

## **National Education Policy 2020**

5.6. Schools/school complexes will be encouraged to hire local eminent persons or experts as ‘master instructors’ in various subjects, such as in traditional local arts, vocational crafts, entrepreneurship, agriculture, or any other subject where local expertise exists, to benefit students and help preserve and promote local knowledge and professions.

5.7. A technology-based comprehensive teacher-requirement planning forecasting exercise will be conducted by each State to assess expected subject-wise teacher vacancies over the next two decades. The above described initiatives in recruitment and deployment will be scaled as needed over time, to fill all vacancies with qualified teachers, including local teachers, with suitable incentives for career management and progression as described below. Teacher education programmes and offerings will also align with the vacancies thus projected.

### **Service Environment and Culture**

5.8. The primary goal of overhauling the service environment and culture of schools will be to maximize the ability of teachers to do their jobs effectively, and to ensure that they are part of vibrant, caring, and inclusive communities of teachers, students, parents, principals, and other support staff, all of whom share a common goal: to ensure that our children are learning.

5.9. The first requirement in this direction will be to ensure decent and pleasant service conditions at schools. Adequate and safe infrastructure, including working toilets, clean drinking water, clean and attractive spaces, electricity, computing devices, internet, libraries, and sports and recreational resources will be provided to all schools to ensure that teachers and students, including children of all genders and children with disabilities, receive a safe, inclusive, and effective learning environment and are comfortable and inspired to teach and learn in their schools. In-service training will have inputs on safety, health and environment at workplace in schools to ensure that all teachers are sensitized to these requirements.

5.10. State/UT Governments may adopt innovative formats, such as school complex, rationalization of schools, without in any way reducing accessibility, for effective school governance, resource sharing, and community building. The creation of school complexes could go a long way towards building vibrant teacher communities. The hiring of teachers to school complexes could automatically create relationships among schools across the school complex; it would also help ensure excellent subject-wise distribution of teachers, creating a more vibrant teacher knowledge base. Teachers at very small schools will not remain isolated any longer and may become part of and work with larger school complex communities, sharing best practices with each other and working collaboratively to ensure that all children are learning. School complexes could also share counsellors, trained social workers, technical and maintenance staff, etc. to further support teachers and help create an effective learning environment.

5.11. In collaboration with parents and other key local stakeholders, teachers will also be more involved in the governance of schools/school complexes, including as members of the School Management Committees/School Complex Management Committees.

5.12. To prevent the large amounts of time spent currently by teachers on non-teaching activities, teachers will not be engaged any longer in work that is not directly related to teaching; in particular, teachers will not be involved in strenuous administrative tasks and more than a rationalized minimum time for mid-day meal related work, so that they may fully concentrate on their teaching-learning duties.

5.13. To help ensure that schools have positive learning environments, the role expectations of principals and teachers will explicitly include developing a caring and inclusive culture at their schools, for effective learning and the benefit of all stakeholders.

5.14. Teachers will be given more autonomy in choosing aspects of pedagogy, so that they may teach in the manner they find most effective for the students in their classrooms. Teachers will also focus

on socio-emotional learning - a critical aspect of any student's holistic development. Teachers will be recognized for novel approaches to teaching that improve learning outcomes in their classrooms.

### **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**

5.15. Teachers will be given continuous opportunities for self-improvement and to learn the latest innovations and advances in their professions. These will be offered in multiple modes, including in the form of local, regional, state, national, and international workshops as well as online teacher development modules. Platforms (especially online platforms) will be developed so that teachers may share ideas and best practices. Each teacher will be expected to participate in at least 50 hours of CPD opportunities every year for their own professional development, driven by their own interests. CPD opportunities will, in particular, systematically cover the latest pedagogies regarding foundational literacy and numeracy, formative and adaptive assessment of learning outcomes, competency-based learning, and related pedagogies, such as experiential learning, arts-integrated, sports-integrated, and storytelling-based approaches, etc.

5.16. School Principals and school complex leaders will have similar modular leadership/management workshops and online development opportunities and platforms to continuously improve their own leadership and management skills, and so that they too may share best practices with each other. Such leaders will also be expected to participate in 50 hours or more of CPD modules per year, covering leadership and management, as well as content and pedagogy with a focus on preparing and implementing pedagogical plans based on competency-based education.

