

KICCE POLICY BRIEF

December, 2021 Issue 20

Support of Government and Local Delivery Systems for the Implementation of 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」

I. Revision and Implementation of the Nuri Curriculum

In accordance with the Moon Jae-in government's national task and the Ministry of Education(MOE)'s innovative plan for early childhood education, revision of the national early childhood education and care curriculum, the Nuri Curriculum was carried out.

- Announced in July 2017, the State Task 50 of the Moon government's 5-year national administration plan specifies the reorganization to learner-centered curricula.¹
- In accordance with the government's state operation plan, the innovation plan for early childhood education announced in December 2017 specifies the transformation of the educational paradigm centered on young children. In the direction of innovation in the Nuri Curriculum, the plan suggests the following: 1) respect children's individuality, 2) encourage children's free play, and 3) respect the autonomy of practitioners.²
- In this context, 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」, announced in July 2019, was revised to promote child-centered and play-centered practice as well as the autonomy of field personnel.³

「The 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」, which was revised in alignment with the government's administrative direction, has been implemented in kindergartens and childcare centers since March 2020. Due to the obstacles posed by COVID-19, the government and local delivery systems are providing various forms of support to ensure the proper implementation of the revised curriculum.

- 「The 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」 is the 'national curriculum for 3-5 years old children' and has been implemented in kindergartens and child care centers that are under the jurisdiction of the MOE and the Ministry of Health and Welfare(MOHW), respectively.
- Due to the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, the operation of kindergartens was delayed for 3 months, allowing children to start attending kindergarten only at the end of May. Childcare centers were closed for a long time, except for emergency care services.
- For kindergartens, the MOE and provincial offices of education promptly issued guidelines for distance education and have continually developed and uploaded content to support distance education.

* This paper is based on the published version of Kim, E., Koo, J., Kim, H. & Cha, K. (2020). A Study on Monitoring and Supporting Measures for 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」 (I) and the interim report of Kim, E., Koo, J., Kim, H., Jeon, H. & Choi, M. (2021). A Study on Monitoring and Supporting Measures for 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」 (II).

** While the Ministry of Education and the provincial ministries of Education support kindergartens, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare and provincial offices support childcare centers, curriculum-related support is provided by central and regional support centers for childcare.

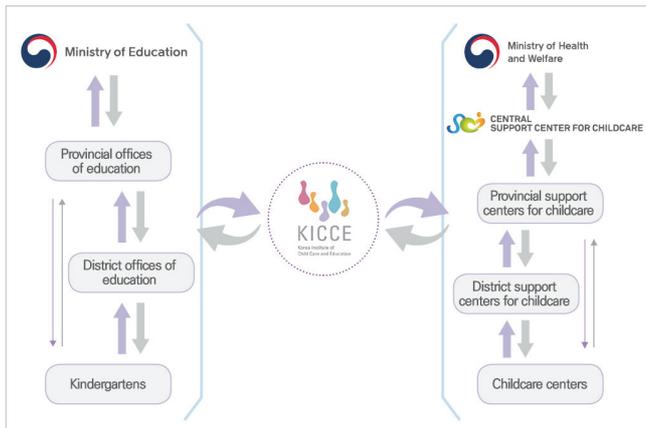
1. State Affairs Planning Advisory Committee (July 2017). Moon government's 5-year national administration plan.

2. Ministry of Education press release (December 27, 2017). Announcement 'the innovation plan for early childhood education' to realize equality as a starting line.

3. Kim, E. et al. (2019). Nuri curriculum revision policy research. the Ministry of Education, Chungcheongnam-do Office of Education, and Korea Institute of Child Care and Education.

- To effectively apply 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」, the Korean government and its local delivery systems are providing support to kindergartens and childcare centers in various ways. The Korea Institute of Child Care and Education(KICCE) is also supporting this national project as a national research institute.

[Figure 1] Government and regional delivery system supporting the application of 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」



II. Governmental Support for the Effective Implementation of the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum

Since 2018, in accordance with the government’s ‘Plans for Innovation in Early Childhood Education’, the MOE has initiated a project to enhance the effectiveness of early childhood education.

