

**Opening Remarks for GSI-IF:
‘Envisioning the Future of Education for a Non-Contact Society
in the Post-Coronavirus Era’**

※ GSI-IF: Global Strategy Institute-International Forum

(June 24, 2020)

Hello everyone.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all. Thank you to the distinguished speakers, colleagues, and audience around the world for virtually joining us today.

In particular, I would like to thank Minister of Science and ICT Kiyoung Choi, a KAIST alumnus, for making time for us despite his very busy schedule.

Also, I would like to thank Director Joung-Ho Kim, Professor So-Young Kim, and the GSI staff members for organizing this forum, following the inaugural forum in April.

I hope this forum will provide a brief moment to reflect on how the pandemic has reshaped our classrooms and to envision the future of education in the years ahead.

Distinguished guests,

In just two months, we have gathered online again. Unfortunately, the world is still suffering from the pandemic. It’s a challenging time for us all.

The pandemic has severely disrupted an entire sector of our society. Among others, the education sector has been the hardest hit.

1.6 billion students from 192 countries, which account for 91 percent of the student population in the world, have experienced educational disruptions in the past four months.

Now, students around the world have been forced to study online. But for many without access to the Internet, the digital divide is wider than ever. Approximately 29 percent of the youth worldwide, around 346 million individuals, are not online.

The barriers to digital access around the world are both complex and pervasive. It is obvious that this digital disparity will accelerate educational inequality, eventually leading to irreparable socio-economic disparities.

Successful education needs the full support of communities and equal access to opportunities. We should seize this pandemic as an opportunity to make technologies more widely accessible.

KAIST also reached out to our community. Our student volunteers helped local schools and teachers set up online classes. I am pleased that we could play a part in creating this virtuous circle to build a better community.

From March, KAIST went online for more than 1200 of its spring semester classes. We offered 60 percent real-time classes via Zoom and 40 percent through the pre-recorded KAIST Learning Management System, which we built for the Education 4.0 initiative.

KAIST started Education 4.0, a flipped learning system, in 2012. This innovative system was designed to encourage learners' active participation and creative thinking capacity in the classroom, which are long-standing issues that Korea's unilateral education system needed to address.

Education 4.0 enables the transition from lecturer-centric teaching to student-centric learning. We invested a lot to establish this system and build the infrastructure for online education.

I have made every effort to expand Education 4.0 into as many classes as we possibly can. Despite these efforts over the past seven years, the ratio of using the Education 4.0 platform remained at about 8 percent of the courses KAIST offered at the end of 2019.

I feel fortunate that the full-scale online classes we started during the pandemic will serve as very positive momentum to advance the Education 4.0 initiative we have been pushing for so long.

I believe that the integration of information technology in education will be further accelerated and online education will eventually become an integral component of our education system.

Thomas Frey predicted that by the year 2030, over half of the traditional colleges will have collapsed. He also said that the largest company on the Internet will be an education-based company that we haven't heard of yet.

Virtual universities will play a crucial role, especially for workers in the times dominated by ever-evolving technologies. They will help the many employees who wish to upskill and reskill their careers as a lifelong education platform.

I hope that this disruption we are experiencing will bring about opportunities for new technology and knowledge that we can leverage to reshape the future of education.

Technological breakthroughs should be used to benefit us all. The private and public sectors should collaborate to facilitate inclusive learning opportunities.

I hope this forum will bring about many new ideas that can positively impact young people around the world, and build a better future for generations to come.

Thank you very much.

June 24, 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Shin', written in a cursive style.

Sung-Chul Shin
President, KAIST