



2025

# How to Start School in Korea



Guide for Entry into Public Education  
for Parents of Students with  
Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)





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## Guide for Entry into Public Education for Parents of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)

### How to Start School in Korea



The Guide for Entry into Public Education for Parents of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students) – “How to Start School in Korea” is a reference for parents of students with migrant background (multicultural students) preparing for their children’s enrollment in kindergartens, elementary, middle, or high schools in Korea. This booklet contains school support details regarding preparation for entrance and adaptation to school life.

It was made to help parents of students with migrant background (multicultural students) support their children’s school life based on information about school life in Korea. Each chapter has different themes as shown below.

- I. “Preparing for School Entrance” describes the school entrance procedure and documents required for the school enrollment of students with foreign nationalities.
- II. “Understanding the Admission Procedure” provides detailed information about the eligibility, timing, and procedures for admission to kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and high school.
- III. “Exploring Education Support Systems” include information about educational subsidies and support for school life and daily life.

We hope that this booklet will be helpful for students with migrant background (multicultural students) in preparing for their children’s enrollment in school in Korea.

※ In this document, children from international marriage families and foreign families are referred to as students with migrant background (multicultural students), and ages are presented based on the international age system.



## Education System of Korea



### Educational System and Program

- ※ Parents failing to send their children with Korean nationality to a compulsory educational institution may be slapped with an administrative fine.
- ※ Free education-related subsidies: Admission fees, tuition fees, school operation support expenses, and textbook fees
- ※ However, you must pay the educational expenses for your child if he/she attends a private elementary school, a private specialized middle school (such as an arts, sports, or international school), a specialized high school, or an autonomous private high school.

Terms of Education Years	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Conversion into Republic of the Korean Education System	Elementary School					Middle School			High School			College				
Foreign Education Systems	5-3-4-4 years	5 years				3 years			3 years			4 years				
	6-4-3-3 years	6 years					4 years			3 years			3 years			
	6-3-2-5 years	6 years					3 years			2 years		5 years				
	2-4-3-4-3 years	2 years	4 years			3 years			4 years				3 years			
	8-4-4 years	8 years								4 years			4 years			



### Key Educational Events and Activities

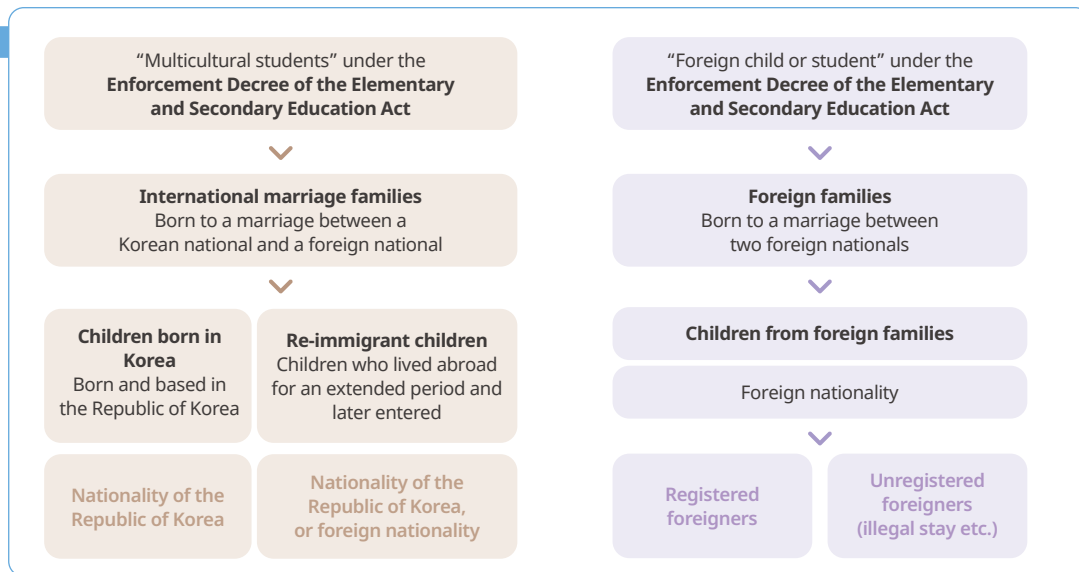
- \* Academic year: Refers to the period starting on March 1 and ending on the last day of February of the following year.  
e.g., Academic Year 2025 (Mar. 1, 2025–Feb. 28, 2026)
- \* Semester: Schools in Korea generally divide each academic year into two semesters.  
e.g., First semester (March 2025–summer vacation), second semester (the day after the end of the first semester–February 2026)
- \* Vacation: Depending on the school, there may be summer and winter vacations, or summer, winter, and spring (end-of-academic-year) vacations.

Event	Description	Schedule
Commencement of School Work (Entrance Ceremony)	First day of a new semester, a new year	First weekday of March
Field Trip	Off-campus classes such as visits to museums or farms	Varying by school
Sports Day	School sports day for all students or by grade	May or Oct.
Open Class	A day for parents to observe their child's class activities	Apr.–May
Summer Vacation Ceremony	End of the first semester and beginning of summer vacation	Late Jul.
Opening Ceremony of the Second Semester	End of summer vacation and first day of the second semester	Late Aug.
Curriculum Presentation	A day when students present what they have learned	Nov.
Winter Vacation Ceremony	Beginning of winter vacation	Late Dec.
Last Day of School (Graduation)	Last day of the grade	Dec. to Feb. next year
Discretionary School Holiday	School holiday autonomously decided by the school	To be determined by the school
School Anniversary	To mark the school anniversary	To be determined by the school

※ The schedule above is an example and may vary depending on the school's operational circumstances.