- The 「2018 Early Childhood Education Enhancement Project」 includes 4 sub-projects that promote child-centered play and autonomy in kindergartens/childcare centers.⁴ A policy study on the revision of the Nuri Curriculum was conducted, based on this project which resulted in 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」.
- The MOE led the revision process, and the MOHW extended their cooperation. In the task of distributing the revised curriculum, the MOE oversaw the project with the support of the MOHW, and the results were shared between the two ministries.

[Table 1] 2018 Early Childhood Education Enhancement Project

Sub-Projects	Description
child-centered/ play-centered curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of materials to ensure and boost each child's play • step by step reorganization of the curriculum
professional development of teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of guidelines and provision of training to teachers to improve their ability to guide child development and child-centered play
promotion of best practices by cities and provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discovery and dissemination of the best practices such as the implementation of autonomous and creative curricula, implementation of various lesson models, and creation of research groups
modification of after-school curricula to align with the Nuri Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of a comprehensive plan to improve the operation of kindergarten after-school curricula in alignment with the direction of the Nuri Curriculum reform

Source: Kim, E. et al. (2020). A study on monitoring and supporting measures for 「the 2019 revised Nuri Curriculum」. Korea Institute of Child Care and Education.

- 「The 2019 Early Childhood Education Enhancement Project」 was a follow-up measure for the effective application and acceptability of the Revised Nuri Curriculum.⁵ The results of this project have been shared on a new website, i-nuri to promote the Revised Nuri Curriculum among teachers, parents, teacher educators, and the general public.

[Table 2] 2019 Early Childhood Education Enhancement Project

Sub-Projects	Description
development and dissemination of revised curriculum materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development and dissemination of a curriculum guide, a play explanatory guide, and a play assistance guide • development of play example booklets (5 types) • development and provision of a Nuri Curriculum web portal
follow-up support for the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of provincial offices for the training and consultation of the education manager • production and dissemination of promotional materials • provision of support for the improvement of indoor and outdoor play environments
parent education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of a documentary on early childhood education • promotion of promotional content through contests
support for improving the curriculum revision system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of support for improving revised curriculum related policies for effective application of the Revised Nuri Curriculum

Source: Kim, E. et al. (2020). A study on monitoring and supporting measures for 「the 2019 revised Nuri Curriculum」(1). Korea Institute of Child Care and Education. <Table III-1-2>. p.58. [Ministry of Education (March 2019). 2019 Early Childhood Education Empowerment [Change]. p. Table 1 excludes the budget]

- In 2020, the MOE also developed materials for supporting kindergarten and provided training using these materials for the effective application of the Revised Nuri Curriculum via

4. Kim, E. et al. (2020). A study on monitoring and supporting measures for 「the 2019 revised Nuri Curriculum」(1). Korea Institute of Child Care and Education. p.57.
 5. Kim, E. et al. (2020). A study on monitoring and supporting measures for 「the 2019 revised Nuri Curriculum」(1). Korea Institute of Child Care and Education. p.58.

four provincial offices of education in Seoul, Gyeonggi, Daejeon, and Gyeongnam.⁶ In particular, the MOE promoted the development of distance education programs due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

[Table 3] 2020 Early Childhood Education Enhancement Project

Municipal Office of Education	Project Description
Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the revised Nuri Curriculum distance education program research research to support the understanding of early childhood play and behavior
Daejeon Metropolitan Office of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of play assistance training materials for field application of the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum development of a kindergarten consulting manual for field application of the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum
Gyeonggi-do Office of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of curriculum practice materials for character education development of play-centered education materials through learning communities
Gyeongsangnam-do Office of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of a system for observing and recording children's play development of materials for parents to introduce the revised curriculum and play

Source: Kim, E. et al. (2020). A study on monitoring and supporting measures for 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」 (I). Korea Institute of Child Care and Education. <Table III-1-3>, p.59. [A summary of an interim review of the Ministry of Education (2020)]

- In 2020, the MOE supported the operation of futuristic kindergartens and development of educational content to help cope with the spread of COVID-19 and prepare for the 4th Industrial Revolution and digitalization.⁷

[Table 4] Support for Future-oriented Kindergarten Curriculum Operation and Development of and Support for Educational Contents

