

Government Reveals 54 Key Tasks to Expand Educational Welfare

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Policy Planning Division

By 2012, all middle school students will be exempted from school support fees and school meals will be provided free for all students in low-income families or rural regions, under a new “Educational Welfare Promotion Plan” set forth by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology on December 17, 2008.

The comprehensive support plan, consisting of 54 mid- to long-term policy tasks, comes as an effort to ensure sufficient educational access for underprivileged students and to bridge the gap of education by region and income level.

The ministry has set aside 17.2239 trillion Korean won (approximately \$12.7 billion) for the purpose, to be invested over a period of five years from 2008 to 2012, including the 2.9403 trillion won spent this year. The plan’s 52 policy tasks are outlined below.

1. Ensure that financial status does not affect access to education

Policy Task	Implementation Scheme	Budget(KRW)
Increase basic educational fee aid for secondary students	1. Expand free education for middle school students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exempt middle school students in the 1st and 2nd second lowest income tier from school support fees by 2008; exempt all middle school students by 2012 ▪ Provide a larger majority of middle school students with free education by 2012 	601.9 billion
	2. Support tuition fees for underprivileged high school students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exempt all high school students in the 1st and 2nd lowest income tier from tuition by 2009 	1430.5 billion
	3. Provide benefit-based education fees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide schools with basic and benefit-based education fees in lump sums to support underprivileged children not classified under current law 	100 million
	4. Support meal fees for needy students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide free meals for all students in the 2nd lowest income tier by 2011 ▪ Provide free meals for all students in agricultural/fishing villages by 2012 	2023 billion
Expand loans for higher education students	1. Develop customized national scholarship schemes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide all basic livelihood support recipients with scholarship grants by 2009 ▪ Expand financial support for work-study programs ▪ Impose different interest rates for student loans by income level 	5439.5 billion
	2. Establish a National Scholarship Foundation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide tailored one-stop scholarship services; develop diverse financial aid schemes 	33.8 billion

2. Strengthen students' academic capacity and bridge the education gap

Policy Task	Implementation Scheme	Budget(KRW)
Build infrastructure to improve students' basic academic capacity	1. Develop an advanced national academic evaluation system ▪ Conduct evaluation of all students' basic academic ability and performance level	36.6 billion
	2. Ensure the basic education rights of academically under-performing students ▪ Offer special financial aid according to the number of academically needy students	To be allocated
	3. Introduce assistant instructors to aid students' basic academic acquisition ▪ Mobilize to-be-teachers, university students, social service workers, etc.	13 billion
Bridge the gap of English education	1. Enlarge the "Teach and Learn in Korea" project ▪ Invite native instructors on government scholarship to teach primary students in rural areas during after-school hours	98.8 billion
	2. Run intensive English camps during vacation ▪ Offer primary students in agricultural and urban poverty regions with the opportunity to learn from native English speakers	40 billion
	3. Operate virtual lectures offered by native English teachers ▪ Introduce distance learning methods in rural schools	48.8 billion

Policy Task	Implementation Scheme	Budget(KRW)
Promote after-school programs	1. Supply more child-care facilities for primary students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the number of primary child-care facilities at school to 3,100 by 2010 ▪ Promote consigned operation of child-care facilities 	316.8 billion
	2. Increase after-school vouchers for needy students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide vouchers to 50 percent of all students in the 2nd lowest income tier by 2012 ▪ Manage the vouchers on an online system 	710.9 billion
	3. Assist after-school operation at agricultural regions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the revision of the Local Education Finance Subsidy Act, so as to stabilize financial support for agricultural/fishing villages ▪ Improve the utilization of social service workers in after-school program provision 	307.4 billion
	4. Facilitate the university mentoring program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Induce the participation of students at Teacher's Colleges and Universities of Education; develop manuals 	30 million
	5. Systemize the operation of after-school programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide legal grounds to financially aid after-school programs ▪ Reflect after-school program operation when evaluating City/Provincial Offices of Education; include as a criteria to disclose together with other school information 	-

Policy Task	Implementation Scheme	Budget(KRW)
Diversify support for students from multi-cultural backgrounds	1. Assist multi-cultural students in their acquisition of basic academic ability and Korean language proficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aid the basic academic development of pre-primary multi-cultural children(2008) ▪ Aid the academic acquisition of school-aged multi-cultural children(2009) 	27.63 billion
	2. Help enhance the educational capacity of multi-cultural parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide parents with courses on Korean language and PC usage(2009) ▪ Offer counseling programs and interpretation services 	21.85 billion
	3. Expand infrastructure for multi-cultural education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assist the introduction of courses on 'multi-culturalism' at universities 	14.18 billion
	4. Raise awareness and understanding on multi-culturalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand education on multi-culturalism at schools 	12.24 billion
Assist the education of students from North-Korean defector families	1. Provide education to help North-Korean defector students adapt to life in South Korea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offer adaptation education and recognize previous educational experiences 	80 million
	2. Strengthen support for children to attend regular schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve the education accreditation system ▪ Develop consigned education for mal-adapted students 	2.68 billion
	3. Induce support from private education facilities(2009) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allocate education budgets customized to the number of students/programs and school size 	2.76 billion

