



The school in the 1950s.
Photo courtesy of Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School.

Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School

SEONG JUNG KIM

Seong Jung Kim graduated from College of Education at Cheongju University with a major in history. He has served in Sahmyook middle and high schools for 32 years. He was inaugurated as the 25th principal of Daejeon Sahmyook middle school on March 1, 2021.

Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School (Daejeon Sahmyook Joonghakkyo) is a secondary educational institution affiliated with the Middlewest Korean Conference of the Korean Adventist Church. This middle school is located in 15, Dorim 1-gil, Seo-gu, Daejeon. In 2020, there were 202 students enrolled in six classes in first, second, and third grades, and 36 faculty members.¹

Founding of the School

Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School was founded as a small school in 1952 in Hyodong, Daejeon city, Chungnam Province, and had a single class per grade. At that time the name of the school was Daejeon Sahmyook School. There were good relationships and friendliness between teachers and students?²

Dong Shim Cheong became the first principal and the Daejeon Hyodong Church was used as a temporary school building. At that time there were only 10 freshmen. After its liberation from Japanese colonial rule, the Korean

Adventist Church divided the organization of the Korean Union Mission into Central Korean Mission, South Korean Mission, and North Korean Mission in September 1947. At that time Dong Shim Cheong was appointed as the superintendent of the South Korean Mission.³ There was an empty official residence of the Chungnam Province Governor, which was permitted to be used as an office for the South Korean Mission, a Daejeon Adventist church, and Daejeon Sahmyook School.⁴ This was where Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School promoted its early educational work.

History of the School

The first graduation ceremony of Daejeon Sahmyook School was held on March 11, 1955, when it produced 18 graduates. And on December 20 of that year, it was approved by the government as Daejeon Sahmyook Godeunggongmin Institute. As of April 1, 1956, the school was newly opened under the name of Daejeon Sahmyook Godeunggongmin Institute, and Jung-Oh Kim took office as principal.⁵

In 1963 the Middle West Korean Mission was established to govern the Daejeon area, and Jong Kyun Shin was appointed as the president of the mission.⁶ On August 18, 1963, the mission purchased 15,000 pyeong (12.25 acres) of school land, which is now a school site. And the school moved to Doma-dong from Hyodong on February 24, 1964. Then three temporary classrooms including a teacher's office with a floor space of 122 pyeong (402 square meters) were built. And the present school name, Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School, was allowed to be used by the education office of the government in 1970. Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School had a total of three classes for three grades and 150 students on campus.⁷

In 1973 Byung Hyo Min, who had been working as the principal of Mukho Sahmyook Middle School, transferred to the position of the fourth Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School principal. And he tried to recruit many students because he thought that if the number of graduating students was over 50, he could establish a Sahmyook High School in the Daejeon area. Since then, the school has been growing a lot, resulting in the number of students reaching over 160 and teachers over 10. It seemed to be normal middle school figures. In addition, the position of vice principal was secured, and he supervised teachers effectively.⁸

In 1987 Seong Sik Shin was inaugurated as the seventh principal. During the period of his term, the administrative committee of the Middlewest Korean Conference decided to raise funds for the construction of a new school building and a dormitory. The amount of 250 million won (\$ 225,000) was needed for the new construction.⁹ On March 26, 1991, the committee called the meeting with local pastors and elders and talked about the matter of purchasing the school land first (address: Okgyedong Mt. 2-1 and other five divided pieces of land). However, that project was not successful because of some problems with the construction company.

In the meantime, the new school building was not built until 1996. On September 16 of that year, the classroom (1940 square meters) was built at a cost of 960 million won (\$865,000), which was raised by the Korea Union Conference, the Middlewest Korean Conference, and Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School.¹⁰

By 2000 the school tried to recruit good students through various special programs. In 2010 also, the school became prestigious in the local area by running the English Immersion Program, the Academic Ability Jumping up Programs, and so on.

