

IMMEDIATE

No. EDN-HE (21)A(3)06/2020-V

Directorate of Higher Education

Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-1

Tel.0177-2653120 Extn. 234, Fax: 2812882, e-mail: dhe-sml-hp@gov.in



Dated: Shimla-1 the 09th October, 2020

12 OCT 2020

To

1. All the Dy. Directors of Higher/ Elementary Education, Himachal Pradesh
2. All the Principals, District Institute of Education and Training, Himachal Pradesh
3. All the Principals/ Headmasters, Government/Pvt. Sen. Sec./ High Schools in, Himachal Pradesh

Subject:-

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)/ Guidelines for Re-opening of Schools after COVID-19 Lockdown.

In pursuance to Government of Himachal Pradesh letter No.EDN-B-B(14)-12/2018 dated 08-10-2020, received from the Secretary(Education) to the Government of Himachal Pradesh, enclosing therewith GOI, MHAs order No.40-3/2020-DM-I(A) dated 30th September, 2020, to re-open more activities in areas outside the Containment Zones, wherein following has been intimated:-

1. Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India has issued detailed SOPs/ Guidelines for health and safety protocols for reopening of Schools and learning with physical/ social distancing vide letter No. F. No.11-16/2020-Sch.4 dated 05-10-2020 (Copy enclosed). You are directed to adopt these guidelines as per conditions prevailing in our State. These guidelines may also be brought to the notice of all the Teachers through Har Ghar Pathshala Forum.
2. Apart from above, it is further directed that all the Teaching and Non-Teaching staff of Educational Institutions may be directed to attend the Educational Institutions w.e.f. 12-10-2020 on daily basis following SOPs prescribed above.
3. All the Educational Institutions will prepare Institutions based micro plans to implement the SOPs in the particular institution. This activity will be completed by 17-10-2020.
4. All the Government Educational Institutions will hold e-PTM with parents of the Students during 15th to 17th October, 2020 to share the precautionary measures to avoid COVID-19 as per the SOPs mentioned above. Students' achievements

during first term online exams and Har Ghar Pathshala initiatives like weekly quiz and remedial teaching material would also be shared with the parents.

5. The guidelines issued earlier regarding visiting of Students of Class 9th to 12th with written consent of parents would continue till further orders.
6. Online teaching and learning process through Har Ghar Pathshala would continue as usual. Principals/ Head Teachers of the Educational Institutes will further ensure delivery of offline notes to the Students who are unable to join the teaching learning process through Har Ghar Pathshala or under the Himachal Doordarshan Gyanshala Programme through Doordarshan Shimla.

In view of above mentioned, you are directed to take further necessary action in the matter accordingly and these directions/ instructions may also be publicized widely for the information of Students.

This may be given personal attention and top priority please.



(Dr. Amarjeet Kumar Sharma),
Director of Higher Education,
Himachal Pradesh

Endst. No. Even Dated Shimla-1 the 09th October, 2020
Copy for information and necessary action is forwarded to:-

1. The Secretary (Education) to the Government of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-2, w.r.t. above mentioned letter number and date.
2. The Director of Elementary Education, Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-1.
3. The State Project Director, Samagra Shiksha, Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-1.
4. The Technical Officer, IT Cell, with the direction to upload this letter on the Departmental website.
5. Guard file.



Director of Higher Education,
Himachal Pradesh

No. 40-3/2020-DM-I(A)
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs

North Block, New Delhi-110001

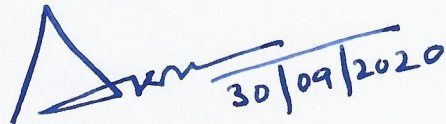
Dated 30th September, 2020

ORDER

Whereas, an Order of even number dated 29.08.2020 was issued for containment of COVID-19 in the country, for a period upto 30.09.2020;

Whereas, in exercise of the powers under section 6(2)(i) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has directed the undersigned to issue an order to re-open more activities in areas outside the Containment Zones and to extend the lockdown in Containment Zones upto 31.10.2020;

Now therefore, in exercise of the powers, conferred under Section 10(2)(1) of the Disaster Management Act 2005, the undersigned hereby directs that guidelines for Re-opening, as **annexed**, will be in force upto 31.10.2020.


30/09/2020

Union Home Secretary

and, Chairman, National Executive Committee (NEC)

To:

1. The Secretaries of Ministries/ Departments of Government of India
2. The Chief Secretaries/Administrators of States/Union Territories
(As per list attached)

Copy to:

- i. All Members of the National Executive Committee
- ii. Member Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority

Guidelines for Re-opening

[As per Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Order No. 40-3/2020-DM-I (A)
dated 30th September, 2020]


1. Activities permitted outside the Containment Zones

In areas outside the Containment Zones, all activities will be permitted, except the following:

- (i) State/ UT Governments may take a decision in respect of re-opening of schools and coaching institutions, after 15th October 2020, in a graded manner. The decision shall be taken in consultation with the respective school/ institution management, based on their assessment of the situation, and subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Online/ distance learning shall continue to be the preferred mode of teaching and shall be encouraged.
 - b. Where schools are conducting online classes, and some students prefer to attend online classes rather than physically attend school, they may be permitted to do so.
 - c. Students may attend schools/ institutions only with the written consent of parents.
 - d. Attendance must not be enforced, and must depend entirely on parental consent.
 - e. States /UTs will prepare their own standard operating procedure (SOP) regarding health and safety precautions for reopening of schools/ institutions based on the SOP to be issued by Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education, Government of India, keeping local requirements in view.
 - f. Schools, which are allowed to open, will have to mandatorily follow the SOP to be issued by Education Departments of States/ UTs prepared as above.
- (ii) Department of Higher Education (DHE), Ministry of Education may take a decision on the timing of the opening of Colleges/ Higher Education Institutions, in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), based on the assessment of the situation. Online/ distance learning shall continue to be the preferred mode of teaching and shall be encouraged.

However, Higher Education Institutions only for research scholars (Ph.D) and post-graduate students in science and technology stream requiring laboratory/ experimental works will be permitted to open from 15th October, 2020, as under:

- a. For Centrally Funded Higher Education Institutions, the Head of Institution will satisfy herself/ himself that there is a genuine

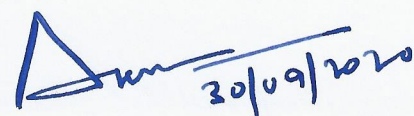

30/09/2020

requirement of research scholars (Ph.D) and post-graduate students in science and technology stream for laboratory/experimental works.

- b. For all other Higher Education Institutions e.g. State Universities, Private Universities etc., they may open only for research scholars (Ph.D) and postgraduate students in science and technology stream requiring laboratory/experimental works as per decision to be taken by the respective State/UT Governments.
- (iii) Swimming pools being used for training of sportspersons will be permitted to open with effect from 15th October, 2020, for which the SOP will be issued by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MoYA&S).
- (iv) Cinemas/ theatres/ multiplexes will be permitted to open with upto 50% of their seating capacity, in areas outside the Containment Zones only, with effect from 15th October 2020, for which, SOP will be issued by Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.
- (v) Entertainment parks and similar places will be permitted to open with effect from 15th October, 2020, for which the SOP will be issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW).
- (vi) Business to Business (B2B) Exhibitions will be permitted to open, in areas outside the Containment Zones only, with effect from 15th October 2020, for which, SOP will be issued by the Department of Commerce.
- (vii) Social/ academic/ sports/ entertainment/ cultural/ religious/ political functions and other congregations have already been permitted with a ceiling of 100 persons, outside Containment Zones only. Such gatherings beyond the limit of 100 persons may be permitted, outside Containment Zones, by State/ UT Governments only after 15th October 2020, and subject to the following conditions:
 - a. In closed spaces, a maximum of 50% of the hall capacity will be allowed, with a ceiling of 200 persons. Wearing of face masks, maintaining social distancing, provision for thermal scanning and use of hand wash or sanitizer will be mandatory.
 - b. In open spaces, keeping the size of the ground/ space in view, and with strict observance of social distancing, mandatory wearing of face masks, provision for thermal scanning and hand wash or sanitizer.State/ UT Governments will issue detailed SOPs, to regulate such gatherings and strictly enforce the same.
- (viii) International air travel of passengers, except as permitted by MHA.

2. National Directives for COVID-19 Management

National Directives for COVID-19 Management, as specified in **Annexure I**, shall continue to be followed throughout the country.



30/09/2020

3. Lockdown limited to Containment Zones

- (i) Lockdown shall remain in force in the Containment Zones till 31st October, 2020.
- (ii) Containment Zones shall be demarcated by the District authorities at micro level after taking into consideration the guidelines of MoHFW with the objective of effectively breaking the chain of transmission. Strict containment measures will be enforced in these containment zones and only essential activities will be allowed. There shall be strict perimeter control to ensure that there is no movement of people in or out of these zones, except for medical emergencies and for maintaining supply of essential goods and services. In the Containment Zones, there shall be intensive contact tracing, house-to-house surveillance, and other clinical interventions, as required. Guidelines of MoHFW shall be effectively implemented for the above purpose.
- (iii) These Containment Zones will be notified on the websites by the respective District Collectors and by the States/ UTs and information will be shared with MOHFW.

4. State/ UT Governments shall not impose any local lockdown (State/ District/ sub-division/City level), outside the containment zones, without prior consultation with the Central Government.

5. No restriction on Inter-State and intra-State movement

There shall be no restriction on inter-State and intra-State movement of persons and goods including those for cross land-border trade under Treaties with neighbouring countries. No separate permission/ approval/ e-permit will be required for such movements.

6. Movement of persons with SOPs

Movement by passenger trains; domestic passenger air travel; movement of persons on Vande Bharat and Air Transport Bubble flights; and sign-on and sign-off of Indian seafarers will continue to be regulated as per SOPs issued.

7. Protection of vulnerable persons

Persons above 65 years of age, persons with co-morbidities, pregnant women, and children below the age of 10 years are advised to stay at home, except for essential and health purposes.

