

SALIENT FEATURES OF NEP 2020: SCHOOL EDUCATION

1. NEW PEDAGOGICAL AND CURRICULAR STRUCTURE

- The extant 10+2 structure in school education will be modified with a new pedagogical and curricular restructuring of 5+3+3+4 covering ages 3-18.
- Currently, children in the age group of 3-6 are not covered in the 10+2 structure as Class 1 begins at age 6. In the new 5+3+3+4 structure, a strong base of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) from age 3 is also included.

2. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION: THE FOUNDATION OF LEARNING

- Universal provisioning of quality early childhood development, care, and education must be achieved as soon as possible, and no later than 2030.
- The overall aim of ECCE will be to attain optimal outcomes in the domains of: physical and motor development, cognitive development, socio-emotional-ethical development, cultural/artistic development, and the development of communication and early language, literacy, and numeracy.
- A National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCPFECCE) for children up to the age of 8 will be developed by NCERT
- The numerous rich local traditions of India developed over millennia in ECCE involving art, stories, poetry, games, songs, and more, will also be suitably incorporated.
- ECCE shall be delivered through a significantly expanded and strengthened system of early-childhood education institutions consisting of:
 - stand-alone Anganwadis;
 - Anganwadis co-located with primary schools;
 - pre-primary schools/sections covering at least age 5 to 6 years co-located with existing primary schools; and
 - stand-alone pre-schools
- All of above would recruit workers/teachers specially trained in the curriculum and pedagogy of ECCE.
- For universal access to ECCE, Anganwadi Centres will be strengthened.
- Prior to the age of 5 every child will move to a “Preparatory Class” or “Balavatika” (that is, before Class 1), which has an ECCE-qualified teacher.
- Training of current Anganwadi workers/teachers: those with qualifications of 10+2 and above shall be given a 6-month certificate programme in ECCE; and those with lower educational qualifications shall be given a one-year diploma programme
- These programmes may be run through digital/distance mode allowing teachers to acquire ECCE qualifications with minimal disruption to their current work.
- The planning and implementation of early childhood care and education curriculum will be carried out jointly by the Ministries of HRD, Women and Child Development (WCD), Health and Family Welfare (HFW), and Tribal Affairs.

3. FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY: AN URGENT & NECESSARY PREREQUISITE TO LEARNING

- A National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy will be set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) on priority.
- All State/UT governments will prepare an implementation plan for attaining universal foundational literacy and numeracy in all primary schools for all learners by grade 3 to be achieved by 2025.
- Teachers will be trained to impart foundational literacy and numeracy.
- To ensure that all students are school ready, an interim 3-month play-based ‘school preparation module’ for all Grade 1 students will be developed by NCERT and SCERTs.
- A national repository of high-quality resources on foundational literacy and numeracy will be made available on the Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA).
- States to consider establishing innovative models to foster peer-tutoring and volunteer activities, etc. for promoting foundational literacy and numeracy.
- Public and school libraries will be significantly expanded, and digital libraries will also be established.
- A National Book Promotion Policy will be formulated.
- The nutrition and health (including mental health) of children will be addressed, through healthy meals and regular health check-ups, and health cards will be issued to monitor the same.

4. CURTAILING DROPOUT RATES AND ENSURING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS

- Two initiatives for above:
 - no school remains deficient on infrastructure support from pre-primary school to Grade 12 and alternative and innovative education centres to ensure that children of migrant labourers, and other children who are dropping out of school due to various circumstances are brought back into mainstream education.
 - achieve universal participation in school by carefully tracking students, as well as their learning levels
- Counsellors or well-trained social workers connected to schools/school complexes
- Scope of school education will be broadened to facilitate multiple pathways to learning involving both formal and non-formal education modes.
- NIOS and State Open Schools will also offer A, B and C levels that are equivalent to Grades 3, 5, and 8 of the formal school system; secondary education programs that are equivalent to Grades 10 and 12; vocational education courses/programs; and adult literacy and life-enrichment programs.
- States encouraged to develop these in regional languages by establishing new/strengthening existing State Institutes of Open Schooling (SIOS).
- The focus will be to have less emphasis on input and greater emphasis on output potential concerning desired learning outcomes.

