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SCHOOL & MASS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

NOTIFICATION

The 14th May, 2018

Sub: Policy of Rationalisation of Schools.

S.R.O. No. 177/2018— Exponential growth of elementary and secondary schools in the State in last two decades has undoubtedly resulted in expansion of access to schools and at present there is hardly any un-served habitation left in the State. But, so far as quality education is concerned there is still much room for improvement. One of the important factors affecting the pace of growth in quality education is lack of adequate number of teachers in many schools. Ironically many schools are running with very less number of teachers in our State although it has a highly favourable PTR i.e. 23:1 against the RTE Norm 40:1. This is the reason why a continuous effort has been made in last 10 years to rationalise the teachers. But rationalisation of teachers alone has not solved the acute problem of vacancy of teachers in many schools especially those located in rural & remote areas. The following situations have been found to be inhibitory in the stride towards the goal of quality education:

- (a) Schools with very poor roll strength and those with better roll strength have been provided with equal number of teachers to satisfy the RTE norm.
- (b) A large number of schools being there, the State has not been able to provide at least one teacher for each class in elementary schools as required in an ideal situation. Thousands of primary schools are running with only two teachers. Similarly large number of upper primary schools is running with 3-4 teachers. This has forced the schools to adopt the multi-grade teaching method which probably slow down the pace of our journey towards the goal of quality education.
- (c) Myriad instances are found where two or more schools with same class range or compatible range of classes are running from one campus or close vicinity. This results in inadequacy of human as well as material resources in each of such institutions.
- (d) Existence of large number of schools splits and reduces the availability of material and intellectual resources for individual institutions. This also causes problem in monitoring and supervision. Deficiency in monitoring and supervision obviously affects the achievement of quality education.

Rationalisation of schools being one of the most effective ways of solving the problems caused due to the above situations, steps have been taken in this direction in

recent years by merging schools and closing down many schools with very poor roll strength. Although these steps have been taken in the right direction, a comprehensive and strategic approach to the problem was required to be worked out to ensure rational distribution of teachers in order to bring improvement in quality.

Thus, formulating a comprehensive policy of rationalisation of schools was under active consideration of Govt. for a long period. Government after careful considerations have been pleased to introduce a “Policy of Rationalisation of Schools” with following details.

1. Scope:

All Govt. schools, both elementary and secondary schools shall be covered under the policy.

The Horizontal/vertical integration among Block Grant School and GIA Schools will be considered separately with detail modalities.

2. Initiatives under the Policy:

The following major initiatives shall be undertaken for implementation of the policy:

(a) Merger of schools:

Schools located in same campus or located within a distance of 100 meters shall be merged so as to form a single institution or a composite institution which may have both elementary and secondary wing.

Further, schools with very low roll strength shall be physically merged with other schools of same range of class or higher range of class even though the distance exceeds 100 meter. A primary school with roll strength less than 20 and an Upper Primary school (class I-VIII) with roll strength less than 30 shall be treated as Low Roll Strength School for the purpose of merger. Similarly, in case of Secondary schools, a 2 class Secondary school with roll strength less than 30 and a 5 class/7 class school with roll strength less than 50 shall be treated as Low Roll Strength Schools.

But in case of EBB/TSP Blocks, the Primary Schools having roll strength less than 10, in case of U.P Schools(I to VIII class) having roll strength less than 20, 2 class Secondary Schools having roll strength less than 20 and for 5 class / 7 class Secondary Schools having roll strength less than 40 shall be treated as low roll strength Schools for this purpose.

However, keeping the RTE distance norms for access in view, Geographical location of school, natural barriers and other local factors , Govt. may decide to modify the minimum roll strength criteria for physical merger of Low Roll Strength schools

The merger shall be of two types such as;

(i) Horizontal Merger: Schools with same range of classes shall be merged to form a single school. The following mergers shall be treated as horizontal mergers

- Merger of two or more primary schools
- Merger of two or more Upper Primary schools of any range
- Merger of two Secondary schools of any range

(ii) Vertical Merger: Schools with different range of classes i.e. one with lower class range and the other with higher class range shall be merged to form a single or composite school. The following mergers shall be treated as vertical mergers;

- Merger of one or more Primary School(s) with a 3 class (VI-VIII) or 8 class (I-VIII) Upper Primary School.
- Merger of one or more Primary School(s) with a 5 class (VI-X)/7 class (IV-X) Secondary School.
- Merger of one or more 3 class Upper Primary Schools(VI -VIII)/8 class Upper Primary Schools(I-VIII) with a 2 class (IX-X) /5 class (VI-X)/7 class (IV-X) Secondary School.
- Merger of one or more Primary Schools with a 2 class (IX-X) Secondary School, provided that the linking classes are opened by Govt. in appropriate time to facilitate continuity of study of the students passing out of the top class of the primary school.

