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Government of Himachal Pradesh
Department of Higher Education.

No.EDN-B-F(7)-1/2023

Dated: Shimla-2 03-1-2024

NOTIFICATION

The Governor, Himachal Pradesh is pleased to introduce a new programme named “APNA VIDYALAYA: THE HIMACHAL SCHOOL ADOPTION PROGRAMME” in the Schools, as per Annexure-A with immediate effect.

By Order

Rakesh Kanwar, IAS
Secretary (Education) to the
Government of Himachal Pradesh

Endst. No. No.EDN-B-F(7)-1/2023 Dated: Shimla-2. 03-1-2024

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:-

1. All Administrative Secretaries to the Government of H.P.
2. All Head of the Departments, Himachal Pradesh.
3. All Deputy Commissioner, Himachal Pradesh.
4. All Superintendent of Police, Himachal Pradesh.
5. The Accountant General (A&E), Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-171003.
6. The Director of Higher Education, H.P. Shimla-171001.
7. The Director of Elementary Education H.P Shimla-171001.
8. The Joint Secretary (GAD) to the Govt. of H.P. in compliance to item No. 24 approved by the Cabinet on dated 20.12.2023 for information please.
9. The Deputy Director Higher/Elementary Education all Districts of H.P.
10. Guard File.

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Anil Kumar
3/1/24

(Anil Kumar) 3/1/2024
Under Secretary (Education) to the
Government of Himachal Pradesh

APNA/VIDYALAYATHE HIMACHAL SCHOOL ADOPTION PROGRAMME**1. INTRODUCTION:**

1.1. Himachal has consistently focused on education and people of the State have internalised importance of education. State Government has invested huge amount of money over the decades to address the issue of access, enrolment, gender parity and retention.

1.2. Now there is a need to shift our attention and focus on the learning outcomes.

1.3. It has been observed that poor student performance is one of the major challenges that we face today. It is a fact (as indicated in the annual ASER reports) that a significant percentage of students, even in advanced grades, struggle to attain proficiency in reading and writing in their native language, let alone in English. Additionally, over half of these students lack the foundational skills to perform basic arithmetic operations such as addition or subtraction. This critical deficiency in fundamental skills is particularly evident among students progressing through higher grades, indicating a substantial gap in the present system.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT:

2.1. Over the years the powerful elite in our villages and towns has exited the state run education system. It will not be out of context to state that in a large number of government schools, children of marginalised sections of the society have remained. The rest have migrated to the so-called "private schools" which have become aspirational. Anyone who has surplus disposable income wants his/her child to go to the English - medium private school. As a result, the community support for government schools has declined. The government schools are no longer seen as "good schools" and the community help, support for the government schools has gone down drastically. This needs to be brought

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back into the system as government Schools have developed "trust issues" with their respective local communities. There is a continuous trend of students migrating from the government schools to the private schools. This has led to very small school size in the State of Himachal Pradesh. Since the State Government has created a huge infrastructure and it invests large amount of money in public education system annually but due to declining enrolment in government schools a sizable number of schools have become non-viable and the teachers and other resources are at sub-optimal levels.

2.2. The public education system, a vast and intricate network, serves over 68% of the student population nationwide, and in Himachal Pradesh, more than 55% of students are enrolled in government schools. Despite being a crucial learning space for a significant portion of the population, this system grapples with challenges such as declining enrolment, lack of accountability and ownership issues. Numerous studies conducted by civil societies and NGOs highlight that schools' underperformance is closely tied to a lack of ownership and support within the public education system (NEP Para 21.8). The sheer size and complexity of the system make it unfeasible for government officials to individually support every school, contributing to a deficit in collective responsibility among community members. The failure of community responsibility emerges as a substantial factor in the struggles faced by this extensive education system (NEP Para 2.7).