- Efforts to involve community: Databases of literate volunteers, retired scientists/government/semi government employees, alumni, and educators will be created for this purpose.

5. RESTRUCTURING SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY IN A NEW 5+3+3+4 DESIGN

- The curricular and pedagogical structure of school education: guided by a 5+3+3+4 design corresponding to the age ranges of 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years, respectively.
- **No parallel changes to physical infrastructure will be required.**
- It will consist of:
 - **Foundational Stage** (in two parts, that is, 3 years of Anganwadi/pre-school + 2 years in primary school in Grades 1-2; both together covering ages 3-8): with flexible, multilevel, play/activity-based learning and the curriculum and pedagogy of ECCE.
 - **Preparatory Stage** (Grades 3-5, covering ages 8-11): with the introduction Experiential learning across the sciences, mathematics, arts, social sciences, and humanities.
 - **Middle Stage** (Grades 6-8, covering ages 11-14): with a subject-oriented pedagogical and curricular style.
 - **Secondary Stage** (Grades 9-12 in two phases, i.e., 9 and 10 in the first and 11 and 12 in the second, covering ages 14-18) : with greater depth, greater critical thinking, greater attention to life aspirations, and greater flexibility and student choice of subjects, and option to exit at grade 10 and re-enter at a later stage in grade 11.

6. HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS

- Overall thrust of curriculum and pedagogy reform to move towards real understanding and learning how to learn - and away from the culture of rote learning
- Aim of education will not only be cognitive development, but also building character and creating holistic and well-rounded individuals equipped with the key 21st century skills.
- Specific sets of skills and values across domains will be identified for integration and incorporation at each stage of learning, from pre-school to higher education.

7. REDUCTION IN CURRICULUM CONTENT TO ENHANCE ESSENTIAL LEARNING AND CRITICAL THINKING

- Curriculum content will be reduced in each subject to its core essentials, and make space for critical thinking and more holistic, inquiry-based, discovery-based, discussion-based, and analysis-based learning.
- The mandated content will focus on key concepts, ideas, applications, and problem-solving.
- Teaching and learning will be conducted in a more interactive manner

8. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

- In all stages, experiential learning will be adopted
- Will include hands-on learning, arts-integrated and sports-integrated education, story-telling-based pedagogy, among others, as standard pedagogy

- Classroom transactions will shift, towards competency-based learning and education.
- The assessment tools (including assessment “as”, “of”, and “for” learning) will be aligned with the learning outcomes, capabilities, and dispositions as specified for each subject of a given class.

9. NO HARD SEPARATION

- Students will be given increased flexibility and choice of subjects to study, particularly in secondary school - including subjects in physical education, the arts and crafts, and vocational skills
- There will be no hard separation among ‘curricular’, ‘extracurricular’, or ‘co-curricular’, among ‘arts’, ‘humanities’, and ‘sciences’, or between ‘vocational’ or ‘academic’ streams.
- Subjects such as physical education, the arts and crafts, and vocational skills, in addition to science, humanities, and mathematics, will be incorporated throughout the school curriculum.
- Each of the four stages of school education, may consider moving towards a semester or any other system that allows the inclusion of shorter modules

10. MULTILINGUALISM AND THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

- Wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the home language/mother tongue/local language/regional language.
- Thereafter, the home/local language shall continue to be taught as a language wherever possible.
- This will be followed by both public and private schools.
- High-quality textbooks, including in science, will be made available in home languages/mother tongue.
- All languages will be taught in an enjoyable and interactive style
- States may enter into bilateral agreements to hire teachers from each other
- The three-language learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and of the students, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India.
- Efforts to prepare 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.
- Indian Sign Language (ISL) will be standardized across the country, and National and State curriculum materials developed, for use by students with hearing impairment.