The above Horizontal Merger or Vertical Merger can either be Physical or Administrative.

In physical merger two or more schools shall be merged resulting in complete closure of one or more school(s). In such case the students will physically shift out to another school from the closed school(s). The school records and all movable assets of the closed school(s) shall be shifted to the Nodal School with which merger is made.

Similarly in administrative merger two or more schools shall be merged for the purpose of optimum utilization of available resources under unified command and one administrative supervision. In such case if the levels of classes are different the school shall run with two different wings. All employees will work under control of one head of institution but their cadre will not change and their service matters will be dealt with by different authorities as before. Merger of Elementary schools with Secondary schools is always an administrative merger.

In case more than two schools are there in a merger group and physical merger of all schools is not possible, as many schools as possible should be physically merged so that only two schools finally remain for administrative merger.

(b) Up-gradation of Schools:

In order to implement this policy of rationalisation of schools Govt. may upgrade a primary school to Upper Primary school or an Upper Primary School to Secondary School in following situations.

- (i) To open link classes(VI-VIII) where it is decided to merge a Primary school with a two-class Secondary school, the primary school may be upgraded to an Upper Primary School.

(ii) Selection of Schools for Merger:

The selection of schools for merger should be based on the following criteria—

- (a) All schools being merged need to be located in the same district
- (b) The Schools must be Govt. managed schools.

- (c) Madrasa, Sanskrit Toll, Special Schools shall not be selected for merger.
- (d) The schools should be located in same campus or within 100 metre radius. In case of **Low Roll Strength Schools**, the 100 meter distance restriction shall not apply.
- (e) Schools separated by State High Way, National High Way and Railway line shall not be taken for merger.
- (f) Schools separated by rivers , forests, hills or any other natural barriers shall not be merged.
- (g) An aided school shall not be considered for merger with a Govt. school.
- (h) In case of physical merger of schools not located in the campus, the availability of class rooms in the school to which students of closed school(s) shall be shifted must be verified properly.
- (i) In case of non-availability of required number of class rooms to accommodate the students after physical merger, administrative merger may be taken up for the time being till construction of the additional class rooms.

3. Implementation Modalities:

- (i) The Schools to be merged/upgraded shall be selected on the basis of UDISE data vis-à-vis the above mentioned guidelines by a District Level Merger Committee (DLMC) under chairmanship of Collector of that district. The DEO , DPC & all BEOs shall be the members of the committee and DEO shall be the member convener. If the committee so decides fresh verification of UDISE data may be made.
- (ii) The schools considered for merger shall form the merger group and the school with highest class in the group shall normally be the **Lead School** with which other schools will merge. The schools which will merge with the lead school shall be known as **Satellite Schools**. In case, there is more than one school to be the Lead School the DLMC will take a decision taking into account the number of classes, infrastructure and roll strength, in that order of such schools to select the lead school.

A secondary school within the merger group shall normally be the Lead School. But if there are two secondary schools in the group and one is having class range IX-X whereas the other school is having class range from VI –X the later shall be the Lead School. Among other factors, communication facility to lead School is to be considered.

Similarly, in a merger group having only elementary schools, an Upper Primary school shall be the lead school. But if there are two or more Upper Primary Schools in the group, the one with better infrastructure, better communication facility and more roll strength shall be the lead school.

- (iii) The list of schools for merger/ up gradation approved by the DLMC shall be submitted by the DEO to the SPD, OPEPA in the format enclosed as **Annexure I** to this resolution.
- (iv) A State Level Merger Committee (SLMC) under the chairmanship of SPD, OPEPA with SPD, RMSA, DSE& DEE as members will scrutinize the list and send it to Govt for further examination and Notification. The Officer in charge of Access in OPEPA will convene the meetings of SLMC.

