

Department of School Education and Literacy

Background Note on the Budget announcements 2021-22

(1) Schools of Excellence

Budget Announcement:

“More than 15,000 schools will be qualitatively strengthened to include all components of the National Education Policy. They shall emerge as exemplar schools in their regions, handholding and mentoring other schools to achieve the ideals of the Policy”.

Background:

- Universal access to quality education is fundamental for developing an equitable and just society, promoting national development, scientific advancement, national integration, and cultural preservation.
- Initiatives such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (now the Samagra Shiksha) and the Right to Education Act, in recent years have played a significant role in attaining near-universal enrolment in elementary education. However, the data for later grades indicates some serious issues in retaining children in the schooling system. As per UDISE+ 2018-19 (provisional), the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is 93% in Primary, 90% in upper primary, 80% in Secondary and 59% in Senior Secondary respectively - indicating that a significant proportion of enrolled students drop out after Grade 5 and especially after Grade 8. As per the 75th round household survey by NSSO in 2017-18, the number of out of school children in the age group of 6 to 17 years is 3.22 crore.
- The National Education Policy 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of our country. This Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st century education, including SDG4, while building upon India’s traditions and value systems.
- The aim of exemplar schools is to improve the quality of the education system by building the capacities in schools to transform the system into one that is responsive and committed to the learning needs of children and to ensure enhanced student learning.
- The schools will be funded for strengthening of infrastructure, Early Childhood Care and Education including Introduction of Balvatika, Teaching Learning Material, foundational Literacy and Numeracy(TLM, Capacity building of Teachers, Teachers Resource material),School grants(Composite School grants, Library grant, Sports

grant), Quality and Innovation(LEP, HPC, Science and Maths kits, Innovative Pedagogies, Bagless days, Internships with Local artisans etc.), Child tracking, Equity and Inclusion, ICT and vocational interventions, RTE Entitlements and Capacity building of SMCs etc. The programmatic and financial norms of revamped Samagra Shiksha will be followed to a great extent.

- **Selection of Schools:** The school should have UDISE+ code. All category of school i.e.- Primary, Elementary, Secondary and Senior Secondary school will be selected under this initiative to be transformed as an Exemplar School. Preference will be given to composite schools. i.e., For Primary level classes 1 to 5, Elementary level classes 1 to 8, Secondary level classes 1 to 10 and Senior Secondary level classes 1 to 12. If composite schools are not available, selection may be done from other category of school i.e.- Schools having class 6 to 8, 6 to 10, 6 to 12, 9 to 10, or 10 to 12 etc.
- Schools will be selected from each district of every state/UT, including KGBV schools. Selection should be made in such a way that both urban and rural areas in the district and each category of school should be represented from each district. Schools having the higher enrolment amongst those meeting the minimum benchmarks will be selected by the districts and states based on the parameters decided under the scheme.
- **Monitoring of the Scheme:** The scheme will also have a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation mechanism to monitor the quality through initiatives such as; improved and updated version of Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE), which is online; Comprehensive Child tracking for both transition and learning outcomes; PRABANDH, A comprehensive online monitoring system, Achievement Surveys to check the health of the educational system and to provide information about the learning achievement of students, etc.
- Further, as the exemplar school will include all components of National Education Policy, the quality evaluation of these schools will be undertaken at regular intervals to ensure the standard of school. School Quality and Learning Evaluation Framework (SQLEF) will be undertaken based on the following parameters:
 - 1) Physical Facilities
 - 2) Teaching and non-teaching staff
 - 3) Teacher Professional Development & Learning Resources
 - 4) Classroom Teaching and Management
 - 5) Co-curricular Programmes for Students
 - 6) Student Assessment, Reporting, and Use of findings
 - 7) School Leadership & Management
 - 8) Students Safety, Equity and Dropout rate
 - 9) Community Participation