11. CURRICULAR INTEGRATION OF ESSENTIAL SUBJECTS, SKILLS, AND CAPACITIES

- Certain subjects, skills, and capacities will be emphasized in school: such as, 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; etc.

- Introduction of contemporary subjects such as Artificial Intelligence, Design Thinking, Holistic Health, Organic Living, Environmental Education, Global Citizenship Education (GCED), etc. at relevant stages
- Mathematics and computational thinking to be given increased emphasis throughout school years. Activities involving coding to be introduced in Middle Stage.
- Bagless days will be encouraged throughout the year for various types of enrichment activities involving arts, quizzes, sports, and vocational crafts.

12. NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION (NCFSE)

- The formulation of a new and comprehensive National Curricular Framework for School Education, NCFSE 2020-21, will be undertaken by the NCERT
- The NCFSE document shall henceforth be revisited and updated once every 5-10 years, taking into account frontline curriculum.

13. NATIONAL TEXTBOOKS WITH LOCAL CONTENT AND FLAVOUR

- All textbooks shall aim to contain the essential core material on a national level, but at the same time contain any desired nuances and supplementary material as per local contexts and needs.
- 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.
- Concerted efforts, through suitable changes in curriculum and pedagogy, will be made to significantly reduce the weight of school bags and textbooks.

14. KNOWLEDGE OF INDIA

- Will include knowledge from ancient India to modern India as well as future aspirations
- Will be incorporated in an accurate and scientific manner throughout the school curriculum wherever relevant
- Indian Knowledge Systems, including tribal knowledge and indigenous and traditional ways of learning, will be covered
- Specific courses in tribal ethno-medicinal practices, forest management, traditional (organic) crop cultivation, natural farming, etc. will also be made available.
- Video documentaries on inspirational luminaries of India, ancient and modern, in science and beyond
- Students will be given a logical framework for making ethical decisions at a young age.
- 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
- Traditional Indian values and all basic human and Constitutional values will be developed in all students.

- 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.

15. TRANSFORMING ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

- All students will take school examinations in Grades 3, 5, and 8 also, which will test achievement of basic learning outcomes, and application of knowledge in real-life situations.
- The Board exams for Grades 10 and 12 will be continued.
- Board exams will be made ‘easier’, as they will test primarily core capacities/competencies rather than months of coaching/memorization
- Boards may over time also develop further viable models of Board Exams, such as - annual/semester/modular Board Exams; offering all subjects beginning with mathematics, at two levels; two parts exams or objective type and descriptive type.
- With regard to all of the above, guidelines will be prepared by NCERT, in consultation with SCERTs, Boards of Assessment (BoAs), and PARAKH, the proposed new National Assessment Centre etc.,
- The progress card of all students for school-based assessment will be redesigned.
- The progress card will be a holistic, 360-degree, multidimensional report that reflects in great detail the progress and the uniqueness of each learner in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.
- The progress card will include self-assessment, peer assessment and teacher assessment
- Teachers to be prepared for a transformation in the assessment system by the 2022-23 academic session.
- A National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) to be set up as a standard-setting body for setting norms, standards, and guidelines for student assessment and evaluation for all recognized school boards.
- The National Testing Agency (NTA) will 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 for university entrance exams.

16. SUPPORT FOR GIFTED STUDENTS/STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL TALENTS

- 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.
- Teachers will encourage students with singular interests and/or talents in the classroom by giving them supplementary enrichment material and guidance.
- Olympiads and competitions in various subjects will be conducted across the country.

- Online apps with quizzes, competitions, assessments, enrichment materials, and online communities for shared interests will be developed as group activities.
- Schools will develop smart classrooms, in a phased manner.

17. TEACHERS RECRUITMENT AND DEPLOYMENT

- Transfers will be conducted through an online computerized system that ensures transparency.
- Teacher Eligibility Tests (TETs) will be strengthened and extended to cover pre-primary to grade 12 teachers, in both public and private schools.
- For subject teachers, suitable TET or NTA test scores along with a classroom demonstration will be utilized for recruitment.
- 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.

18. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

- Continuous opportunities for self-improvement will be offered in multiple modes, such as, workshops, online teacher development modules, etc.
- Each teacher will be expected to participate in at least 50 hours of CPD opportunities every year driven by their own interests.
- School Principals will also be expected to participate in 50 hours or more of CPD modules per year, covering leadership and management, with a focus on preparing and implementing pedagogical plans based on competency-based education.

19. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS

- A common guiding set of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by 2022, by the NCTE.
- The standards would cover expectations of the role of the teacher at different levels of expertise/stage, and the competencies required for that stage.
- NCTE to be restructured as a Professional Standard Setting Body (PSSB) under General Education Council (GEC).

20. SPECIAL EDUCATORS

- For subject teaching for children with disabilities/*Divyang* children at the Middle and Secondary school level, specializations will be offered during or after pre-service teacher preparation with greater synergy between the course curriculum of NCTE and RCI.

21. APPROACH TO TEACHER EDUCATION

- Teacher education will gradually be moved into multidisciplinary colleges and universities by 2030.
- By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree.

- The 2-year B.Ed. programmes will also be offered only for those who have already obtained Bachelor's Degrees in other specialized subjects.
- Adapted 1-year B.Ed. programmes for 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.
- Multidisciplinary higher education institutions having accreditation for ODL may also offer high-quality B.Ed. programmes in blended or ODL mode.
- 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.
- Special shorter local teacher education programmes will also be available at BITEs, DIETs, 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.
- 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.
- By 2021, a new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021, will be formulated by the NCTE in consultation with NCERT
- 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.

22. TEACHER EDUCATION

- The Regulatory System shall be empowered to take stringent action against substandard and dysfunctional teacher education institutions (TEIs) that do not meet basic educational criteria, after giving one year for remedy of the breaches.
- By 2030, only educationally sound, multidisciplinary, and integrated teacher education programmes shall be in force.
- All multidisciplinary universities and colleges - will aim to establish, education departments will also run B.Ed. programmes, in collaboration with other departments such as psychology, philosophy, sociology, neuroscience, Indian languages, arts, music, history, literature, physical education, science and mathematics.
- All stand-alone TEIs will be required to convert to multidisciplinary institutions by 2030, since they will have to offer the 4-year integrated teacher preparation programme.
- The admission to pre-service teacher preparation programmes shall be through suitable subject and aptitude tests conducted by the National Testing Agency.
- All fresh Ph.D. entrants, irrespective of discipline, will be required to take credit-based courses in teaching/education/pedagogy/writing related to their chosen Ph.D subject and will also have a minimum number of hours of actual teaching experience.
- The use of technology platforms such as SWAYAM/DIKSHA for online training of teachers will be encouraged.

- A National Mission for Mentoring shall be established, with a large pool of outstanding senior/retired faculty who would be willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.

23. EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: LEARNING FOR ALL

- Focus on Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs)
- **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).
- Separate strategies will be formulated for focused attention for reducing each of the category-wise gaps in school education.
- Regions of the country with large populations from educationally-disadvantaged SEDGs should be declared Special Education Zones (SEZs), for additional concerted efforts.
- A ‘Gender-Inclusion Fund’ will be constituted to provide equitable quality education for all girls as well as transgender students.
- Free boarding facilities will be built - matching the standard of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas particularly for students who from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas will be strengthened and expanded to increase the participation in quality schools (up to Grade 12)
- Additional Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and Kendriya Vidyalayas will be built around the country, especially in aspirational districts, Special Education Zones, and other disadvantaged areas.
- 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.
- 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
- Barrier free access for all children with disabilities will be enabled as per the RPWD Act.

