4.13. The three-language formula will continue to be implemented while keeping in mind the Constitutional provisions, aspirations of the people, regions, and the Union, and the need to promote multilingualism as well as promote national unity. However, there will be a greater flexibility in the three-language formula, and no language will be imposed on any State. The three languages learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and of course the students themselves, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India. In particular, students who wish to change one or more of the three languages they are studying may do so in Grade 6 or 7, as long as they are able to demonstrate basic proficiency in three languages (including one language of India at the literature level) by the end of secondary school.

4.14. All efforts will be made in preparing high-quality bilingual textbooks and teaching-learning materials for science and mathematics, so that students are enabled to think and speak about the two subjects both in their home language/mother tongue and in English.

4.15. As so many developed countries around the world have amply demonstrated, being well educated in one's language, culture, and traditions is not a detriment but indeed a huge benefit to educational, social, and technological advancement. India's languages are among the richest, most scientific, most beautiful, and most expressive in the world, with a huge body of ancient as well as modern literature (both prose and poetry), film, and music written in these languages that help form India's national identity and wealth. For purposes of cultural enrichment as well as national integration, all young Indians should be aware of the rich and vast array of languages of their country, and the treasures that they and their literatures contain.

4.16. Thus, every student in the country will participate in a fun project/activity on 'The Languages of India', sometime in Grades 6-8, such as, under the *'Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat'* initiative. In this project/activity, students will learn about the remarkable unity of most of the major Indian languages, starting with their common phonetic and scientifically-arranged alphabets and scripts, their common grammatical structures, their origins and sources of vocabularies from Sanskrit and other classical languages, as well as their rich inter-influences and differences. They will also learn what geographical areas speak which languages, get a sense of the nature and structure of tribal languages, and learn to say commonly spoken phrases and sentences in every major language of India and also learn a bit about the rich and uplifting literature of each (through suitable translations as necessary). Such an activity would give them both a sense of the unity and the beautiful cultural heritage and diversity of India and would be a wonderful icebreaker their whole lives as they meet people from other parts of India. This project/activity would be a joyful activity and would not involve any form of assessment.

4.17. The importance, relevance, and beauty of the classical languages and literature of India also cannot be overlooked. Sanskrit, while also an important modern language mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, possesses a classical literature that is greater in volume than that of Latin and Greek put together, containing vast treasures of mathematics, philosophy, grammar, music, politics, medicine, architecture, metallurgy, drama, poetry, storytelling, and more (known as 'Sanskrit Knowledge Systems'), written by people of various religions as well as non-religious people, and by people from all walks of life and a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds over thousands of years. Sanskrit will thus be offered at all levels of school and higher education as an important, enriching option for students, including as an option in the three-language formula. It will be taught in ways that are interesting and experiential as well as contemporarily relevant, including through the use of Sanskrit Knowledge Systems, and in particular through phonetics and pronunciation. Sanskrit textbooks at the foundational and middle school level may be written in Simple Standard Sanskrit (SSS) to teach Sanskrit through Sanskrit (STS) and make its study truly enjoyable.

4.18. India also has an extremely rich literature in other classical languages, including classical Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia. In addition to these classical languages Pali, Persian, and Prakrit; and their works of literature too must be preserved for their richness and for the pleasure and enrichment of posterity. As India becomes a fully developed country, the next generation will want to

partake in and be enriched by India's extensive and beautiful classical literature. In addition to Sanskrit, other classical languages and literatures of India, including Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Pali, Persian, and Prakrit, will also be widely available in schools as options for students, possibly as online modules, through experiential and innovative approaches, to ensure that these languages and literature stay alive and vibrant. Similar efforts will be made for all Indian languages having rich oral and written literatures, cultural traditions, and knowledge.

4.19. For the enrichment of the children, and for the preservation of these rich languages and their artistic treasures, all students in all schools, public or private, will have the option of learning at least two years of a classical language of India and its associated literature, through experiential and innovative approaches, including the integration of technology, in Grades 6-12, with the option to continue from the middle stage through the secondary stage and beyond.

4.20. In addition to high quality offerings in Indian languages and English, foreign languages, such as Korean, Japanese, Thai, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian, will also be offered at the secondary level, for students to learn about the cultures of the world and to enrich their global knowledge and mobility according to their own interests and aspirations.

4.21. The teaching of all languages will be enhanced through innovative and experiential methods, including through gamification and apps, by weaving in the cultural aspects of the languages - such as films, theatre, storytelling, poetry, and music - and by drawing connections with various relevant subjects and with real-life experiences. Thus, the teaching of languages will also be based on experiential-learning pedagogy.

