

SECTOR UPDATE

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Education



“When the untapped potential
of a student meets
the liberating art of a teacher,
a miracle unfolds.

— Mary Hatwood Futrell

 Primus Partners India

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1. We Believe

A year has gone by and we have come full circle in more ways than one. We are back to asking the same question – to be or not to be – about lockdowns, COVID surges, and board exams. But at least there is certainty around the exam question – these are to be suspended for some time.

Meanwhile, most people became easy about living virtually and therefore the shift to online platforms in education saw a massive uptick in the use of online resources and virtual learning. Teacher training courses of 4-5 hours each in online mode covering 18 modules on elementary education were launched under the National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement or NISHTHA last October as in-service teacher training on the Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing or DIKSHA platform. These courses had 3.4 crore registrations reporting 2.8 crore completions from more than 23 lakh teachers. DIKSHA which also provides access to a large number of curriculum linked e-content such as QR coded Energized Textbooks (ETBs), courses for teachers, quizzes etc today boasts of a repository of 3600 QR coded textbooks from 29 states, 1.44 lakh e-content and more than 300 courses. With the unusual situation that played out across the country, mental health and well-being got addressed under 'Manodarpan' with counselling for students under distress. A web page, national toll-free number, interactive online chat options and national-level database and directory of counsellors are part of the initiative. The Ministry of Education has also released comic books on curricular concepts on the DIKSHA platform. These serve as

learning nuggets offering a deep dive into concepts. The narrative style of comic books embeds a concept in a relatable real-life context and creates opportunities for applied and situational learning. It will also cater to differentiated learning styles and multiple intelligences which determine how different learners learn. Further, gender questions, values and social messaging can be integrated using this learner friendly medium.

Kendriya Vidyalaya implemented its decision to set up Artificial Intelligence labs to expose students to coding and AI tools. The curriculum also plans to introduce subjects like agriculture, smart cities, human anatomy, space exploration, etc and these will provide students an appreciation of how AI tools are being applied in contextual situations.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and British Council are working together on the Competency-based assessment framework. The project will set standards for test items, create assessment tools and train a cohort of test writers to generate new high-quality test items enhancing the competency-based assessment process of schools. While several states have their plans to set up assessment cells it is hoped that international benchmarks of the like seen in PISA are able to inform standards here in India.

And finally, it is exciting to note that National Education Policy 2020 gets an implementation plan under Students' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement Through Quality Education or SARTHAQ that can be adopted by States and UTs. SARTHAQ outlines guidelines for designing tasks, outputs, standards, agencies and governance towards the actioning of NEP 2020. Some focus areas under SARTHAQ concern curriculum frameworks, Early Childhood Care and Education, teacher education and adult education – all critical exponents in a constantly evolving mix of human and non-human influencers for improving education indicators in our country. How this plays out at the State and more importantly at the classroom level will rest with the agencies carving their roadmap for execution.

“There is nothing ‘artificial’ about AI. It has been created to augment the way we will think, learn, work, communicate and transform our ecosystem in the future.”

- **Renu Punhani**
Academic Advisor
Primus Partners

Charu Malhotra
Co-Founder & MD
Primus Partners

2. Policy Review: NEP 2020

Continuous Professional Development



Investing in our Educators

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) has been given great importance in the National Education Policy 2020, where teachers and faculty have been recognised as the “heart of the learning process”. By providing holistic trainings, we are investing in our educators as well as in high quality teaching and learning outcomes. CPD is not only directed towards teachers, but also includes improvement in leadership and management skills for principals, administrators and counsellors in its purview. National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by the Professional Standard Setting Body (PSSB) under the General Education Council (GEC) which will set specific competency and performance expectations for teachers.

Professional and Personal Development

“Each teacher will be expected to participate in at least 50 hours of CPD opportunities every year for their own professional development. 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”.

Teachers will be encouraged to upskill at all levels at Teacher Education Institutions, in areas of their own benefit. Anganwadi workers and teachers will be provided opportunities to complete ECCE certificate and diploma programmes mentored by Cluster Resource Centres at School Education Departments. For school education, courses to be provided for teachers include those on strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy, formative and adaptive assessment of learning outcomes, competency-based learning, and learner-centred pedagogies, such as experiential learning, arts-integrated, sports-integrated, and storytelling-based approaches as well as new initiatives.

NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement), an integrated teacher training program was launched in 2019-20 under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha. A robust Management Information System (MIS) had been infused with capacity building for effective delivery of the training, monitoring and support mechanism. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SRG and Teacher trainings were shifted to an online mode with the first online training for the SRGs in Andhra Pradesh was launched on 16th July 2020. Platforms such as SWAYAM and DIKSHA may also be used for training purposes.

“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”.

The NEP maintains that teachers that continue to excel in their professional capacities must be encouraged to take on academic leadership and management positions. In order to do so, they will be provided with sufficient platforms in order to advance their career prospects and take on positions in schools, school complexes, BRCs, CRCs, BITEs, DIETs and relevant government departments.

Our Take

Professional development is an important means to upgrade the content knowledge and pedagogical skills of teachers and thereby enhance the teaching – learning experience in the classroom. It has been seen that student learning and achievement increases when teachers engage in activities that focus on building the competencies needed to address challenges in students' learning. Thus, an effective professional development program should be on-going and should include activities that involve classroom observations, receiving feedback, listening to and examining current classroom practice, access to global best practices and exemplars of student activities. It is also crucial that we raise the bar in terms of competency frameworks and impact assessment to make a change.

Reference: [Ministry of Human Resource Development, Gov \(2020\). National Education Policy.](#)

3. In the Spotlight

Looking towards education in 2021-22 | The Union Budget and its implications on the education sector

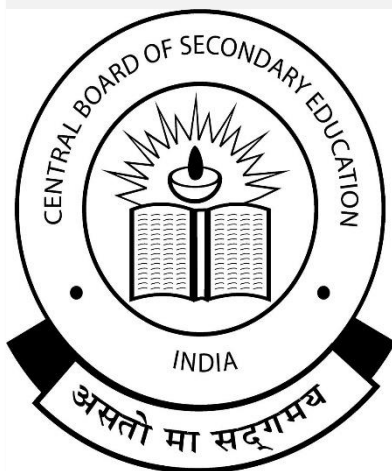
By 2030, India will have the world's largest working-age population, that will need to be educated and skilled for jobs. As we begin the implementation process of the National Education Policy 2020, the Union Budget 2021-22 follows suit in the effort. The Education Ministry has been allocated Rs 93,224.31 crore in the Budget estimate of. Out of the total education budget, Higher Education has been allocated Rs 32,900 crore which is an increase of 16.5 % relative to 2020-21, while Rs 52,189 crore has been allocated to School Education and Literacy which is a 5.1% increase.

The Budget focuses on bringing about notable changes such as moving from a traditional rote learning format to a competency-based framework for K -12. It also proposes to make education accessible and inclusive for everyone through setting up of schools in collaboration with NGOs and Private organizations. The Budget also includes the setting up of a regulatory mechanism to permit dual degrees, joint degrees, and other such mechanisms in collaboration with foreign higher educational institutions providing ample quality education opportunities for the youth. It makes way for apprenticeship and internships to develop the required skills. There has also been sufficient emphasis on research and development via funds allotted to the National Research Foundation.



Our Take

The focus of the budget on creating new and supporting structures for effective implementation of the NEP is very encouraging. On one hand Sainik Schools and Eklavya Schools are being set up to bring more equality in educational opportunities. On the other hand, a university is being planned in Leh to bring last-mile delivery of good quality higher education. This budget also lays greater emphasis on expenditure for innovation, research, and development which will help create a world-class education ecosystem in the country and equip our 21st century professionals with the required skills and competencies.



NEP gets a kick-start | New assessment framework launched by CBSE and the British Council

The CBSE in collaboration with the British Council, and three other agencies from the UK namely, Cambridge, UK NARIC and Alphaplus will develop a new competency-based assessment framework, based on the NEP 2020. The framework is centred around reviewing the current assessments for English, Math and Science and developing assessment frameworks, lesson plans, institutional capacity building resources, teacher training and mentoring around them. Competency based education utilises application-based learning as well as frequent and formative assessment, that improve the quality of learning outcomes. These tools are used to achieve the predetermined competencies that are linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By 2024, the project aims to reach 25,000 CBSE schools including 2,000 NVs and KVs, 132,000 teachers and 20 million learners.