8. Use of *Aarogya Setu*

- (i) *Aarogya Setu* enables early identification of potential risk of infection, and thus acts as a shield for individuals and the community.
- (ii) With a view to ensuring safety in offices and work places, employers on best effort basis should ensure that *Aarogya Setu* is installed by all employees having compatible mobile phones.

(iii) District authorities may advise individuals to install the *Aarogya Setu application* on compatible mobile phones and regularly update their health status on the app. This will facilitate timely provision of medical attention to those individuals who are at risk.

9. Strict enforcement of the guidelines

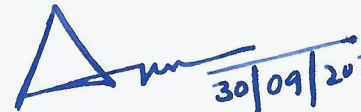
(i) State/ UT Governments shall not dilute these guidelines issued under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, in any manner.

(ii) For the enforcement of social distancing, State/ UT Governments may, as far as possible, use the provisions of Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) of 1973.

(iii) All the District Magistrates shall strictly enforce the above measures.

10. Penal provisions

Any person violating these measures will be liable to be proceeded against as per the provisions of Section 51 to 60 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, besides legal action under Section 188 of the IPC, and other legal provisions as applicable. Extracts of these penal provisions are at **Annexure II**.



30/09/2020

**Union Home Secretary
and, Chairman, National Executive Committee**

NATIONAL DIRECTIVES FOR COVID-19 MANAGEMENT

1. **Face coverings:** Wearing of face cover is compulsory in public places; in workplaces; and during transport.
2. **Social distancing:** Individuals must maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet (*2 gaz ki doori*) in public places.

Shops will ensure physical distancing among customers.

3. **Spitting in public places** will be punishable with fine, as may be prescribed by the State/ UT local authority in accordance with its laws, rules or regulations.

Additional directives for Work Places

4. **Work from home (WfH):** As far as possible the practice of WfH should be followed.
5. **Staggering of work/ business hours** will be followed in offices, work places, shops, markets and industrial & commercial establishments.
6. **Screening & hygiene:** Provision for thermal scanning, hand wash or sanitizer will be made at all entry points and of hand wash or sanitizer at exit points and common areas.
7. **Frequent sanitization** of entire workplace, common facilities and all points which come into human contact e.g. door handles etc., will be ensured, including between shifts.
8. **Social distancing:** All persons in charge of work places will ensure adequate distance between workers, adequate gaps between shifts, staggering the lunch breaks of staff, etc.


30/09/2020

Offences and Penalties for Violation of Lockdown Measures

A. Section 51 to 60 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005

51. Punishment for obstruction, etc.—Whoever, without reasonable cause —

- (a) obstructs any officer or employee of the Central Government or the State Government, or a person authorised by the National Authority or State Authority or District Authority in the discharge of his functions under this Act; or
- (b) refuses to comply with any direction given by or on behalf of the Central Government or the State Government or the National Executive Committee or the State Executive Committee or the District Authority under this Act,

shall on conviction be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine, or with both, and if such obstruction or refusal to comply with directions results in loss of lives or imminent danger thereof, shall on conviction be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years.

52. Punishment for false claim.—Whoever knowingly makes a claim which he knows or has reason to believe to be false for obtaining any relief, assistance, repair, reconstruction or other benefits consequent to disaster from any officer of the Central Government, the State Government, the National Authority, the State Authority or the District Authority, shall, on conviction be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, and also with fine.

53. Punishment for misappropriation of money or materials, etc.—Whoever, being entrusted with any money or materials, or otherwise being, in custody of, or dominion over, any money or goods, meant for providing relief in any threatening disaster situation or disaster, misappropriates or appropriates for his own use or disposes of such money or materials or any part thereof or wilfully compels any other person so to do, shall on conviction be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, and also with fine.

54. Punishment for false warning.—Whoever makes or circulates a false alarm or warning as to disaster or its severity or magnitude, leading to panic, shall on conviction, be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to one year or with fine.

55. Offences by Departments of the Government.—(1) Where an offence under this Act has been committed by any Department of the Government, the head of the Department shall be deemed to be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly

unless he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he exercised all due diligence to prevent the commission of such offence.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), where an offence under this Act has been committed by a Department of the Government and it is proved that the offence has been committed with the consent or connivance of, or is attributable to any neglect on the part of, any officer, other than the head of the Department, such officer shall be deemed to be guilty of that offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

56. Failure of officer in duty or his connivance at the contravention of the provisions of this Act.—Any officer, on whom any duty has been imposed by or under this Act and who ceases or refuses to perform or withdraws himself from the duties of his office shall, unless he has obtained the express written permission of his official superior or has other lawful excuse for so doing, be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine.

57. Penalty for contravention of any order regarding requisitioning.—If any person contravenes any order made under section 65, he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both.

58. Offence by companies.—(1) Where an offence under this Act has been committed by a company or body corporate, every person who at the time the offence was committed, was in charge of, and was responsible to, the company, for the conduct of the business of the company, as well as the company, shall be deemed to be guilty of the contravention and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly:

Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall render any such person liable to any punishment provided in this Act, if he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he exercised due diligence to prevent the commission of such offence.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), where an offence under this Act has been committed by a company, and it is proved that the offence was committed with the consent or connivance of or is attributable to any neglect on the part of any director, manager, secretary or other officer of the company, such director, manager, secretary or other officer shall also, be deemed to be guilty of that offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

Explanation.—For the purpose of this section—

- (a) “company” means anybody corporate and includes a firm or other association of individuals; and
- (b) “director”, in relation to a firm, means a partner in the firm.

59. Previous sanction for prosecution.—No prosecution for offences punishable under sections 55 and 56 shall be instituted except with the previous sanction of the Central Government or the State Government, as the case may be, or of any officer authorised in this behalf, by general or special order, by such Government.

60. Cognizance of offences.—No court shall take cognizance of an offence under this Act except on a complaint made by—

- (a) the National Authority, the State Authority, the Central Government, the State Government, the District Authority or any other authority or officer authorised in this behalf by that Authority or Government, as the case may be; or
- (b) any person who has given notice of not less than thirty days in the manner prescribed, of the alleged offence and his intention to make a complaint to the National Authority, the State Authority, the Central Government, the State Government, the District Authority or any other authority or officer authorised as aforesaid.

B. Section 188 in the Indian Penal Code, 1860

188. Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant.—Whoever, knowing that, by an order promulgated by a public servant lawfully empowered to promulgate such order, he is directed to abstain from a certain act, or to take certain order with certain property in his possession or under his management, disobeys such direction, shall, if such disobedience causes or tends to cause obstruction, annoyance or injury, or risk of obstruction, annoyance or injury, to any person lawfully employed, be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one month or with fine which may extend to two hundred rupees, or with both; and if such disobedience causes or tends to cause danger to human life, health or safety, or causes or tends to cause a riot or affray, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees, or with both.

Explanation.—It is not necessary that the offender should intend to produce harm, or contemplate his disobedience as likely to produce harm. It is sufficient that he knows of the order which he disobeys, and that his disobedience produces, or is likely to produce, harm.

Illustration

An order is promulgated by a public servant lawfully empowered to promulgate such order, directing that a religious procession shall not pass down a certain street. A knowingly disobeys the order, and thereby causes danger of riot. A has committed the offence defined in this section.

COVID-19

SOP/Guidelines for Health and Safety protocols for Reopening of Schools and Learning with Physical/Social Distancing

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INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Home Affairs vide Order no. 40-3/2020-DM-I (A) dated 30th September, 2020 , has issued guidelines for re-opening, following lockdown measures put in place for containment of COVID-19 in the country under the under the Disaster Management Act, 2005. Among the activities permitted outside the Containment Zones is the **re-opening of schools and coaching institutions , after 15th October, 2020, in a graded manner , for which the State/UT Government may take a decision in consultation with the respective school/institution management, based on their assessment of the situation and subject to the following conditions:**

- a. Online/distance learning shall continue to be the preferred mode of teaching and shall be encouraged
- b. Where schools are conducting online classes, and some students prefer to attend online classes rather than physically attend school, they may be permitted to do so.
- c. Students may attend schools/institutions only with the written consent of parents.
- d. Attendance must not be enforced, and must depend entirely on parental consent
- e. States/ UTs will prepare their own Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) regarding health and safety precautions for reopening of schools/institutions based on SOP to be issued by Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education, Government of India, keeping local requirements in view.
- f. Schools which are allowed to open, will have to mandatorily follow the SOP to be issued by Education Departments of States/UTs prepared as above.

Accordingly, the Department of School Education and Literacy , Ministry of Education, has prepared the following guidelines/SOP for re-opening of schools. The guidelines are divided into two parts:

- a) **Part I refers to the health and safety aspects for reopening schools. These are based on the prevailing instructions of Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with regard to health and safety protocols, and maybe implemented by adopting/adapting in accordance with the local situation in all states/UTs.**

Part II refers to learning with physical/social distancing and the academic aspects related to the delivery of education, such as, curriculum transactions, instructional load, timetables, assessment, etc. These are advisory in nature. States &UTs may use these in the manner deemed fit to prepare their own guidelines

Based on these SOP/guidelines, State / UT Governments need to develop their own Standard Operating Procedures for reopening schools and for training different stakeholders as and when the State/Union Territory Governments declare it safe for schools to operate.

The extent and severity of COVID-19 is evolving and changing with time and also varies spatially from region to region. The response and safety protocols will accordingly need to be adjusted to these dynamics by the States/UTs from time to time. States/UTs while adopting the measures suggested may plan additional measures depending on the local situation.

All states/UTs are expected to comply with the COVID-19 related directions issued by Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, from time to time.

It is pertinent to note that many schools have been used as quarantine centres, therefore, it is of utmost importance to properly sanitize/deep clean all of these schools before reopening them. School re-opening must be safe and consistent and aligned with India's overall COVID-19 health response, with adequate measures taken to protect students, teachers, other staff, cook-cum-helpers and their families. Teachers and other staff may be encouraged to use Arogya Setu Application for their own as well as others safety.