- (v) After notification of schools for merger, steps will taken by the DEO or BEO as the case may be for transfer and admission of all merged schools in the lead school or any other nearby school as required.
- (vi) The records, stores, accounts, movable properties of the satellite schools shall be handed over by the Headmasters of the concerned schools to the Headmaster of the Lead school .A copy of such handing over and taking over of charges with signature of Headmasters concerned shall be submitted to the concerned Block Education Officer and District Education Officer as the case may be.
- (vii) The subsequent adjustment/shifting/transfer of employees in the schools notified for merger shall be made as per instructions in the notification of merger.
- (viii) Similarly after a merger the new institution will be normally named after the Lead school with which the Satellite Schools merged with addition of the word '**Nodal**'. Future records and seal of the school shall stand changed accordingly. The UDISE code of the Lead School shall remain unchanged. If the Lead school is a High School its school code with Board shall also remain unchanged. The Board will be intimated to bring the change in name of the school against that school code in their records.
- (ix) In case of dispute in naming of the Nodal School after merger, the Headmaster of the Nodal School shall organize a joint meeting of the SMCs /SMDCs of all the schools in the merger group. The name decided in the Joint meeting shall be submitted to the Govt. through the DEO and Govt. shall consider for approval of the name.
- (x) All Nodal Schools created after merger shall be deemed to be Co-Education schools.
- (xi) In case the newly created Nodal School is a high school and the schools merged are Primary or UP schools the Nodal High School shall have two Units i.e. Elementary Unit and Secondary Unit with two separate Attendance Registers.
- (xii) At the time of transfer of an elementary teacher to a Nodal High School the transfer order should necessarily mention Elementary Unit of such and such Nodal High School. In other correspondences/records also this Elementary Unit should also be mentioned.
- (xiii) After merger the HM of the Nodal School will take steps to record the land and property of the all merged Schools in its name in revenue records.
- (xiv) The Nodal School shall be treated as one school for the purpose of school timing, routine, holiday list, prayer assembly, functions, observations, celebrations and other routine activities. In case the Nodal School is a secondary school, the holiday list applicable to secondary schools will be followed in the nodal school.
- (xv) In case of administrative merger of elementary schools with secondary schools, separate Attendance Register for staff of the erstwhile schools (as it was before merger) may be maintained but the HM of the Nodal School will remain in charge of these Attendance Registers.
- (xvi) In case of merger of elementary schools with secondary schools the Headmaster of the Nodal High School will be the Head of the Institution of the new school for all purpose. She/he will maintain all accounts of the new institution. She/he will be in charge of academic supervision/inspection as well as internal administration of the

new school. The existing arrangement of drawl of salary of the teachers in the erstwhile satellite elementary Schools shall continue as before except that the HM of the secondary School shall submit bills to the DDO/BEO. The existing arrangement for maintenance of Service Books and other service matters of teachers of elementary schools will continue as before. The Headmaster of the new Nodal School will forward proposals for sanction of increment, leave, GPF, pension, etc. in respect of teachers of the Elementary Unit to the DDO/Block Education Officer. There shall be no change in the cadre prospects of teachers of any particular cadre.

- (xvii) If the Nodal School is a High School, it is to be ensured that the children reading in lower classes get the benefit of academic support with pedagogical input from High School teachers. If so needed the HM of the High School may assign lower classes to High School teachers. The teachers of Elementary Unit shall be assigned with only arrangement classes in Secondary Unit .
- (xviii) In class VIII, subjects like Science, Mathematics, English and Odia will be taught by Graduate Teachers having training qualification of either wing (Elementary/ Secondary). Sanskrit and Hindi Teachers of the Secondary School will teach Sanskrit/Hindi in both the wings of the school.
- (xix) If the Nodal School is a High School, the building of all merged schools shall be treated as part of the High School for the purpose of maintenance by Roads & Building Department or Rural Works Department, as the case may be. Accordingly, the concerned department shall be intimated to do the needful.
- (xx) Govt. shall provide required funds for improvement of infrastructure in the nodal school if needed to accommodate the new classes with students in view of physical merger of satellite schools.
- (xxi) In case of physical merger of any school with the Nodal School, if the building of the closed school is not necessary for any purpose by the Nodal School the building shall be handed over by the School & Mass Education Department to Panchayati Raj Department in case of rural areas and H&UD Department in case of urban areas through a notification. Till such notification the building of the closed school will remain under the charge of the Nodal school.
- (xxii) The Headmaster of the Nodal School shall take steps for constitution of new SMC/SMDC for the new institution taking into account the new stakeholders within 45 days of merger and till such reconstitution the existing SMC and/or SMDC of the Nodal School shall continue as before.

4. Applicability of Provisions of RTE Act:

The distance norm for access for children from catchment villages/habitations as prescribed in RTE Act shall not be deviated in any case of physical merger of elementary schools.

5. Applicability of Odisha Elementary Cadre Rules:

The provisions of Odisha Elementary Cadre Rules in so far as service conditions of the teachers of elementary schools are concerned, shall not be deviated in any manner after the merger.

6. Repeal of Earlier Provisions:

All previous instructions issued in the above matter shall stand repealed after issue of this resolution.

ORDER

Ordered that, this Notification shall be published in an Extraordinary issue of *Odisha Gazette*.

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By Order of the Governor

PRADIPTA KUMAR MAHAPATRA
Principal Secretary to Government