Eight more classrooms of the school building and the fortieth anniversary memorial hall of Chungcheong Conference (560 seats) were added on March 6, 2003 and used for various events, such as Sabbath worship, and chapel on Tuesdays. A cafeteria was also expanded where about three hundred people could eat at the same time so that students who had been struggling with the lack of space in classrooms and the cafeteria could study in a more comfortable environment.¹¹

In 2017 out of 84 graduates, 27 students (32 percent pass rate) entered special-purpose high schools. In other words, one out of three students were accepted to special-purpose high schools and autonomous private high schools, and in Daejeon, which is known for having a high education fever, Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School gained a reputation as a school that teaches its students well. At the time Principal Yang Ho Son also said, "The high reputation of the school and the high pass rate are proud fruits of students, parents, and teachers working together."¹²

In particular, in the school year of 2018, Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School was selected to run the Daejeon school innovation program and has been receiving 142 million won (\$128,000) over four years from 2019 to 2022.¹³

Historical Role of the School

For the philosophy of Adventist education, Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School (DSMS) operates the five aspects of the character-building certification program (arts, volunteering, reading, personality, and training) for cultivating talented people with the right personality. In addition to the 1-5-3 project,¹⁴ 1-1-1 program (every student donates 1,000 won every month for foreign children) is being operated, and DSMS is carrying out volunteer activities to help the underprivileged neighbors in the community throughout the year and to share briquettes with neighbors every winter.¹⁵

In 2019 about twenty students in Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School visited Daejeon Western Education Support Office to hold a small concert that commemorates Teacher's Day. The students played two songs they had practiced, such as "The Grace of the Teacher" and "Amazing Grace," and the superintendent of education, Hae Yong Lee, gave

encouragement and a small gift of gratitude to the students. At that time Principal Se Won Oh said, "On Teacher's Day, the students' concert will lift teachers' morale and self-esteem, create and spread the culture of respect for teachers across society, which will serve as an opportunity to revitalize public education and restore trust"¹⁶

In 2020 DSMS had seniors who lived around the school take pictures at no cost. Also, DSMS rented Hanbok and manufactured picture frames. Taking pictures was conducted by donating talents from teachers and students, and it was done by designating individual times in accordance with the quarantine rules. Gyu Man Ahn, the chief of Doma-2 dong, appreciated and said, "I am grateful to Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School for making ties with the elderly and cultivating respect for adults."¹⁷

Challenge and Mission

Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School is striving to become faithful in the mission in various ways. First, we play out our role as light and salt in our region by building a bridge between cities and countries. DSMS helps the conference to hold and run a one-day farmers market called "Donong-hanmadang." Second, as more and more non-Christian students are coming into our school due to a random student allocation system, we have included religion classes in our curriculum to help students have faith in their Creator and develop divine characters. We also have "Prayer Week" to preach the gospel through sermons and prayer meetings. Third, DSMS organizes a summer volunteer team to dispatch student missionaries to local churches. During summer vacation they teach local children various educational activities and games. At the same time, they teach the Bible through songs and dances so that children can receive Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Through these pursuits student missionaries get to have not just knowledge but also hands-on experiences in true service.¹⁸

As of March 1, 2021, Seong Jung Kim was inaugurated as the twenty-fifth principal and is striving to operate a more systematic and substantial school for the second development based on the students' skills and positive relationship with the local community.

List of Principals

Daejeon Sahmyook School: Dong Shim Jeong (04/01/1952 to 03/31/1953); Ki Bang Kim (04/01/1953 to 08/31/1953); Jung Oh Kim (09/01/1953 to 08/31/1955); Myung Hwan Choi (09/01/1955 to 03/31/1956).

Daejeon Sahmyook Godung Gongmin Institute: Jeong Oh Kim (04/01/1956 to 03/31/1959); Hyung Rak Kim (04/01/1959 to 02/28/1962); Sang Rok Lee (03/01/1962 to 02/28/1965).

Daejeon Sahmyook Middle School: Su Sung Oh (03/01/1965 to 02/29/1966); Chun Taek Im (03/01/1966 to 08/31/1968); Hae Dal Choi (09/01/1966 to 02/28/1969); Seok Kwon Kim (03/01/1969 to 02/06/1973); Byeong Hyo Min (02/07/1973 to 02/28/1976); Jae Shin Kim (03/01/1976 to 02/28/1978); Young Sik Kwon (03/01/1978 to 02/28/1987); Seong Sik Shin (03/01/1987 to 02/28/1995); Chan Yeon Go (03/01/1995 to 04/30/1997); Dae Sung Kim (05/01/1997 to 02/28/1999); Jae Gwi Kim (03/01/1999 to 08/31/1999); Jong Kyu Lee (09/01/1999 to 02/28/2003); Sung In Ji (03/01/2003 to 08/31/2009); Joon Sub Kim (09/01/2009 to 08/31/2014); Gil Hwan Kim (09/01/2014 to 02/28/2015); Yang Ho Son (03/01/2015 to 08/31/2017); Se Won Oh (09/01/2017 to 02/28/2021); Seong Jung Kim (03/01/2021 to Present).

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NOTES

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