PART- I

SOPs FOR HEALTH, HYGIENE AND SAFETY

I. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs) FOR HEALTH, HYGIENE AND OTHER SAFETY PROTOCOLS BEFORE OPENING OF SCHOOLS

a) Ensure proper cleaning and sanitation facilities in the school

- Arrange for thorough cleaning and disinfecting of all areas, furniture, equipment, stationery, storage places, water tanks, kitchens, canteen, washrooms, laboratories, libraries, etc. on school campus and ensure air flow in indoor space.
- Ensure working hand washing facilities in the school.
- Ensure availability of key supplies like thermometers, disinfectants, soaps, etc., and arrange for availability of these essentials. The thermometer to be used should be a calibrated contact-less infrared digital thermometer.
- Ensure sanitization of school transport before they start plying.
- Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Disinfection of Common Public Places available at <http://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Guidelinesondisinfectionofcommonpublicplacesincludingoffices.pdf> may be referred to for suitable follow-up.

b) Form different Task Teams

- Task Teams such as, Emergency Care Support/Response Team, General Support Team for all stakeholders, Commodity Support Team, Hygiene Inspection Team, etc. with earmarked responsibilities will be helpful.
- Teachers, students and other stakeholders deemed fit for being the members of these task forces may be identified to be the members of these task forces who will work collaboratively to take strategic and immediate actions.

c) Seating plan

- As suggested by the Ministry of Health, there must be at least 6 feet distance between students in the revised seating plan. It is advisable to mark the seating that students should occupy.
- If there are single-seater desks, simply providing space between the desks in the classrooms to maintain physical/social distancing of 6 feet will be effective. If benches are used, 'one child one bench norm' may be considered.
- Similarly, physical/social distancing shall also be maintained in the staff rooms, office area, and other places of public interaction.
- If available, temporary space or outdoor spaces (in case of pleasant weather) may be utilized for conducting classes, keeping in view the safety and security of the children and physical distance protocols
- Seats may be designated with adequate distance for teachers in the staff room and other available rooms/halls.

- The number of seats in the reception area may be limited with at least 6 feet distance between them.

d) Ensure Physical / social distancing at the Entry and Exit Points of the School

- Staggering the timing of entry and exit for students of different classes.
- Earmarking different lanes for coming and going.
- Opening all the gates at the time of entry and exit, in case school has more than one gate and earmarking classes for each gate to avoid crowding.
- Making announcements through Public Announcement System to guide parents/guardians and students to maintain physical/social distancing.

e) School SOPs based on guidelines from States/UTs

- Schools may be encouraged to make their own SOPs based on the guidelines issued by States/UTs for the following, keeping in view the safety and physical/social distancing norms, and ensuring that the notices/posters/messages/communication to parents in this regard are prominently displayed/disseminated:

- Use of Playground, Library and Laboratory
- Break Time
- Regular Cleaning and Disinfection of school infrastructure
- Use of School Transport
- Private pick up and drop off facility
- Monitor and Plan for Absenteeism of both staff and students
- Information Sharing System with partners
- Dealing with emergency situation
- Visit of service providers, parents and other visitors to school

f) Display Signages and markings for enforcing physical/social distancing and safety protocols -

- Displaying posters/messages/stickers and signage at appropriate places in the school reminding students about maintaining physical/social distancing such as inside the classroom, libraries, outside washrooms, hand washing stations, drinking water areas, school kitchen, halls, classrooms, buses/ cabs parking, entry and exits.
- Ban on spitting shall be strictly enforced.
- Marking circles on ground at different places like reception, water facility stations, hand washing stations, area outside washrooms, and other areas.
- Marking separate lanes with arrows for coming and going at all possible places in school to avoid physical contact.

g) Staggering timetables – some alternatives:

- One way of ensuring physical/social distancing is to have flexible, staggered and reduced timings planned for different classes in such a way that physical /social distancing is maintained along with other guidelines.
- Asking only a certain percentage of the students to attend the school depending on the enrolment, rotationally on alternate days, or every two days in a week and combining with home assignments could be another mechanism.
- Alternatively, there could be a weekly class-wise timetable for attendance. All classes need not attend school every day.
- Odd-Even Formula for classes can also be considered.
- Running school in two shifts in case of high enrolment schools can also be considered by reducing time duration of school hours per shift, such that the school is able to manage with the same set of teachers in the overall school hours.
- In case size of classroom is small, classes may be held in rooms having larger area such as computer room, library, laboratory etc. with physical distance of 6 feet between the students.

h) School events, congregations, meetings, etc.

- Schools should not undertake school events where physical/social distancing is not possible.
- Functions and celebration of festivals should be avoided in schools
- However, school assembly may be conducted by the students in their respective classrooms or outdoor spaces or other available spaces and halls under the guidance of the class teacher.
- Likewise, if possible, virtual parent teacher meetings can be arranged.
- During the process of admission to new classes, only parents/guardians may be consulted. Children need not accompany parents as far as possible.
- Efforts may be made to conduct admissions online wherever possible.

i) Parent's/Guardian's consent

- States/UTs should take the consent of parents/guardians before their child/ward begins attending schools.
- Students willing to study from home with the consent of the parents may be allowed to do so.
- Follow-up on the progress of the learning outcomes of all such students may be planned appropriately.

j) Sensitize students, parents, teachers, community members and hostel staff on COVID-19 related challenges and their role:

- Schools may share the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with all the stakeholders. **Suggestive strategies for sensitizing the stakeholders are given in Annexure B**
- Prior to reopening of schools, arrangements may be made for sensitization of teachers, parents, staff, and members of School Management Committee through online/offline modes such as pamphlets , letters, public announcement systems in villages, urban wards etc. on COVID appropriate behavior such as:
 - Required do's and don'ts including maintenance of hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces
 - Maintaining physical distance
 - Hygienic practices necessary for the prevention of COVID-19
 - Stigmas attached to COVID-19
 - Thermal screening for fever detection
 - Avoiding attending school if having symptoms and seeking medical care
- Staff and students belonging to containment zones shall not attend the school and other educational institutions until the containment zone is denotified.
- Students and staff shall be advised not to visit areas falling within containment zone.
- The recommendations of MoHFW are to be followed, i.e, “All employees who are at higher risk i.e, older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions to take extra precautions.. They should preferably not be exposed to any frontline work requiring direct contact with the students.”

k) Ensure availability of medical support

- Ensure availability in school or at contactable distance full-time trained health care attendant/nurse/doctor and counsellor to take care of physical and mental health of the students.
- Regular health check-up of students and teachers may be organized.

l) Redefine the school attendance and sick leave policies:

- Attendance must not be enforced, and must depend entirely on parental consent.
- Flexible attendance and sick leave policies may be developed to encourage students and staff to stay at home when sick.

- Awards and incentives for perfect attendance may be discouraged.
- Alternate staff for critical school jobs/roles may be identified and given orientation for their new job roles.

m) Academic Calendar:

- Plan for academic calendar changes for all classes, particularly in relation to breaks and exams.
- See section on Learning with physical/ social distancing for greater detail.

n) Access to Textbooks:

- Ensure all students have access to prescribed textbooks before school reopens.

o) Collect information:

- From students, parents and teachers:
In the form of self-declaration regarding their health condition, Arogya Setu health assessment, recent travels abroad or inter-state, and decide if the person will require additional time away from school.
- From local administration:
About the State and district help lines and the nearest COVID Centre and other contact details for dealing with emergency.

p) Ensure Safe Residential Stay at Hostel:

- Temporary partitions may be erected to separate inmates/boarders. Adequate distance between beds may be ensured.
- Physical/social distancing must be maintained all the times in hostels. Signage and messaging at prominent places will be important.
- Alternative space may be arranged to accommodate students to enable physical/social distancing.
- Initial preference for calling students to join back hostels may be given to students who do not have any support at home and also no facility for on-line education.
- Students of higher classes may be called first as per accommodation facility of the school.
- Screening of every boarder needs to be done before they start staying at the hostel. Only asymptomatic boarders should be allowed to join.
- Since students may be coming from different locations by using public transports such as buses, trains, etc., it is important that they should minimize their contact and interaction with others on arrival at hostel, and effectively,

maintain quarantine as per State/UT requirement. Their health status should be monitored during the period.

- Arrangement for a regular visit of Counselor teacher or a Counselor needs to be ensured to take care of any mental or emotional health issue of the students.
- Hostel should be out of bound for all persons except essential staff with known health status.
- Visiting medical team may inspect kitchen and mess at least once a week to ensure maintenance of hygiene.
- Capacity building of hostel staff should be done on physical/social distancing norms, health, and hygiene, clean and nutritious food, etc., for the hostellers.
- Availability of good quality Wi-Fi connection, cable connection for Television and Radio may be ensured. These facilities should be used as per norms of physical/social distancing.

II. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs) FOR HEALTH, HYGIENE AND OTHER SAFETY PROTOCOLS TO BE FOLLOWED AFTER OPENING OF SCHOOLS

a) Ensure continuous maintenance and monitoring of cleanliness and hygienic conditions in and around school premises

- School campus should be cleaned daily and a daily record of areas cleaned may be maintained.
- Note that students should not be involved in any of the cleaning activities for health and safety reasons.
- Water, sanitation and waste management facilities may be ensured along with compliance of environmental cleaning and decontamination procedures. Waste management (with regards to bio-medical waste including masks, used tissues ,etc.) needs to follow CPCB guidelines (available at https://cpcb.nic.in/uploads/Projects/Bio-Medical-Waste/BMW-GUIDELINES-COVID_1.pdf)
- Frequent cleaning and sanitization of commonly touched surfaces like doorknobs and latches etc., inside and outside the classrooms may be carried out.
- Disinfecting all teaching learning material such as learning materials, teaching aid, sports materials, swings, desks, chairs, computers, printers, laptops, tablets etc. focusing particularly on frequently touched surfaces/object.
- All garbage should be disposed in dustbins and must not be allowed to pile up anywhere else in the school premises.
- All dustbins must be cleaned and covered properly. Protocols must be in place for the final safe disposal of waste.
- Availability of soap and clean water at all hand washing facility may be ensured. This can be monitored by the identified or designated staff/students.
- If possible, alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be placed at prominent places like reception and entrance of the school.
- Frequent cleaning and disinfecting of washrooms during the school hours may be ensured.
- Mandatory hand washing for all students and staff at regular intervals as per the planned protocol following physical/social distancing norms may be ensured. Hand washing time should be a minimum of 40 seconds
- Availability of safe and clean drinking water for students may be ensured. Bringing of water bottles by students may be encouraged.
- Cleanliness and hygiene should be maintained during midday meal preparation, serving, eating, and after eating the place and utensils, etc., should be properly cleaned.
- Sanitization may be done before school and after the students leave classroom and school premises.