Office of Education	Project Description
Incheon Metropolitan Office of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop materials and contents to support AI communication in kindergartens develop teacher training programs to enhance digital literacy
Gyeonggi-do Office of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop materials and contents to promote the utilization of distance education
Chungcheongbuk-do Office of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop materials and contents to support digitalized play environments develop materials and contents to support distance education using play packages

Source: The interim report of Kim, E. et al. (2021). A study on monitoring and supporting measures for 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」(II). Korea Institute of Child Care and Education. <Table III-1-1>, pp.35-36. [Ministry of Education Internal Data (March 2021). A summary of 「Support for Future-oriented kindergarten curriculum and content development」]

III. Support from Regional Delivery Systems for the Effective Implementation of 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」

In 2020, which was the first year of implementation of the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum, provincial offices of education that support kindergartens provided instructional supervision consultation regarding the Nuri Curriculum, and professional learning communities. They also provided support for mentoring, training, selection, and operation of exemplary kindergartens. They held contests for outstanding practices, sharing of exemplary practices, development and dissemination of educational materials, and also provided support for the renovation of the physical environment, play material support, etc.

- Nuri Curriculum Consulting is the most common project in all 17 provinces.
- Projects running in 16 provinces include the provision of professional learning communities, training, development and dissemination of educational materials and support for the renovation of the physical environment.
- The least implemented project in 2020 was the selection of exemplary kindergartens and their operation, which was carried out in 8 out of 17 provinces.

18 support centers for childcare, which provide support to childcare centers, also operated open-class observation/feedback, the Nuri Curriculum consulting, and professional learning communities. They provided mentoring, training, held contests for exemplary practices, sharing of exemplary practices, and the development and dissemination of educational materials to promote the effective implementation of the Revised Nuri Curriculum.⁸

- The training was the most common project in 2020 in 16 centers, followed by the Nuri Curriculum consulting, with 12 centers in operation.
- The least implemented project in 2020 was mentoring which was provided in only 2 centers.

6. Kim, E. et al. (2020). A study on monitoring and supporting measures for 「the 2019 revised Nuri Curriculum」 (I). Korea Institute of Child Care and Education. p.58.

7. The interim report of Kim, E. et al. (2021). A study on monitoring and supporting measures for 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」(II). Korea Institute of Child Care and Education. p.35.

8. The interim report of Kim, E. et al. (2021). A study on monitoring and supporting measures for 「the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum」(II). Korea Institute of Child Care and Education.

IV. Policy Suggestion

The MOE, with the participation and cooperation of the MOHW, initiated the provision of contents for the effective implementation of the Revised Nuri Curriculum.

- While kindergartens are under the jurisdiction of the MOE, and childcare centers are under the MOHW in Korea, the development of a curriculum is under the jurisdiction of the MOE. Early childhood curriculum development and content provision are the responsibility of the MOE.
- Childcare centers receive support from the MOHW and, the practical support for the Nuri Curriculum from support centers for childcare.

Support from delivery systems is through provincial offices of education and provincial support centers for childcare.

- Kindergartens benefit from various projects run by the provincial offices of education, but these projects differ by province.
- Childcare centers receive support from provincial support centers for childcare, but the amount of support is less than that provided to kindergartens.

Differences in the support received by the delivery systems according to institution type and region may cause qualitative differences in curriculum operations.

- The difference in the means of support provided to kindergartens and childcare centers due to the dualization of the administration system of early childhood education may cause qualitative differences in curriculum operation.
- Among kindergartens and childcare centers, there may be differences in the quality of curriculum operation due to differences in the support projects among different delivery systems.

To reduce the differences in the quality of curriculum practices, due to the dualization of the early childhood education administration system, it is necessary to share the support materials and equalize the budget.

- It is necessary to reinforce cooperation and share content related to curriculum support among delivery systems.
- It is necessary to create a system for sharing an expert workforce and providing equal support to kindergartens and childcare centers.
- While considering regional characteristics, it is necessary to equalize the budget per child for kindergartens and childcare centers to prevent qualitative differences in the implementation of the curriculum.

Eunyoung Kim Ph. D.
Senior Research Fellow
keycandy@kicce.re.kr