4.22. Indian Sign Language (ISL) will be standardized across the country, and National and State curriculum materials developed, for use by students with hearing impairment. Local sign languages will be respected and taught as well, where possible and relevant.

Curricular Integration of Essential Subjects, Skills, and Capacities

4.23. While students must have a large amount of flexibility in choosing their individual curricula, certain subjects, skills, and capacities should be learned by all students to become good, successful, innovative, adaptable, and productive human beings in today's rapidly changing world. In addition to proficiency in languages, these skills include: scientific temper and evidence-based thinking; creativity and innovativeness; sense of aesthetics and art; oral and written communication; health and nutrition; physical education, fitness, wellness, and sports; collaboration and teamwork; problem solving and logical reasoning; vocational exposure and skills; digital literacy, coding, and computational thinking; ethical and moral reasoning; knowledge and practice of human and Constitutional values; gender sensitivity; Fundamental Duties; citizenship skills and values; knowledge of India; environmental awareness including water and resource conservation, sanitation and hygiene; and current affairs and knowledge of critical issues facing local communities, States, the country, and the world.

4.24. Concerted curricular and pedagogical initiatives, including the introduction of contemporary subjects such as Artificial Intelligence, Design Thinking, Holistic Health, Organic Living, Environmental Education, Global Citizenship Education (GCED), etc. at relevant stages will be undertaken to develop these various important skills in students at all levels.

4.25. It is recognized that mathematics and mathematical thinking will be very important for India's future and India's leadership role in the numerous upcoming fields and professions that will involve artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data science, etc. Thus, mathematics and computational thinking will be given increased emphasis throughout the school years, starting with the foundational stage, through a variety of innovative methods, including the regular use of puzzles and games that make mathematical thinking more enjoyable and engaging. Activities involving coding will be introduced in Middle Stage.

4.26. Every student will take a fun course, during Grades 6-8, that gives a survey and hands-on experience of a sampling of important vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, metal work, gardening, pottery making, etc., as decided by States and local communities and as mapped by local skilling needs. A practice-based curriculum for Grades 6-8 will be appropriately designed by NCERT while framing the NCFSE 2020-21. All students will participate in a 10-day bagless period sometime during Grades 6-8 where they intern with local vocational experts such as carpenters, gardeners, potters, artists, etc. Similar internship opportunities to learn vocational subjects may be made available to students throughout Grades 6-12, including holiday periods. Vocational courses through online mode will also be made available. Bagless days will be encouraged throughout the year for various types of enrichment activities involving arts, quizzes, sports, and vocational crafts. Children will be given periodic exposure to activities outside school through visits to places/monuments of historical, cultural and tourist importance, meeting local artists and craftsmen and visits higher educational institutions in their village/Tehsil/District/State.

4.27. "Knowledge of India" will include knowledge from ancient India and its contributions to modern India and its successes and challenges, and a clear sense of India's future aspirations with regard to education, health, environment, etc. These elements will be incorporated in an accurate and scientific manner throughout the school curriculum wherever relevant; in particular, Indian Knowledge Systems, including tribal knowledge and indigenous and traditional ways of learning, will be covered and included in mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, yoga, architecture, medicine, agriculture, engineering, linguistics, literature, sports, games, as well as in governance, polity, conservation. Specific courses in tribal ethno-medicinal practices, forest management, traditional (organic) crop cultivation, natural farming, etc. will also be made available. An engaging course on Indian Knowledge Systems will also be available to students in secondary school as an elective. Competitions may be held in schools for learning various topics and subjects through fun and indigenous games. Video documentaries on inspirational luminaries of India, ancient and modern, in science and beyond, will be shown at appropriate points throughout the school curriculum. Students will be encouraged to visit different States as part of cultural exchange programmes.

4.28. Students will be taught at a young age the importance of "doing what's right", and will be given a logical framework for making ethical decisions. In later years, this would then be expanded along themes of cheating, violence, plagiarism, littering, tolerance, equality, empathy, etc., with a view to enabling children to embrace moral/ethical values in conducting one's life, formulate a position/argument about an ethical issue from multiple perspectives, and use ethical practices in all work. As consequences of such basic ethical reasoning, traditional Indian values and all basic human and Constitutional values (such as *seva, ahimsa, swachchhata, satya, nishkam karma, shanti*, sacrifice, tolerance, diversity, pluralism, righteous conduct, gender sensitivity, respect for elders, respect for all people and their inherent capabilities regardless of background, respect for environment, helpfulness, courtesy, patience, forgiveness, empathy, compassion, patriotism, democratic outlook, integrity, responsibility, justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity) will be developed in all students. Children will have the opportunity to read and learn from the original stories of the Panchatantra, Jataka, Hitopadesh, and other fun fables and inspiring tales from the Indian tradition and learn about their influences on global literature. Excerpts from the Indian Constitution will also be considered essential reading for all students. Basic training in health, including preventive health, mental health, good nutrition, personal and public hygiene, disaster response and first-aid will also be included in the curriculum, as well as scientific explanations of the detrimental and damaging effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