## Types and Admission Flowchart of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)

### Types of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)



### Admission Flowchart of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)

- Students with Korean nationality: Children born in Korea, including students with Korean nationality, follow the same academic record registration procedures as non-migrant background students.
- Foreign national students, including children from foreign families: For children from foreign families or re-immigrant children who have not previously resided in Korea or do not have academic records in Korea, parents must first contact the competent office of education (district office of education) over the child's place of residence to confirm the admission procedures.

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
① Admission application	After contacting the Community Service Center having jurisdiction over the child's place of residence, submit an application for admission to the head of the relevant elementary school.	Submit an application for admission to the district office of education having jurisdiction over the child's place of residence or to the head of a middle school within their middle school district.	Submit an application for admission to the head of the preferred high school.
② Verification of admission documents	※ For more details, refer to the "Preparing for School Entrance (p. 8-10)" section.		
③ Grade determination	If documents proving the student's educational background are available		If documents proving the student's educational background are unavailable
	Grade placement is determined based on the duration of attendance and completed coursework in foreign schools, aligned with Korea's 12-year school system. Grade placement is determined based on documents proving the student's educational background.		After academic deliberation, academic recognition and grade determination are determined. ※ Determined by the Academic Deliberation Committee of the metropolitan and provincial office of education or by schools authorized by the superintendent of education to make such decisions.
④ Academic record registration (school)	Guidance for parents on academic record registration · Student name: Based on passport (certificate of foreign resident registration, or residence card) * If the supporting document includes both English and Korean names, the student/parent may choose the preferred name format. · Resident registration number: Foreign registration numbers can be used for admission * If unavailable, the first six digits will represent the birthdate, and the last seven digits will be 3000000 (male) or 4000000 (female).		

## Support for Korean School Life of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)



### Support for Entry into Public Education to Guarantee Fair Educational Opportunities

- **Children and juveniles** can enter and transfer to elementary and middle school **regardless of their status of stay, nationality, race, etc.**
- Illegally staying residents will not be subject to enforcement actions through their children to uphold children's right to education.



### Support for School Adjustment and Korean Language and Culture Education

- **Steppingstone Program**
  - Support program for early adaptation to school life, provided for students with migrant background (multicultural students) who will enter or transfer to elementary school or middle school.
- **Preliminary Korean Language Program**
  - Provides intensive Korean language education for 3 months to 1 year at a designated external institution for students with migrant background who have difficulty using Korean.
- **Korean Language Class (Special Multicultural Class)**
  - Special classes are created and operated to provide intensive Korean language education and school adaptation programs for newly arrived re-immigrant and foreign students.
- **Visiting Korean Language Education**
  - Korean language teachers visit and provide Korean language education during after-school hours or other available times.
- **College Student Mentoring Program**
  - College students (mentors) help in migrant background preschoolers and students' (mentees) school life and study.
- **Development and Distribution of Teaching Aids**
  - Teaching materials that explain key concepts and terms of courses easily to help in students' studies.



### Career Education and Emotional Support

- **Support for the Development of Multilingualism Benefits**
  - Develops bilingual textbooks and hosts the "National Bilingual Speaking Contest" to encourage bilingual learning.
- **Career Education Programs and Mentoring**
  - Career education programs tailored to the characteristics of students with migrant background (multicultural students).
  - Operation of "online career mentoring (mentoring.career.go.kr)."
- **Psychological-emotional Support for School Life Adaptation**
  - Provides the "Questionnaire for Screening of Emotional and Behavioral Characteristics" in different languages and cooperates with Wee Class and support institutions for migrant background children and juveniles in communities.

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PART I



# Preparing for School Entrance



1. Understanding the Admission Procedure
2. Documents Required for the School Enrollment of Students with Foreign Nationalities
3. How to Verify the Academic Recognition of Students with Foreign Nationality

I

## Preparing for School Entrance







### 1. Understanding the Admission Procedure

#### Admission Classification by Nationality

Category	 Nationality of the Republic of Korea	 Foreign Nationality
Scope	Children with Republic of Korea nationality (including those with multiple nationality)	Children with foreign nationality (including unregistered migrant children and refugees)
Description	Follow the same procedure as non-migrant background students	Follow the school register procedure for students with foreign nationalities

#### Application for Admission



※ When selecting a school for your child's admission or transfer, consult first with the school in your residential area or the metropolitan and provincial office of education or the district office of education (refer to the appendix).

Category	 Nationality of the Republic of Korea Multiple nationalities including the nationality of the Republic of Korea	 Foreign Nationality Including unregistered migrant children and refugees
 Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit an application via the website of the Integrated Portal for Early Childhood Education and Care, "Admission Application Website (enter.childinfo.go.kr)." (Early recruitment begins every November 1, followed by the regular preschool application period after November)</li> <li>- Submit an application for admission to the head of the preferred kindergarten at any time.</li> <li>※ Applicants are selected according to the fixed number of students.</li> </ul>	
 Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A written notice to enroll is sent to the home from public institutions such as Community Service Centers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit an application for admission to the head of a school in the school district where the students' residence is located.</li> <li>※ After consulting with the Eup/Myeon/Dong Community Service Center in the child's residential area, submit the application.</li> </ul>
 Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit an application for admission to the student's current elementary school; students are then assigned to middle schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit an application for admission to the district office of education having jurisdiction over the child's place of residence or to the head of a middle school within their middle school district.</li> </ul>
 High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit an application for admission to the student's current middle school; students are then assigned to high schools.</li> <li>※ Check the admission processes of high schools via the High School Admission Information Portal (<a href="http://www.hischool.go.kr">www.hischool.go.kr</a>).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit an application for admission to the head of the preferred high school.</li> <li>※ For special cases such as special admission, check in advance with the school or office of education to confirm whether admission is possible.</li> </ul>