3. SOLUTION: SCHOOL ADOPTION

3.1. Education is a cornerstone for societal progress and individual empowerment. Recognizing the critical role of schools in shaping the future, the concept of "Adoption of Government Schools" emerges as a unique initiative to enhance the quality of education in alignment with NEP 2020. This initiative proposes the voluntary adoption of government

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schools by political leaders, senior bureaucrats, retired personnel and skilled individuals, fostering a collaborative approach to uplift the education landscape (NEP Para 3.7).

3.2. School Adoption, apart from providing much needed ownership by the local community, will help in the following manner:

3.2.1. To address the declining enrolment in Government Schools,

3.2.2. To check drop out, especially amongst girls,

3.2.3. To support schools with shortage of teachers, especially in remote areas,

3.2.4. To check teacher absenteeism,

3.2.5. To create social pressure on the school to perform, and

3.2.6. To take care of inadequate infrastructure and to bridge the resource gap

4. PROVISION IN NEP 2020:

4.1. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to instigate a transformative shift at every tier of education in India by actively engaging both the community and the private sector to achieve its objectives. Within the various chapters of NEP 2020, there is a strong focus on encouraging volunteer participation (NEP Para 21.3). Several provisions within the policy specifically advocate for the community to play a proactive role in enhancing the quality of school education.

5. OBJECTIVE OF THE SCHOOL ADOPTION PROGRAMME:

5.1. To create a synergistic partnership between public representatives, administrative leaders, and skilled professionals to contribute collectively to the improvement of government schools. The overarching goal is to enhance the learning environment, infrastructure, and overall educational experience for students (NEP Para 3.6 & 3.7).

5.2. To address the learning gaps in the State Government Schools. Various Reports/Surveys (including NAS 2021, PGI and ASER 2022) record a

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declining trend in the performance of the students of Government Schools. These studies and surveys highlight, that schools' underperformance is closely tied to a lack of ownership and support within the public education system.

5.3. To address infrastructure and resource gap in schools through community support.

6. FOUR STREAMS OF THE SCHOOL ADOPTION PROGRAMME

6.1. STREAM-I: "SCHOOLPATRON" CAMPAIGN: Following dignitaries will be requested to adopt at least one Government School of their choice anywhere in the State:

- All the Members of Parliament representing the State of HP in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha;
- All the Members of the State Legislative Assembly;
- All the Gazetted Class I and Class II officers of the State Government. The District/Sub Division level officers such as DC, SP, DFO, CMO, SDM, BDO, BMO, DSP etc will adopt at least one school each.

6.1.1. They will be known as **School Patrons**.

6.1.2. The School Patrons are expected to visit the school at least twice in a year.

6.1.3. They may interact with the teachers/students/SMC members and guide them. The Patrons may make suggestions to improve learning outcomes.

6.1.4. There will be a Visitors Book in each school which has been adopted under the School Patron Campaign and the Patrons will be requested to record their suggestions at the time of their visit.

6.1.5. The School Head will keep the Patron informed about the progress of the students in the school and about their achievements from time to time.

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6.1.6. The School Patrons may share their feedback, suggestions directly on a dedicated e-mail account which will be shared with them.

6.2. **STREAM II: "SCHOOL MENTOR" CAMPAIGN:** all the Officers in the Education Department (those posted in the Secretariat, and the Directorates); all the Deputy Directors in the Departments of Higher and Elementary Education and all the District Programme Officers and DIET Coordinators; Principal and Faculty in the SCERT; officers of the HP Board of School Education shall adopt one school.

6.2.1. They will be known as School Mentors.

6.2.2. The School Mentors will visit the School at least once in a month and will record their observations about the school in a pre-designed format, which will be designed by the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

6.2.3. The observation sheet/format, as will be designed by SSA, will be shared with the Deputy Director concerned and also with the Director Higher Education/Elementary Education as the case may be as a feedback which will be acted upon by the authorities.