### **Career Management and Progression (CMP)**

5.17. Teachers doing outstanding work must be recognized and promoted, and given salary raises, to incentivize all teachers to do their best work. Therefore, a robust merit-based structure of tenure, promotion, and salary structure will be developed, with multiple levels within each teacher stage, that incentivizes and recognizes outstanding teachers. A system of multiple parameters for proper assessment of performance will be developed for the same by State/UT Governments that is based on peer reviews, attendance, commitment, hours of CPD, and other forms of service to the school and the community or based on NPST given in Para 5.20. In this Policy, in the context of careers, 'tenure' refers to confirmation for permanent employment, after due assessment of performance and contribution, while 'tenure track' refers to the period of probation preceding tenure.

5.18. Further, it will be ensured that career growth (in terms of tenure, promotions, salary increases, etc.) is available to teachers within a single school stage (i.e., Foundational, Preparatory, Middle, or Secondary), and that there is no career progression-related incentive to move from being teachers in early stages to later stages or vice versa (though such career moves across stages will be allowed, provided the teacher has the desire and qualifications for such a move). This is to support the fact that all stages of school education will require the highest-quality teachers, and no stage will be considered more important than any other.

5.19. Vertical mobility of teachers based on merit will also be paramount; outstanding teachers with demonstrated leadership and management skills would be trained over time to take on academic leadership positions in schools, school complexes, BRCs, CRCs, BITEs, DIETs as well as relevant government departments.

### **Professional Standards for Teachers**

5.20. A common guiding set of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by 2022, by the National Council for Teacher Education in its restructured new form as a Professional Standard Setting Body (PSSB) under the General Education Council (GEC), in consultation with NCERT, SCERTs, teachers from across levels and regions, expert organizations in teacher preparation and development, expert bodies in vocational education, and higher education institutions. The standards would cover expectations of the role of the teacher at different levels of expertise/stage, and the competencies required for that stage. It will also comprise standards for

performance appraisal, for each stage, that would be carried out on a periodic basis. The NPST will also inform the design of pre-service teacher education programmes. This could be then adopted by States and determine all aspects of teacher career management, including tenure, professional development efforts, salary increases, promotions, and other recognitions. Promotions and salary increases will not occur based on the length of tenure or seniority, but only on the basis of such appraisal. The professional standards will be reviewed and revised in 2030, and thereafter every ten years, on the basis of rigorous empirical analysis of the efficacy of the system.

### **Special educators**

5.21. There is an urgent need for additional special educators for certain areas of school education. Some examples of such specialist requirements include subject teaching for children with disabilities/*Divyang* children at the Middle and Secondary school level, including teaching for specific learning disabilities. Such teachers would require not only subject-teaching knowledge and understanding of subject-related aims of education, but also the relevant skills for understanding of special requirements of children. Therefore, such areas could be developed as secondary specializations for subject teachers or generalist teachers, during or after pre-service teacher preparation. They will be offered as certificate courses, in the pre-service as well as in-service mode, either full time or as part-time/blended courses - again, necessarily, at multidisciplinary colleges or universities. Greater synergy will be enabled between the course curriculum of NCTE and RCI to ensure adequate availability of qualified special educators who can handle subject teaching as well.

### **Approach to Teacher Education**

5.22. Recognizing that the teachers will require training in high-quality content as well as pedagogy, teacher education will gradually be moved by 2030 into multidisciplinary colleges and universities. As colleges and universities all move towards becoming multidisciplinary, they will also aim to house outstanding education departments that offer B.Ed., M.Ed., and Ph.D. degrees in education.

5.23. By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree that teaches a range of knowledge content and pedagogy and includes strong practicum training in the form of student-teaching at local schools. The 2-year B.Ed. programmes will also be offered, by the same multidisciplinary institutions offering the 4-year integrated B.Ed., and will be intended only for those who have already obtained Bachelor's Degrees in other specialized subjects. These B.Ed. programmes may also be suitably adapted as 1-year B.Ed. programmes, and will be offered only to those who have completed the equivalent of 4-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's Degrees or who have obtained a Master's degree in a specialty and wish to become a subject teacher in that specialty. All such B.Ed. degrees would be offered only by accredited multidisciplinary higher education institutions offering 4-year integrated B.Ed. programmes. Multidisciplinary higher education institutions offering the 4-year in-class integrated B.Ed. programme and having accreditation for ODL may also offer high-quality B.Ed. programmes in blended or ODL mode to students in remote or difficult-to-access locations and also to in-service teachers who are aiming to enhance their qualification, with suitable robust arrangements for mentoring and for the practicum-training and student-teaching components of the programme.