10) Student Learning Achievement

Beneficiaries and Benefits of Exemplar Schools

- Around 15000 schools will be benefitted from this scheme, including KGBVs, KVs and JNVs.
- Approximately 15 lakh students are expected to be direct beneficiaries of the scheme. Besides these schools, the scheme will also promote understanding of various dimensions of Quality of school education and inform Policy, Practice and Implementation. The learning from these schools will be scaled up to other schools in the country.
- The aim of these schools will not only be cognitive development, but also building character and creating holistic and well-rounded individuals equipped with the key 21st century skills.
- These schools will help showcase the implementation of the National Education Policy and emerge as exemplars and schools of excellence over a period of time that will provide leadership in their respective regions in providing high-quality education in an equitable, inclusive and joyful school environment that takes care of the diverse background, multilingual needs, and different academic abilities of children and makes them active participants in learning process as per the vision of NEP 2020.
- Pedagogy adopted in these schools will be more experiential, holistic, integrated, inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-centred, discussion-based, flexible, and, enjoyable. Pedagogy will involve real life situations and ensure competency-based learning.
- Focus on learning outcomes of every child in every grade – Assessment of Quantitative, Verbal & Logical Reasoning Skills.
- Introduction of Child tracking, Holistic progress Card etc.
- Convergence with existing schemes and line Ministries.

Way Forward:

Activities	Timeline
Preparation of Strategy note and its circulation to all stakeholders/experts	by 28th February, 2021
Consultation with Experts and States and UTs	by 3rd and 4th March 2021
Finalization of Concept Note based on the inputs received from all stakeholders	by 15th March 2021

Preparation of Draft EFC and its inter-ministerial circulation	by 15th April 2021
Finalization of EFC based on the comments/suggestions received from various Ministries	by 30th May 2021
EFC approval	by 15th June 2021
Submission of Cabinet Note	by 30th June 2021
Cabinet Approval	

After Cabinet approval, the selection of schools will be done on a pre-defined criteria and implementation of the interventions will be undertaken from 2021-22 to 2024-25.

(2) National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST):

Budget Announcement:

“Standards will be developed for all school teachers in the form of National Professional Standards for Teachers – NPST. This will enhance the capabilities of teachers and will be followed by 92 lakh teachers of public and private school system in the country”.

Background:

The National Education Policy 2020, inter-alia, includes numerous new educational institutes, bodies, and concepts to be formed. These include design and development of a Common Professional Standards for Teachers for the country.

Para 5.20 of the NEP, 2020 provides the following:

“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.”

Way Forward:

For development of NPST, the Department will consult expert organisations, such as NCTE, NCERT, NIEPA, etc. The process is being initiated with the following actions:

- Consultations with the State education departments, SCERTs, school boards, DIETs, CTEs, IASEs and University Education Departments will be held to understand the expectations of education departments from the teachers as per policy perspectives, modalities for its implementations, provision of professional recognition of teachers, etc.
- There are many countries, such as Finland, Australia, etc. which have the mechanism of National Professional Standards for Teachers. Models of NPST of these and some other countries will be collected and studied.
- Consultations will also be held with NCTE, KVS, NVS and CBSE schools to discuss various dimensions of NPST as per the perspectives of the NEP, 2020.
- Based on above, a draft framework of standards will be developed by involving experts drawn from amongst teacher educators, subject experts and teachers across the stages. The standards will be developed for in-service teachers, Heads of schools and Teacher Educators.
- These will be finalized after having wider consultations at the National and State level.
- The standards will be issued by the regulatory body in the area of Teacher Education (at present NCTE) and implemented by the states/UTs.
- States will introduce systems to achieve these standards, while the centre will introduce a system of grading states in achievement of NPST.
- The draft NPST will be ready by November 2021. Stakeholder consultation will be completed by June 2022. NPST will be launched by August 2022.

(3) Toy based pedagogy

Budget announcement:

“Toys are both an expression of entertainment and learning. A unique indigenous toy-based learning – pedagogy for all levels of school education will be developed. This will transform classroom transactions from mundane and rote learning to an engaging and joyful experience”.

