

Increasing Educational Support for Underprivileged Children

Kang Hyun-Guk

President
Daegu National University of Education

■ Educational Background:

- B.A. in Literature, Kyungpook National University
- M.Ed. in Korean Education, Kyungpook National University
- Ph.D. in Literature, Kyungpook National University

■ Professional Experience:

- 1976. ~ present Poet
- 1984. ~ present Full-time Lecturer ~ Professor, Daegu National University of Education (DNUE)
- 1999. ~ 2000. Director of Elementary Education Training Center, DNUE
- 2003. ~ 2004. Director of Library, DNUE
- 2006. ~ present President, DNUE

■ Selected Publications:

- "A Study on Teaching Method of Creative Poem's Reading in Elementary School"
- "A Tendency of Modern Korean Poetry"
- "A Study on the Framework for Guiding the Appreciation of Poetry"
- Others



Summary

In January, 2006, the Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development announced its plan to spend approximately 172.8 billion KRW to increase educational, culture, and welfare services for underprivileged students in 100 low-income regions nationwide by 2008.

In an effort to reduce the educational gap between the rich and the poor, the educational welfare project will help offer diverse educational and cultural opportunities to about 220,000 students attending 750 pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools across the nation. As a start, the ministry has earmarked 20.9 billion KRW this year to expand beneficiaries from the current 15 to 30 regions including small-to-medium sized cities with populations of more than 250,000.

Under the plan, the education ministry will offer supplementary education for those who lag behind through teachings in small groups, vacation camps, and diversified usage of the library. Students will also be provided with after-school programs and specialized programs in accordance with their academic aptitudes and club activities.

The project, first started in 2003 as one of the core strategies of the Participatory Government of the Republic of Korea, has so far provided educational welfare services for students in 15 districts in six large cities including Seoul and Busan. While continuing to enlarge the scope of support to 100 regions, the ministry also plans to link the project with on-going welfare policies of other governmental departments such as lifelong learning cities, u-learning complexes, and after-school academies.

1. 3N Day

- **No tie**
- **No car**
- **Neighborhood**

3N Day is a major campaign in Daegu National University of Education (DNUE). One day a month, DNUE members take public transportation to work (**No car**) with informal dress (**No tie**) for social service

to the neighborhood (**Neighborhood**).

2. Mentoring Program

First, the educational mentoring program of DNUE, launched in June, 2006, is a supportive device to bridge the gap in educational opportunities and alleviate polarization. In this program, DNUE students help improve the learning capacity and sociality of underprivileged children by offering tutoring lessons. The programs serve a double purpose, as mentors are able to gain social service experience and earn college credits in return for their contribution.

Lessons from the mentoring program may range across a wide variety of contents according to a child's needs and request, such as tutoring in basic academic skills, helping with school course work, career guidance, counseling, and sports & culture activities. The mentoring will take place at DNUE, or may also be conducted at a child's home upon request and will last approximately two hours, twice a week. Mentored children include students from low-income families, those without parents, and those in foster care.

DNUE students will receive monthly stipends from DNUE to cover transportation and culture activity costs.

The mentoring program is currently under trial operation in Namgu district of Daegu. Under a collaborative effort of DNUE with Daegu Metropolitan Office of Education (DMOE) and with Gyeongsangbuk-do Office of Education (GOE), DNUE plans to expand the mentoring program to Daegu and Gyeongsangbuk-do. In the long run, the program will also cover services for children of interracial marriages, migrant worker's offspring, as well as their parents.

3. After-School Program

After-school programs have been providing extra-curricular learning opportunities for students with programs such as level-differentiated supplementary studies and special skill/aptitude training. However, due to a limited variety of support for low-income students, the participation rate of students has remained low.

With today's growing demands to curb excessive private education costs, to address the problems of low birth rates and ageing society, and to bridge the educational gap, the government has realized that it would need to provide improved and diverse educational service, and has been focusing on improving after-school programs as a means for that purpose.

Starting 2005, the Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development has launched pilot after-school programs in 48 primary and secondary schools across the country's 16 cities and provinces.

In May, 2006, DNUE concluded an agreement with DMOE on after-school programs. In July, 2006, DNUE also concluded an agreement with GOE on after-school programs.

DNUE is mobilizing teacher-to-be personages, DNUE students, to provide various after-school learning programs at school including arts, sports, foreign languages and other regular subjects.

The main goal of the after-school program is to absorb the demand for private education into school boundaries and to offer qualified learning opportunities, especially for low-income-class students. By operating the program, DNUE also seeks to strengthen childcare provision and attract other social programs with this strategy, ultimately developing schools into regional centers of education and culture with DMOE and GOE.

The after-school program enables schools to accommodate the different needs and demands for learning and child care. So the outlook of the big plan for conducting the program is that it will empower the educational function of schools, help curb private education expenditure, and effectively bridge the educational gap between income levels and regions.