Policy Task	Implementation Scheme	Budget(KRW)
Reduce the information gap in education	1. Expand the integration of ICTs in education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue provision of PC and Internet fees for underprivileged students ▪ Further activate the Cyber Home Schooling Program 	152.5 billion
	2. Foster a U-learning environment in agricultural regions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribute advanced teaching-learning material ▪ Refurbish U-learning infra such as electronic boards and TPC 	49.6 billion
	3. Provide EBS college preparation lecture material for free (for 90,000 students)	12 billion
	4. Actively use cyber education to raise the basic academic ability of high school students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop cyber contents for the high school curriculum ▪ Operate a Bridge Program for junior college students 	3.4 billion
Bridge the urban/rural gap of education	1. Designate schools that will operate yearlong student care programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the provision of study/culture/welfare programs during semesters ▪ Aid the study/culture/health activities of students on weekends and during vacation 	129 billion
	2. Select 150 public board high schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Select and financially support 150 schools in agricultural/fishing villages 	557.3 billion
	3. Support the operation of 'agricultural K-2 schools' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compose the schools with pre-primary students and primary 1st, 2nd graders ▪ Help resolve long-distance commuting difficulties and secure education safety nets 	400 million

Enlarge support for students from urban poverty households	1. Increase the number of priority regions for educational welfare provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Select 540 schools in 100 priority regions by the end of 2008 ▪ Improve the way priority regions are selected 	364.6 billion
	2. Upgrade the operation and quality of support programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarify program objectives and strengthen performance evaluation ▪ Enhance the professional capacity of teachers 	-
	3. Support the operation of tailored support programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and distribute guidance manuals 	300 million
	4. Develop new schemes to finance schools with large numbers of low-income students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Subsidize 750 million won per selected school for a five-year period 	75 billion

3. Ensure the health and safety of students

Policy Task	Implementation Scheme	Budget(KRW)
Improve the health management skills of students	1. Advance the student health check-up system ▪ Upgrade health check-up sampling surveys; standardize check-up criteria	1 billion
	2. Offer diverse health-related information ▪ Set up a website for students' health information provision	100 million
	3. Introduce a health environment evaluation system ▪ Develop criteria to assess factors that affect school environment and sanitation ▪ Grade the environmental condition of each school according to evaluation results	400 million
Provide safe and good school meals	1. Modernize school meal service facilities and improve environments ▪ Finance 626 schools to refurbish feeding facilities ▪ Reduce cases of food poisoning at schools by 50 percent by 2012	752.4 billion
	2. Introduce a place of origin labeling system for foods ▪ Introduce the system at all schools nationwide ▪ Guide local governments to supply foods of high quality	813.3 billion
Assist mal-adapting students and drop-outs	1. Establish a system to prevent drop-outs and student mal-adaptation ▪ Operate a "Wee Project" that will operate across three stages: Wee Class(making friends), Wee Center(student life support), Wee School(long-term consigned education)	126.4 billion
	2. Expand opportunities for drop-outs to resume school studies ▪ Establish legal grounds and improve school environments	11.1 billion

4. Add quality to pre-primary and special education

Policy Task	Implementation Scheme	Budget(KRW)
Ensure that pre-primary children gain basic abilities	1. Ensure that pre-primary youths acquire basic necessary abilities ▪ Provide education, culture and arts experience programs	20 billion
	2. Offer comprehensive support for children and parents ▪ Expand free education for 5-year-olds in stages ▪ Increase the rate of day-long operation at nursing facilities to 100 percent by 2010	2399.6 billion
	3. Strengthen the pre-primary support system ▪ Utilize university students as mentors; nurture online mentor networks ▪ Increase basic research on pre-primary children of low-income families	50 million
Provide disabled persons with educational support tailored to the needs of each life stage	1. Support disabled pre-school youths ▪ Ensure early diagnosis of disability; provide disabled youngsters with free education	67.3 billion
	2. Support disabled primary and secondary students ▪ Assist disabled students attending regular schools ▪ Evaluate the academic ability of disabled students; strengthen teacher capacity ▪ Develop tailored after-school and vacation programs	475.1 billion
	3. Support disabled higher education students ▪ Activate disabled student support centers on campus ▪ Review the introduction of university programs for students with developmental disability	12 billion
	4. Support disabled adults ▪ Refurbish lifelong education programs and facilities for disabled adults	2.6 billion

5. Foster a culture of lifelong learning

Policy Task	Implementation Scheme	Budget(KRW)
Assist the learning activities of low-educated adults	1. Bring flexibility into accrediting primary and middle school diplomas for adults <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish Literacy Education Screening Committees under Superintendents ▪ Develop teacher training programs on literacy education 	1.7 billion
	2. Improve the accreditation of non-formal learning experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accumulate study experiences through the Learning Account System; link with the accreditation of higher education degrees ▪ Introduce an evaluation system to test general adult competencies 	300 million
	3. Assist the literacy education of adults with less than middle school diplomas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish adult literacy education centers; develop training programs and manuals 	13.3 billion

6. Upgrade the educational welfare support system

Policy Task	Implementation Scheme	Budget(KRW)
Expand infrastructure for educational welfare	1. Restructure the national educational welfare support system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up separate support offices at local education offices and schools ▪ Unify the variety of school budgets for welfare projects 	50 million
	2. Develop indices to check the level of educational welfare; build a data base <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include indices on regional/social/economic conditions, education facilities, teacher supply and the number of lifelong education facilities 	250 million