Background:

- The NEP 2020 in the chapter -4 titled “ Curriculum and Pedagogy in Schools: Learning should be Holistic, Integrated, Enjoyable and Engaging” states that “ in all Stages experiential learning will be adopted, including hands-on, learning, arts-

integrated and sports-integrated education, story-telling based pedagogy, among others, as standard pedagogy within each subject, and with explorations of relations among different subjects. Also the NEP-2020 envisages that “Art-Integration is a cross-curricular pedagogical approach that utilises various aspects and forms of art and culture as the basis for learning of concepts across subjects.” In this context, toys play a crucial role in providing joyful and experiential learning as well, which needs to be adopted and adapted with teaching-learning and assessment process.

- Toys helps in understanding social and cultural aspects of our country, strengthen psychomotor and emotional aspects of child’s personality. For pre-schoolers, toys are used for making children ready to learn. However, they can be used from pre-school to higher secondary education. Toy as a teaching-learning resource has a potential to transform classroom pedagogy. Story-telling, drama-show, enacting real life situations, etc. can easily be done using toys linking with themes in the syllabus and learning outcomes. Toy based pedagogy can easily be used by parents as well to make their children learn.

Beneficiaries: Students, teachers, parents, teacher educators, CWSN, educational administrators.

Implementation Strategy: Generating awareness about toy based pedagogy and educational toys, for a joyful and engaging teaching learning experience. Development of e-resources based on gamified learning and assessment strategies. Organizing capacity building programme through face to face blended and online mode for wider reach and scaling. Using social media to popularize initiatives related to implementation of toy pedagogy among all stakeholders.

Way forward:

- Given the importance of toys, games, play, puzzles, art-integration, puppets, activities, etc. in child’s life for entertainment, learning and happiness, the toy-based pedagogy will be given adequate space in three National Curriculum Frameworks – i.e., NCF for School Education, NCF for ECCE, and NCF for Teacher Education. The NCF will be prepared in 2021-22.
- This will guide syllabus and textbook developers to integrate toy-based pedagogy in the syllabus and textbooks across the classes and subject areas focusing on making of toys, games, play, puzzles, art-integration, puppets, activities, etc. by the students and teachers in classrooms.
- Future textbooks developed at the state/UT level will further give space to regional, state and local level toys, games, play, puzzles, art-integration, puppets, etc.
- Training Module on toy-based pedagogy will be developed for teachers across the stages and subject areas for their capacity building to implement toy-based pedagogy in the classrooms (online or offline). This will be ready by August 2021.

- Guidelines will be developed for conducting various activities related to toy-based pedagogy at the school, district, state and national level such as toy fair, toy hackathon, toy week, etc. This will be ready by July 2022.
- National level programmes such as Kala Utsav, Science Exhibition, etc will provide space to toy making for children. This will be implemented from 2021-22.
- Framework for foundational literacy and numeracy will include the perspective of toy-based pedagogy to be implemented at the foundational stage
- Efforts will be made so that Toy –making may be considered as job role under Vocational Education by the National Skill Council.

(4) National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR)

Budget announcement:

“A National Digital Educational Architecture (NDEAR) will be set up within the context of a Digital First Mindset where the Digital Architecture will not only support teaching and learning activities but also educational planning, governance administrative activities of the Centre and the States/ Union Territories. It will provide a diverse education eco-system architecture for development of digital infrastructure, a federated but interoperable system that will ensure autonomy of all stakeholders, specially States and UTs.”

Background

Para 24.4 (b) of the National Education Policy 2020 states the following:

“Digital infrastructure: There is a need to invest in creation of open, interoperable, evolvable, public digital infrastructure in the education sector that can be used by multiple platforms and point solutions, to solve for India’s scale, diversity, complexity and device penetration. This will ensure that the technology-based solutions do not become outdated with the rapid advances in technology.”

