

# An Analysis of The Kindergarten-elementary School Transition Policy from The New Perspective of “Bidirectional Articulation”

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## [요약]

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In March 2021, the <Guidance on Promoting the Scientific Interface between Kindergarten and Elementary School> issued by the Ministry of Education of China clearly pointed out that it is necessary to adhere to child oriented. This goal of this policy is based on the idea of “living education” proposed by Mr. Heqin Chen in 1940, which indicates that a true understanding of children is necessary before talking about educating them. The core goal of “bidirectional articulation” is to strengthen the sense of articulation between kindergartens and elementary school, scientifically prepare for and adapt to school enrollment, and promote the smooth transition of children. Moreover, the <Guidance Points for Kindergarten Readiness Education> and the <Guidance Points for Elementary School Adaptation Education>, which were released at the same time as the <Guidance on Promoting the Scientific Interface between Kindergarten and Elementary School>, also place special emphasis on the cultivation of children’s life preparation and adaptability. The aim of the bidirectional articulation “bridging” is to realize a two-way exchange of curriculum between kindergarten and elementary school, and to reform the curriculum at three levels through the curriculum spirit of “gamification”, the continuous curriculum structure, and the developmental curriculum evaluation.

**주제어:** Bidirectional Articulation, Kindergarten-elementary school transition, Kindergarten and elementary school transition curriculum

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## I . Introduction

In April 2022, China revised the <Compulsory Education Curriculum Program and Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition)>. This policy clarifies the “kindergarten–elementary school transition” of preschool education, emphasizing the need to strengthen the articulation of school segments, based on the evaluation of students’ development level in the five fields of health, language, society, science, and art. The curriculum in the first to second grades of elementary school will be reasonably designed, with emphasis on activity-based, game-based, and life-based learning design. Regarding the proposal of early childhood and elementary school articulation, as early as March 2021, the <Guidance on vigorously promoting the scientific articulation between kindergarten and elementary school> promulgated by the Ministry of Education clearly defines the guiding ideology, basic principles and main objectives of good early childhood and elementary school articulation. Concrete measures are proposed from two aspects: how to carry out school readiness education in kindergarten and how to carry out school adaptation education in elementary school. This is also the first time since the founding of New China to link kindergarten and elementary school together and make arrangements for the Kindergarten–elementary school transition. For a long time, the work of early childhood and elementary school articulation has been mainly concentrated in kindergarten. However, this document clearly emphasized that kindergarten and elementary school should be connected in both directions, requiring the participation of educational administrative departments, educational and scientific research institutions, kindergartens, elementary schools and parents of young children. At the same time, the scope of supervision has been extended to relevant social training institutions, which reflects a landmark event in the implementation of the policy level of early childhood articulation.

## II. Kindergarten–elementary school transition under the policy of “bidirectional articulation” Social Responsibility in Education

### 1. “Bidirectional articulation”

The <Guidance on Promoting the Scientific Interface between Kindergarten and Elementary School> clarifies the concept of “bidirectional articulation”, that is, to strengthen the awareness of articulation, cooperation between kindergarten and elementary school, scientific preparation and adaptation to school, and promoting the smooth transition of children. The key task of “bidirectional articulation” is to change the weak sense of articulation and the separation between elementary and kindergarten education, and to establish a cooperative mechanism for young children to coordinate and link up. This can build a ladder for children’s transition from kindergarten to elementary school and promote two-way articulation. The two subjects of “bidirectional articulation” are kindergarten and elementary school.

### 2. Kindergarten–elementary school transition

In fact, the concept of kindergarten–elementary school transition can be divided into broad sense and narrow sense. In a narrow sense, the concept of kindergarten–elementary school transition refers to the interface between kindergarten education and elementary education. In a broad sense, the concept of kindergarten–elementary school transition includes all the elements surrounding the children during this period, i.e., the interface between kindergarten, elementary school, family, community, and other social environments. It is manifested in the following two aspects.

#### 1) Preparatory education for kindergarten entrance

The <Guidance Points for Kindergarten School Readiness Education>, issued by the Ministry of Education in March 2021, aims to promote children’s overall physical and

mental preparation. The four parts of physical and mental preparation, life preparation, social preparation and learning preparation are mainly aimed at the key qualities that children need to enter school. Each part consists of three parts: development goals, specific performance, and educational recommendations.

< Table 1> The Guidance Points for Kindergarten School Readiness Education

Readiness for school		Developmental goals			
Physical and mental preparation	1. Enter school	2. Be in a good mood	3. Enjoy movement	4. Coordinate movement	
Life preparation	1. Habits of living	2. Self-care	3. Safety and protection	4. Participation in labor	
Social preparation	1. Interaction and cooperation	2. Honesty and compliance	3. Task awareness	4. Love for the community	
Learning preparation	1. Curiosity and questioning	2. Learning habits	3. Interest in learning	4. Learning ability	

## 2) Adaptive education for elementary school entrance

The <Guidance Points for Adapting to Elementary School> is based on the <Guidance Points for Kindergarten School Readiness Education>, which put forwards the same goals for children to adapt to elementary school in four aspects, and further requirements for children's physical and mental development.

