

# Transforming the System of Assessment: Holistic Progress Card

## Background Note

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### 1. Basic Premise for Having a Multidimensional Holistic Progress Reporting

Traditionally, assessment has focused majorly on the year-end examinations. This presents a very rigid and narrow idea of assessment emphasizing only the quantitative achievement in terms of marks, which further becomes a deciding factor for future employment. It creates a lot of pressure among students and to increase their marks they resort to rote memorization instead of understanding, analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity. Additionally, students also enter the vicious circle of increasing pressure by seeking extra support, apart from school, from the mushrooming coaching centres. Such a system completely forgets that education is a holistic process and it aims at the development of a person in his/her entirety. The overemphasis on summative evaluation shoves the other aspects of development and learning to the side background, oft times leading them to be ignored. Hence, the focus should not be solely on year-end achievements rather on the progress throughout the educational journey.

For these reasons, there have been many attempts to move away from the traditional one-time examination-based assessment of students in India as well as abroad. These include: conduct of tests on an interval, ranging from a week to a quarter of the year; use of multiple assessment tools in addition to the traditional tests; and continuous

and comprehensive evaluation (CCE).

The Holistic Progress Card (HPC) is a revolutionary tool that has the potential to bring about paradigm shift in the very nature of pedagogy, teaching and learning process, assessment practices and teacher training. Hence, the attempt is to prepare the structure of such a holistic progress card which gives equal attention to the growth in all the aspects of development of learners, such as physical, mental, emotional, social, etc. over a period of time, instead of measuring their achievements only once in quantitative terms. This report would make the learners aware of their strengths, areas of interest as well as the scope for further improvement, thus reflecting and celebrating the uniqueness of each learner.

HPC will be a collaborative endeavor in assessment including all the major stakeholders in the education of a learner - teachers, parents, peers, and most importantly the learner herself. This practice will also be an attempt to forge a stronger link between the home and the school, along with providing agency to learners as well in their assessment.

The very title 'Holistic Progress Card' clearly communicates that the child's own journey is viewed as a progress. Different aspects of the learning process that include diverse skills and competencies are taken into consideration in holistic reporting. It focuses not only on the

externally visible outcomes but also on the internal processes of reflection, thought and emotions. The HPC creates opportunities to appreciate the learner in his or her own context whether it be cultural, linguistic, socio-economic or other. Schools can also customise their reporting in relation to their context and the learner's needs.

## 2. Policy Background

Creating a new tool for assessment is in alignment with the stated vision of the NEP 2020 that strongly advocates experiential and joyful learning in the classroom. The NEP 2020 has a strong focus on the holistic development of a student.

The NEP 2020 focuses on being learner centric and promoting competencies and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills rather than on textbook driven rote learning. So far, report cards have been styled within the normative framework, comparing children and communicating a one-sided judgment of an authority figure, leading to both stress and loss of self-esteem in the child. Para 4.35 of the NEP recommends a multidimensional 360 degree Holistic Progress Card to bring out the uniqueness in each child.

The proposed HPC therefore is in alignment with the framework of NEP 2020 that brings in joyful experiential learning that celebrates the uniqueness of every child.

## Focus on Holistic Development of Learners



Building character & creating well-rounded individuals equipped with the key 21<sup>st</sup> century skills including cognitive skills



Manifestation of knowledge which is a deep-seated treasure within an individual



Moving towards real understanding & away from the culture of rote learning



Developing learners into good, successful, innovative, adaptable & productive individuals

### **3. Features of the HPC**

The proposed HPC takes into consideration the diverse aspects of the child's learning journey. Some of its significant features are as follows:

- Participatory and learner centric
- Inclusive
- A qualitative feedback
- Builds on self-awareness and self-esteem
- Tracks skills and competencies
- Inter-disciplinary
- Flexible