Scope:

- NDEAR- National Digital Education Architecture is being envisioned to be a digital infrastructure for Education. N-DEAR will be beneficial for both Centre and States in planning, administering and governing school education as well as to teachers, students and schools for having a seamless digital learning experience.
- The National Education Policy 2020 has highlighted key critical reforms like National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Universalisation of Early Childhood Care and Education, setting up of National Education Technology Forum for school and higher education, setting up a dedicated institute for assessments (PARAKH), etc.

- NDEAR will be a de-centralised framework, it is inherently federated and designed to enable autonomy and choice and in keeping with the federal nature of education under the Indian Constitution.

NDEAR Core Principles:

NDEAR is meant to enable a common set of principles and approaches to be followed in building, using and re-using technology for education. This will ensure that:

- Systems will not function in silos and be able to connect with each other and leverage their combinatorial values.
- It will be possible to leverage great innovations and solutions by State's and the wider education community by others.
- The lead time for getting tech projects and solutions by State's and UT's would be reduced.
- With NDEAR building blocks, solutions and ideas that have worked in a particular State, would be reusable and reconfigurable by another without having to start from scratch.
- NDEAR would provide access to communities of practice and best practices in leveraging technology in the context of India
- Data systems would be able to talk to each other using a common framework and this would help policy making particularly to drive learning outcomes.
- Having common frameworks on data and policies around data will enable consistent handling of data, protection of individual data- particularly children's data.

Implementation plan

Phases	Priorities	Timelines
Phase-1	Finalisation of NDEAR Report	March - 2021
Phase - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up of PMU, Steering Committee • Core set of foundational projects which have high usability and impact. Foundational projects help develop core NDEAR building blocks which are leveraged by subsequent projects. 	December- 2021
Phase - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that provide impetus to NEP and FLN mission implementations leveraging projects from Phase-1 	December- 2022

Phase - 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that amplify efficiency and outcomes building off projects in Phase-1 and 2. 	June - 2024
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(5) Indian Sign Language

Budget announcement:

“For children with hearing impairments, the Government will work on standardization of Indian Sign language across the country, and develop National and State Curriculum materials and digital contents for use by them”.

Background:

The NEP 2020 advocates barrier free access to teaching learning process for all children with disabilities, in harmony with the RPwD Act 2016. The special education needs of children with disabilities with respect to language accessibility vary at both levels--inter disability and intra-disability categories. At one hand we have children who need tactile form of language as in Braille and on other hand we have children who need visual form of language such as cued speech, picture based communication and sign language. Braille is more of a script and comparatively, sign language is more closely resembles the label “language” and it has its own grammar and regional variations just like other recognized languages. Unlike Braille, which is more or less same across globe, the Sign Language has nation specific versions such as Australian sign Language, American Sign Language, British Sign Language, Indian Sign Language and so on.

Within the national versions of Sign language, there exist lots of variations in the Indian Sign Language (ISL). Recognizing the diversity in the ISL, the NEP 2020 proposed that the process of standardization of ISL may be initiated and the task is to be completed in mission mode.

The NEP-2020 emphasises that “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. {NEP-2020, Chapter -4, point 4.22, page -16}

The standardization of any language is required in order to facilitate communications, to make possible the establishment of an agreed orthography (system of spelling in a language) and to establish a comparable quality in the resources. Standardized language is a way to support a common identity and hence a language should be standardized to gain formality.

Beneficiaries: Teachers, teachers educators, Children with Hearing and other impairments as mentioned in the RPWD Act 2016, parents, educational administrators

Implementation Strategy: Popularization of the e-content thus created on various media and other platforms such as DIKSHA, PM eVIDYA DTH channels etc. In addition sensitization, capacity building and awareness programs will be organized at regional and national levels to promote the usage of the UDL based content prepared in ISL. Social Media shall be used for advocacy.

Way forward:

- The CIET, NCERT and ISLRTC have signed an MoU and are working in close collaboration with ISLRTC for developing NCERT textbook based videos in Indian Sign language. Recorded 300 ISL videos based on NCERT curriculum at primary stage.

- The task of standardization of ISL brings an opportunity to collaborate and contribute towards making society inclusive and to bring some cohesiveness in the many dialects of sign language in practice across India.

