

Comprehensive Education Scheme for Disabled Children

The Govt. of India notified a Comprehensive Education Scheme for Disabled Children in compliance to Section 30 of the Disabilities Act 1995 in the year 2004.

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PART 1 SECTION 1

Government Of India

Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 4th November 2004

1. Section 30 of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 stipulates the following:-

"30. Without prejudice to the foregoing provisions, the appropriate Governments shall by notification prepare a comprehensive education scheme which shall make provision for-

(a) Transport facilities to the children with disabilities or in the alternative financial incentive to parents or guardians to enable their children with disabilities to attend schools;

(b) The removal of architectural barriers from schools, colleges or other institution imparting vocational and professional training.

(c) The supply of books, uniforms and other materials to children with disabilities attending school;

(d) The grant of scholarships to students with disabilities

(e) Setting up of appropriate fora for the redressal of grievances of parents regarding the placement of their children with disabilities.

(f) Suitable modification in the examination system to eliminate purely mathematical questions for the benefit of blind students and students with low vision.

(g) Restructuring of curriculum for the benefit of children with disabilities; restructuring the curriculum for benefit of students with hearing impairment to facilitate them to take only one language as part of their curriculum.”

2. The constitution of India as amended in December 2002 provides that free and compulsory education is a fundamental right of all children in the age group of 6-14 years. Accordingly, the Ministry of Human Resources Development in the Government of India has formulated a comprehensive and integrated national programme of Sarv Shiksha Abhiyaan (SSA) to provide assistance to states. This programme adopts a 'zero rejection policy' so that no child is left out of the education system. The programme has been launched to provide eight years of quality education to all children including children with special needs. It also supports a wide range of approaches, options and strategies for education of children with disabilities. The Government of India has been implementing a centrally sponsored scheme of Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC) in various States and UTs. The scheme endeavors to achieve the integration of children with 100% financial assistance is provided for transport facilities, books and stationery, uniform, instructional material, assistive equipments, readers facilities for the visually handicapped, attend facility for the orthopaedically handicapped, special teacher facility, hostel facility for disabled children situated on school campus, removal of architectural barriers in schools etc.

3. In order to effectively implement provisions of section 30 of the Act through convergence of various schemes/activities by the Government organization/ autonomous bodies, the following guidelines are issued:

(a) Transport facility to the children with disability or in the alternative financial incentives to parents or guardians to enable their children with disabilities to attend schools:

(i) The schools providing transport facilities to their children should ensure that the children with disabilities also get the facility of transport suitable to their requirements. This would mean availability of facilities so that wheel-chair users have access to the transport and the children with other disabilities provided necessary assistance to utilize the services.

(ii) The schools, which are not providing transport facility to their children, should establish a system by hiring/arranging transport vehicles to suit the requirement of children with disabilities studying in their schools.

(iii) In case it is not possible to arrange for the transport facility for the children with disabilities, necessary arrangements may be made with the help of parents of the children with disabilities through formation of an association, self-help groups, citizen welfare groups.

Some of the existing schemes of the Government provide for a component for arranging transport for children with disabilities. There should be utilized.

(b) Removal of Architectural barriers from schools, colleges or other institutions imparting vocational and professional training.

(i) All new school buildings being constructed should provide for barrier free features such as ramps, handrails and other facilities as laid down in the guidelines for disabled and elderly persons issued by Central Public Works Department (CPWD) in the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment, Government of India. These guidelines set out standards for providing barrier-free access in built environment.

(ii) All the existing schools should also modify their school buildings in such a manner that they become barrier-free.

(iii) The creation of barrier-free environment including provision of ramps etc. should be done using locally available material and appropriate technology suitable and available in the area.

(iv) The structural designing/modification should be done under the guidance of qualified civil engineers.

(v) The funds available in various programmes/schemes including SSA, IEDC etc. should be utilized for the purpose.

(c) Supply of Books, Uniforms and other materials to children with disabilities attending school.

(i) To encourage children with disabilities to attend schools regularly, they should be provided with free textbooks.