## 2. Documents Required for the School Enrollment of Students with Foreign Nationalities









### Kindergarten

Category	Description
 <p>Application for admission or transfer</p>	<p>- Form provided by the school or office of education</p>
 <p>Certificate of entry and exit or certificate of foreign resident registration</p>	<p>- Certificate of entry and exit or certificate of foreign resident registration (choose 1)            ※ If it is not possible to issue a certificate of entry and exit or a certificate of alien registration, <b>documents that can verify the place of residence, such as lease contract or letter of guarantee for residence (proof of the guarantor's identity)</b>, may be used as substitutes.</p>

### Elementary/Middle/High School



Category	Description
 <p>Application for admission or transfer</p>	<p>- Form provided by the school or office of education</p>
 <p>Certificate of entry and exit or certificate of foreign resident registration</p>	<p>- Certificate of entry and exit or certificate of foreign resident registration (choose 1)            ※ If it is not possible to issue a certificate of entry and exit or a certificate of alien registration, <b>documents that can verify the place of residence, such as lease contract or letter of guarantee for residence (proof of the guarantor's identity)</b>, may be used as substitutes.</p>
 <p>Documents proving the student's educational background (certificate of graduation, certificate of enrollment, and transcript)</p>	<p>- A document signed by the principal of the school, showing the date of enrollment/withdrawal and current grade, or academic transcripts containing academic grades up to the highest or current grade            ※ If it is difficult to prove the student's educational background, the <b>Committee of Deliberation on Academic Backgrounds of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)</b> deliberates on matters regarding their academic backgrounds.</p>
 <p>Student record (if applicable)</p>	<p>- Submit if the child has attended a school in Korea before</p>
 <p>Certificate of immunization</p>	<p>- The school may demand the relevant document under the Immunization Management of New Students and Transfer Students from Foreign Countries of the "Manual on Prevention and Crisis Response to Infectious Diseases for Students"</p>
 <p>Other documents under the guidelines of the metropolitan and provincial office of education</p>	<p>- Documents must be confirmed by the competent office of education</p>

※ With the applicant's consent, the household register (resident register), abstract of resident registration, and certificate of alien registration may be looked up by the school and district office of education. Apart from this, for educational purposes, some schools may demand a copy of passport, certificate of family relations, household register (resident register) (if the student has acquired the nationality of the Republic of Korea), etc. in order to check the student's information.



### Committee of Deliberation on Academic Backgrounds of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)

If it is difficult to prove the student's educational background, the Committee of Deliberation on Academic Backgrounds deliberates on matters regarding whether to accredit his/her educational background and grade determination.

- Academic recognition: Recognizing academic achievements equivalent to elementary school graduation or middle school graduation
- Grade determination: Determining the school level, grade, and semester for enrollment



## 3. How to Verify the Academic Recognition of Students with Foreign Nationality (Choose 1)

Category	Method
① Check on the website of the Ministry of Education	Visit the main page of the Ministry of Education website ( <a href="http://www.moe.go.kr">www.moe.go.kr</a> ) → [Policy] → [Elementary, Middle, and High School Education]. ※ Schools recognized by the Ministry of Education are accepted based on documents issued by the principal without apostille or consular authentication.
② Apostille authentication (verified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Ministry of Justice)	Visit the main page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Overseas Travel Safety website ( <a href="http://www.0404.go.kr">www.0404.go.kr</a> ) → Consular Services menu.
③ Consular authentication	Submit a document authenticated by a consul at a Korean diplomatic mission abroad, certifying that the school is an accredited regular school in the respective country.
④ Other cases	Submit proof that the school is an officially accredited educational institution recognized by the local education authority in that country.



### Please Note! - Document Issuing Institutions

Documents Required	Issuing Authority
Application for admission or transfer	- School of intended enrollment or district office of education
Certificate of entry and exit	- Si/Gun/Gu Offices, Eup/Myeon/Dong Community Service Centers, or immigrant offices
Certificate of foreign resident registration	
Certificate of domestic residence report	- Si/Gun/Gu Offices or Eup/Myeon/Dong Community Service Centers
Household register (resident register), abstract of resident registration (if the student has acquired the nationality of Korea)	
Certificate of family relations, birth certificate, etc.	

※ Various certificates can also be issued online through Government 24 ([www.gov.kr](http://www.gov.kr)).

## PART II



# Understanding the Admission Procedure by School Level

1. Enrollment in Kindergarten
2. Enrollment in Elementary School
3. Enrollment in Middle School
4. Enrollment in High School

II

## Understanding the Admission Procedure by School Level



### 1. Enrollment in Kindergarten

**Type**

- **National kindergartens:** Kindergartens established and operated by the State
- **Public kindergartens:** Kindergartens established and operated by local governments
- **Private kindergartens:** Kindergartens established and operated by juristic persons or private individuals

**Timing for Admission**

- Children can enroll in kindergarten starting March 1 of the year following their third birthday.
- Regular admission: Admission applications are submitted via the **Integrated Portal for Early Childhood Education and Care, "Admission Application Website (enter.childinfo.go.kr),"** between October and November.
- Rolling admission: Outside the regular admission period, admission is available within the capacity limits for each age group at any time. Please check directly with the respective kindergarten for on-site application availability.
- ※ Aside from the regular admission period, you should submit an application for admission to the kindergarten in person. Your child may be accepted when the kindergarten has a vacancy.