- The task will also promote the learning of children with hearing impairment thereby providing them an equal opportunity to unfold their potential. All children will be able to communicate with each other with ease and know each other better. This will help to promote inclusion in the impressionable period of development during the school years.

- The following will be done in this regard from April 2021 onwards as a continuous process:
 - Standardize the ISL by considering the variations in the signs used in collaboration with ISLRTC
 - Prepare e-textbook version of NCERT textbooks, including 1000 videos of ISL, audio and text, as per the UDL guidelines
 - Strengthen and update the dictionary prepared by ISLRTC and develop it as per UDL guidelines
 - Capacity building of teachers and educators on ISL
 - Dissemination of ISL based resources in multiple modes

Timelines for implementation:

- 150 videos in sign language for primary level on DIKSHA by March 2021

- Books shall be converted as e-books as per the UDL guidelines and 1000 more ISL videos will be developed from April 2021 to March 2024

All these will be disseminated through DIKSHA and PM e-VIDYA DTH TV Channels ensuring resilient and coherent access of digital contents on ISL.

(6) National Mission for Mentoring:

Budget announcement:

“There are a number of senior and retired teachers. They will be used for individual mentoring of school teachers and educators through constant online/offline support on subjects, themes and pedagogy”.

Background:

- National Education Policy 2020 has been announced on 29.07.2020. The NEP 2020 inter alia includes the establishing of a National Mission for Mentoring.
- Para 15.1 of NEP provides for mentoring of Teacher Educators – “Teacher education is vital in creating a pool of schoolteachers that will shape the next generation. Teacher preparation is an activity that requires multidisciplinary perspectives and knowledge, formation of dispositions and values, and development of practice under the best mentors.”
- Para15.11 of NEP 2020, provides for setting up a national mission for mentoring - “A National Mission for Mentoring shall be established, with a large pool of outstanding senior/retired faculty – including those with the ability to teach in Indian languages – who would be willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers”.
- Para 1.7 of NEP provides for mentoring of ECCE teachers – “In the longer term, State Governments shall prepare cadres of professionally qualified educators for early childhood care and education, through stage-specific professional training, mentoring mechanisms, and career mapping”
- Mentoring is a process for the informal transmission of knowledge and the psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development. Mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to need the guidance (the protégé).
- Therefore, NEP recognises the importance of the outstanding senior/retired faculty who can play an active and vital role in realising 21st century developmental goals of our nation. The NMM underlines the importance of the short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers/teacher educators/faculty.

Way Forward

- NCTE will play an important role keeping into account the following points in its plan of action/promulgation within the timeframe 2021-23.

S I . No.	Classification	Specification	T a r g e t e d Groups
	Blended Mentoring -	E-mentoring where communication between the mentor and learner are done electronically	With the help of N M M Centres different modes of mentoring shall be transacted to cover the target group
	T r a d i t i o n a l Mentoring -	Face-to-face mentoring	
	C o m b i n e d Mentoring-	By combining online group mentoring sessions with individual, face-to-face meetings with a mentor. By incorporating IT with the traditional mentoring method, target group can benefit from the technologies of e-mentoring while receiving direct and personal advice from the traditional method.	

- Data-driven Strategies:**

NCTE will set up a data strategy centre for NMM at National level in NCTE Hqrs, New Delhi.

- Professional Bodies and Qualifications:**

NCTE will evolve an effective plan of action for developing networking of the bodies/TEIs to play a supportive and advisory role and collecting/contacting profile/people of those who possess the ability/qualifications to teach in Indian languages/Indian subjects and willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.

- Mentorship Program:**

NCTE will also develop a manual on NMM to regulate the functioning of mentor with well-defined terms and conditions of incentivising/recognizing.

- Time Frame:**

NCTE may complete all the tasks as stated above latest by December 2021, so that it could be unfolded from Academic Session 2022-23 in a phase wise manner. This will be followed by a periodical review at an interval of 3 years and country wide expansion of NMM at length may be achieved by 2025.

Action Point	NCTE Preparedness by 2021-22	Achievement at length	
As proposed above	Framing guideline/designing and developing manual/ networking/creative resource pool of outstanding senior/retired faculty/identifying centres etc.	Unfolding of N M M by 2022-23	Country wide expansion by 2025 after review (if any).

(7) Holistic Progress Card (HPC)

Budget Announcement:

*“Students have so far been evaluated on uni-dimensional parameters. There will be a complete shift from using assessments to not only judge the cognitive levels of the learner but also using it as an opportunity to identify the unique strengths and the potential of the child. To this effect, a **holistic progress card** is envisaged to provide students with valuable information on their strengths, areas of interest, needed areas of focus and thereby helping them in making optimal career choices”.*

Background:

- As per NEP recommendation (Para 4.35), the progress card of all students for school-based assessment, will be completely redesigned. 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.
- Para 4.4. of NEP states that - 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. Curriculum frameworks and transaction mechanisms will be developed for ensuring that these skills and values are imbibed through engaging processes of teaching and learning. NCERT will identify these required skill sets and include mechanisms for their transaction in the National Curriculum Framework for early childhood and school education.

Beneficiaries and Benefits of HPC

- HPC will benefit 25 crores school going children
- Focus on Holistic development of learners
- Emphasis on Multi-dimensional assessment including peer assessment
- HPC will include the following instead of only marks obtained in a subject:
 - ✓ Cognitive domain,
 - ✓ affective/emotional domain,
 - ✓ social, and psycho-motor/physical dimensions
 - ✓ description of values, dispositions, attitudes
 - ✓ learning skills acquired, such as, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, problem-solving, etc.
 - ✓ life skills acquired, such as, courage, self-awareness, self-control, decision-making, etc.
- Emphasis will be on identifying the unique strengths and the potential of the child
- HPC will also act as information to teachers and parents on how to support each student in and out of the classroom
- Students themselves will recognize their own areas of strengths, areas of interest, needed areas of focus etc.
- HPC will help students to enable them to make optimal career choices.

Way Forward:

- CBSE will carry out a pilot in 2021-22, first for foundational years, to test the HPC in selected CBSE affiliated schools, KVVs, NVs and some state Government Schools.
- Initially, the HPC will be introduced in primary grades in 2022-23 and later will be expanded till class XII.
- During and at the end of schooling years, the learners should be able to access their detailed HPC through Digi-locker. CBSE shall undertake training of schools for implementing HPC.

(8) Adult Education

Budget announcement:

“To enable increased access of resources, online modules covering the entire gamut of adult education will be introduced.”

Background:

- The Sustainable Development Goal 4.6 of the United Nations mandates that “By 2030 ensure that all youth and adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy”. It is therefore imperative that the country should eliminate illiteracy and achieve 100% literacy by 2030.
- The ongoing scheme of Adult Education “PadhnaLikhnaAbhiyan (PLA)” for FY 2020-21 was approved by Hon’ble Education Minister on 25.04.2020, before the launch of the National Education Policy-2020 on 29.07.2020.
- As such, the new scheme of Adult Education for the next five years i.e. FY 2021-26 is to be designed and developed by aligning with the recommendations contained in para-21-’Adult Education and Lifelong Learning’ of NEP 2020.
- A new scheme of Adult Education is proposed to be implemented during FY 2021-26 in line with National Education Policy-2020.

Programmes envisaged:

The curriculum framework for adult education to be prepared by NCERT in 2021-22 and will include at least five types of programmes, each with clearly defined outcomes as follows:

- **Foundational literacy and numeracy:**

Foundational/Functional Literacy and Numeracy to be imparted to all illiterate adults in 15+ age group, and the target for this component for FYs 2021-26 is 13 crore learners, out of which efforts will be made to cover up to 8 crore learners through “**Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment System (OTLAS)**” in collaboration with National Informatics Centre, NCERT and NIOS. By registering on OTLAS, a learner can attend the class through online/virtual mode classes by using his/her mobile or any Common

Service Centre (CSC)/Digital Booth, any cybercafé, schools identified as Adult Education Centers, or any place where computer/internet facility is available.

