

## Education Update

### No way to run schools

Publication: The Hindu  
Date: Mon, 2011-10-24

The recent amendments to the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Rules in Andhra Pradesh show that the state is embracing a model of high stakes assessment for schools, in order to ensure teacher accountability in primary education. The Rules provide that at the end of the academic year, wherever the performance of children in a subject/class falls below 60 per cent of the standards prescribed by the Academic Authority, the class teacher/subject teacher will be recommended by the local authority for penalty for committing a serious misconduct. If the performance of children in a subject/class, is above 90 per cent of the standards prescribed by the Academic Authority, the class teacher/subject teacher will be recommended by the local authority concerned for the best teacher award at the district/state level.

**FAILED MODEL**-The state government is on the verge of making the same mistakes as was made by the No Child Left Behind Act in the US (NCLB). The NCLB Act passed in the US in 2001 mandates remedial action against schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress toward subject proficiency and graduation goals as defined by their respective states. The accountability requirements of the Andhra Pradesh RTE Rules will impact schools in rural and poorer areas. The targets are defined as absolute levels of performance in tests and are uniformly applied across the board to all schools. Thus irrespective of what a school's baseline is, it is expected to meet standards of class-level performance, in this case defined as 60 per cent in the test administered by the administrative authority.

Such high-stakes testing leads to a scenario where teachers will concentrate their energies on borderline children, those perceived to be close enough to the required test score that they can be pushed up if they are given some extra attention. There is no incentive for teachers to pay attention to and work on the children far below the required standard. As a result, such children will get neglected and in extreme circumstances, forced to drop out of school.

Another fallacy lies in measuring teacher and school effectiveness solely through test scores. Test scores fail to account for differences in socio-economic backgrounds of students. Inferences about school and teacher quality must account for the differences in students' socio-economic background, for example gender, caste, the income and educational levels of the parents, especially the mother and whether the child gets supplementary help from tutors or par-

ents. Research points towards the efficacy of adopting a more nuanced, flexible and value-added measure of student assessment that measures growth as well as achievement. In this approach, schools track the progress of each student year on year. Furthermore, differences in student background characteristics are controlled for, thereby isolating the contribution of schools and teachers to student learning. Such a system encourages teachers to pay attention to the lowest-performing children.

Accountability is crucial to improving learning achievement levels of school children in India and the fact that state governments are putting into place accountability systems is laudable. However, a poorly designed system focused on high stakes testing will hit the poorest and educationally backward students the hardest

Source: <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/article2568181.ece?homepage=true>

### Karnataka demands central aid to implement RTE

Publication: DNA India  
Date: Fri, 2011-10-21

Differences between the state and Union government continue to dog the implementation of Right to Education (RTE) Act. Minister for primary and secondary education Visveshwara Hegde Kageri on Thursday stated that effective implementation of RTE would not be possible unless Centre provides liberal financial assistance.

"The state government is committed to implementing the RTE, which envisages compulsory education for children in the age-group of 6 to 14 years. But Union government, which has brought the Act, should also provide financial assistance for the states to implement it. I put this across strongly at the meeting of state education ministers chaired by Union human resources development minister Kapil Sibal in Delhi recently," Kageri said.

The state government is going ahead with its proposal to merge the schools with very low student strength—below 10 students—with the nearest bigger school. There are about 1,500 such schools in the state. The merger would be completed before the start of next academic year.

The minister denied the charge that mergers were being effected due to financial crunch. "It is not due to financial or any other problem. It is being done with the sole intention of ensuring quality education for all the children," Kageri said.

Source: [http://www.dnaindia.com/bangalore/report\\_karnataka-demands-central-aid-to-implement-rte\\_1601531](http://www.dnaindia.com/bangalore/report_karnataka-demands-central-aid-to-implement-rte_1601531)

## Provide grant-in-aid to private schools: association

Publication: THE HINDU  
Date: Sun, 2011-10-09

The Karnataka Secondary School Teachers' Association on Saturday urged the State Government to provide grant-in-aid to private schools.

They also demanded that the disparity between the pay scales of teachers in the schools run by the State government and the Union government be removed.

KSSTA general secretary Shivanand Sindhanakera told presspersons here that though the State government included 370 schools in the grant-in-aid scheme, it had left out some.

"We are hopeful the government includes them soon," Mr. Sindhanakera said.

He said there was a "huge difference" between the salaries of teachers of schools run by the State government and the Union government.

Mr. Sindhanakera also demanded that time-bound promotions and benefits to teachers be provided as per the Vaidyanathan Committee recommendations.

He said that Shantkumar Biradar had been elected the president of the association's district unit. Shalivan Gandage was elected the honorary president, Raghunath Bhure, Jayashant, Rajshekar Mangalagi and Manohar Bhavara were elected vice-presidents.

Prakash Lakkashetty was elected general secretary, Mahadev Mathapati organising secretary and Maharudrappa Madakatti treasurer.

Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-karnataka/article2522539.ece>



## Parents should be counselled about changes in education system

Publication: Hindustan Times  
Date: Fri, 2011-10-14

HT interviews Basanti Roy, educationist and former divisional secretary of SSC Board.

### • What, according to you, is inclusive education?

—*Inclusive education is a holistic term. When an underprivileged student, deprived of education gets an opportunity to attend class with a student from an affluent family one, can reach towards inclusive education. Inclusive education can lead to the growth and development of a child.*

### • The Right to Education Act carves out a 25 % reservation for the underprivileged in schools. What do you think are the implications?

—*There are two sides to this. At one end, poor children who were deprived of education will get quality education. For a country such as India, where literacy levels are low, the reservation is a good move. However, schools will need to pay extra attention to these students.*

*It will be interesting to see how children will mingle in class. Classroom dynamics will change culturally, socially and economically.*

### • What will the challenges be for students and parents?

—*The 75 % students who come from regular backgrounds should be sensitised towards disparities with the underprivileged. The atmosphere in which a student from an affluent family is brought up is in contrast to that of a student from an underprivileged background. Parents will also have to be counselled about changes in the education system.*

### • How should schools cope with an inclusive education programme?

—*It will be a challenge for schools to maintain the quality of education despite the rule. Teachers should be trained to cope with the students from underprivileged backgrounds and they will have to be patient with them.*

*Teachers will have to put in extra work hours to ensure all students understand concepts. The government should hold workshops to sensitize teachers.*

Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/Parents-should-be-counselled-about-changes-in->



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