**Enrollment in Kindergarten**

Early Recruitment*	General Recruitment	Additional Recruitment
Receipt of submissions for applications	Early receipt of submissions for applications	Submission of applications and registration
Selection and announcement	Regular receipt of submissions for applications	
Registration	Selection and announcement	
	Registration	
	Waiting list management	

\***Early recruitment:** See the recruitment guide of the kindergarten to find out whether your child is eligible for early recruitment, and then submit required documents.

**Procedures for Using the Admission Application Website**



**Kindergarten Life**

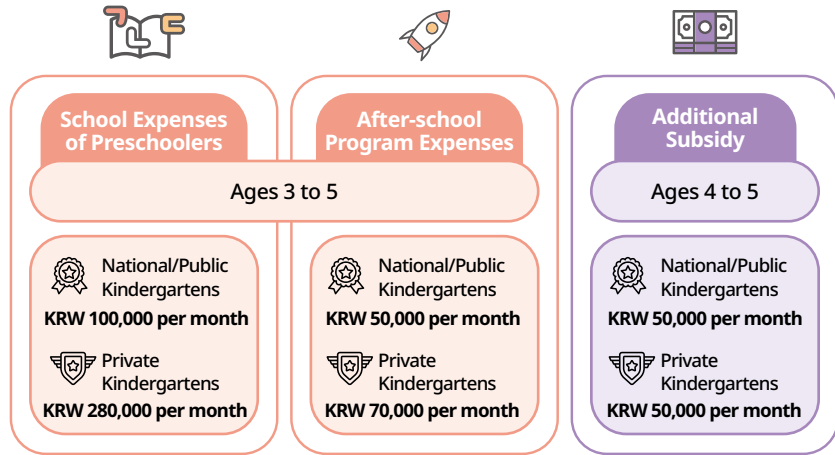
- **Daily schedule:** Divided into the Nuri Curriculum (4-5 hours per day) and after-school programs (after the regular program). Daily schedule may vary by kindergarten.

<Example of daily schedule>

Category	Time	Activity Description
Nuri Curriculum	09:00-13:00	Arrive at the kindergarten, free time (play), snack, play outdoors, lunch, activities
After-school Program	13:00-18:00	Break/Nap, afternoon snack, specialized programs, special activities, free time (play), play outdoors

## Educational Subsidies for Preschoolers

(As of Mar. 1, 2025)



※ Subsidies may vary by city and province. Please check with the competent office of education (district office of education) or the Eup/Myeon/Dong Community Service Center.

- Subsidies for school expenses are provided for all preschoolers (ages 3 to 5) attending a kindergarten regardless of income level.

※ But only within a three-year limit.

- An additional subsidy of up to KRW 200,000 per month is provided for preschoolers from legal low income families (people eligible for assistance, second-lowest income bracket, or single-parent families) and who are currently attending a private kindergarten, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for provision of educational subsidies for preschoolers.

\* Including preschoolers of early admission, deferred admission, etc.

- Visit the Eup/Myeon/Dong Community Service Center having jurisdiction over the parent's (guardian's) place of residence, or the Bokjiro ([www.bokjiro.go.kr](http://www.bokjiro.go.kr)) to apply for subsidies.



## 2. Enrollment in Elementary School



### Type

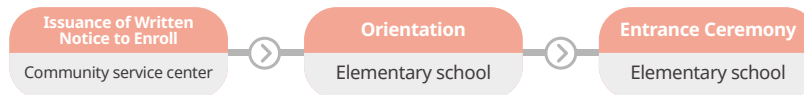
- **National elementary schools:** Elementary schools established and operated by the State and elementary schools attached to teachers' colleges and colleges of education of national universities
- **Public elementary schools:** City/Do elementary schools established and operated by local governments
- **Private elementary schools:** Elementary schools established and operated by juristic persons or private individuals

### Timing for Admission

- Children enter school on March 1 of the year following the year in which they turn six years old.
- Generally, they enter the designated school by receiving a written notice to enroll issued by Community Service Center.
- Parents of children wishing to enter school early or defer admission for early admission or admission deferral with the competent Eup/Myeon/Dong Community Service Center in person between **October 1 and December 31** every year. Consider carefully before filing an application.

※ Parents failing to send their children with Korean nationality to an elementary school may be slapped with an administrative fine.

### Enrollment in School



### Preparation for Admission by Student Type

- **Students with Korean Nationality**
  - Children born in Korea, including students with Korean nationality, follow the same academic record registration procedures as non-migrant background students.
  - Generally, students are assigned to a school based on their place of residence. Children from multicultural families facing communication difficulties may be admitted to elementary school that have established special classes for migrant background students (Korean language classes).
- **Students with Foreign Nationality**
  - A written notice to enroll is not issued to **children from foreign families** even though they were born in Korea. **Visit the competent Eup/Myeon/Dong Community Service Center or a nearby elementary school with documents verifying your child's residence in Korea and inquire about admission.**
  - **Unregistered foreign children can enroll in school.** If it is not possible to issue a certificate of entry and exit or a certificate of alien registration, they should submit documents verifying their **residence** in Korea and **date of birth**, such as written lease contract and letter of guarantee (proof of the guarantor's identity).



### In the case of re-immigration,

- Consult with the district office of education having jurisdiction over the child's residence and the local Multicultural Education Support Center for admission. (See page 27 of the Appendix.)
- Documents verifying the child's residence in the Republic of Korea and proof of academic background (for grade placement) are required.  
(Refer to pages 8–10 of "Preparing for School Entrance.")
- ※ If it is difficult to prove the student's educational background, you must apply to the academic review authority to determine the appropriate grade level. (As the responsible authority differs by region, please contact the local Multicultural Education Support Center for assistance.)

### Elementary School Life

- **Curriculum** ※ For more details, please refer to the "Smart Handbook for Parents."
  - Classes are conducted under a full-time homeroom teacher system. **Each class period lasts 40 minutes with a 10-minute break in between.**
  - Schools operate from four to six periods per day.
  - Subjects
    - Grades 1–2: Korean Language, Mathematics, Integrated Course
    - Grades 3–4: Korean Language, Social Studies, Moral Education, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education, Music, Fine Arts, and English
    - Grades 5–6: Korean Language, Social Studies, Moral Education, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education, Practical Arts, Music, Fine Arts, and English
- **Neulbom School**
  - What is the **Neulbom School**? Neulbom School is a **careing program offered after regular classes to students who wish to participate.**
    - A variety of programs are offered, including physical education, arts, and career exploration, to support students' growth and development.
    - All elementary school students may apply, and for grades 1–2, customized programs suited to their level are provided free of charge for two hours each day.

※ Depending on the school's circumstances, the program may operate in different formats such as Morning Neulbom or After-School Neulbom. Please contact your district office of education or school before applying.



### 3. Enrollment in Middle School

#### Type

General Middle Schools	General middle schools providing standard education, constituting the largest portion of high school types
Specialized Middle Schools	Arts/Physical Education Middle Schools Middle schools specializing in arts and physical education
	International Middle Schools Middle schools specializing in nurturing talent in the international field for the global era
	Alternative Middle Schools Middle schools specializing in alternative education such as hands-on education

- ※ Schools can be classified as national, public, or private depending on the founding body.
  - National: Operated and managed by the State
  - Public: Managed and operated by local governments
  - Private: Managed and operated by private individuals or private juristic persons

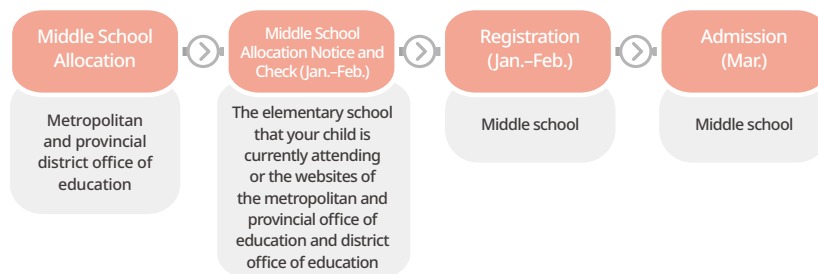
#### Timing for Admission

- Generally, children graduate from elementary school and enter middle school in the year they turn 12 years old. **(Children who have graduated from an elementary school or who have an equivalent education background thereof are subject to compulsory middle school enrollment.)**

※ Parents failing to send their children with Korean nationality to a middle school may be slapped with an administrative fine.

- Since the admission period and procedures for specialized middle school vary by school, you must contact the school before applying.

#### Enrollment in School



#### Preparation for Admission by Student Type

- **Students with Korean Nationality**
  - Children born in Korea, including students with Korean nationality, follow the same academic record registration procedures as non-migrant background students.

- Middle schools are allocated based on the student's residential address as of October 31 during the second semester of 6th grade in elementary school. After selecting the desired middle school, parents must submit an allocation form to the school, and students are assigned to nearby schools through a lottery system.
- **Children with migrant background may be admitted to middle schools that have set up special multicultural class (Korean language class).**
- **Students with Foreign Nationality**
  - When a student with foreign nationality is entering middle school as a first-year student (new admission), it is **necessary to confirm eligibility for admission with the district office of education having jurisdiction over the student's residence or with a nearby middle school**, as is the case for Korean students.
  - **Unregistered foreign children can enroll in school.** If it is not possible to issue a certificate of entry and exit or a certificate of alien registration, they should submit documents verifying their **residence** in Korea and **date of birth**, such as written lease contract and letter of guarantee (proof of the guarantor's identity).



#### **In the case of re-immigration,**

- Consult with the district office of education having jurisdiction over the child's residence and the local Multicultural Education Support Center for admission. (See page 27 of the Appendix.)
- Documents verifying the child's residence in the Republic of Korea and proof of academic background (for grade placement) are required.  
(Refer to pages 8–10 of "Preparing for School Entrance.")
- ※ If it is difficult to prove the student's educational background, you must apply to the academic review authority to determine the appropriate grade level. (As the responsible authority differs by region, please contact the local Multicultural Education Support Center for assistance.)

### **Middle School Life**

- **Curriculum** ※ For more details, please refer to the "Smart Handbook for Parents."
  - Unlike elementary schools operated with the full-time homeroom teacher system, **middle schools** are operated on the basis of a combination of the **homeroom teacher system and the departmental system**.
  - **Each class period lasts 45 minutes with a 10-minute break in between.** Schools operate from six to a maximum of seven periods per day.
- **Free Learning Semester Program**
  - What is the **Free Learning Semester Program**? This program in middle school allows students to explore their interests and career paths for one semester by participating in various experiential activities and interactive classes without the pressure of exams.
  - Written exams such as midterms and finals are not conducted, and students are evaluated based on their learning process and growth.
  - Students develop interest in learning and self-direction through various activities such as physical education, arts, career exploration, and club activities.