- Assistive devices and appropriate technology-based tools, language-appropriate teaching-learning materials will be made available.
- NIOS will develop high-quality modules to teach Indian Sign Language, and to teach other basic subjects using Indian Sign Language.
- 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.
- Knowledge of how to teach children with specific disabilities will be an integral part of all teacher education programmes.
- 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.
- Special attention will be given to reduce the disparities in the educational development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes – through special hostels in dedicated regions, bridge courses, and financial assistance through fee waivers and scholarships.

24. EFFICIENT RESOURCING AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE THROUGH SCHOOL COMPLEXES/CLUSTERS

- The challenges of optimal utilization and sharing of resources will, by 2025, be addressed by State/UT governments by adopting innovative mechanisms to group or rationalize schools, such as, school complexes.
- Benefits of school complex include - improved support for children with disabilities, more topic-centred clubs and academic/sports/arts/crafts events across school complexes, sharing of teachers including use of ICT tools to conduct virtual classes, better student support, enrolment, attendance, and performance through the sharing of counsellors
- To further enhance cooperation and positive synergy among schools, including between public and private schools, the twinning/pairing of one public school with one private school will be adopted across the country.

25. STANDARD-SETTING AND ACCREDITATION FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Independent responsibilities within the State school education system and the approach to regulation are as follows:
 - The Department of School Education will be responsible for overall monitoring and policymaking for continual improvement.
 - The educational operations and service provision for the public schooling system of the whole State will be handled by the Directorate of School Education.
 - An effective quality self-regulation or accreditation system will be instituted for all stages of education including pre-school education - private, public, and philanthropic - to ensure compliance with essential quality standards. States/UTs will set up an independent, State-wide, body called the State School Standards Authority (SSSA) which will establish a minimal set of standards. This information shall be self-disclosed and will be made available on a public website maintained by the SSSA.

- Academic matters, including academic standards and curricula in the State will be led by the SCERT (with close consultation and collaboration with the NCERT).
- The SCERT will develop a School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework (SQAAF) through wide consultations with all stakeholders.
- Public and private schools (except the schools that are managed/aided/controlled by the Central government) will be assessed and accredited on the same criteria, benchmarks, and processes,

26. REIMAGINING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

- By 2025, at least 50% of learners through the school and higher education system shall have exposure to vocational education
- Beginning with vocational exposure at early ages in middle and secondary school, quality vocational education will be integrated smoothly into higher education.
- Every child to learn at least one vocation and exposed to several more.
- Sampling of important vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, metal work, gardening, pottery making, etc., as decided by States and local communities during Grades 6-8.
- A 10-day bagless period sometime during Grades 6-8 to intern with local vocational experts such as carpenters, gardeners, potters, artists, etc.
- Similar internship opportunities to learn vocational subjects to students throughout Grades 6-12, including holiday periods.
- Vocational courses through online mode will also be made available.
- Vocational education will be integrated in the educational offerings of all secondary schools in a phased manner over the next decade. Towards this, secondary schools will also collaborate with ITIs, polytechnics, local industry, etc. Skill labs will also be set up

27. ADULT EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

- An adult education curriculum framework will be developed by a new constituent body of the NCERT that is dedicated to adult education
- The curriculum framework for adult education will include at least five types of programmes, each with clearly defined outcomes:
 - foundational literacy and numeracy;
 - critical life skills (including financial literacy, digital literacy, commercial skills, health care and awareness, etc.);
 - vocational skills development
 - basic education (including preparatory, middle, and secondary stage equivalency);
 - continuing education (including engaging holistic adult education courses in arts, sciences, technology, culture, sports, and recreation, etc.
- Use of schools/ school complexes beyond school hours and public library spaces for adult education courses which will be ICT-equipped when possible and for other community engagement and enrichment activities.

- Trained instructors/educators will be required to deliver the curriculum framework to mature learners
- Qualified community members including from Higher Educational Institutions to engage with their local communities will be encouraged and welcomed to take a short training course and volunteer.
- Quality technology-based options for adult learning such as apps, online courses/modules, satellite-based TV channels, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centres, etc. will be developed.