b) Making students' stay safe in school

- All students and staff to arrive at school wearing a face cover/mask and continue wearing it all through, especially when in class, or doing any activity in groups, such as eating in the mess, working in the laboratories or reading in the libraries.
- Ensure and educate children not to exchange masks with others.
- To the extent possible schools may adopt contactless process for attendance, classroom participation, assessment and learning including online submissions etc. for both students and staff members.
- Simple health screening of students and staff may be carried out daily, and updates be maintained.
- Every child needs to learn how to cough or sneeze into a tissue or elbow and avoid touching face, eyes, mouth, and nose.
- Sensitize all stakeholders in school about the ban on spitting.
- Availability of necessary equipment like gloves, face cover/ masks, hand washing soaps for sanitation staff/workers.
- Encourage students (to whom mid-day meals are not served) to bring and eat home cooked and nutritious food and avoid sharing food and utensils with others.
- No outside vendor should be allowed to sell any eatables inside the school premises or at the entry gate/point.
- The tender age of children may be kept in mind while giving these instructions and advice, which may be explained gently in a way that they can understand.
- In case some children are not following instructions, parents may be taken into confidence to assist teachers.
- Give responsibility to teachers and willing students (with parental consent from class VI onwards) on a rotation basis to monitor observing of physical /social distancing norms at different places and also students' behavior like frequently touching own face or handshake with other students, etc.

c) Ensure Safe Commuting of Students

- Sanitization of school transportation on regular basis at least twice a day – once before children board the transport and once after.
- School Driver and conductor should maintain physical distance at all times and ensure physical/social distancing among students in the bus/cab.

- A minimum physical distance of 6 feet should be maintained during seating. Staggering of school timings/days/shifts may be essential for ensuring this. Wherever possible, more buses may be arranged.
- If possible, thermal screening of students may be done by the bus conductor at the time of their boarding the bus.
- All commuters to wear face cover/masks in the bus/cab. School transport should not permit children without masks to board buses.
- No curtains on windows in the bus/cab.
- Preferably keep all windows open.
- For air-conditioned buses/cabs, the guidelines issued by CPWD shall be followed which include temperature setting at 24-30°C, relative humidity at 40-70% with provision for intake of fresh air (available at: https://cpwd.gov.in/WriteReadData/other_cir/45567.pdf.)
- Students may be oriented not to touch surfaces unnecessarily. If possible, hand sanitizer may be kept in the bus/cab.
- Students may be advised to patiently wait for their turn to board or alight from the vehicle keeping a safe distance.
- As far as possible, parents may be encouraged to use their personal transport to drop their children to school.
- Students commuting through public transport should be adequately guided by schools to take all precautions such as – physical/social distancing, covering nose and mouth with up face cloth/masks, sanitizing hands when touching any surface etc.
- As far as possible, parents of students of classes I- V may be encouraged to drop and pick up their children.
- Private cabs or carpooling may be discouraged as far as possible.

d) Implement Safe School Practices for safe arrival and departure of staff and students

- Physical/social distancing norms should be followed, both, during arrival and departure time, to and from school. Minimum 6 feet physical distance should be maintained when queuing up for entry and inside the school.
- Students to attend schools on rotation basis or on alternate days or as per the schedule prepared by the school, as already mentioned.
- Have staggered arrival and departure timings for different classes.
- If the school has more than one gate, then all the gates be used for entry and exit.
- Assistance of Traffic Police or Volunteers from the community may be taken to regulate traffic outside schools to avoid congestion of vehicles.

- Screening of all including staff members before entering the school without fail for fever/cough and breathlessness.
- Self-monitoring of health by all and disclosure about any illness at the earliest to State and district helpline and school authorities.
- School heads to allow staff who want to remain on leave due to sickness, with the advice that they resume duties as soon as they are recovered as the school needs their services in this tough time for children who have started coming to school for education. However , MoHFW recommendations as mentioned at Chapter I (j) for employees at higher risk should be followed.
- Parents may be sensitized about personal hygiene, personal health, and cleanliness of uniform and this information may be circulated well in advance through letters, emails, or any other social media.
- Parents to be sensitized that they must not send their wards to school if the child or any family member living in the same household suffers from fever/cough/breathlessness etc. Similarly, children with underlying medical conditions are to take appropriate precautions as advised by their respective medical practitioners.
- States may also consider obtaining declaration forms from the parents saying that no one in the family is suffering from COVID-19 or from fever/cough/breathlessness etc., before their wards start coming to school.
- Children, parents and staff members having mobile phone may be advised to download the **Arogya Setu App**.
- Announcements may be made to sensitize students and accompanying parents to follow all safety norms.
- School attendance may be monitored to keep track of student and teacher absence and to compare against usual absenteeism patterns. Close track to be kept of absence due to respiratory illnesses.

e) Ensure safety norms in classrooms and other places

- A proper crowd management in the school as well as in outside premises shall be ensured.
- Teachers may ensure students sit at marked/allocated seats maintaining physical/social distancing and wearing face covers /masks in the classes, laboratories, libraries, playground or any other part of school premise.
- Group activities in games, sports, music, dance or other performing art classes may be allowed only if it is feasible to maintain physical distance and following health safety norms.
- Practical work should be done in small groups maintaining physical distance.
- Students should not share any material (textbooks, notebooks, pen, pencil, eraser, tiffin box, water bottles, etc.) with each other.

- If possible, school bag for students of lower primary classes (I to V) may be discouraged. All the necessary learning material may be kept in the classroom.
- Different break times may be provided for different classes.
- No sharing of food among students should be allowed.
- Teachers to wear face covers/ masks while correcting written assignments of students. As far as possible online assignments may be encouraged.
- Windows and doors of the classrooms and other rooms to be kept open for ventilation.
- Number of people in the elevators and passages shall be restricted. Use of stairs with one person on alternate steps may be encouraged.
- Specific focus on avoiding over-crowding in washrooms should be encouraged.
- Students to sanitize hands before and after lunch/snacks, each time they use the washroom and any other outdoor activities. Hand sanitizers with 70% alcohol can be an alternative.
- For air conditioning within the school, CPWD norms shall be followed which prescribes temperature setting in the range of 24-30°C, relative humidity in the range of 40-70% and provision for intake of fresh air and cross-ventilation.
- All physical/social distancing norms are to be implemented as per the defined protocols/SOPs.

f) Protocol to be followed in case of detection of a suspected case of COVID-19

- Place the ill student or staff in a room or area where they are isolated from others
- Provide a mask/face cover till such time as he/she is examined by a doctor.
- Immediately inform the nearest medical facility (hospital/clinic) or call the State or district helpline.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken by the designated public health authority (district Rapid Response Team/treating physician) and accordingly further action be initiated regarding management of case, his/her contacts and need for disinfection.
- Disinfection of the premises to be taken up if the person is found positive.
- For a suspect or a case detected in hostel, the student/staff shall not be sent back to his/her home as it may lead to spread of the disease. He/She should be isolated and State/district health officials shall be informed to suitable follow-up.
- All protocols as advised by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare should be followed.

g) Physical/social distancing during distribution of Mid-Day Meal

- Methods of safe distribution can be employed by the schools which may include staggered distribution.
- Physical/social distancing norms may be observed in the kitchen as well. No other person may be allowed in the kitchen except minimum essential staff. Cleanliness of kitchen and its staff may be ensured.
- Staggered timing for having midday meals to avoid crowding.
- Detailed guidelines for Mid-Day Meal in schools are given in the following section of these guidelines.

III. SOPs FOR SERVING MID- DAY MEAL IN SCHOOLS

a) Background:

- To meet the nutritional requirements of children and safeguard their immunity during the COVID-19 outbreak, States / UTs were advised to provide hot cooked Mid-Day Meal or its equivalent Food Security Allowance to eligible children during closure of schools and summer vacations.
- These broad guidelines are aimed at helping State/district/block authorities to prepare for resuming the normal cooking and serving of Mid-Day Meal in schools with focus on food safety, health, and hygiene along with physical/social distancing.

b) Entry of Cook-cum-Helpers (CCH) in schools

- It shall be the responsibility of District/block administration related to MDM to ensure that the CCH is not COVID positive.
- All CCH to also give a self-declaration with regard to the wellness of self and family members before starting their work in school.
- Thermal scanning of the CCH may be carried out at the entry of the school to check the temperature. The temperature may be recorded on daily basis.
- The CCH must sanitize/ wash their hands for minimum 40 seconds upon entering in the school following the prescribed methods (<https://covid.aiims.edu/steps-of-handwash/>).
- Wearing face cover/mask will be mandatory during cleaning, washing cutting, cooking and serving of meals. If handmade face covers are used, it should be ensured they are washed daily.
- Nail polish or artificial nails should not be worn because they can become foreign bodies and may compromise on food safety.
- No watches, rings, jewelry and bangles should be worn during cooking, serving and distribution as there is a danger of contamination of product.
- Spitting and nose blowing should be strictly prohibited within the premises by CCH or any other person during school hours and especially while handling food.
- The CCHs should be provided adequate and suitable clean protective apron, and head gear for covering hair and gloves. It must be ensured that the CCHs at work wear only clean protective apron and head covering.
- The CCHs should wash their hands at least each time work is resumed and whenever contamination of their hands has occurred; e.g. after coughing / sneezing, visiting toilet, using telephone. Hand washing time should be a minimum of 40 seconds.
- CCH must be cautious to avoid certain hand habits - e.g. scratching nose, running finger through hair, rubbing eyes, ears and mouth, scratching beard, scratching parts of bodies etc.- that are potentially hazardous when associated

with handling food products, and might lead to food contamination through the transfer of microbes. When unavoidable, hands should be effectively washed before resuming work after such actions. Soap must be available at all times at the wash basin/handpump/tap water for frequent hand cleaning by CCH.