## 4. Enrollment in High School

### Type

Category	Description		Admission Process	
General High Schools	General high schools providing standard education, constituting the largest portion of high school types		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standardized regions: Lottery system</li> <li>- Non-standardized regions: Students are selected based on their academic performances and other criteria</li> </ul>	
Special-purpose High Schools	Schools focusing on specialized fields such as foreign languages, international studies, or science to provide professional education	Foreign Language High Schools	Foster experts proficient in foreign languages	- A self learning screening process evaluated by the school's admission screening committee
		International High Schools	Nurture professionals in international politics and diplomacy	
		Science High Schools	Train talents in science	
		Arts High Schools & Physical Education High Schools	Foster talented individuals in fields such as literature, music, arts, dance, theater, and film	- Each school selects students through its own admission process, which may include academic performances, interviews, and practical tests
		Meister High Schools	Develop future Meisters (young Meisters) by aligning specialized industries with promising fields of demand	
Specialized High Schools	Schools offering education aimed at training talents in a specific field for students having similar aptitudes, skills, and abilities, or focusing on experience-oriented education such as field training in nature	Vocational High Schools	Vocational training for students who want to get a job after graduation	- Each school selects students through its own admission process, which may include academic performances, interviews, and practical tests
		Alternative Specialized High Schools	Operates autonomous alternative educational programs focusing on students	
Autonomous High School	Public or private schools authorized to operate more autonomously than other high school types with regard to school management or curriculum	Autonomous Private High Schools	Operate educational programs and management based on their founding philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standardized regions: Lottery system</li> <li>- Non-standardized regions: Students are selected based on their academic performances and other criteria</li> </ul>
		Autonomous Public High Schools	Operate curriculum and management autonomously with the superintendent's approval to improve and develop the education system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recommendations and allocation</li> <li>- Deliberation by the selection committee</li> </ul>

※ Schools can be classified as national, public, or private depending on the founding body.

- National: Operated and managed by the State
- Public: Managed and operated by local governments
- Private: Managed and operated by private individuals or private juristic persons

### Timing for Admission

- Students are eligible for admission if they have graduated from middle school or have passed an examination certifying equivalent academic achievement.
- Recruitment periods, admission processes, etc. vary by metropolitan and provincial offices of education and schools. Contact the competent office of education for details.

### Enrollment in School

- Unlike elementary and middle schools, high schools conduct their own admission processes under the discretion of the school principal, so it is necessary to check the requirements in advance.
- The time for selecting new high school students is divided into the first term and the second term.
  - **First term:** General high schools (art/physical education), special-purpose high schools (science/arts/physical education high schools, high schools tailored to industry demand)
  - **Second term:** High schools not included in the first term, such as general high schools (except art/physical education)
- Detailed information on high school admission can be found on the "High School Admission Information Portal Website ([www.hischool.go.kr](http://www.hischool.go.kr))."

※ Specialized high schools can be found on the "Specialized and Meister High School Portal ([www.hifive.go.kr](http://www.hifive.go.kr))" and the specialized high school information portals provided by each metropolitan and provincial office of education.

### Preparation for Admission by Student Type

- **Students with Korean Nationality**
  - Children born in Korea, including students with Korean nationality, follow the same academic record registration procedures as non-migrant background students.
  - Recruitment periods and admission procedures may vary by metropolitan and provincial office of education. Contact the competent office of education for details.
- **Students with Foreign Nationality**
  - **Unregistered foreign children can enroll in school.** If it is not possible to issue a certificate of entry and exit or a certificate of alien registration, they should submit documents verifying their **residence** in Korea and **date of birth**, such as written lease contract and letter of guarantee (proof of the guarantor's identity).



### In the case of re-immigration,

- Consult with the district office of education having jurisdiction over the child's residence and the local Multicultural Education Support Center for admission. (See page 27 of the Appendix.)
- Documents verifying the child's residence in the Republic of Korea and proof of academic background (for grade placement) are required.  
(Refer to pages 8–10 of "Preparing for School Entrance.")
- ※ If it is difficult to prove the student's educational background, you must apply to the academic review authority to determine the appropriate grade level. (As the responsible authority differs by region, please contact the local Multicultural Education Support Center for assistance.)

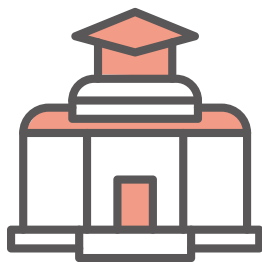
## High School Life

### · Curriculum

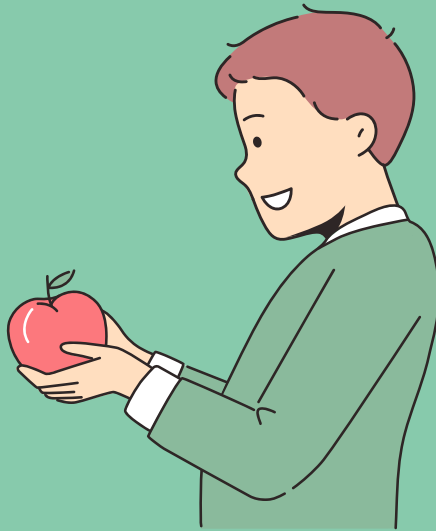
- Unlike middle schools, high schools are operated on the basis of the **High School Credit System** and a combination of the **homeroom teacher system and the departmental system**.
- **Each class period lasts 50 minutes with a 10-minute break in between.** Schools operate from six to a maximum of seven periods per day.

