



सत्यमेव जयते
Ministry of Education
Government of India

A Concept Note on Nurturing Inclusive Classroom

SHIKSHAK PARV, 2021



THEME: Nurturing Inclusive Classroom

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NEP provisions relating to Equitable and Inclusive Education: Learning for All

NEP Para 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. 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.

NEP Para 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).

NEP Para 6.3: The critical problems and recommendations regarding ECCE, foundational literacy and numeracy, access, enrolment and attendance, are particularly relevant and important for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups.

NEP Para 6.4: 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.

NEP Para 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.

NEP Para 6.6: Aspirational Districts require special interventions for promoting their educational development. It is also 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.

NEP Para 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 thus recommends that the policies and schemes designed to include students from SEDGs should be especially targeted towards girls in these SEDGs.

NEP Para 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.

NEP Para 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. 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.

NEP Para 6.11: 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. 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.

NEP Para 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 & technology based solutions 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.

NEP Para 6.13: Most classrooms have children with specific learning disabilities who need continuous support. 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.

NEP Para 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.

NEP Para 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. 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.

NEP Para 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 talented and meritorious students from all SEDGs on a larger scale, especially at the secondary stage of education, to facilitate their entry into higher education.

NEP Para 6.17: Under the aegis of the Ministry of Defence, State Governments may encourage opening NCC wings in their secondary and higher secondary schools, including those located in tribal dominated areas. This will enable harnessing of the natural talent and unique potential of students, which in turn would help them to aspire to a successful career in the defence forces.

NEP Para 6.18: All scholarships and other opportunities and schemes available to students from SEDGs will be coordinated and announced by a single agency and website to ensure that all students are aware of, and may apply in a simplified manner on such a 'single window system', as per eligibility.

NEP Para 6.19: All the above policies and measures are absolutely critical to attaining full inclusion and equity for all SEDGs - but they are not sufficient. What is also required is a change in school culture. All participants in the school education system, including teachers, principals, administrators, counsellors, and students, will be sensitized to the requirements of all students, the notions of inclusion and equity, and the respect, dignity, and privacy of all persons.

NEP Para 6.20: Students will be sensitized through this new school culture, brought in by teachers, trained social workers and counsellors as well as through corresponding changes to bring in an inclusive school curriculum. The school curriculum will include, early on, material on human values such as respect for all persons, empathy, tolerance, human rights, gender equality, non-violence, global citizenship, inclusion, and equity. It would also include more detailed knowledge of various cultures,

religions, languages, gender identities, etc. to sensitize and develop respect for diversity. Any biases and stereotypes in school curriculum will be removed, and more material will be included that is relevant and relatable to all communities.