- Capacity building of CCH and teachers through digital mode can be used to update them on hygiene, safety and physical/social distancing in schools.

c) Cleaning Kitchen cum Store or the place of cooking:

- The kitchen cum store/place of cooking must be deep cleaned and sanitized before 24 hours of actual cooking after reopening of schools.
- The kitchen should be cleaned before the actual preparation and cooking of MDM on daily basis.
- The floors of kitchen and the cooking top should be cleaned every day before and after the food is cooked.
- Special attention should be paid to the cleaning of difficult to reach areas including cooking areas and at the junction of floors and walls.
- It is important that surfaces in direct contact with food must be both clean and dry before use.
- Cracks, rough surfaces, open joints etc. must be repaired as soon as possible.
- There should be efficient drainage system with adequate provisions for disposal of refuse. Potential sources of contamination like rubbish, waste water, toilet facilities, open drains and stray animals should be kept away from kitchen.
- Ventilation systems natural and /or mechanical including windows, exhaust fans etc. wherever required, should be designed and constructed so that air does not flow from contaminated areas to clean areas.

d) Cleaning of utensils for cooking and serving of MDM

- Cleaning accessories such as cloths, mops and brushes carry a very high risk of cross contamination. They must therefore be thoroughly washed, cleaned and dried after use.
- Cleaning accessories used in the cooking area should not be used in other parts of the kitchen.
- Sun drying of the cleaning accessories in a clean and tidy place should be done.
- Tables, benches and boxes, cupboards, glass cases, etc. should be clean and tidy. Cooking utensils and crockery should be clean and in good condition. These should not be broken/ chipped. All kitchen utensils and devices should be washed and sun-dried before using. Preferably use hot water (above 60 degrees Celsius) for washing and sanitizing.

- Clean cloths should be used for wiping utensils, wiping hands and for clearing surfaces. Cloth used for floor cleaning should not be used for cleaning surfaces of tables and working areas and for wiping utensils.
 - Leftovers or crumbs from plates or utensils should be removed into dustbin by using cloth or wiper. Every utensil or container containing any food or ingredient of food should at all times be either provided with a properly fitted cover/lid or with a clean gauze net or other material of texture sufficiently fine to protect the food completely from dust, dirt and flies and other insects.
- e) Checking of old stock of food grains, oil & fat and condiments before use:**
- Use of left out food grains, oil & fat and condiments should only be done after careful inspection of quality and shelf life if any, as they are left in schools for the last few months due to closure of schools.
 - Use of ingredients should be subject to FEFO (First Expire First Out) or FIFO (First in, First Out) stock rotation system as applicable.
- f) Washing & cutting of vegetables and cleaning of food-grains and pulses etc.**
- Vegetable, fruits and perishable food commodities should be procured fresh and storing for long time/duration should be avoided.
 - The vegetables once procured should be thoroughly cleaned with water before use. Vegetables may be washed thoroughly with a combination of salt and haldi (turmeric) / 50 ppm chlorine (or equivalent solution) and clean potable water to remove the dirt and other contaminants.
 - The food grains, pulses need to be washed properly before using.
 - Outer sealed package /cover of condiments, pulses etc., should be thoroughly washed with soap solution and sun dried before transferring the material to the jars followed by washing of hands with soap for a minimum of 40 seconds.
 - No raw material or ingredient should be accepted if it is known to contain vermin, undesirable micro-organisms, pesticides, veterinary drugs or toxic items, decomposed or extraneous substances, in other words, material which cannot be reduced to an acceptable level by normal sorting and/or processing.
- g) Cooking of the Mid-Day Meals**
- Wherever possible, kitchen activities may be performed maintaining appropriate distance between activities e.g., there should be defined separations for raw material procurement area, cutting of vegetables and cleaning of grains/ pulses, cooking area, cooked food area.
 - The cooks cum helpers may work with their faces in the opposite direction to maintain physical distance.

h) Serving of Mid-Day Meals

- The serving and dining area should also be well sanitized before and after food consumption.
- The serving of MDM to the school children may be done in a spread-out manner in batches to follow physical/ social distancing norms.
- In case staggering the distribution is not possible, children could be served the Mid-day meal in their respective class rooms.
- However, in case the meals are served in school verandah/dining halls, clear markings should guide the children to the seating arrangement.
- The CCH, while distributing the food should wear personal protective equipment such as hand gloves, face mask, head cover and shall maintain appropriate distance from the school children.
- The school children should also wear face cloth/ masks while the food is being served and at all times in the dining area except while eating/drinking.
- Temperature of the mid-day meal when served should be maintained at least at 65°C. Therefore, food should be served to children immediately after being cooked.

i) Hand washing by School Children before and after having MDM

- Hand wash with soap for a minimum of 40 seconds before and after eating MDM should be vigorously promoted.
- The schools should define an area for hand washing where children can wash their hands while maintaining physical/social distancing. For this purpose, empty plastic bottles can be filled with liquid soap and diluted with water.
- Children should wash their hands for minimum 40 seconds.
- The teachers need to monitor the process of hand washing carefully.
- Wherever proper hand washing facilities are either not available or inadequate for all children, buckets and mugs can be used to supplement the available facilities.

j) Drinking Water supply

- Continuous supply of potable water should be ensured in the school premises. In case of intermittent water supply, adequate storage arrangement for water used in food or washing should be made. Water used for cleaning, washing and preparing food should be potable in nature.
- Water storage tanks, if available, should be thoroughly cleaned before the reopening of schools and further periodical cleaning should be done.
- Non potable water pipes should be clearly distinguished from those in use for potable water.

k) Management of waste

- Adequate waste disposal systems and facilities should be provided and they should be designed and constructed in such manner that the risk of contaminating food or the potable water supply is eliminated.
- Waste storage/tanks should be located in such manner that it does not contaminate the food process, storage areas, the environment inside and outside the kitchen and waste should be kept in covered containers and removed at regular intervals.
- Periodic disposal of the refuse/waste may be made compulsory.
- Eco friendly measures like vermi-composting may be encouraged for food waste management.
- Applicable food waste management rules of respective States / UTs shall be adhered to by all schools.

l) Involving stakeholders

- Under the prevailing circumstances, active positive involvement of parents, community, SMC members and teachers is of crucial importance in providing nutritious meals to children in a safe and hygienic manner.

In order to effectively implement these guidelines, State and UTs are advised to prepare their own detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) in local language based on these guidelines, and carry out training of teachers and Cook cum-Helpers before resumption of hot cooked mid-day meal in schools.

PART – II

LEARNING WITH PHYSICAL/SOCIAL DISTANCING

IV. REDEFINING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TO ACHIEVE DESIRED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Online / distance learning shall continue to be the preferred mode of teaching and should be encouraged. However, the following SOPs may be followed for face to face classes in schools and online learning:

A. BEFORE SCHOOL REOPENING

a) Preparation of Teaching-Learning: Making a Comprehensive Alternative Calendar of Activities for the Whole Year with focus on learning outcomes

- States may consider dividing the total school hours between school and home. It is suggested that broad categories such as the following could be considered.
 - (i) Number of hours at school
 - (ii) Number of hours spent at Home School Hours (active learning)
 - (iii) Number of hours spent on keeping physically and mentally healthy
 - (iv) Number of hours spent on creative activities related to art, and art-integration.

- States/UTs may like to consider rationalizing the curriculum into 3 components:
 - (i) Classroom lessons – which could include, essential topics that are conceptually difficult to understand
 - (ii) Self-learning lessons – which could include essential but conceptually easier to understand
 - (iii) Not a part of the core area of curriculum or learning Outcomes – which could be kept aside this year

For Elementary level, flexibility may be given at school level depending on the number of academic days available. For secondary and senior secondary level, the respective boards maybe advised to consider revisiting their curriculum.

- Academic calendar may be realigned for the whole year in accordance with the emerging situation. Comprehensive academic plan can be prepared as per the guidelines received from the concerned Directorate of Education.
- School calendar needs to make syllabus learning outcome-based rather than theme-based; decentralized planning may be at the school level for blended/diverse mode learning, and also a clear policy on assessment of children.

- The comprehensive academic plan should clearly depict the topics to be covered at school and activities to be covered at home by the students along with the proper methods and rubrics of assessment.
- This plan may follow guidelines of **Alternative Academic Calendar** prepared by the NCERT.

Looking at the current pandemic situation, inequitable access to infrastructure for online teaching and internet connectivity and non-availability of smart phones with all parents, NCERT has come out with ALTERNATIVE ACADEMIC CALENDAR which only expects a basic mobile to make a connection between child or parent with a school teacher, so that teacher can initially guide parent or student. Later, students can do self-study with the help of parents or siblings.

The Alternative Academic Calendar is based on multiple pedagogies-guided learning followed by self-study and are available on the web link <http://ncert.nic.in/aac.html>

- Fun activities may be planned for each class as students might not be going out for playing.
- Pedagogical interventions may be included which emphasize linking classroom activities with the experience children are undergoing or have gained in their day-to-day life in COVID-19 situation. For example, prepare age appropriate awareness posters relating to COVID-19 precautions, to be displayed in every classroom. These posters may be in local language/Hindi/English or all these languages. Some posters involving graphs, data on how corona spreads may not only be useful for awareness but also serve as a teaching tool in higher classes. This will help the teachers to link the students' day to day experiences with the subject areas like environmental studies, languages, mathematics and science.
- Arrangements may be made for community radio and audio classes by the teachers on this medium through schools whenever possible.
- Receive-only-Terminals (ROT), Television, Projectors, Computer, etc., if available, may be repaired and functional before reopening of the school. Students can be engaged with these gadgets in case of shortage of teachers.
- Assessment plans may be prepared along with rubrics.
- The formats for periodic tests, mid-term and final exams may be designed as per the demand of the situation and keeping in view number of days and adjusted curriculum.
- It is advisable that the school should not plan any assessment of student learning in the first two-three weeks of reopening of schools in order to ensure emotional well-being of the students.