### · High School Credit System

- What is the **High School Credit System**? It is a system in which students select courses based on their career paths and interests, build on foundation competences and basic academic skills, and earn and accumulate credits for subjects in which they meet the completion standards to graduate.
- In addition to the required courses, students can take elective courses that match their career goals and interests.
- Students must earn the required credits to graduate, and their academic performance is evaluated through various methods beyond simple written tests, including performance assessments.



**PART III**



# Exploring Education Support Systems

1. Educational Subsidies
2. Support for School Life and Daily Life



## Exploring Education Support Systems

### 1. Educational Subsidies

#### Admission Preparation Subsidy (Varies by City/Province)

- Depending on the metropolitan and provincial offices of education, admission preparation subsidies are provided to first-year students entering elementary, middle, or high school.

※ The details of the subsidy vary by region, so please check with the local office of education or district office of education.

#### School Uniform (Varies by City/Province)

- In some cases, school jointly purchase school uniforms<sup>1)</sup>, or the subsidy may be provided as mobile points with designated items for purchase<sup>2)</sup>, so it is important to check and utilize the available options in advance.

#### Education Benefits and Educational Subsidies for Children from Low-income Families

- There are support programs such as the “education benefit” for children from low-income families and the “educational subsidy” for children from low-income migrant background families. Please inquire at Community Service Centers to check eligibility and apply.

※ The education benefit and educational subsidy cannot be received simultaneously, so please check the eligibility requirements before applying.

#### For More Information

- Health & Welfare Counseling Center: ☎ 129
- Central Counseling Center for Educational Expenses: ☎ 1544-9654
- National Family Center: ☎ 1577-9337
- Eup/Myeon/Dong Community Service Centers of the place of residence, schools, and the local office of education (district office of education)
- ※ [Appendix 4] Counseling Centers for School Admission and School Life

## 2. Support for School Life and Daily Life



### Multicultural Education Center (Refer to the appendix)

- Each of the 17 metropolitan and provincial offices of education operates a center to support students with migrant background and their parents in entering and adapting to public education, provide multicultural education experience programs, Korean language education for students with migrant background, and career experience programs.



### Korean Institute for Healthy Family Multicultural Family Support Center Danuri 1577-1366

- Korean Institute for Healthy Family Multicultural Family Support Center Danuri provide family relationship enhancement education (family, gender equality, human rights, etc.), Korean language education, visiting education, counseling, information, translation service for immigrants by marriage, and language development support service for children in order to help multicultural families adapt to Korean society. Currently, 244 centers are operating in Korea.

#### · Danuri Call Center (☎ 1577-1366)

- The Danuri Call Center provides Korean practical information, emergency counseling and support, practical interpretation, and three-party interpretation services for multicultural women and immigrant women residing in Korea.
- Services are provided in 13 different languages, allowing a client to speak in her mother language to a counselor who is also an immigrant woman from the client's country.
  - ※ All counseling sessions and the client's identification are confidential.
- **Support Details**
  - Operates emergency shelters and provides counseling for emergencies and violence damage counseling and link to emergency support.
  - Provides practical information, practical interpretation, and three-party phone interpretation (local counseling in cooperation with the Korean Bar Association).



### WEE CLASS (School)

- Wee Class provides one-stop services covering diagnosis, counseling, and treatment for students who have difficulty adapting to school, at-risk students, and students who need counseling. Wee Class operates to help students adapt to home, school, and society. In addition, it helps students understand and overcome their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral issues. (Professional counselors are available. Students can visit the Wee Class room at any time for assistance or counseling when they face difficulties.)



### Migrant Background Youth Support Foundation 02-733-7587

- The Migrant Youth Foundation Rainbow Youth Center helps juveniles with migrant backgrounds (North Korean adolescent refugees, immigrant juveniles, multicultural juveniles). The foundation provides a variety of programs associated with basic information about Korean society, Korean language education, social relationship enhancement, etc. in order to help juveniles with migrant backgrounds develop their social learning ability and self-reliance.

PART IV



## Appendix

[Appendix 1] Terms Related to Entry into (or Advancement in) Public Education

[Appendix 2] Video Resources for Parents of Students with Migrant Background  
(Multicultural Students)

[Appendix 3] Free Online Korean Language Education Websites

[Appendix 4] Counseling Centers for School Admission and School Life

## VI

## Appendix



## &lt;Appendix 1&gt; Terms Related to Entry into (or Advancement in) Public Education

Terms	Description
Orientation Day	A significant day when parents and students visit the school for the first time, submit the written notice to enroll, and receive essential guidance for admission
Entrance	Entering school as a first year student in elementary, middle, or high school
Admission	Entering the appropriate grade level in a compulsory education school for the first time
Attendance	Holding student status (academic records) at the enrolled school
Semester	Academic term that divides an academic year as necessary. Generally divided into two semesters, from March to August and from September to February
Vacation	Any of the periods during which schools (kindergartens) are closed for a certain period of time at the end of the semester or year (* Summer vacation, winter vacation, spring vacation etc.)
Start of School	The day regular class period starts after school (kindergarten) vacation ends
Graduation	Completion of the prescribed curriculum by a student (preschooler) in accordance with regulations
Grade Retention	Failure to advance to the next grade level due to non-completion of the current grade's curriculum
Leave of Absence	Temporary suspension of school attendance for a set period with the school principal's approval due to reasons such as illness
Deferral of Admission	Deferral of obligation to enroll and receive education in the current academic year to the following academic year
Transfer	Moving from the current school to another



## &lt;Appendix 2&gt; Video Resources for Parents of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)



**Guidance Video on Entering Public Education for Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)** is produced in Korean and available in 14 multilingual subtitles (English, Japanese, Chinese, Tagalog (Philippines), Vietnamese, Russian, French, Mongolian, Khmer, Thai, Arabic, Burmese, Uzbek, and Indonesian) on YouTube.