< Table 2> The Guidance Points for Adaptive Education in Elementary School

Adaptation to school		Developmental goals			
Physical and mental adaptation	1. Enjoy school	2. Be happy	3. Exercise actively	4. Be flexible	
Life adaptation	1. Living habits	2. Self-care ability	3. Safety and self-care	4. Love of labor	
Social adaptation	1. integration into the group	2. Interpersonal interaction	3. Compliance with rules and regulations	4. Moral development	
Learning adaptation	1. Willingness to learn	2. Learning habits	3. Interest in learning	4. Learning ability	

### 3. Transition curriculum of kindergarten and elementary school under “bidirectional articulation” Overview of the development of inclusive kindergartens in Shandong Province

#### 1) Curriculum research

The “transition” of the kindergarten-elementary school transition is not a simple addition or patchwork of activities, but a redesign of curriculum and teaching. An important goal of the kindergarten-elementary school transition is to build a continuous learning experience for children, and the curriculum is the core of this goal. In terms of curriculum objectives, elementary school follow the national revised compulsory education curriculum standards, while kindergartens follow the requirements of the “Guidelines for the Learning and Development of Children Aged 3-6”, which stipulates “no promotion, no demotion”. In order to make the curriculum of kindergarten and elementary school exchange needs, we need to reform in three levels: curriculum spirit, curriculum structure, and curriculum evaluation.

##### (1) Gamification of curriculum spirit

The game of curriculum spirit is to optimize the curriculum with the game spirit, make the curriculum more vivid, interesting and effective, and better promote children’s learning and development. For kindergartens, doing well in every high-quality educational activity is the best embodiment of the game spirit itself. For elementary schools, it is necessary to reform education and teaching methods, strengthen inquiry learning and experiential learning with children as the main body, increase the vividness, playfulness and situation of educational activities, and provide more support for students’ practical operation and perceptual experience.

##### (2) Continuity of curriculum structure

The structure of the kindergarten-elementary school transition curriculum includes three aspects: physical and mental health, self-management, and learning skills. Nine aspects are implemented from the three dimensions. For elementary schools, the whole

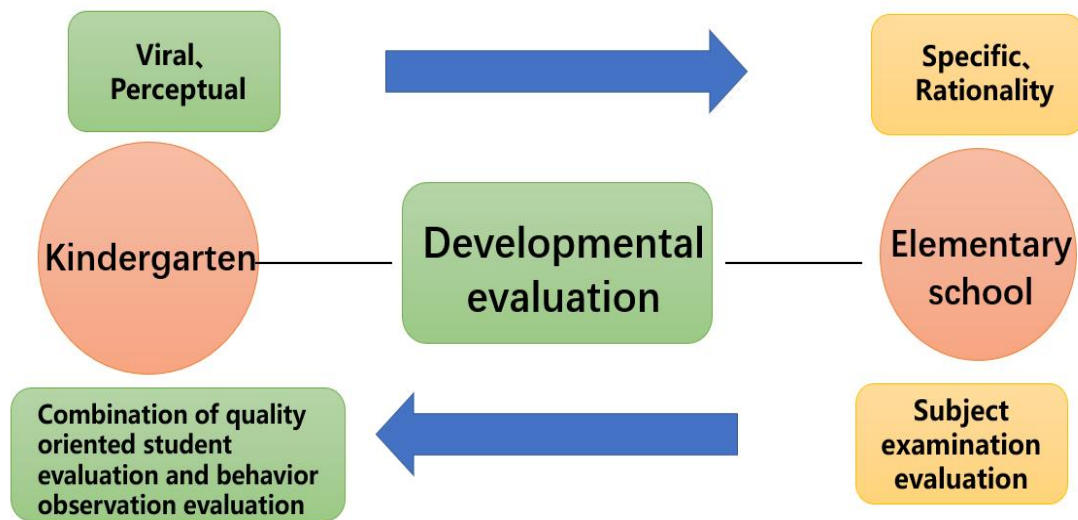
curriculum structure is based on children’s physical and mental health, cognitive development, emotional development and social development.

<Table 3> Three dimensions and nine aspects of curriculum structure

Three dimensions of curriculum structure	Nine aspects of curriculum structure		
Physical and mental health	Emotional stability	Love of movement	Motor coordination
Self-management	Time management	Object management	Task management
Learning skills	Reading power	Thinking power	Creativity

(3) Developmental curriculum evaluation

Although elementary schools and kindergartens have different evaluation methods, we encourage them to try to establish their own curriculum evaluation mechanism with development as the link. The “idirectional articulation” of curriculum evaluation requires that kindergartens and elementary schools be close to each other and learn from each other in the evaluation mechanism, so that children can get appropriate development in this transitional period. For kindergartens, try to transition from intuitive and perceptual evaluation indicators to specific and rational evaluation indicators; for elementary schools, try to transition from subject examination evaluation to the combination of literacy-oriented student evaluation and behavior observation evaluation, and so on. According to the curriculum contents of the Kindergarten Readiness Education Guideline and the Kindergarten Readiness Education Guideline, the kindergarten curriculum evaluation criteria evaluate children in three aspects: physical and mental health, self-management, and learning ability, while elementary schools evaluate students from four aspects: physical and mental health, cognitive development, emotional development, and social development. However, no matter what stage, kindergartens and elementary schools must take “development” as the common goal, respect individual differences with developmental assessment, and let teachers and children develop comprehensive abilities from the curriculum.



[Figure 1] Developmental curriculum evaluation under “two-way articulation”

### III. Conclusion

To carry out the “bidirectional articulation”, we must fully understand the physical and mental development and thinking characteristics of children. The two sides jointly build a convergence slope, adhere to the principle of “child-based, bidirectional articulation”, and improve children’s learning adaptability in the formulation of curriculum objectives, the arrangement of teaching content, the choice of teaching forms, as well as teaching language, classroom interaction, seating arrangements and other aspects. At present, according to the spirit and theme of the <Guidance on vigorously promoting the scientific articulation between kindergarten and elementary school>, and have achieved certain results. The kindergarten–elementary school transition is gradually being implemented in kindergartens and elementary schools. I believe that China’s future path of kindergarten–elementary school transition will also develop steadily and continue to open up a correct path unique to China. I also look forward to more cooperation and common progress in preschool education between China and South Korea.

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