- Moreover, non-stressing assessments may be planned to identify the learning gaps, i.e., to find out how much the students have learned during home-based schooling.
- Assessments in the form of role plays, choreography, class quiz, puzzles and games, brochure designing, presentations, journals, portfolios, etc., may be preferred over routine pen-paper testing.

B. AFTER SCHOOL REOPENING

a) Teaching Learning Process: Create Learner-friendly School and Classroom Environment

- Reintegration of students into school may be taken on priority after reopening.
- Teachers must talk and sensitize all students about COVID-19 and related myths, social stigma, and fears.
- There can be flexibility with attendance until such time that the situation eased. As one of the important activities in each class, students themselves may be asked to prepare and take an innovative pledge focusing on Dos and Don'ts for school entry/exit/duration, and for following at their homes. Time may be allocated during the school schedule daily to reflect on it.
- Care should be taken to ensure health, social, and emotional bonding despite having to maintain physical/physical/social distancing.
- Children may be discouraged from sharing books, copies, etc., and how they will help each other in this way to reduce risk of spreading the disease may be explained to them. Mock safety drills may be conducted on how to keep safe from COVID-19 on regular basis (for a few days) to ensure complete sensitization and awareness.
- Some yogic exercises may be practiced in the classroom to make children comfortable. For example:
 - Micro yogic practices like the rotation of the head and shoulder, touching toes and stretching for primary children.
 - Some simple asanas like Tadasana, Vrikshasana for children in classes 6 onwards-)
 - If sitting place is available Swastikasana, Vajrasana, etc. can be organized for children in classes 6 onward)
 - Other breathing practices like Kapalbhatai, Anuloma-Viloma, Pranayama can also be organized

- Children can also be sensitized about the pandemic by integrating various concepts into the teaching of various subject areas such as EVS, languages, science and social science, arts; here are a few examples:
 - Use posters, visuals, video or other media to show how to protect themselves from being infected and teach them about the value of media and how to distinguish true news from fake news.
 - promote good hand washing practices of minimum 40 seconds judiciously (wash hands with soap after reaching school, after going to the toilet, before taking food, handling garbage, touching pets and other animals, caring for sick people coughing and sneezing) and make them aware of the composition of soap and how it is able to disinfect from the virus.
 - eating healthy food, fruits, and doing regular yoga to boost immunity and the role these have in reducing immune-suppressants in the body
 - proper and hygienic use of the toilet, and how it aids in the spread of illness if not used properly.
 - share their experience of the lockdown period and understand the importance of physical/social distancing.
 - Provide children with all important information to protect themselves and their families. This may require discussing with children about work their parents do, and discussion on this aspect may lead to the theme- 'Work People Around Us Do' - this theme is inbuilt from classes 3 to 8 in EVS and Social Sciences.

An Example

- ❖ With children at the primary stage, the discussion can happen in the following manner:
- ❖ Can anyone show how we cough? (or teacher can demonstrate)
- ❖ Has he/she done it rightly?
- ❖ Yes! Do all of you cough like this?
- ❖ No, why is it wrong?
- ❖ Why do we keep our mouth covered while coughing?
- ❖ While sneezing, what should we do?
- ❖ Why are we using masks nowadays? Or Why do we use masks every day?
- ❖ Do you have any queries regarding the present situation?

(Teachers may start discussions and observe children's participation, interest, and also the information they have already collected from outside. The teacher must observe every student on the following rubric-

1. Participation in discussion
2. Interest level
3. Fear/anxiety
4. Alertness about Corona Virus spread
5. Feeling the need to work to save corona infected people

6. Actions they take at their level

Creating some subject-specific rubric will help teachers to make the class engaging and also help in assessing children on their learning outcomes

- When students start feeling comfortable in schools with the present situation and also with teachers and peers, teachers may start teaching-learning process based on syllabus focusing on learning outcomes.

b) Teaching-Learning when students are in School

- Teachers must polish their skills for integrating ICT in class as far as possible. Training modules may be prepared for the same.
- It is possible that all students may not attend school regularly, until the pandemic situation is over. Therefore, teachers should be prepared for teaching in classroom as well as following up with students at home, and also for adapting their teaching mechanisms accordingly.
- Right in the beginning, teachers must discuss with the students the clear roadmap of the curriculum, the modes of learning to be adopted (through face to face instruction/individual assignments or portfolios/group-based project work/group presentations, etc.) to be covered, the time to be taken for the same, dates of school based assessments, breaks, etc.
- Teachers must also clarify those topics and themes, which are required to be explained by the teacher through classroom transactions/activities and those that are to be covered by the students at home, though assessed at school.
- Divergent use of teaching resources shall have to be relied upon keeping physical/social distancing and other safety norms in mind. Resources could include peer teaching and learning, use of workbooks and worksheets, use of technology-based resources in class, empowering parents/grandparents/older sibling to teach, using the services of volunteers from the community, etc.
- There should be greater emphasis on collaborative learning in class. This will also impact positively on the mental well-being of children.
- Mechanisms should be put in place to get constant feedback from parents.
- Life skills must be integrated with all teaching and learning processes, as now, more than ever, these will be required in learners. Life skills, such as communication and collaboration can be developed through group presentations as a method for learning. Creativity and critical thinking skills can be developed in specific home-assignments, project work, etc.
- Routine homework assigning should be discouraged; instead work that will develop curiosity and problem-solving abilities in the child should be encouraged. For example, diversity is a theme, which cuts across the subject areas and classes. Homework can be interdisciplinary in such a case.

Similarly, the concepts of chemical reactions, gravitational laws, etc. can be introduced as a concept by the teacher and later on projects and assignment related to it can be done at home.

c) Address Concerns of Children with Special Needs along with other Children

- Focus on the most vulnerable students (homeless/migrated students, students with disabilities, and students directly affected by Covid-19 through a family death or hospitalization) to prioritize their needs.
- Ensure provision of assistive devices and learning content as per the needs of the CwSN.
- Ensure that safety guidelines are available as far as possible in multiple and accessible formats to meet the needs of all children, such as:
 - JAWS software, large print and high contrast for children who are blind or have low vision;
 - Easy-to-read version for children who have intellectual disabilities;
 - Digital formats with text captioning
 - Sign language for Children with hearing impairment
 - Accessible web content for those using assistive technologies such as screen readers
 - Useful Apps related to COVID 19 such as AarogyaSetu are usable with assistive technologies such as the screen reading software.
 - Ensure Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 (WCAG 2.1) for the web pages, digital documents, and apps user interface.
- **Make use of free online resources on the NCERT website under “Accessibility” (<http://www.ncert.nic.in/accesstoedu.html>) in the school curriculum icon:**
 - Barkhaa: A Reading Series for All based on UDL& IE principle. These stories can be linked with the content of textbooks at Primary and Upper Primary Level
 - E-pathshala Digital Textbooks (Class 1- 12) in all subjects
 - E-pathshala Mobile App- “Text To Speech (TTS)” for children with Visual Impairments
 - The E-Pathshala mobile scanner app
 - E-Pathshala AR/VR programs through the dedicated app
 - Tactile Map Book with Audio programs
 - Audio Books

- **Make use of the NIOS prepared material for visually-impaired and hearing-impaired students in secondary and senior secondary level.**
- Introduce strict preventive measures for children who are more susceptible to infection due to the respiratory or other health complications caused by their impairment.
- Train teachers and other school staff on signs of distress to enable them to identify and refer children who may have specific psychosocial support needs, or for signs of violence who may require protection and assistance.

d) Prepare Students for Learning at Home

- As only a fraction of students on roll might attend school on rotational basis as per the decision of the State/UT, it is important that all students have their textbooks as well as details of the curriculum to be covered in the given time.
- Teachers and parents/students must have some form of communication at least 2 to 3 times a week.
- In case blended approach is to be used, students will require various technological tools to support the blended model.
- PRAGYATA Guidelines on digital and online education can be used to orient teachers and students in this regard.
- If the State/UT has Energized Textbooks, inform students and parents how to download the e-content behind the QR on DIKSHA, codes and use the same in offline mode, thereon.

NCERT has also developed PRAGYATA, the guidelines for digital and online education for teachers and students containing useful information on how to switch over to online education. These guidelines also compile numerous links of online resources available in India and abroad. These will be made available on MHRD and NCERT website.

- Project-based assignments, portfolios, creative work, etc. are the best ways to continue effective learning from home. More details are given in the next para.
- Audio-visual e-content may can be loaded onto pen-drives, CDs etc and taken to far-flung and interior areas where there is neither any internet / mobile / TV network.

e) Project-work, Assignments to be done at home under the guidance of teachers and parents

- Teachers may select various themes on which interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary project work and assignment are done by students at home with the support of the parents
- Very creative methods could be used to ensure learning. For example,

- Record interview of your mother of her experiences at the workplace or home. Listen to this recording and write its highlights (for class VI-VIII students). This can be done under subject areas Hindi, Urdu, English, Social Sciences, etc.
- Make an expenditure chart of your home for last one month. Make a summary of the money spent on different categories of items and savings, Also, write how can this be improved in the next month (Upper- Primary- Mathematics, Languages, Social Sciences).
- Collect different materials such as toys, pen, pencils, empty small medicine containers, etc. Immerse them in water and write your observations (EVS, Science, languages, for class V-VIII).
- Children of classes 1 and 2 can undertake projects related to drawing and painting.
- For children of classes 3 to 5, projects and assignments may focus around family, work and food, etc.

f) Promote Learner-Friendly Assessment

- Teachers, parents, and administrators need to focus on formative assessment to ensure achievement of learning goals by all learners.
- However, the format of assessment must undergo change. Typical pen-paper tests must be discouraged at all levels.
- In school, assessment can take different formats, such as, role plays, choreography, class quiz, puzzles and games, brochure designing, presentations, journals, portfolios, etc.
- At home, multiple modes of assessments such as individual projects/reflections/ experimentation/portfolios should be promoted.
- The assessment should not focus on what students have memorized, but instead it should focus on application of learning and critical and creative thinking in situations relating to daily life. It is not important whether they have solved a problem, it is more important what steps they take to solve it, or how they have tried to solve it.
- For students studying from home, explore low-cost or no-cost options for students to be able to submit responses/ tasks on which they get feedback to teachers, perhaps benefitting from collective if not individual feedback once the teacher has a chance to review all responses. For example, empower the learners to self-check and peer review whether their responses are correct.
- Guidelines of SCERT/NCERT may be used to sensitize parents to improve their understanding of and appreciation for formative assessment.
- Teachers may use text-or audio-based messages to send brief quizzes to parents/caregivers to use for informally assessing their progress against the curricular contents for their grade, or even their emotional and mental well-being.