6.2.4. SSA will in due course of time develop an online portal dedicated to the Apna Vidyalaya Programme so that entire related content is uploaded on this portal including information about school visits; observation sheets; feedback; best practices; contribution made (howsoever small or un-important it may appear) and other information. The information and data related to this Programme shall be made available in public domain. This will ensure accountability as well as enable online and real time measurement, monitoring and corrective actions.

6.3. **STREAM III: "MY SCHOOL - MY PRIDE" CAMPAIGN:** This campaign will encourage individuals and organizations to adopt a particular school. This adoption will cover the entire spectrum of school

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support initiatives ranging from teaching the students to providing career counselling and guidance; from holding extra/special classes for remedial teaching to coaching the students for various examinations to; from training them in Yoga, sports, co-curricular activities to engaging them in intense and goal oriented training camps; from orienting them to providing skill education in a structured form as an add-on course; from mentoring them to engaging them in various community support services; from donating money to the school to supporting systematically to create the required infrastructure in the school; from sponsoring an event to providing sustained financial help; from providing scholarships to meritorious, talented and bright students to encouraging scholarships for further studies; from helping in MDM programme to reducing the non-teaching burden of the school teachers etc. The range is immense and it is felt that if the school reaches out the interested individuals in the school's community a large number of people are waiting to help the school:

6.3.1. SCHOOL'S ACADEMIC SUPPORT TEAM: Willing individuals will be allowed to teach the students without payment of any honorarium as part of the "giving back to the society" initiative keeping in view the available vacancies and the willingness of the member of the community. This initiative will encourage the schools to take advantage of the experienced and qualified professionals who wish to adopt the school.

- Retired teachers and other retired employees of the State government/central government/PSUs/armed forces/ private sector organisations/ professionals/housewives and/or any other member of the community will be encouraged to come forward and become a member of the School's Academic Support Team to teach the students. These "teachers" need not be

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qualified/trained teachers academically, for example, a retired engineer may teach mathematics or science; a retired doctor may teach biology or chemistry; or any educated person may teach a subject of his/her interest depending upon the need of the institution.

- These “adopters” may be allowed to support the school in case there is shortage of teachers and/or when a teacher is on leave.
- The teaching assignment will be given by the Principal/Head Master/Head Teacher/Teacher in-Charge of the school after the approval of the SMC, under intimation to the Deputy Director concerned.
- This assignment shall be purely voluntary and the volunteer shall give her/his services free of charge; he/she shall not be paid any remuneration/honorarium etc.
- This arrangement shall only be to address the learning gaps and/or to meet the shortage of teachers in the school.
- The “adopters” may be allowed to teach as long as the school needs them and by mutual agreement.
- The Deputy Directors/Block Education Officers/CHTs will, as the case may be, will monitor and supervise this initiative. They will interact with the “adopters” and try to implement their suggestions wherever possible.
- The services of the “adopters” may be discontinued by the School, in consultation with the SMC, if it is found that there is no visible improvement in the learning levels/skill set of the students, and/or if the conduct of the “adopters” is objectionable. Report about such incidents/decisions should be sent immediately to the higher authorities.

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- The decision of the Principal/Head Master/CHT/Head Teacher/Teacher in-Charge, taken after consulting the SMC, shall be final.

6.3.2. SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAM: NON-ACADEMIC: The School will encourage the volunteers to support the school in the following activities:

- Sports
- Co-curricular activities
- Skill training
- Arts/Crafts/Painting/Music/Theatre/Dance etc.
- Career Counselling and Guidance
- Support in Mid-Day Meal and to reduce the non-teaching workload of the teachers.

6.3.3. FINANCIAL ADOPTION: Individuals and organisations; groups (such as old students of the school, any social/cultural/non-government organization etc) will be encouraged to support the school financially by providing help in cash and/or kind.

6.4. STREAM IV: S.A.M.V.A.D. CAMPAIGN: This campaign will be launched in all the districts of the State in parallel. SAMVAD is based on the initiative by the same name launched by District Kangra (the concept note and the implementation framework is attached as **Annexure A**).