4.29. All curriculum and pedagogy, from the foundational stage onwards, will be redesigned to be strongly rooted in the Indian and local context and ethos in terms of culture, traditions, heritage, customs, language, philosophy, geography, ancient and contemporary knowledge, societal and scientific needs, indigenous and traditional ways of learning etc. – in order to ensure that education is maximally relatable, relevant, interesting, and effective for our students. Stories, arts, games, sports, examples, problems, etc. will be chosen as much as possible to be rooted in the Indian and local geographic context. Ideas, abstractions, and creativity will indeed best flourish when learning is thus rooted.

National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE)

4.30. The formulation of a new and comprehensive National Curricular Framework for School Education, NCFSE 2020-21, will be undertaken by the NCERT - based on the principles of this National Education Policy 2020, frontline curriculum needs, and after discussions with all stakeholders including State Governments, Ministries, relevant Departments of the Central Government, and other expert bodies, and will be made available in all regional languages. The NCFSE document shall henceforth be revisited and updated once every 5-10 years, taking into account frontline curriculum.

National Textbooks with Local Content and Flavour

4.31. The reduction in content and increased flexibility of school curriculum - and the renewed emphasis on constructive rather than rote learning - must be accompanied by parallel changes in school textbooks. All textbooks shall aim to contain the essential core material (together with discussion, analysis, examples, and applications) deemed important on a national level, but at the same time contain any desired nuances and supplementary material as per local contexts and needs. Where possible, schools and teachers will also have choices in the textbooks they employ - from among a set of textbooks that contain the requisite national and local material - so that they may teach in a manner that is best suited to their own pedagogical styles as well as to their students and communities' needs.

4.32. The aim will be to provide such quality textbooks at the lowest possible cost -namely, at the cost of production/printing - in order to mitigate the burden of textbook prices on the students and on the educational system. This may be accomplished by using high-quality textbook materials developed by NCERT in conjunction with the SCERTs; additional textbook materials could be funded by public-philanthropic partnerships and crowd sourcing that incentivize experts to write such high-quality textbooks at cost price. States will prepare their own curricula (which may be based on the NCFSE prepared by NCERT to the extent possible) and prepare textbooks (which may be based on the NCERT textbook materials to the extent possible), incorporating State flavour and material as needed. While doing so, it must be borne in mind that NCERT curriculum would be taken as the nationally acceptable criterion. The availability of such textbooks in all regional languages will be a top priority so that all students have access to high-quality learning. All efforts will be made to ensure timely availability of textbooks in schools. Access to downloadable and printable versions of all textbooks will be provided by all States/UTs and NCERT to help conserve the environment and reduce the logistical burden.

4.33. Concerted efforts, through suitable changes in curriculum and pedagogy, will be made by NCERT, SCERTs, schools, and educators to significantly reduce the weight of school bags and textbooks.

Transforming Assessment for Student Development

4.34. The aim of assessment in the culture of our schooling system will shift from one that is summative and primarily tests rote memorization skills to one that is more regular and formative, is more competency-based, promotes learning and development for our students, and tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity. The primary purpose of assessment will indeed be for learning; it will help the teacher and student, and the entire schooling system, continuously revise teaching-learning processes to optimize learning and development for all students. This will be the underlying principle for assessment at all levels of education.

4.35. The progress card of all students for school-based assessment, which is communicated by schools to parents, will be completely redesigned by States/UTs under guidance from the proposed National Assessment Centre, NCERT, and SCERTs. The progress card will be a holistic, 360-degree, multidimensional report that reflects in great detail the progress as well as the uniqueness of each

learner in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. It will include self-assessment and peer assessment, and progress of the child in project-based and inquiry-based learning, quizzes, role plays, group work, portfolios, etc., along with teacher assessment. The holistic progress card will form an important link between home and school and will be accompanied by parent-teacher meetings in order to actively involve parents in their children's holistic education and development. The progress card would also provide teachers and parents with valuable information on how to support each student in and out of the classroom. AI-based software could be developed and used by students to help track their growth through their school years based on learning data and interactive questionnaires for parents, students, and teachers, in order to provide students with valuable information on their strengths, areas of interest, and needed areas of focus, and to thereby help them make optimal career choices.