- Open book examination system may be introduced for a few selected subjects / topics

g) Customizing assessment practices

Keeping the availability of infrastructural facilities, schools/teachers can customize assessment practices in line with the strategies suggested below: -

1.Schools, where reasonably good ICT enabled environment is existing and students are undertaking online classes through desktop, laptops, and smart phone

- Replace Pen-paper test by alternative methods of assessment like individual assignments, project work, and portfolios.
- Credit to these assessments needs to be shared with the students in advance. Students may be involved in framing the assessment criteria.
- Teachers may encourage using peer assessment and self-assessment through class wise/subject wise groups.
- Students after learning a few concepts/subtopics may reflect on their learning and keep it as a record.
- Teachers may use ICT enabled assessment using existing tools, analyse the responses and share it with students.
- Assessment based on discussion forums may be practiced.

2.Schools having partial facilities for conducting online classes and students are occasionally engaged in online classes

- Teachers may use tools to develop quizzes and seek responses of students through social media or mobile platforms.
- Teachers may create peer groups and encourage them to give appropriate feedback.
- Students may keep a record of their work like composing a poem, copy of the notes, small drawings, self-framed questions, and creative answers. This material can be shared in the group to seek appropriate feedback.
- A quick review of the concepts/topics may be carried out. Quiz and MCQs for each topic may be administered to know the readiness of students for the forthcoming concepts/topics.

3. Schools, where there is no ICT, enabled environment and there is no engagement of students in the learning process

- Teachers may interact with students and parents telephonically about the on-going learning in the class and keep track of students through interview mode.
- Teachers and children together can also suggest ways to go for other alternative modes that suit them better such as sending worksheets to the homes of students, answers to which can be provided in the next round.
- Children may be asked to reflect on their lockdown days and narrate stories/ write memoirs/ write poems, share their experiences, etc. This can be part of assessment especially in the areas of languages.
- Students may interact with the parents/elders on various topics and can record their observations. This may also be part of the assessment.
- Students may be encouraged to conduct small experiments at home with the help of parents.
- Schools may rationalize their syllabus and prioritize learning outcomes. Suitable strategies need to be adopted for assessment to avoid physical/environmental shortcomings being considered as shortcomings in learning.

V. ENSURING SMOOTH TRANSITION OF STUDENTS FROM HOME-BASED SCHOOLING DURING LOCKDOWN TO FORMAL SCHOOLING

- In order to ensure smooth transition of students from home-based schooling during lockdown to formal schooling and ensuring emotional well-being of students, the schools may consider taking the following actions:
 - Implement re-adjusted school calendar and redesigned Annual Curriculum Plan (ACP) to make up for the lost instructional time.
 - Assess each student upon return to school, by adopting informal methods to enable teachers to adjust their teaching plans accordingly.
 - Plan and implement remedial actions like individualized instructional plans for the students with special needs and also those students who were not able to access online classes during lockdown in order to help them catch up and mitigate learning loss. Activities may also be planned/designed to fill the learning gaps as per individual student's needs.
 - It is advisable that during the first two-three weeks after the resumption of classes, students are to be allowed gradually get used to school life again, either by focusing on review of lessons which have been taught online, or through any other activity.
 - “Back to School” campaign may be initiated, with particular focus on the out of school and marginalized children especially girls, children with disabilities, children of migrant workers and children belonging to SC/ST communities.
 - Vocational Educational and career guidance programs may be expanded to facilitate the school to work transition of adolescents upon completion of school, keeping in mind the economic fall-out of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Open learning programs may be supported for over-aged out of school children.

VI. ENSURING EMOTIONAL WELLBEING OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

- It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during and after a disaster/pandemic and children are indeed the most vulnerable ones at such times.
- Therefore, the schools are advised to take note of any symptoms of stress in their students and take appropriate action in collaboration with parents.
- It is advisable that the teachers, school counselor and school health workers should work in unison to ensure emotional safety of their students.
- Moreover, these tough times might have also impacted the well-being of the teachers which in turn might affect their ability to lead and manage their students along with responding to the change when schools reopen. So, it is of paramount importance that the mental well-being of teachers should also be taken care of in equal measure. Teachers can be guided to take proactive steps to promote their own mental wellbeing.
- Online training modules can be developed for teachers with special emphasis on counseling competency of general teachers
- Similarly, concise module on counseling can be developed to ensure emotional stability, removal of anxiety and building up self-confidence of children once they come back to school after a long gap.
- **Suggestive guidelines for promoting emotional wellbeing of the students and**

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India has initiated a programme called ‘MANODARPAN’ covering a wide range of activities to provide psychosocial support to students, teachers and families for Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing during the COVID outbreak and beyond.

The services include:

- A webpage <https://mhrd.gov.in/covid-19> on the website of MHRD containing advisories and motivational posters, and
- A National Toll-free helpline 8448440632 to provide tele-counselling for students, parents and teachers to help cope with the situation.

teachers are given in Annexure- A.

VII. SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STATE/UT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Before the announcement of reopening of schools, it is very important to define the roles and responsibilities of all the organizations and stakeholders, i.e. **State/UT Education Department, School Principal, Teachers, Students and Parents** to ensure safe and smooth functioning of the schools after reopening.

The complete list of the roles and responsibilities of the above-mentioned stakeholders is given in **Annexure-B**. The roles and responsibilities of the state/UT education department are briefly as follows (for detailing, this document may be read in its entirety):

a) State/UT SOPs or guidelines:

- States/UTs may proactively take note of all the guidelines/SOPs issued from time to time at the National level, including this one, and adopt/adapt them and issue their own SOPs/guidelines and inform District and School Administration in a timely manner.
- **State/UT SOPs for school reopening:** States/UTs may prepare a comprehensive set of SOPs before the opening of schools, which may include:
 - **Phase-wise opening of schools:** as per the directions issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and State Health Departments and a detailed health risk assessment in consultation with the local health authorities. No school shall be allowed to resume operations if they fall in containment zones. Restriction of movement of staff and students from contained zones shall be adhered to.
 - **Suggest staggered timetables/shifts:** for attending schools by different classes, alternate days of schooling (if required) and also double shifts in school (if required) with reduced school hours.
 - **Staggering timetables – some alternatives:**
 - One way of ensuring physical/social distancing is to have flexible, staggered and reduced timings planned for different classes in such a way that physical/social distancing is maintained along with other guidelines.
 - Asking only a certain percentage of the students to attend the school depending on the enrolment, rotationally on alternate days, or every two days in a week and combining with home assignments could be another mechanism.
 - Alternatively, there could be a weekly class-wise timetable for attendance. All classes need not attend school every day.

- Odd-Even Formula for classes can also be considered.
 - Running school in two shifts in case of high enrolment schools can also be considered by reducing time duration of school hours per shift, such that the school is able to manage with the same set of teachers in the overall school hours.
- **Database of teachers:** belonging to different zones may be prepared by the State Department with the information of every teacher residing in containment zones particularly.
 - **Children of migrant labourers:** Directions to all government and government-aided schools to give automatic admissions to children of migrant labourers.
 - **Suspension of activities:** that require the gathering of children such as science fair, book fair, annual function of the school, extended remedial teaching classes, excursion, field trips, etc., till the COVID-19 situation normalizes.
 - **Continuation of certain activities:** safe procurement of books for the school library, sports equipment, sanitization material, stationery items, e-content related equipment, mid-day meal, scholarship, etc., which do not involve a gathering of children or teachers.
 - **Flexible time- tables of the school:** Rather than a period of 45 minutes, there could be short 30 minutes periods or there could be long periods of one hour each for every subject area with the integration of arts and health activities so that children should not feel tired and stressed.
 - **Classroom arrangements:** In view of physical/social distancing measures, flexibility in conducting classes must be introduced. This will require a policy to be spelled out clearly by the States/UTs which would take into consideration the following:
 - **Number of students per class** keeping in view the physical size of the classroom following physical/social distancing norm of 6 feet in all four directions.
 - **Seating arrangement** in the class and sanitization of walls, floors, and furniture.

b) Instructional load

- States may consider dividing the total school hours between school and home and rationalization of syllabus.

c) School Academic Calendar

- School Academic Calendar needs to be overhauled, making syllabus learning outcome-based rather than theme-based, providing for decentralized planning at the school level for blended/diverse mode learning, and also a clear policy on

assessment of children. States &UTs may encourage pedagogies that promote socio-emotional and foundational learning skills among children.

d) Volunteer parents/community members:

- Those having adequate qualifications may also be involved in the teaching-learning of students with proper verification from the school side, particularly, regarding health and safety aspects.

e) Safe transport

- Wherever possible, safe transport facilities may also be made available for teachers and students, in case students and teachers are coming from far off places to school.

f) District level task force

- A District Level Task Force may be created involving DIETs, DEOs and other identified stakeholders for making random visits to schools for observing their preparedness and safe operations. This task force can also prepare a database on the requirements of schools for safe functioning and adequate learning achievements.

g) Dialogue with school education boards

- This may be initiated on conduct and assessment of board examinations.

h) Capacity building of teachers for digital education

- Arrangements may be made for online/digital education capacity building through television channel, radio and other online and social media tools, on COVID-19 infection, preventive measures, tackling students and parents in this situation, teaching-learning with new perspectives limitations of physical distance, etc., with modules and videos.

i) Checklists

Make role and responsibility charts for SCERT, DIETs, DEOs, BEOS, Schools, and other education related functionaries

j) Responsibility of States/UTs with regard to children of migrant labourers:

- While the States/UTs prepare for schools' reopening, many will also have to prepare for certain special circumstances.
- In view of the lockdown due to COVID 19 a large number of migrant labourers are returning to their homes and are likely to stay there for varying periods. Along with the migrant workers, their families and children are also returning to their homes. For these children this will lead to a disruption in their studies and learning.