Our Take

The association between the CBSE and the British Council and other agencies indicates a positive trend of absorption of best practices and collaboration at an international scale. Although the NEP is a forward-looking policy shift in education, it will be a mammoth task to implement. A detailed roadmap based on research, analytics as well as an in-depth understanding of the stakeholders and their capabilities created by these agencies will be useful in kick starting the implementation of the NEP in schools across the nation.

4. On the Trail

Top News in the Sector

CBSE restores its previous syllabus for the academic session 2021-22

The academic year 2020-21 saw a 30% reduction in CBSE course content. With most schools across the country remaining closed, CBSE is confident in its online classroom system and has returned to the complete syllabus.

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CBSE cancels Class X and postpones Class XII board exams owing to upsurge in COVID cases

In a high-level meeting chaired by the Prime Minister, the CBSE announced the cancellation of Class 10 board examinations. Students are to be assessed by objective criteria based on performance through the year.

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In-person bridge courses suggested by CBSE to fill learning gaps for students from classes IX to XII

To ensure that students improve on their Math, Geography, IT and practical lab skills before their board examinations, COVID guidelines will be enforced for conducting bridge courses.

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Ministry of Education releases roadmap for NEP implementation: SARTHAQ

The Department of School Education and Literacy has announced an NEP implementation roadmap for States and UTs to adapt as per their needs. The plan aims to improve learning outcomes and retention rates.

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Comic books across 16 subjects launched for classes 3 to 5 by NCERT

Over 100 concept based digital comic books have been launched by the Ministry of Education across subjects in order to promote holistic understand and allow students to apply their knowledge. The books include assessment worksheets as well.

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Top Sector Player News

STEM based scholarship for women announced by The British Council

The British Council Scholarship for Women in STEM has been launched to financially support women for master's degrees in STEM subjects in the United Kingdom. The full scholarship also supports women with dependents.

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Post-graduate programs announced by IIM Nagpur and Jaro Education

The post-graduate programs are catered to professionals that wish to upskill in Business Management (IT), Data Science, Digital Strategy and Marketing or Financial Technology.

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World Bank Project in Gujarat to improve learning outcomes for school students

The Outcomes for Accelerated Learning (GOAL) program aims to improve education planning, delivery, physical and digital infrastructure, foundational learning, teacher capacities and NEP implementation in the state among others.

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First-of-its-kind 'Lab on Wheels', developed by Delhi Technological University

The mobile lab to be launched under the university's 'Digital Village – Literate India' initiative and will target students with limited access to facilities. Volunteer university students will support learners through tutorials, lectures and study tours.

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Embassy of Vietnam establishes Ambassadors Scholarship with three Indian universities for Vietnamese students

The scholarship is aimed towards financially supporting Vietnamese students who wish to complete their undergraduate and postgraduate education. The partnership is between the Embassy and Integral University, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology and Rishikood University.

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Primus Partners has been set up to partner with clients in 'navigating' India, by experts with decades of experience in doing so for large global firms. Set up on the principle of 'Idea Realization', it brings to bear 'experience in action'.

'Idea Realization'— a unique approach to examine futuristic ideas required for the growth of an organization or a sector or geography, from the perspective of assured on ground implementability.

India is and will continue to be a complex opportunity. Private and Public sector need trusted advisory partners in order to tap into this opportunity. Primus Partners is your go-to trusted Advisory for both public and private sector organizations involved intricately with nation building, and the creation and growth of robust corporations as engines of progress.

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Primus Partners brings experience of working in more than 30 countries with private and public sector, including working with Government of India, building and leading large consulting teams at the leadership level, and creating one of the largest public sector consulting practice in India. They also represent 200 person years of experience in leading global and Indian consulting firms and the public sector.

The founding team is supported by a distinguished advisory board that includes experts with leadership experience across government, large corporate and notable civil society organizations.

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