The **Systematic Adolescent Management and Value Addition Dialogue (SAMVAD)** is a collaborative effort of multiple departments including District Administration, Police, Excise, Women and Child Development, Higher Education, Welfare, Health & AYUSH, Youth Services & Sports, Public Relations Department, Legal Services Authority, Red Cross, Panchayati Raj, NSS, NCC, NYK and Non Governmental Organisations. SAMVAD aims to educate school-going

adolescents, about various essential aspects that will contribute to their personal development and empowerment.

SAMVAD aims to achieve the following objectives:

- **Moral values and Experience Sharing** (Strengthening of moral characteristics of adolescents to prepare them for a meaningful contribution to society and nation tomorrow.);
- **Career counselling and general orientation** (The initiative shall also help the adolescents in choosing amongst various career options and general orientation of their future path.);
- **Drug/substance Awareness and Prevention** (Educate adolescents about the harmful effects of drug/substance abuse, addiction, and its impact on their physical and mental health.);
- **Nutrition and Well-being** (Promote awareness about proper nutrition, physical health, and mental well-being, emphasizing the importance of a healthy lifestyle.);
- **Legal Knowledge** (Educate adolescents about their legal rights and responsibilities, fostering a sense of responsibility and adherence to the law)and
- **Girl Empowerment Schemes** (Inform and empower adolescent girls by providing information about various government schemes, legal provisions and programs.)

This STREAM will be implemented by scaling up the initiative taken by the District Administration, Kangra.

7. ADVANTAGES of APNA VIDYALAYA:

7.1. Fostering Civic Duty: This Programme, with all its four streams, tries to engage public representatives, administrators, officers, education functionaries, spirited individuals, corporate, non-government organisations and others to participate meaningfully in addressing

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education issues at grassroots by fostering a sense of community ownership and civic responsibility.

7.2. Strengthening School Vision and Community Engagement: This programme envisages a massive collaboration with school patrons, mentors, support team volunteers, adopters, community, and School Management Committees (SMCs) to define and regularly review school vision, aligning it with NEP 2020 for enhanced community involvement.

7.3. Impacting School Infrastructure and Services: The programme adopts dual approach- it allows patrons/mentors/adopters to contribute directly to the school activities and also to act as intermediaries, advocating for additional budgetary provisions at the state level.

7.4. Mentoring Schools: This programme leverages adopters' experience to provide mentorship, guidance, and advisory support to both students and school administration during periodic visits. There are a large number of retired professionals, including teachers, who will be more than willing to help their nearest school.

7.5. Developing sustainable model for educational improvement: The programme by focusing on enhanced academic performance and learning outcomes allows the parents, and community at large to support schools.

8. Monitoring and Supervision

8.1. At the State Level, overall guidance will be given by the Governing Body of the SSA which is headed by the Chief Minister.

8.2. At the State Level the overall review, supervision and regular monitoring will be done by a Committee under the Secretary (Education).

8.3. At the District Level the supervision and monitoring of the Programme will be done by a Committee constituted by the Deputy Commissioners under their Chairpersonship. The DCs (Deputy Commissioners) will provide their leadership to the Apna Vidyalaya Programme.

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8.4. The State Project Officer SSA will be the State Nodal Officer for the Programme.

8.5. The required funds (for developing a portal and for carrying out IEC activities, for developing a monitoring and feedback mechanism and other related activities) will be provided from SSA/STARS Project.

8.6. There will be monthly review at the level of the Secretary (Education), DCs, Director Higher Education and Elementary Education and SSA.

9. **DOCUMENTATION:** All initiatives under the Programme (each and every one of them, howsoever small the support may appear) shall be documented. The SSA will

10. **IMPACT ASSESSMENT:** The SamagraShikshain collaboration with SCERT and DIETs will design the format to assess the impact of the Programme at least on bi-annual basis. The results and outcomes will be shared with all concerned including the SMC and community members.

11. **REWARDS:** Best performing schools will be rewarded at the State and District level.