**Guidance Video for Parents of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students) about Elementary School Life** provides information in Korean on the Korean education system and school life from elementary school admission to graduation, with 7 multilingual subtitles (English, Japanese, Chinese, Russian, French, Vietnamese, and Philippines) on YouTube.



The videos can be accessed through the **Multicultural Education Portal (edu4mc.or.kr) Archives** or the **National Center for Multiculture Education YouTube channel (@edu4mc)**.



### <Appendix 3> Free Online Korean Language Education Websites

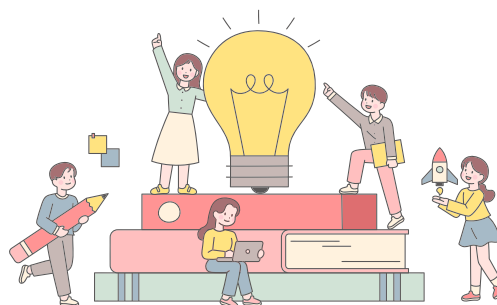
<p>EBS Durian (ebs.co.kr/durian)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides Korean language education programs where you can learn Korean language and culture and EBS multicultural contents for immigrant families.</li> <li>- 4 languages supported (Korean, English, Vietnamese, and Chinese).</li> </ul>
<p>Multilingual Fairy Tale Content, National Library for Children and Young Adults (nlcy.go.kr/NLCY/contents/C10503010000.do)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presents Korean traditional fairy tales and creative children's stories in flash animation.</li> <li>- Provides multilingual services in up to 9 languages (Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Mongolian, English, Russian, Khmer, and Tagalog).</li> </ul>
<p>Nuri King Sejong Institute (nuri.iksi.or.kr)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides a wide range of educational materials related to Korean language and culture.</li> <li>- 16 languages supported (Korean, English, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Mongolian, Thai, Indonesian, Russian, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Malay, Arabic, Uzbek, and Hindi).</li> </ul>
<p>Duru Bookstore (두루책방.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides reading materials of six levels starting with books consisting of short sentences.</li> <li>- 5 languages supported (Korean, English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Thai).</li> </ul>
<p>Dubbing School TV (YouTube – Search for Dubbing School TV)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For 1st and 2nd graders who are less proficient in the written language, dubbed videos are provided in 4 languages (Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Mongolian).</li> <li>- For 3rd to 6th graders who are familiar with the written language, subtitled videos are provided in 6 languages (Russian, Vietnamese, Mongolian, Chinese, English, and Japanese).</li> </ul>
<p>Study Korean of the Overseas Koreans Agency (study.korean.net)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides Korean language learning materials for overseas Koreans. You can use the contents even though you are not an overseas Korean.</li> <li>- You can access a lot of Korean culture contents without logging in to the website.</li> <li>- Log in to the website and apply for a course if you want to learn Korean.</li> </ul>
<p>Ollybolly Online Picture Book (ollybolly.org)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduces picture books of different countries (Republic of Korea, Lebanon, Rwanda, Mongolia, Vietnam, Uzbekistan, Iran, Indonesia, China, Cambodia, Thailand, Tibet, Palestine, and Philippines).</li> <li>- Each picture book is provided in its original language, Korean, and English.</li> <li>- You may organize picture books by theme or country.</li> </ul>
<p>Korean for Everyone (korean.edunet.net)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students can attend Korean language classes and complete assignments using content designed for elementary and middle school levels.</li> </ul>



#### <Appendix 4> Counseling Centers for School Admission and School Life

Agency	Tel.
Seoul Multicultural Education Support Center	070-4832-8327, 070-4832-8328
Busan Multicultural Education Support Center	051-819-7062
Daegu Multicultural Education Support Center	053-231-2925
Incheon Multicultural Education Support Center	032-420-8269
Gwangju Multicultural Education Support Center	062-940-8955
Daejeon Multicultural Education Support Center	042-616-8856
Ulsan Multicultural Education Support Center	052-255-8180
Sejong Multicultural Education Support Center	044-320-2141
Gyeonggi Multicultural Education Support Center	031-820-0696, 031-820-0697, 031-820-0698

Agency	Tel.
Gangwon Multicultural Education Support Center	033-258-5448
Chungcheongbuk-do Multicultural Education Support Center	043-210-2831
Chungcheongnam-do Multicultural Education Support Center	041-640-7232, 041-640-7234
Jeonbuk-do Multicultural Education Support Center	063-239-3482
Jeollanam-do Multicultural Education Support Center	061-640-3330
Gyeongsangbuk-do Multicultural Education Support Center	054-805-3264
Gyeongsangnam-do Multicultural Education Support Center	055-210-5162
Jeju Multicultural Education Support Center	064-784-9041



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**Guide for Entry into Public Education  
for Parents of Students with Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)**

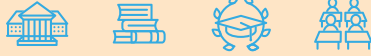
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<b>Address</b>	4F, National Institute for Lifelong Education, 105-7 Magokjungang-ro, Gangseo-gu, Seoul (Postal Code) 07800
<b>Tel.</b>	02-3780-9943
<b>Fax</b>	02-3780-9959
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2025

# How to Start School in Korea



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for Parents of Students with  
Migrant Background (Multicultural Students)