Harmonizing the Quality of Early Childhood Teachers in Korea: Challenges and Prospects

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Korea Institute of Child Care and Education
Outline

- Background
- Current Status of ECEC in Korea
- ECEC policy of the New Korean Government
- Professional Development of EC Teachers in Korea
  - Findings from national surveys
  - Supporting policies
- Challenges and Prospects
Part I

Background
• Refers to knowledge, skills and competencies attained for professional advancement (OECD, 2012)

• Aims at improving the performance of ECCE teacher in already assigned positions.

• Societal changes demand different roles and tasks of EC teachers. Retaining good teachers and providing quality professional development becomes more important.

• Generally considered a ‘professional duty’ for EC teachers (EU, 2014)

• What are issues and challenges of in-service training?
Starting Strong V
TRANSITIONS FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Starting Strong 2017
KEY OECD INDICATORS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

www.oecd.org/edu/earlychildhood
Teacher-Child Ratios in ECEC in OECD countries
(1:14 on average)

Child-to-teacher ratios in early childhood education and care (ISCED 0)

Pre-primary education (ISCED 02)
Early childhood educational development (ISCED 01)

The Age distribution of teachers working in pre-primary education (2014)

Part II

Current Status of ECCE in Korea
Key Statistics (1)

- **Country population**: 49.855 million (2017)
- **Total fertility rate**: 1.172 (2017) (the estimated population in 2060 is 40.6 million)
- **Population dispersion** (urban/rural): 45.5% of the total population live in Seoul (capital) & Gyeonggi province
- **GDP growth**: 2.2% (2015)
- **Female labor participation**: 56.2% (2017) *(46.4% of women with children under 6 are working)*
- **Gini coefficient**: 0.304 (2016; cf. 0.310 in 2011)
- **School drop-out rate**: middle school 0.63%, high school 1.26%, college 4.09% (2015)
- **Children of marriage migrants**: 67,498 children under 6 year olds (58.8% of entire children under 18 year olds of marriage migrants (*30.8% from China (Korean ethic), 22.4% from China, 20.8% from Vietnam*)
- **Children 0 to 4 with special needs**: 5,313 (2015) *0.2% of the total number of the disabled people
- **Orphaned children under 6 year olds**: 2,794 (2015) (in 243 child welfare facilities)
• **Participation rates in ECEC by age:** under 1 yr olds: 30.4%, 1 yr olds: 75.3%, 2 yr olds: 90.2%, 3 yr olds: 87.5%, 4 yr olds: 91.1%, 5 yr olds: 93.9% (2015)

• **Numbers of ECEC institutions:** 9,029 kindergartens (public 52.6%/ private 47.4%) (2017) & 42,517 childcare centers (public 6.18%, private 34.4%, family daycare 51.9%, legal corporate 1.96%, social welfare foundation 3.33%; work place 1.85%, parent co-op 0.36%)

• **Numbers of children by types of ECEC institutions:** 2,135,366 (682,553 in KG; 1,452,813 in childcare centers) (2015)

• **The total public spending for ECEC**
  - a percentage of GDP: 1% (since 2014)
  - a percentage of total government budget: 4.4%. (2014)

• **Public expenditure on kindergarten education as percentage of the total public education expenditure:** 10% (2014)
### Early Childhood Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Child Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of children served</td>
<td>0 to 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Childcare facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Auspice</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Basis</td>
<td>Childcare Act (1991)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Nuri Curriculum for children aged 3 to 5/Standard childcare curriculum for children aged 0 to 2 (since 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>4 yr-, 2yr-College &amp; 1 yr-post high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Monitoring</td>
<td>Consolidated Evaluation Indicators (2017) / Child Care Accreditation (since 2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Kindergartens

- Ministry of Education
  - Basic Education Act, Elementary & Secondary Education Act (Before 2004)
  - Nuri Curriculum (since 2012)
  - National Kindergarten Curri (1969-2011)
- Childcare facilities
  - Ministry of Health and Welfare
  - Nuri Curriculum for children aged 3 to 5/Standard childcare curriculum for children aged 0 to 2 (since 2007)

#### Institution

- 3 to 5
- Kindergartens
- Ministry of Education

#### Curriculum

- Basic Education Act, Elementary & Secondary Education Act (Before 2004)
- Nuri Curriculum (since 2012)
- National Kindergarten Curri (1969-2011)

#### Teacher Training

- 4 yr-, 3yr-, & 2yr-College

#### Quality Monitoring

- Consolidated Evaluation Indicators (2017) / Kindergarten Evaluation (since 2008)
- Consolidated Evaluation Indicators (2017) / Child Care Accreditation (since 2005)
Current Status of EC Workforces

**Kindergarten**

- **50,641 staff**
  - (4,295 directors & 46,346 teachers)
- **73.5% in private KG**

**By Qualification Level**

- 4,295 director (8.5%)
- 1,609 assistant director (3.15%)
- 25 master teacher (0.05%)
- 12,816 1st level teacher (25.3%)
- 31,896 2nd level teacher (63.0%)

**Childcare Centers**

- **271,454 staff**
  - (42,338 directors & 229,116 teachers)
- **90.5% in non-public/private CC**

**By Qualification Level**

- 42,338 director (15.6%)
- 121,361 1st level teacher (44.7%)
- 95,902 2nd level teacher (36.5%)
- 11,849 3rd level teacher (4.2%)
**EC Teacher Qualifications**

### Kindergarten

- **Minimum Qualification**: ISCED Level 5
- **Director, Assistant Director, Master Teacher**
- **1st Level KG Teacher**
- **2nd Level KG Teacher**
- **ECE Department-centered training at Univ./Colleges**

### Childcare Centers

- **Minimum Qualification**: ISCED Level 3
- **Director**
- **1st Level CC Teacher**
- **2nd Level CC Teacher**
- **3rd Level CC Teacher**
- **Credit-oriented system** with 13 relevant college depts. (majoring in Child Development, Childcare, Child Welfare, Nursing, etc.) & non-tertiary level institutes
Initial Training Requirements

Kindergarten

Minimum of 72 credits (50 for major & 22 for teaching profession)

- Theory of teaching (more than 6 courses, 12 credits), basic knowledge of teaching (6 credits) & teaching practice (4 credits).

Childcare Centers

Minimum of 51 credits (17 courses in 3 areas)

- Minimum of 8 off-line courses
- 240 hours (6 weeks) of field practice
  - 65 credits (22 courses) for 3rd level qualification
**Kindergarten**

**Minimum Training Duration**
- 90 hours in 15 days to become Level 1 kindergarten teacher, Master teacher, and Assistant – director
- 180 hours in 25 days to become kindergarten Director

**Training Courses**
- General liberal arts (10-20%)
- Courses for teaching profession (10-20%)
- Courses on specialized areas, such as play, arts, science, etc. (60-80%)

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**Childcare Centers**

**Minimum Training Duration**
- 80 hours to become Level 1 & Level 2 childcare teacher

**Training Courses**
- Level 2 CC teacher (21 courses), Level 1 (20 courses)
- Courses on fundamentals of childcare, child development, childcare programs, health and nutrition, families and communities, childcare center management, etc.
### Compulsory In-service Training for KG Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hour(s)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reporting of Child Abuse</td>
<td>1 (min.)</td>
<td>Every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Safety</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Within 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR &amp; First Aids</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of Personal Information</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character Education</td>
<td>4 (min.)</td>
<td>Every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural Education</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Within 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Bus Safety</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Within 2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part III

ECCE Policies of the New Government in Korea
National Agenda on Early Childhood Education in Korea (July 7, 2017)

- 1. Strengthening governmental accountability in securing the Nuri subsidies
- 2. Increasing participation rates in public kindergartens/childcare centers up to 40%
- 3. Ensuring giving priorities to disadvantaged children in using ECEC services
- 4. Customized educational support for disadvantage children (Increasing the number of facilities for children with special needs; developing multicultural programs focusing on language learning, etc.)
- 5. Enhancing satisfaction through closing the gaps in quality between kindergartens and childcare centers (teacher salaries, qualifications, etc.)
- 6. Implementing child-centered curriculum by legislatively proper hours of learning
- 7. Prohibiting excessive private academy education for young children
- 8. Safe environment for parental trust
- 9. Reducing gaps between public vs. private kindergartens
- 10. Improving learning environment for the future
- 11. Strengthening autonomy and implementation power of Local Offices of Education
- 12. Child Allowances of USD 100 per month per child aged 0 to 5

“All Children are Children of All of Us.”
### Innovation Plan of EC Education 2018-2022

(Ministry of Education, Dec. 27, 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Strengthening national accountability of early childhood education &amp; Innovating culture of education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensuring quality EC education and equal educational opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for children’s development through educational communities of kindergartens, teachers, parents</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensuring the publicness of ECE through building networks with kindergartens</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recovering Hope Ladder to by strengthening the Hope Ladder</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Realizing Hope Ladder by ensuring equal educational opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expansion of public kindergartens</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Strengthening publicness through transparent operation of private KGs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Creating the culture of child-centered education through classroom innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shifting a paradigm to child-centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Improving excessive private education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support for healthy development of children with educational communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Creating a learning environment which gives trust to parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strengthening parental participation to support child’s healthy development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strengthening T-C interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Building administration systems for innovation of EC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Developing evaluation system for EC centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Improving support system for private KGs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Implementation system | Building Comprehensive & Systemic Support Systems among Ministry of Education and other relevant ministries, Local Offices of Education and kindergartens, teachers, and parents |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
Realizing equal opportunities for early childhood education

Classes for children with special needs
Integrated kindergartens for children with special needs
Multicultural kindergartens

Strengthening publicness of early childhood education

Participation rates in Public kindergartens
Expanding semi-public kindergartens
Strengthening child-centered curriculum (Innovative Kindergartens)

- Expanding innovative kindergartens
- Play-based afterschool programs

- Cooperation among communities
- Voluntary Problem-solving
- Fortifying autonomy of curriculum implementation
- Democratic operation of kindergartens
# The 3rd (2018-2022) Mid-term Plan on Child Care Policy

## Vision

*Society working Together toward Happy Growth of Children*

## Goals & Strategies

### Strengthening publicness of childcare

1. Increasing participation rates in public CC to 40%
2. Strengthening publicness of operation of public CC
3. Expanding childcare at workplaces
4. Improving transparency of childcare centers

### Restructuring childcare systems

1. Improving support systems of childcare centers
2. Setting the unit cost of childcare fees and providing proper level of subsidies
3. Revising the Standard Childcare Curriculum

### Enhancing quality of services

1. Promoting professionalism of CC teachers
2. Ensuring remuneration of CC teachers
3. Improving childcare environments
4. Monitoring quality on a regular basis

### Fortifying parental child-rearing

1. Support for parents’ child-rearing
2. Expanding hourly childcare services
3. Improving childcare support for disadvantaged children

### Implementation

- Restructuring functions of support systems
- Increasing collaboration of Government and NGO
- Reorganizing the e-system
The 3rd (2018-2022) Mid-term Plan on Child Care Policy

- 4 areas & 17 tasks

**Strengthening the publicness of childcare**

- Increasing *participation rates* in public childcare centers up to 40%
- Mandating and supporting to *establish childcare at workplaces more than 90%*

**Reorganizing childcare support systems**

- Securing sufficient access to childcare services
- Appropriate childcare fee subsidies through the *re-estimating childcare unit cost*
Upgrading qualification of childcare teachers

- Maintaining teacher license level 1 & 2 (*Discarding level 3*[high school graduation plus one-year training])*), Operating *College Department-centered teacher training*
  - Harmonizing gaps between childcare and kindergarten teachers by *increasing salaries of childcare teachers*
- Providing substitute childcare teachers (expanding 21,000 → 28,000 people)
- Improving quality of learning environment; providing safety education to all childcare centers

Expanding support for parents’ child-rearing

- Expanding customized hours of childcare services (200 centers more)
- Expanding Comprehensive Childcare Support Centers to lessen parental burden of child-rearing and to provide parent education
Part IV

Professional Development of Early Childhood Teachers:

National survey findings and Supporting Policies
### 2017 National Survey on EC Education

- **1,722 Kindergartens (Public 899, Private 823)**
- **2,224 KG Teachers (Public 428, Private 1,796)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>% (No)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category of Institution</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0 (1,722)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>52.2 (899)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>47.8 (823)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>% (No)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Types of Institution</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school attached public</td>
<td>48.7 (839)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent public</td>
<td>3.5 (60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private (Person)</td>
<td>41.6 (717)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private (Legal corporate)</td>
<td>6.1 (106)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>% (No)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0 (2,224)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large city</td>
<td>39.5 (880)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small/Mid-size city</td>
<td>43.0 (957)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural area</td>
<td>17.4 (387)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>% (No)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of enrolled children</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50 Children</td>
<td>44.2 (761)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to less than 100</td>
<td>23.9 (412)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 And more</td>
<td>31.9 (550)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>% (No)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working Experiences</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 years</td>
<td>42.3 (940)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to less than 7 years</td>
<td>30.8 (684)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 years and more</td>
<td>27.0 (600)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff composition

- Staff composition is more various in private than in public kindergartens, encompassing a teaching aid, nutritionist, cook, driver, clerk, etc.
- Similar in large cities and large-scale kindergartens

Gender & Educational Level

- Mostly specialized in early childhood education (Dir/Ass.-Dir, 84.0%, Teacher 94.4%)
- 57.8% of directors & 41.8% of assistant directors hold a master’s degree
- 82.1% of classroom teachers & 94.5% of after school programs are trained in 3 to 4-year college programs

Working Experiences of Classroom Teacher

- Teachers in Public KG 12.5 years; Private teachers 4.3 years
Marital Status & work-home Balance

• Not married 73.1% in total (37.6% of teachers in Public; 81.6% in Private KGs)

Salaries

• Director (Approx. USD 448), Assistant director (USD342), teacher (USD 172)

Hiring a new teacher

• 52.0% of entire kindergartens hired teachers during last one year
• The employment rates and the number of newly hired teachers are higher in large cities and large kindergartens
• Hiring rates of beginner teachers: public (39.7%)< private (71.8%)
Current Status of On-going Training and Satisfaction

**Teacher training on Nuri Curriculum**
- 86.6% of survey respondents had training experiences on the Nuri curriculum
- More hours in both on- & off-line training in 2012

**Other on-going training**
- No experiences of on-going teacher training from 2012 to 2017: ‘79.6%
- ‘Not eligible for on-going training’(41.8%), ‘eligible but, a long waiting list’(27.7%).

**Support for on-going professional development**
- No financial support: 31.2% in public & 45.6% in private

**Content of on-going training**
- Curriculum & programs (58.9%), Learning & teaching methods (52.4%), Child Development(28.2%)
Satisfaction on on-going training

• Promotional training, autonomous training (over 3.0 points based on 5 points scales, & special training (2.9)

Things satisfactory and unsatisfactory

• Satisfactory: ‘Curriculum’ (30.4%) points, ‘Educational methods’ (28.1%),
  ‘Need to receive training’ (27.2%)

• Unsatisfactory: ‘mandated nature of training’ (38.1%), curriculum (19.5%),
  ‘duration of training, etc."
Working Conditions and Salary

Working hours
- Daily working hours: Private 9hrs. 49min. > Public 8 hours 48min.
- Weekly working hours: Private 49 hours 24min. > Public 43 hours 5 min.

Salary scales
- ‘National salary scales for teachers’ applied to all public teacher; 9.1% of private KGs without applying salary scales.

Paid Holidays (for last one year)
- Primary school attached public KG 21.1 days > private (legal corporate) 21.0 days > private (person) 17.6 days > Independent public 15.4 days.

Use of Maternity and Parental Leave
- Private KG teachers: maternity leave (28.7%) & parental leave (17.4%)
  Public KG teachers fully use both leaves

Reasons for Resigning / Turn over
- 37.2% of private & 10.1% of public KG teachers consider to resign.
- Because of ‘poor working conditions’ (public 6.7%; private 24.6%), ‘moving to kindergartens with better working conditions’ (public 12.3%; private 21.1%), etc.
Findings from the Kindergarten Teacher Survey (4)

**Job Satisfaction** Large gaps between public vs private teachers
- Salary level (public 3.0; private 2.5)
- Working hours (public 3.0; private 2.5)
- Welfare conditions (incentives, holidays)(public 2.9; private 2.3)

**Job Difficulties**
- Independent kindergartens, KG with less than 50 children enrolled, teachers with less than 7 years of working experiences have difficulties in administrative work (2.7~2.9/4-point scale).
- Novice teachers with less than 3 years of working experiences have difficulties in interaction with children (2.2), relationships with parents (2.5), curriculum implementation (2.3).

**Support from a kindergarten working currently**
- Use of substitute teachers (public 2.6> private 2.4)
- Support for professional development (independent public 3.2> primary school attached KG 3.1> private (legal corporate 3.0)> private (person) 2.7
Policies to Support ECEC Teachers (1)

• **Harmonizing quality of teachers between kindergartens and childcare centers**
  
  ✓ Developing training materials jointly by MoE & MoHW for the implementation of the Nuri Curriculum
  
  ✓ Consolidating indicators of *Kindergarten Evaluation & Childcare Accreditation System*
  
  ✓ Consulting systems for kindergartens and childcare centers
  
  ✓ Upgrading qualifications of childcare teachers

✓ **Subsidies for childcare teachers for the Nuri curriculum implementation** (Approx. 300 USD per teacher per month)

✓ **Overtime payments for childcare teachers** (since 2010)
Policies to Support ECEC Teachers (2)

- Harmonizing quality of teachers between Public and Private EC institutions
  - Cooperative Networks of public & private kindergartens (since 2010)
  - Providing Short-term Substitute Teachers to private KGs and CCs for professional development and family events of teachers

  ✓ Subsidies for salaries of private kindergarten teachers (Approx. 300 USD per teacher per month, since 2010)
  ✓ Starting from 2018, salary subsidies for private KG teachers (Approx. 60 USD per month until 2022)
• **Harmonizing quality of teachers in rural areas**

  ✓ **Head teacher allowances** in rural areas since 2007 and presently in cities as well

  ✓ **Improving teacher placement system**
    - Assign **beginner teachers** (esp. in rural areas) to **kindergartens with more than 3 classes** or experienced teachers in order for the development of professionalism
    - Also, mandate beginner teachers to get **consulting** (for their lesson)
Part V

Challenges and Prospects
Challenges

Improved, But still mostly for Public kindergarten teachers ....

- **Evaluation on Teacher Competence Development** (2012)
- **Sabbatical Leave System for kindergarten teachers** (2013)
- **Professional Learning Communities (PLC)**
- **Public Recruitment System of public kindergarten directors** (which was an appointment system previously)
- **Master Teacher System in kindergartens** (2012, USD 400 per month for action research)
Suggestions

- **Equal entitlement and access** to on-going professional development for *All teachers*

- Enhancing *individualized training* & diversifying training institutes - diverse topics of training programs (37.9%), specified CPD by teaching experiences (19.8%) with Chinese teachers and directors (Moon, et. al., 2015)

- **Mandating active sharing** of training programs and successful cases among cities and provinces at national levels

- **Linking CPD to career progression** and financial/non-financial reward - “Evaluation on teacher competence development” in Korea (2013)
Suggestions

• Quality of on-going teacher training needs to improved through *good cases and practice-focused contents*.

• In order to recruit quality teacher trainers, *compensation for teacher trainers* needs to be improved.

• *Administrative works need to be minimized* to enable teachers to concentrate on the curriculum implementation.

• A pool of and budgets for *substitute teachers/staff* need to be secured.

• *Job satisfaction* (happiness of teachers) and *rights of EC teachers need to be improved* (e.g., installation of CCTV within the classroom)

• Action plans of integrating qualification, training and monitoring systems need to be implemented.
How can we draw a picture on the sky?

*Copyright: Chung-Ang University Kindergarten, Seoul, Korea (2011).
The children will become something that they would not have without you.

- Bernard Spodek

THANK YOU.

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