

GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON REVIEW COMMITTEE OF DSEAR'73,
ROOM NO. 10, SCERT, VARUN MARG, DEFENCE COLONY
NEW DELHI-110024

F.No.1/CH/RC/2011/03

Dated: 29.06.11

Minutes

A meeting was held on 29.06.11 and was attended by the following:-

- a) Ms. Shailaja Chandra, IAS (Retd.), Chairperson, Review Committee
- b) Ms. Abha Joshi, Member Secretary
- c) Sh. Manish Gaur, Member
- d) Sh. Pushparaj Deshpande, Intern/ Consultant
- e) Father Binny Issac, President, Catholic Schools Association
- f) Ms. Aneeta Wattal, Secretary, National Progressive School Committee
- g) Ms. Madhu Sen, Chairperson, Forum of Public School
- h) Mr. S.V. Sehgal, President, National Progressive School Committee
- i) Mr. S.K. Bhattacharya, Chairman, Action Committee
- j) Mr. M. S. Rawat, Gen. Secy., Federation of Public School
- k) Mr. R.P. Mallik, Chairman, Federation of Public School
- l) Mr. S.L. Jain, Sr. Vice President, Action Committee
- m) Ms. Manju Bharat Ram, Chairperson, Forum for Quality Education

At the outset the Chairperson welcomed all members present and hoped that their inputs as representatives of the largest group of schools would be beneficial. She emphasized the need to inculcate values of inclusive education while underscoring the need for imparting quality education and also to foster a healthy relationship between the Government, the school management and other stakeholders.

To ensure a smooth discussion, she suggested that the issues be categorized and then deliberated one by one. The main issues raised were:

1. Autonomy of Schools: School representatives advocated grant of greater autonomy to private un-aided schools in matters related to finance, admission processes, selection of teachers and management. It was also pointed out that over 90 percent of the tuition fee collection goes into the payment of teacher salaries. As this is their only source of income, they demanded that the schools be allowed to keep a surplus of 20-30 percent so that they can contribute to further growth of the school system.

2. Accountability of Schools: The representatives accepted that along with grant of autonomy to private schools, provisions for accountability and responsibility of management too should be introduced. They were open to the suggestion to place all relevant information already being provided to the Government and even to CBSE on a website for being viewed by the stakeholders.

3. Status of School: There was a demand that the status of private unaided schools need to be clarified i.e. whether they are to be considered as non-profit institutions or commercial institutions because the Govt. levies property tax, electricity charges etc on commercial rates. An example given was that 12% service tax on buses provided to the schools was being levied.

4. Fee hike: The representatives pointed out that though there is no cap of 10 percent fee hike under the existing Act, but even so, the Department interferes in the fee-fixation done by management. Moreover, fee-structure of schools depends on teacher-pupil ratio and infrastructural facilities provided by them. This fact is not taken into account by government representatives.

5. Right to Education Act: The school representatives were aggrieved that the parents were using the Right to Education Act to harass schools. They also pointed out that in the absence of any code of conduct for children, problem of indiscipline were increasing. They emphasized that the duties of parents and children should be clearly laid down.

6. Shortage of Schools: It was generally accepted that the crux of the problem lay in the increasing gap between demand and supply of quality schools and to solve it, land should be allotted to more and more societies to enable schools to come up.

7. Problem due to Section 10 of DSEAR'73: Some representatives were of the view that Section 10 of DSEAR'73 be repealed because it was not feasible to give full salary to teachers as stipulated as the overall income of the schools was too low.

It was suggested that a better option would be to give minimum wages to a freshly appointed teacher. After grooming for a few years, management may consider grant of full salary to him/her.

However, there were some members who were of the view that Section 10 of DSEAR'73 should not be repealed because it may lead to exploitation of teachers. They instead suggested that a better option would be to allow appointment of contractual teachers.

8. Vocational Courses after school hours: There was a suggestion from school representatives that the schools be allowed to run vocational courses etc. after school hours so that their fund collection is augmented. The rationale given was that this may ease the quantum of fee hike.

9. Non –receipt of reimbursement amount : The school representatives lamented that although they had admitted 25 percent of children as per the provisions of the RTE, they are yet to receive any re-imbusement from Government.

10. Interference of department: The school representatives were aggrieved by what they considered as too much interference by the Departmental officials. Often the schools are asked to comply with certain orders like installing fire safety equipments and producing necessary certificate within 24 hours. The Act should be simplified so that there is minimum interference from Department.

11. Age criteria at nursery level : It was also pointed out that the issue of minimum age at nursery level needs to be reconsidered because as per the RTE Act, 2009, a child of 6 years should be admitted in class-I which implies that a child of 4+ years be admitted in nursery. Presently a child of 3+ years is eligible for nursery.

12. Child Protection vis a vis harassment: Most of the schools felt that they were getting a number of complaints from DPCPR regarding harassment of children which were baseless. They asserted that definition of child protection vis a vis harassment needs to be clarified.

Chairperson agreed that a separate meeting with the officials of DPCPR shall be held to discuss this aspect although it would need to be resolved administratively and not through law.

13. As regards the issues related to minority schools, the Chairperson held that a separate meeting will be held to discuss their issues.

14. All the representatives were of the view that they should be provided with an institutionalized forum to hold regular meetings with the Director when their experiences can be brought to his notice. This would obviate the need for having to go to the Court to settle administrative disputes.

15. Chairperson then sought their views on initiating some sort of accreditation of schools so that a fee regulation committee may be constituted on the lines of department of higher education. She also sought their views on the creation of a website where schools may give information regarding fee structure, teacher -pupil ratio, qualification of teachers etc. Some of the schools representatives were against the idea of accreditation. The apprehension was that this would jeopardise their interest. The Chairperson clarified that accreditation would be in the form of ranking on the basis of financial outgo and the information would be restricted to information on the teachers' names and qualification, number of classes and duties and salaries paid. As regards the concept of a web site, the representatives were not averse to this idea.

In the end the Chairperson proposed that the representatives present give in writing a clear perspective on all issues in the following format:

Provision DSEAR'73	Need for amendment/ modification giving a concrete example with justification.	Proposed change with reference to Section/ Rule proposed to be changed or newly introduced.	Proposed Mechanism.
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Provision of RTE	Need for amendment/ modification giving a concrete example with justification.	Proposed change with reference to Section/ Rule proposed to be changed or newly introduced.	Proposed Mechanism.
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Shri B. K. Bhattacharya undertook to have this exercise conducted and to supply a document by 20.07.2011.


(ABHA JOSHI)
MEMBER SECRETARY