4.36. The current nature of secondary school exams, including Board exams and entrance exams - and the resulting coaching culture of today - are doing much harm, especially at the secondary school level, replacing valuable time for true learning with excessive exam coaching and preparation. These exams also force students to learn a very narrow band of material in a single stream, rather than allowing the flexibility and choice that will be so important in the education system of the future.

4.37. While the Board exams for Grades 10 and 12 will be continued, the existing system of Board and entrance examinations shall be reformed to eliminate the need for undertaking coaching classes. To reverse these harmful effects of the current assessment system, Board exams will be redesigned to encourage holistic development; students will be able to choose many of the subjects in which they take Board exams, depending on their individualized interests. Board exams will also be made 'easier', in the sense that they will test primarily core capacities/competencies rather than months of coaching and memorization; any student who has been going to and making a basic effort in a school class will be able to pass and do well in the corresponding subject Board Exam without much additional effort. To further eliminate the 'high stakes' aspect of Board Exams, all students will be allowed to take Board Exams on up to two occasions during any given school year, one main examination and one for improvement, if desired.

4.38. In addition to introducing greater flexibility, student choice, and best-of-two attempts, assessments that primarily test core capacities must be the immediate key reforms to all Board exams. Boards may over time also develop further viable models of Board Exams that reduce pressure and the coaching culture. Some possibilities include: a system of annual/semester/modular Board Exams could be developed - that each test far less material, and are taken immediately after the corresponding course is taken in school - so that the pressure from exams is better distributed, less intense, and less high-stakes across the Secondary Stage; all subjects and corresponding assessments, beginning with mathematics, could be offered at two levels, with students doing some of their subjects at the standard level and some at a higher level; and Board exams in certain subjects could be redesigned to have two parts – one part of an objective type with multiple-choice questions and the other of a descriptive type.

4.39. With regard to all of the above, guidelines will be prepared by NCERT, in consultation with major stakeholders, such as SCERTs, Boards of Assessment (BoAs), the proposed new National Assessment Centre etc., and teachers prepared, for a transformation in the assessment system by the 2022-23 academic session, to align with the NCFSE 2020-21.

4.40. To track progress throughout the school years, and not just at the end of Grades 10 and 12 - for the benefit of students, parents, teachers, principals, and the entire schooling system in planning improvements to schools and teaching-learning processes - all students will take school examinations in Grades 3, 5, and 8 which will be conducted by the appropriate authority. These examinations would test achievement of basic learning outcomes, through assessment of core concepts and knowledge from the national and local curricula, along with relevant higher-order skills and application of knowledge in real-life situations, rather than rote memorization. The Grade 3 examination, in particular, would test basic literacy, numeracy, and other foundational skills. The results of school examinations will be used only for developmental purposes of the school education

system, including for public disclosure by schools of their overall (anonymized) student outcomes, and for continuous monitoring and improvement of the schooling system.

4.41. It is proposed to set up a National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), as a standard-setting body under MHRD that fulfils the basic objectives of setting norms, standards, and guidelines for student assessment and evaluation for all recognized school boards of India, guiding the State Achievement Survey (SAS) and undertaking the National Achievement Survey (NAS), monitoring achievement of learning outcomes in the country, and encouraging and helping school boards to shift their assessment patterns towards meeting the skill requirements of the 21st century in consonance with the stated objectives of this Policy. This Centre will also advise school boards regarding new assessment patterns and latest researches, promote collaborations between school boards. It will also become an instrument for the sharing of best practices among school boards, and for ensuring equivalence of academic standards among learners across all school boards.

4.42. The principles for university entrance exams will be similar. The National Testing Agency (NTA) will work to offer a high-quality common aptitude test, as well as specialized common subject exams in the sciences, humanities, languages, arts, and vocational subjects, at least twice every year. These exams shall test conceptual understanding and the ability to apply knowledge and shall aim to eliminate the need for taking coaching for these exams. Students will be able to choose the subjects for taking the test, and each university will be able to see each student's individual subject portfolio and admit students into their programmes based on individual interests and talents. The NTA will serve as a premier, expert, autonomous testing organization to conduct entrance examinations for undergraduate and graduate admissions and fellowships in higher education institutions. The high quality, range, and flexibility of the NTA testing services will enable most universities to use these common entrance exams - rather than having hundreds of universities each devising their own entrance exams - thereby drastically reducing the burden on students, universities and colleges, and the entire education system. It will be left up to individual universities and colleges to use NTA assessments for their admissions.

