:
- Interview
- Making lesson plan
- Practical teaching skill test, etc
Teacher’s promotion system

- Level 2 teacher certification
  - Level 1 teacher certification
  - Master teacher

- Level 2 teacher certification
  - Level 1 teacher certification
  - Supervisor (Vice principal, Principal)
The organization of the curriculum document

- The general guidelines of national curriculum
  - Subject curriculum (7 subject clusters)
  - Extra-curriculum (Creative experiential activities)
II. General Directions of the 2009 Revised Curriculum
Preparing students for Globalization

- Teaching subjects by using creative teaching method
- Expanding extra-curricular activities (called ‘creative experiential activities’)

‘Cultivation of Creativity and Good Character for the Global society’
Student-Centered Curriculum

To reduce the number of subjects per semester to eight or lower (except arts and physical education) to relieve the student's learning loads in the middle school and high school.

To expand high school students' freedom of elective subjects tailored to their interests and aptitudes.
School autonomy for its own curriculum is indispensable for the realization of student-centered curriculum.

The class hours are allocated for 2 or 3 grades together (grades cluster) or 2 or 3 subjects together (subjects cluster), which can make it possible for each school to organize school curriculum flexibly.

The class hours given for grade clusters and subject clusters can increase or decrease by 20% at the discretion of elementary and middle schools.
subject clusters

- Korean language
- Social Studies/Moral Education
- Mathematics
- Science/ Technology - Home economics
- Physical Education
- Arts (Music/Fine Arts)
- Foreign language
- grade-clusters

- Elementary school
  1st–2nd year

- Middle school
  1st–3rd year

- High school
  1st–3rd year

- 3rd–4th year

- 5th–6th year
III. Characteristics of the 2009 Revised Curriculum at School Level
Principles of Curriculum Design

- creative individuals

that take consideration of and share with others
The vision for the educated person

- One who pioneers the development of individuality and career on top of a holistic development
- One who shows creativity with new thinking and challenges based on basic capabilities
- One who leads a dignified life based on understanding cultural knowledge and pluralistic values
- One who participates in community development possessing the spirit of consideration and sharing, as a citizen communicating with the world.
## Elementary School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject clusters</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>1st &amp; 2nd grades</th>
<th>3rd &amp; 4th grades</th>
<th>5th &amp; 6th grades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td></td>
<td>408</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies/ Moral Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>272</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science/THE *</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>340</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>204</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arts (Music/Fine Art)</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative Experiential Activities</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of class hours</td>
<td>1,680</td>
<td>1,972</td>
<td>2,176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*THE means Technology and Home economics*
How to read the elementary school timetable

- 1 unit of class is usually 40 minutes
- 34 weeks for each year
- THE is only included in 5th and 6th grade.
- the minimum class hours
Basic plans for Elementary School Curriculum Organization and Implementation

The school can autonomously organize and implement adjustment programs for 1st graders that are newly attending the school, using units of creative experiential learning activities for adjustment education.

ICT Education, Health Education, and Chinese Characters and Classics Education are conducted through systematic guidance by using the related subject (cluster) and creative experimental activities.
### Middle School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject clusters</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Grades 7 to 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies (including History/Moral Education)</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science/THE</td>
<td>646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arts (Music/Fine Art)</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elective Subjects*</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative experiential activities</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of class hours</td>
<td>3,366</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- One unit of classroom hour is 45 minutes
- Chinese characters and Classics, ICT, Environment, Foreign languages, Health, Career education

* Chinese characters and Classics, ICT, Environment, Foreign languages, Health, Career education
How to read the middle school timetable

- 1 unit of class is usually 45 minutes
- 34 weeks for each year
- Condensed course-taking except arts and sports
- The minimum hours for 3 years
- **the School** **Sports** Clubs in middle school

  - Part of Creative Experiential Activities
  - 34-68 hours a year
  - Every session
  - From 2012
## High School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Fields</th>
<th>Subject clusters</th>
<th>Minimum required units</th>
<th>School Autonomous Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry</td>
<td>Social Studies (including History/Moral Education)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Organized by schools according to the student’s aptitude and career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE/Arts</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arts (Music/Fine Art)</td>
<td>10(5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life/Liberal Arts</td>
<td>Technology/Home economics/2nd Foreign Language/Chinese Characters and Classics/Liberal Arts</td>
<td>16(12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>86 (77)</strong></td>
<td><strong>94 (103)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative experiential activities</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total number of units</strong></td>
<td><strong>204</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* one unit of classroom hour is 50 minutes, carried out 17 times.
### High School for specialized and industry demand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Fields</th>
<th>Subject clusters</th>
<th>Minimum required units</th>
<th>School Autonomous Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry</td>
<td>Social Studies (including History/Moral Education)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Organized by schools according to the student's aptitude and career &amp; industry demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE/Arts</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arts (Music/Fine Art)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life/Liberal Arts</td>
<td>Technology·Home economics/2nd Foreign Language/Chinese Characters and Classics/Liberal Arts</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized subjects</td>
<td>Agriculture, Industry, Commerce, Fishery &amp; Marine Transportation Department, Home Economics and Vocational Education</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>151</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative experiential activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of units</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- How to read the high school timetable

- 1 unit of class is usually 50 minutes
- 34 weeks for each year
- Carried out 17 times
- The minimum hours for 3 years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous Activities</td>
<td>The school offers student-initiated activities, and students take an active part in diverse activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club Activities</td>
<td>Students voluntarily participate in group activities to develop cooperative skills and broaden their interests and specialties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Services</td>
<td>Students practice activities involving caring and sharing for neighbors and the community and help to preserve the natural environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Activities</td>
<td>Students search for and design their careers through self-development activities fit to their interests, specialties, and aptitudes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. General Directions of the 2015 Revised Curriculum

It will be implemented in 2018
Competencies

- General competencies
  - self management
  - Information processing
  - creative thinking
  - esthetic sensibility
  - communication
  - community

Competencies of the Subject matter

- skills for learning and practicing the subject matter
If you want to find more information about Korean Curriculum, visit this site!
http://www.ncic.re.kr/english.index.do