5.24. All B.Ed. programmes will include training in time-tested as well as the most recent techniques in pedagogy, including pedagogy with respect to foundational literacy and numeracy, multi-level teaching and evaluation, teaching children with disabilities, teaching children with special interests or talents, use of educational technology, and learner-centered and collaborative learning. All B.Ed. programmes will include strong practicum training in the form of in-classroom teaching at local schools. All B.Ed. programmes will also emphasize the practice of the Fundamental Duties (Article 51A) of the Indian Constitution along with other Constitutional provisions while teaching any subject or performing any activity. It will also appropriately integrate environmental awareness and sensitivity towards its conservation and sustainable development, so that environment education becomes an integral part of school curricula.

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5.25. Special shorter local teacher education programmes will also be available at BITEs, DIETs, or at school complexes themselves for eminent local persons who can be hired to teach at schools or school complexes as ‘master instructors’, for the purpose of promoting local professions, knowledge, and skills, e.g., local art, music, agriculture, business, sports, carpentry, and other vocational crafts.

5.26. Shorter post-B.Ed. certification courses will also be made widely available, at multidisciplinary colleges and universities, to teachers who may wish to move into more specialized areas of teaching, such as the teaching of students with disabilities, or into leadership and management positions in the schooling system, or to move from one stage to another between foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary stages.

5.27. It is recognized that there may be several pedagogical approaches internationally for teaching particular subjects; NCERT will study, research, document, and compile the varied international pedagogical approaches for teaching different subjects and make recommendations on what can be learnt and assimilated from these approaches into the pedagogies being practiced in India.

5.28. By 2021, a new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021, will be formulated by the NCTE in consultation with NCERT, based on the principles of this National Education Policy 2020. The framework will be developed after discussions with all stakeholders including State Governments, relevant Ministries/Departments of Central Government and various expert bodies, and will be made available in all regional languages. The NCFTE 2021 will also factor in the requirements of teacher education curricula for vocational education. The NCFTE will thereafter be revised once every 5-10 years by reflecting the changes in revised NCFs as well as emerging needs in teacher education.

5.29. Finally, in order to fully restore the integrity of the teacher education system, stringent action will be taken against substandard stand-alone Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) running in the country, including shutting them down, if required.

## **6. Equitable and Inclusive Education: Learning for All**

6.1. Education is the single greatest tool for achieving social justice and equality. Inclusive and equitable education - while indeed an essential goal in its own right - is also critical to achieving an inclusive and equitable society in which every citizen has the opportunity to dream, thrive, and contribute to the nation. The education system must aim to benefit India’s children so that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of circumstances of birth or background. This Policy reaffirms that bridging the social category gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes in school education will continue to be one of the major goals of all education sector development programmes. This Chapter may be read in conjunction with Chapter 14 which discusses analogous issues of Equity and Inclusion in Higher Education.

6.2. While the Indian education system and successive government policies have made steady progress towards bridging gender and social category gaps in all levels of school education, large disparities still remain - especially at the secondary level - particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged groups that have been historically underrepresented in education. Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) can be broadly categorized based on gender identities (particularly female and transgender individuals), socio-cultural identities (such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, and minorities), geographical identities (such as students from villages, small towns, and aspirational districts), disabilities (including learning disabilities), and socio-economic conditions (such as migrant communities, low income households, children in vulnerable situations, victims of or children of victims of trafficking, orphans including child beggars in urban areas, and the urban poor). While overall enrolments in schools decline steadily from Grade 1 to Grade 12, this decline in enrolments is significantly more pronounced for many of these SEDGs, with even greater declines for female students within each of these SEDGs and often even steeper in higher education. A brief status overview of the SEDGs that come within socio-cultural identities is given in following sub-sections.

6.2.1. According to U-DISE 2016-17 data, about 19.6% of students belong to Scheduled Castes at the primary level, but this fraction falls to 17.3% at the higher secondary level. These enrolment drop-offs are more severe for Scheduled Tribes students (10.6% to 6.8%), and differently-abled children (1.1% to 0.25%), with even greater declines for female students within each of these categories. The decline in enrolment in higher education is even steeper.

6.2.2. A multiplicity of factors, including lack of access to quality schools, poverty, social mores & customs, and language have had a detrimental effect on rates of enrolment and retention among the Scheduled Castes. Bridging these gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes of children belonging to Scheduled Castes will continue to be one of the major goals. Also, the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) which have been identified on the basis of historically being socially and educationally backward also need special focus.

6.2.3. Tribal communities and children from Scheduled Tribes also face disadvantages at multiple levels due to various historical and geographical factors. Children from tribal communities often find their school education irrelevant and foreign to their lives, both culturally and academically. While several programmatic interventions to uplift children from tribal communities are currently in place, and will continue to be pursued, special mechanisms need to be made to ensure that children belonging to tribal communities receive the benefits of these interventions.

6.2.4. Minorities are also relatively underrepresented in school and higher education. The Policy acknowledges the importance of interventions to promote education of children belonging to all minority communities, and particularly those communities that are educationally underrepresented.

6.2.5. The Policy also recognizes the importance of creating enabling mechanisms for providing Children With Special Needs (CWSN) or *Divyang*, the same opportunities of obtaining quality education as any other child.

6.2.6. Separate strategies will be formulated for focused attention on reducing the social category gaps in school education as outlined in the following sub-sections.

6.3. The critical problems and recommendations regarding ECCE, foundational literacy and numeracy, access, enrolment and attendance discussed in Chapters 1–3, are particularly relevant and important for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups. Therefore, the measures from Chapters 1–3 will be targeted in a concerted way for SEDGs.

6.4. In addition, there have been various successful policies and schemes such as targeted scholarships, conditional cash transfers to incentivize parents to send their children to school, providing bicycles for transport, etc., that have significantly increased participation of SEDGs in the schooling system in certain areas. These successful policies and schemes must be significantly strengthened across the country.

6.5. It will also be essential to take into account research that ascertains which measures are particularly effective for certain SEDGs. For example, providing bicycles and organizing cycling and walking groups to provide access to school have been shown to be particularly powerful methods in increasing participation of female students - even at lesser distances - because of the safety benefits and comfort to parents that they provide. One-on-one teachers and tutors, peer tutoring, open schooling, appropriate infrastructure, and suitable technological interventions to ensure access can be particularly effective for certain children with disabilities. Schools providing quality ECCE reap the greatest dividends for children who come from families that are economically disadvantaged. Meanwhile, counsellors and/or well-trained social workers that work with and connect with students, parents, schools, and teachers in order to improve attendance and learning outcomes have been found to be especially effective for children in urban poor areas.

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6.6. Data shows that certain geographical areas contain significantly larger proportions of SEDGs. Also, there are geographical locations that have been identified as Aspirational Districts which require special interventions for promoting their educational development. Hence, it is recommended that regions of the country with large populations from educationally-disadvantaged SEDGs should be declared Special Education Zones (SEZs), where all the schemes and policies are implemented to the maximum through additional concerted efforts, in order to truly change their educational landscape.

6.7. It must be noted that women cut across all underrepresented groups, making up about half of all SEDGs. Unfortunately, the exclusion and inequity that SEDGs face is only amplified for the women in these SEDGs. The policy additionally recognizes the special and critical role that women play in society and in shaping social mores; therefore, providing a quality education to girls is the best way to increase the education levels for these SEDGs, not just in the present but also in future generations. The policy thus recommends that the policies and schemes designed to include students from SEDGs should be especially targeted towards girls in these SEDGs.

6.8. In addition, the Government of India will constitute a ‘Gender-Inclusion Fund’ to build the nation’s capacity to provide equitable quality education for all girls as well as transgender students. The fund will be available to States to implement priorities determined by the Central government critical for assisting female and transgender children in gaining access to education (such as the provisions of sanitation and toilets, bicycles, conditional cash transfers, etc.); funds will also enable States to support and scale effective community-based interventions that address local context-specific barriers to female and transgender children’s access to and participation in education. Similar ‘Inclusion Fund’ schemes shall also be developed to address analogous access issues for other SEDGs. In essence, this Policy aims to eliminate any remaining disparity in access to education (including vocational education) for children from any gender or other socio-economically disadvantaged group.

6.9. Free boarding facilities will be built - matching the standard of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas - in school locations where students may have to come from far, and particularly for students who from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, with suitable arrangements for the safety of all children, especially girls. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas will be strengthened and expanded to increase the participation in quality schools (up to Grade 12) of girls from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Additional Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and Kendriya Vidyalayas will be built around the country, especially in aspirational districts, Special Education Zones, and other disadvantaged areas, to increase high-quality educational opportunities. Pre-school sections covering at least one year of early childhood care and education will be added to Kendriya Vidyalayas and other primary schools around the nation, particularly in disadvantaged areas.

