

Center for Unified Korean Future Hosts “Summer School” for Young North Korean Defectors

1:1 Mentoring with Teachers from Seoul (August 4-7)

- The Center for Unified Korean Future hosted a four-day “Summer School” program from August 4 to 7 in cooperation with the Inter-Korean Education Development Institute. The program was aimed at supporting young North Korean defectors in their social integration and academic improvement.
 - First launched in 2005, this year’s program is the 31st “Summer School” program. It has been held during summer and winter vacations to strengthen the basic academic skills of students from North Korea and help them develop their own-learning habits.
- A total of 87 participants took part in this year’s program, including 32 North Korean defector students, 32 teachers from Seoul, and 23 university student volunteers and staff.
 - Among the mentees, 15 were elementary school students and 17 were middle school students, all enrolled in schools in Seoul. They participated voluntarily through an open application process.
 - The mentors were selected from among teachers who are either currently mentoring North Korean defector students or are home room teachers of such students, and who have a strong interest in them. Mentor-mentee pairings were made by considering various factors such as preferred subjects, location, and gender.

* Mentor composition : 18 elementary school teachers, 7 middle school teachers and 7 high school teachers.

- o The teacher-student mentoring pairs began communication two weeks prior to the program, during which they developed personalized study plans. Based on these plans, 1:1 tailored mentoring sessions were conducted.

- Among the university student volunteers supporting the program, eight were former mentees who had previously participated as North Korean defector students. Their return as volunteers added a meaningful dimension to the program.

- o Myong Gang-min, a student at Seoul Haengdang Elementary School, shared: “I was never confident in math, but I learned a lot through this program. I’m happy to now have a teacher I can turn to even after returning to school.”

- o Teacher Kim Chun-sik from Youngil High School, who participated as a mentor, remarked: “It was a meaningful experience to understand the educational needs of North Korean students. I hope our society can offer more opportunities to support them.”

- Participants also took part in various unification related programs, sharing their visions about peace and reunification on the Korean Peninsula and building confidence in their ability to adapt to South Korean society.

- o Students engaged in activities such as : “Unification Future Experience”(A time-travel simulation aboard the KTX-Unification Train), “I Am a Character Designer”(Creating a personal unification character using blocks) and “Peace and Unification Detective Office”(Experiential understanding of daily life in North Korea)

- o In addition, students participated in team-building exercises, robot-making workshops, and recreational programs that helped foster vision and self-esteem.
- The Center for Unified Korean Future will continue to plan and operate a wide range of peace and unification experiential programs, with the goal of nurturing the next generation of leaders who will shape the future of a reunified Korea.

Attachment : Photos from the “Summer School” program

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Photos from the "Summer School" program



<Teacher Kim Chun-sik and student Myong Gang-min during a mentoring session (Aug. 4)>



<Participating teachers in a training session for educators of North Korean students (Aug. 4)>



<Participants in the "Unification Future Experience" program (Aug. 5)>



<Participants in the "Peace and Unification Detective Office" activity (Aug. 5)>