- **Critical Life Skills:**

These will include, among others, financial literacy, digital literacy, commercial skills, health care and awareness, child care and education, family welfare, how to fill various forms (such as Voter registration, Aadhar, etc.) etc. These will be implemented through convergence with concerned Ministries/Departments at central and state/UT level.

- **Vocational skills:**

Skill development will be a part of the continuous learning process for adult neo-literates with a view to skilling for obtaining local employment, reskilling and upskilling. This too will be implemented through online/blended mode in convergence with concerned Ministries/Departments at central and state/UT level.

- **Basic Education:**

This includes preparatory (classes 3-5), middle (classes 6-8), and secondary stage (classes 9-12) equivalency. This is to be implemented in collaboration between NCERT/SCERTs and NIOS/SIOS. The proposed target of Basic Education (Equivalency) is 15 lakh learners between 2021-2026. State/UTs will have flexibility for implementing Basic Education (Equivalency) through NIOS/SIOS.

- **Continuing Education:**

This includes engaging holistic adult education courses in arts, sciences, technology, culture, sports, recreation, as well as other topics of interest or use to local learners, such as better and advanced material on critical life skills. The framework would be developed keeping in view that adults in many cases will require rather different teaching-learning methods and materials than those designed for children. This will be implemented in convergence with Department of Higher Education and other relevant Ministries/ Departments at central and state/UT level.

Way Forward:

- The aforementioned five components of Adult Education can be transacted by the states/UTs individually, one by one for the learner, or in any combination, so as to attract and motivate adult non-literates to join and continue in the programme. The implementation of this revamped scheme will begin from 2021-22.
- ICT support for hosting modules shall be explored by the Centre/states through different platforms, Apps, etc. At the national level, CIET in NCERT and NIC and DAE will facilitate ICT support in designing and developing central modules/Apps,

while state/UTs will explore partnerships with concerned stakeholders. ICT support for aggregated data captured at the national level, shall be through a central portal which will be developed in collaboration with NIC. Philanthropic/CSR organizations may also participate by hosting ICT support, printing and disseminating Primers/TLM, preparation of e-content, providing volunteer support, opening facilitation centres for adult learners, providing IT access to economically weak adult learners in the form of cell phones, etc.

(9) NISHTHA:

Budget announcement:

“During the year, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, we have trained more than 30 lakh elementary school teachers digitally, covering the whole gamut of education. Taking this further, in 2021-22, we will enable the training of 56 lakh school teachers through the National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers for Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA)”.

Background:

- The Department of School Education and Literacy launched a National Mission to improve learning outcomes at the Elementary level through an Integrated Teacher Training Programme called NISHTHA – National Initiative for School Heads’ and Teachers’ Holistic Advancement on 21st August, 2019.
- The aim of this integrated teacher training programme was to build the capacities of around 42 lakh teachers and Heads of Schools, faculty members of SCERTs and DIETs and Block Resource Coordinators and Cluster Resource Coordinators.
- The prominent feature of this integrated programme is the activity based modules including educational games and quizzes, *Social-emotional learning*, motivational interactions, team building, preparation for school based assessment, in-built continuous feedback mechanism, online monitoring and support system, training gap and impact analysis (Pre and Post training).
- From August 2019 until the pre-lockdown phase, only face to face training was undertaken for all 18 modules.
- A total of 23,137 KRPs and SRPs and 16,99,931 School Heads and Teachers of elementary schools have been trained under NISHTHA in 2019-20 in the pre-lockdown period.
- However, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the NISHTHA programme has been contextualised to the needs of teaching and learning during the pandemic and made 100% online. NISHTHA Online for elementary teachers was launched on 6th October, 2020.