(ii) The IEDC scheme has a provision for grant-in-aid for incurring expenditure on books and stationery up to Rs. 400/- per annum per child with disabilities. This should be utilized.

(iii) Children with disabilities should also be provided with uniforms and other materials, if these are provided to other children free of cost.

(iv) The children with disabilities should be provided with teaching/learning aids such as (i) for visually disabled children – braille books, talking books, mathematics kits, science kits, sensory training kits, canes for mobility, text-to-speech software and computer hardware having Braille key board etc. (ii) for hearing disabled – clinical audio meter, portable audio meter, speech trainer, micrometer for ear-mold making for speech and hearing impaired, speech recognition software and other relevant equipments.

(d) Grant of scholarships to students with disabilities.

(i) Scholarships to fund the cost of education are provided to children with disabilities on the basis of merit.

(ii) Scholarships may be given in monetary form to students with disabilities directly or to the schools as underwritten cost.

(iii) List of students with disabilities being provided with scholarship should be separately mentioned and discussed in the Parents teacher Association meetings.

(iv) List of scholarship-holders should be regularly revised.

(e) Setting up of appropriate fora for the redressal of grievances of parents regarding the placement of their children with disabilities.

(i) Parent Teacher Association should be established in every school to redress the grievances of parents of children with disabilities.

(ii) Regular meetings of Parent Teacher Association should be ensured.

(iii) The school management committees and village education committees set up under SSA should be utilized to provide a forum to address grievances of the parents of children with special needs.

(iv) The Colleges also should make similar arrangements.

(f) Suitable modification in the examination system to eliminate purely mathematical questions for the benefit of blind students and students with low vision.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has taken a number of steps to provide facilities to the children with disabilities in examinations. Some of the major steps taken by CBSE are mentioned below:

(i) Alternate question in lieu of questions requiring special skills based on visual inputs are being provide in Mathematics and science for Sec. School Examination (class X).

(ii) Blind, Physically Handicapped and Dyslexic Students are permitted to use an amanuensis. The amanuensis must be a student of a class lower than the one for which the candidate is taking the examination.

(iii) The visually Handicapped students (with low vision) appearing from Delhi are provided Question Papers with enlarged print.

(iv) Disabled candidates are allowed additional one hour (60) minutes) for each paper of external examination.

(v) Exemption is granted from examination in the Third Language.

(vi) Center Superintendents have been instructed to make arrangements for the conduct of the examination of such candidates on the Ground Floor as far as possible.

(vii) Physically Challenged children are to specifically indicate their category and also state whether they have been provided with a writer in the columns provided in the Main Answer Book.

In addition to above facilities extended by CBSE to children with disabilities, there should be an effort to eliminate purely mathematical questions for the benefit of blind students and students with low vision.

(g) Restructuring of curriculum for the benefit of children with disabilities.

There is a focus on inclusive education and hence child centered pedagogy emphasized. The curriculum to meet the needs of children with disabilities should be suitably developed in consultation with experts so that these children can learn together with other children in regular classrooms. There may be need to suitably modify the curriculum as done by CBSE for children with disabilities. The modifications made is presented below:

The children with disabilities (dyslexic, blind, spastic and candidate with visual impairment) have the option of studying one compulsory language as against two. The language opted by them should be in consonance with the overall spirit of the Three Language Formula prescribed by the Board. Besides one language, they can offer any four of the following subjects:

Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Science, Another Language, Music, Painting, Home Science and Introductory Information Technology.

(h) Restructuring of curriculum for the benefit of students with hearing impairment to facilitate them to take only one language as part of their curriculum.

The Board of Education should make changes in their curriculum to facilitate learning of hearing impaired children by providing an option of only one language as a part of their curriculum.

The Government and its organizations dealing with the subject matter of education of children with disabilities shall take immediate action for incorporation of facilities mentioned in Section 30 of the Act so that all the barriers and obstructions may be removed and children with disabilities are able to obtain education at par with other children.

(Smt. Jayati Chandra)
Joint Secretary to the Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
New Delhi
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