6.10. Ensuring the inclusion and equal participation of children with disabilities in ECCE and the schooling system will also be accorded the highest priority. Children with disabilities will be enabled to fully participate in the regular schooling process from the Foundational Stage to higher education. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act 2016 defines inclusive education as a ‘system of education wherein students with and without disabilities learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities’. This Policy is in complete consonance with the provisions of the RPWD Act 2016 and endorses all its recommendations with regard to school education. While preparing the National Curriculum Framework, NCERT will ensure that consultations are held with expert bodies such as National Institutes of DEPWD.

6.11. To this end, schools/school complexes will be provided resources for the integration of children with disabilities, recruitment of special educators with cross-disability training, and for the establishment of resource centres, wherever needed, especially for children with severe or multiple disabilities. Barrier free access for all children with disabilities will be enabled as per the RPWD Act. Different categories of children with disabilities have differing needs. Schools and school complexes will work and be supported for providing all children with disabilities accommodations and support

mechanisms tailored to suit their needs and to ensure their full participation and inclusion in the classroom. In particular, assistive devices and appropriate technology-based tools, as well as adequate and language-appropriate teaching-learning materials (e.g., textbooks in accessible formats such as large print and Braille) will be made available to help children with disabilities integrate more easily into classrooms and engage with teachers and their peers. This will apply to all school activities including arts, sports, and vocational education. NIOS will develop high-quality modules to teach Indian Sign Language, and to teach other basic subjects using Indian Sign Language. Adequate attention will be paid to the safety and security of children with disabilities.

6.12. As per the RPWD Act 2016, children with benchmark disabilities shall have the choice of regular or special schooling. Resource centres in conjunction with special educators will support the rehabilitation and educational needs of learners with severe or multiple disabilities and will assist parents/guardians in achieving high-quality home schooling and skilling for such students as needed. Home-based education will continue to be a choice available for children with severe and profound disabilities who are unable to go to schools. The children under home-based education must be treated as equal to any other child in the general system. There shall be an audit of home-based education for its efficiency and effectiveness using the principle of equity and equality of opportunity. Guidelines and standards for home-based schooling shall be developed based on this audit in line with the RPWD Act 2016. While it is clear that the education of all children with disabilities is the responsibility of the State, technology-based solutions will be used for the orientation of parents/caregivers along with wide-scale dissemination of learning materials to enable parents/caregivers to actively support their children's learning needs will be accorded priority.

6.13. Most classrooms have children with specific learning disabilities who need continuous support. Research is clear that the earlier such support begins, the better the chances of progress. Teachers must be helped to identify such learning disabilities early and plan specifically for their mitigation. Specific actions will include the use of appropriate technology allowing and enabling children to work at their own pace, with flexible curricula to leverage each child's strengths, and creating an ecosystem for appropriate assessment and certification. Assessment and certification agencies, including the proposed new National Assessment Centre, PARAKH, will formulate guidelines and recommend appropriate tools for conducting such assessment, from the foundational stage to higher education (including for entrance exams), in order to ensure equitable access and opportunities for all students with learning disabilities.

6.14. The awareness and knowledge of how to teach children with specific disabilities (including learning disabilities) will be an integral part of all teacher education programmes, along with gender sensitization and sensitization towards all underrepresented groups in order to reverse their underrepresentation.

6.15. Alternative forms of schools, will be encouraged to preserve their traditions or alternative pedagogical styles. At the same time, they will be supported to integrate the subject and learning areas prescribed by the NCFSE into their curricula in order to reduce and eventually eliminate the underrepresentation of children from these schools in higher education. In particular, financial assistance will be provided to introduce science, mathematics, social studies, Hindi, English, State languages, or other relevant subjects in the curriculum, as may be desired by these schools. This would enable children studying in these schools to attain the learning outcomes defined for Grades 1–12. Furthermore, students in such schools would be encouraged to appear for State or other Board examinations and assessments by the NTA, and thereby enroll in higher education institutions. Capacities of teachers in the teaching of science, mathematics, language, and social studies will be developed including orientation to new pedagogical practices. Libraries and laboratories will be strengthened and adequate reading materials like books, journals, etc., and other teaching-learning materials will be made available.

6.16. Within SEDGs, and with respect to all the above policy points, special attention will be given to reduce the disparities in the educational development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. As a part of the efforts to enhance participation in school education, special hostels in dedicated regions, bridge courses, and financial assistance through fee waivers and scholarships will be offered to