- NISHTHA Online for elementary teachers has been created by customizing Modules for Online delivery in the format compatible with DIKSHA Platform of NCERT. It includes multiple approaches for interaction i.e., Text Modules along with videos, Live Sessions by National level Resource persons on DTH SwayamPrabha TV Channel and Interactive Voice Response System.
- Assessment is in-built in every Module and Online Certificates will be automatically generated for participants after completion of the course.
- There are 18 modules in this programme: 12 for teachers, 5 for school heads and 1 specialised module on teaching and learning during COVID-19 times. Each module consists of guidelines, primers, training package with QR coded e-content, videos on each module, and other e-resources.

Way Forward:

- During the pandemic, all 18 modules were made online: they were contextualized and translated in 10 regional languages and have been uploaded on DIKSHA.
- 29 States/UTs and 7 autonomous (CBSE, KVS, NVS, AEES, Sainik Schools, CTSA and CICSE) organisations under MoE and MoD began conducting online NISHTHA courses in 10 languages (Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Odia, Telugu and Urdu) for approximately 23 lakhs elementary school teachers.
- The training of teachers for elementary level through 18 online modules will be completed by **March 2021**
- Specialized online NISHTHA training will be extended to teachers of foundational years from August 2021.
- Online Training for teachers of Secondary/senior secondary level will be initiated in July 2021.
- Mentors (Key Resource Persons and State Resource Persons) shall also be prepared alongside for continuing the hand holding of teachers after training is over.

Beneficiaries and Benefits of NISHTHA

- Total 56 lakh teachers of all levels will be trained under NISHTHA.
- NISHTHA will help in creating quality cadre of trainers, a support system for teachers, robust follow-up mechanism and a common platform for all States and UTs
- Improvement in learning outcomes of the students which will be assessed through NAS and SAS.
- Improvement in Foundational Literacy and Numeracy of Students.
- Teachers become alert and responsive to the social, emotional and psychological needs of students as first level counselors.
- Teachers are trained to use Art, sports, toys, story-telling, etc. as pedagogy leading to increased creativity and innovation among students.
- Teachers are trained to develop and strengthen personal-social qualities of students for their holistic development.
- Creation of healthy and safe school environment.
- Integration of ICT in teaching learning and assessment.
- Teachers adopt Activity Based Learning and move away from rote learning to competency-based learning.
- Teachers and School Heads become aware of new initiatives in school education.
- Transformation of the Heads of Schools into providing academic and administrative leadership for the schools for fostering new initiatives.

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as the methods of assessment (question setting and evaluation) all reflect this emphasis on rote learning. Apart from creating generations of young people who have not been encouraged to think, this also leads to unfair situation where the same students have to sit for entrance tests to the IITs, Defence Services, Law Universities, which are often based on *competencies and higher order thinking level* questions. This anomaly has encouraged coaching to flourish, filling the vacuum created by the rote learning system in schools.

- Therefore, the need was felt to transform the pattern of assessment to ensure competency-based learning, whole child approach, awareness about the diverse and multilingual needs of students and to carry out assessments accordingly.
- NEP 2020 recommends that the aim of assessment in the culture of our schooling system to 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.
- Reforms suggested by NEP-2020 will be implemented in its letter and spirit.

Way forward:

- In order to move away from rote-memorization and towards the acquisition of competencies, assessment in the form of the Board examinations is being redesigned to include more questions that assess the student's ability to apply acquired knowledge of the subject. CBSE has started modifying the design of its question papers by adding questions that are context/ case based. Questions in multiple formats to include both objective as well as subjective questions have begun for different subjects. In 2022 Board exams, CBSE will have 30% application-oriented/Source/Case-based questions for class X and 20% for class XII. It is planned that 10 %application-oriented/Source/Case-based questions based on real life situations will be introduced in each successive year till the year 2025.
- In order to make the Board Examinations less stressful for students, opportunity to appear in improvement examinations would be provided. Students may thus improve their performance in a subject, even if they have passed in the subject.
- Research based designing of question papers and Qualitative and quantitative analysis of examination data would be undertaken to inform future paper setting and capacity building of examiners/ teachers. This will improve the quality of assessment by measuring student's competencies with precision.