Support for Gifted Students/Students with Special Talents

4.43. There are innate talents in every student, which must be discovered, nurtured, fostered, and developed. These talents may express themselves in the form of varying interests, dispositions, and capacities. Those students that show particularly strong interests and capacities in a given realm must be encouraged to pursue that realm beyond the general school curriculum. Teacher education will include methods for the recognition and fostering of such student talents and interests. The NCERT and NCTE will develop guidelines for the education of gifted children. B.Ed. programmes may also allow a specialization in the education of gifted children.

4.44. Teachers will aim to encourage students with singular interests and/or talents in the classroom by giving them supplementary enrichment material and guidance and encouragement. Topic-centered and Project-based Clubs and Circles will be encouraged and supported at the levels of schools, school complexes, districts, and beyond. Examples include Science Circles, Math Circles, Music & Dance Performance Circles, Chess Circles, Poetry Circles, Language Circles, Drama Circles, Debate Circles, Sports Circles, Eco-Clubs, Health & Well-being Clubs/ Yoga Clubs and so on. Along these lines, high-quality national residential summer programmes for secondary school students in various subjects will also be encouraged, with a rigorous merit-based but equitable admission process to attract the very best students and teachers from across the country including from socio-economically disadvantaged groups.

4.45. Olympiads and competitions in various subjects will be conducted across the country, with clear coordination and progression from school to local to state to national levels, to ensure that all students may participate at all levels for which they qualify. Efforts will be made to make these available in rural areas and in regional languages to ensure widespread participation. Public and private universities, including premier institutions like the IITs and NITs, would be encouraged to use merit-

based results from National, and International Olympiads, and results from other relevant national programmes, as part of the criteria for admissions into their undergraduate programmes.

4.46. Once internet-connected smart phones or tablets are available in all homes and/or schools, online apps with quizzes, competitions, assessments, enrichment materials, and online communities for shared interests will be developed, and will work to enhance all the aforementioned initiatives, as group activities for students with appropriate supervision of parents and teachers. Schools will develop smart classrooms, in a phased manner, for using digital pedagogy and thereby enriching the teaching-learning process with online resources and collaborations.

5. Teachers

5.1. Teachers truly shape the future of our children - and, therefore, the future of our nation. It is because of this noblest role that the teacher in India was the most respected member of society. Only the very best and most learned became teachers. Society gave teachers, or gurus, what they needed to pass on their knowledge, skills, and ethics optimally to students. The quality of teacher education, recruitment, deployment, service conditions, and empowerment of teachers is not where it should be, and consequently the quality and motivation of teachers does not reach the desired standards. The high respect for teachers and the high status of the teaching profession must be restored so as to inspire the best to enter the teaching profession. The motivation and empowerment of teachers is required to ensure the best possible future for our children and our nation.

Recruitment and Deployment

5.2. To ensure that outstanding students enter the teaching profession - especially from rural areas - a large number of merit-based scholarships shall be instituted across the country for studying quality 4-year integrated B.Ed. programmes. In rural areas, special merit-based scholarships will be established that also include preferential employment in their local areas upon successful completion of their B.Ed. programmes. Such scholarships will provide local job opportunities to local students, especially female students, so that these students serve as local-area role models and as highly qualified teachers who speak the local language. Incentives will be provided for teachers to take up teaching jobs in rural areas, especially in areas that are currently facing acute shortage of quality teachers. A key incentive for teaching in rural schools will be the provision of local housing near or on the school premises or increased housing allowances.

5.3. The harmful practice of excessive teacher transfers will be halted, so that students have continuity in their role models and educational environments. Transfers will occur in very special circumstances, as suitably laid down in a structured manner by State/UT governments. Furthermore, transfers will be conducted through an online computerized system that ensures transparency.

5.4. Teacher Eligibility Tests (TETs) will be strengthened to inculcate better test material, both in terms of content and pedagogy. The TETs will also be extended to cover teachers across all stages (Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary) of school education. For subject teachers, suitable TET or NTA test scores in the corresponding subjects will also be taken into account for recruitment. To gauge passion and motivation for teaching, a classroom demonstration or interview will become an integral part of teacher hiring at schools and school complexes. These interviews would also be used to assess comfort and proficiency in teaching in the local language, so that every school/school complex has at least some teachers who can converse with students in the local language and other prevalent home languages of students. Teachers in private schools also must have qualified similarly through TET, a demonstration/interview, and knowledge of local language(s).

5.5. To ensure an adequate number of teachers across subjects - particularly in subjects such as art, physical education, vocational education, and languages - teachers could be recruited to a school or school complex and the sharing of teachers across schools could be considered in accordance with the grouping-of-schools adopted by State/UT governments.