- As a result, some states may see a reduction in numbers of children enrolled in their schools or they will be reported as absent, while others will see a surge in children requiring admissions.
- In order to ensure that there is no loss of learning or academic year for all such children, it is suggested that the following steps may be carefully implemented by all states/UTs.
- In the States where there is out/reverse migration, a database may be prepared of children who have left the local area for their homes in other States/UTs or other parts of the same State/UT. Such a database may be prepared by each school by personally contacting parents/guardians of all children studying in their school, through phone/WhatsApp/neighbor /peer group, etc. Their tentative place of stay during this period may also be noted. Such children, who have left, may be shown separately in enrolment as temporarily unavailable/migrated. While all care must be taken to ensure that their names are not struck off the rolls (as the possibility of their return anytime is always there), their numbers may be reported class-wise to Directorate of Education to compensate for any input costs to be incurred by the school such as mid-day meals, distribution of textbooks and uniforms if not already completed, etc.
- For States/UTs where there is more in-migration/influx, the State government may direct all schools to give admission to any child who has recently returned back to the village without asking for any other documents, except some identity proof. They should not ask for transfer certificates or proof of class attended earlier. The information provided by the child's parents may be assumed to be correct and taken as such for giving admission to the child in the relevant class in his/her neighbourhood government/government-aided school.
- State/UT government should facilitate the above process by giving adequate publicity and involving the district administration and local gram panchayats. The State/UT will also prepare a database preferably in digitized form for such children who are thus admitted in schools, and share it with the states from where they have come.
- Children who are thus admitted may be facilitated to continue their learning by providing remedial learning support through the school and allowed to adjust to the new school environment. They may be provided books from the book banks/libraries maintained by the schools. Peer learning may also be encouraged for such children. They may also be provided Mid-day Meals along with the other children of their school.
- For States maintaining a digitized child wise data, the same may be updated for every in-migrated or every out-migrated child's detail. For every out-migrated child, data maybe shared with the States where the children have migrated to.

k) State/UT to arrange for documentation of the pandemic experience:

- States/UTs may encourage innovative documentation of the pandemic experience at all levels of schooling/administration and governance, through the eyes of the children, teachers, education administrators and functionaries, for posterity.

- These documentations can be compiled at the school, CRC/BRC, district and State levels.
- Schools can undertake this exercise with their students not only to inculcate a sense of history, but also to understand the science behind it, the geography, the mental-emotional responses, how the pandemic has brought in all-around changes in the way we live, interact, learn, travel and how there has been a resurgence of values of empathy, compassion and minimalism.
- Block/District and State level offices may document their initiatives/responses/stakeholders/changed attitudes/changes in workplace, etc., related to school education. The State/UT may compile a mix of documentation at all levels and the same may also be shared with DoSEL, MHRD. Virtual field support call center to receive , record and manage COVID-related queries from the field may be set up by the States/ UTs.

VIII. CHECKLISTS FOR SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

a) For different stakeholders

- **Checklists** can be prepared by the states/UTs for each of the different personnel/stakeholders on the basis of planning done to ensure proper implementation and monitoring of the plans.
- Suggestive ‘Checklists on Safe School Environments’ for Schools, Parents and Students to contain the spread of COVID-19 adopted from UNICEF guidelines, are placed at **Annexure-C**. The schools can contextualize them as per their needs/plans/procedures.
- State MIS systems need to be updated with COVID-related checklists

b) For building resilience

- Since the outbreak of COVID-19, much change in the functions and roles of traditional schools and education has been witnessed.
- The schools can see this crisis as a challenge which can help them establish a **resilient and sustainable education system** which can prepare us for any change of any scale in future.

c) For academic planning and school operations

- Meticulous academic planning and its implementation will be the key for continuing learning effectively. States/UTs are encouraged to develop checklists for schools, teachers, DIETs, etc. in this regard.
- With defined and established roles and responsibilities, clear guidelines and standard operating procedures; and customized plans in accordance with local conditions, the schools will be able to function safely after reopening. Checklists may be devised for these by the states/UTs.
- Measures taken by schools can effectively reduce the chances transmission of COVID-19 by students and staff that might have been exposed to it, while minimizing disruption and protecting students and staff from discrimination.

IX. CAPACITY BUILDING OF STAKEHOLDERS

In order to sensitize all the stakeholders on COVID -19 and build their capacity to ensure safety of all the stakeholders, the State/UT Education Departments may conduct awareness and capacity building programmes for DIET faculty members, School Heads, Teachers, and Parents before the opening of the schools.

A) Awareness Programme for SCERT and DIET faculty member, School Heads, Teachers, SMC members, Parents, and Students

1. Objective:

- a. To provide information in the local language with contextual examples about the virus, disease, its spread, etc.
- b. To interact with them on taking preventive measures for its spread and also to improve mental health.

2. Process:

Step I: Awareness module may be prepared by NCERT/SCERT/SIE on the following aspects:

- a. Information about the virus in the state/regional language in simple form.
- b. Information about the symptoms of the COVID-19 disease
- c. How the disease spreads
- d. How strong immunity helps make us less vulnerable
- e. Why we should not panic, based on half information
- f. How to keep ourselves mentally healthy in this situation
- g. How to maintain health and hygiene in homes and schools
- h. Why physical/social distancing is important
- i. How to convince small children about physical/social distancing
- j. Why COVID-19 is declared as a pandemic
- k. What is Epidemic Diseases Act and National Disaster Management Act
- l. What precautions all schools need to take before reopening in and during school hours.
- m. What is ArogyaSetuApp. How to download and use it
- n. Interaction on FAQs

Step -2 Selecting mode of transaction suitable for different target groups
Suggestive modes of transaction for this awareness programme:

- a. DTH channel – (SWAYAMPRAKASH) or local channel in the State/UT
- b. Radio- Community Radio
- c. Podcasts

- d. Recorded video/audio to be sent to all the school heads, teachers and parents who can send questions through email.
- e. Videos on SOPs may be prepared for training and IEC
- f. On-line using Google meet, hangout, Skype, etc. for webinars and broadcasts

Step 3: Conduct of the Programme

- a. SCERTs may conduct the programme for DIETs and School Heads
- b. DIETs and School Heads may conduct the program for Teachers and Parents

B) Capacity Building Programme for School Heads, Teachers, Hostel Staff and SMC members

1. Objectives:

- a. To develop an understanding of various aspects of the school which need preparation before it's reopening –such as physical/social distancing at the entry, in the class, etc.
- b. To empower them to operate the schools safely and provide each child and staff safe stay.
- c. To equip them with multiple pedagogies for making learning happen in a conducive and stress-free environment so that children learn in a joyful manner with progress on learning outcomes.
- d. To empower them to handle an emergency if any arises during school operation.

2. Process

Step 1: Preparation of module, containing guidelines for taking actions for preparation before reopening of schools, safe school operation, learning and assessment, roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, etc., by SCERT/SIE.

Step 2: Selection of appropriate online medium for the transaction of module like DTH, Radio, etc., based on the accessibility of these mediums with the target group.

Step 3:

- a. SCERT/SIE will conduct programmes for faculty members of DIETs and School Heads
- b. School Heads and DIET faculty members will conduct a capacity building programme for teachers, SMC members, and parents.
- c.

Step4: Online certification for teachers' training programmes may be considered.

PROMOTING EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS
(Guidelines for Students at Elementary and Higher Stages)

A. SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. Mental well-being Activities for Elementary Stage Students

Students may:

- a. Share their feelings and emotions with parents, teachers and other family members, respecting others' emotions
- b. Engage in activities that help to feel positive
- c. Communicate with teachers and friends
- d. Spend time with parents, siblings and other family members by involving in activities like indoor games, antakshari, reading stories together, solving puzzles and crosswords, dancing etc.

2. Activities for Coping with Stress and Anxiety: Strategies for Students at Secondary Stage

- a. **Acknowledge feelings:** It is important to recognize one's feelings and acknowledge that it is okay to have such feelings.
- b. **Reflection:** Give time to self to reflect on what one has been doing during the phase of lockdown for self and for others, which aspects one would like to change, what kind of effort/thinking/action it would require to bring that desired change. Becoming aware of one's sensations and expressions may help to understand one's feelings.
- c. **Positive thinking:** The key to avoid, manage, and reduce stress is a positive mindset and a positive attitude. Never lose hope, begin from yourself and pass it around to all. Be persistent in keeping positive thoughts.
- d. **Schedule your routine and manage time:** Scheduling a routine helps to create discipline and can have a positive effect on one's thoughts and feelings. Students may modify their time table by reducing the time spent on daily activities that they were engaging in during the lockdown. This will help to transit to normalcy.
- e. **Take care of your mind and body:** Make sure to eat a healthy and well-balanced diet, practice meditation, yoga, or breathing exercises after school hours to calm the mind and for building better mental and physical health. Also, get enough sleep every day.
- f. **Become aware** of your thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- g. **Maintain a diary.** Every day write down how you could follow your plan of action. Note down changes in your feelings every day and share with your best friend.

B. GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS FOR PROMOTING EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF THEIR STUDENTS

- a. **Initiate conversational activities in the classroom:** It is important to focus on bringing back the normalcy in the classroom environment again. Teachers may start a conversation with the students on what they did during the Lockdown period to engage themselves in interactive sessions.
 - b. **Indoor individual games:** Mental maths games, word antakshari, make words, etc. and music and dance activities may be conducted in the classroom linking these with subject areas under proper guidance. This will help in keeping children happy and stress-free besides being healthy.
 - c. **Make students feel safe:** Teachers need to make their students feel safe and be able to share anything and everything with them. They may emphasize the fact that child fatalities due to Covid-19 are negligible but children can get it and transmit it if they behave unsafely.
2. **Help students to engage in collaborative activities in the classroom:** Conduct and encourage students to participate in various deep breathing exercises, activities that will help the students to be mindful. Teachers have to create an environment of emotional togetherness among students by
 - i. precluding of social out casting of anybody recovered from COVID-19
 - ii. