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## Elementary and Secondary Education Act Amended to Support Multicultural Students

-Support for students with migrant backgrounds is enhanced by the implementation of a survey on multicultural education and establishment of multicultural education centers from 2025.

The Ministry of Education (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Lee Ju-Ho) announced the approval of amendments to the Enforcement Decree of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act at the cabinet meeting on April 16.

The amendment aims to align with the revised Act implemented in October 2023. The amendments address key areas, including surveys on multicultural education and long-term absences without legitimate reasons, by fleshing out relevant provisions in detail.

First, the amendment requires the Minister of Education to conduct a survey every three years on the basic status of students with migrant backgrounds, including information on their nationality. This survey will also assess educational programs, facilities, and manpower, along with student progression and career paths. This data will be used to establish a systematic multicultural education policy.

Second, to develop customized education policies and support multicultural education at schools, the amendments allow for the creation of the hub local support center by the Minister of Education. In addition, provincial Superintendents of Education can establish, operate, designate, or entrust regional centers. The hub center focuses on research, project support, student learning initiatives, and promotion of multicultural education, while the regional centers provide on-site support, train teachers, and establish

regional cooperation.

Third, the amendments address long-term student absences. If a student with no valid reason continues to be absent despite notification for the next school year, the principal can continue managing their school records outside the quota for that year. This change aims to improve confusion arising from previous interpretations of the law pertaining to organizing classes and calculating grades when such long-term absent students were re-integrated and counted as part of student quota.

"With these amendments, we have laid the groundwork for the multicultural education survey and support centers. This will allow us to develop customized education policies to help students with migrant backgrounds become future talents. I request your support in helping these students become thriving members of our society," said Lee Ju-Ho, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education.

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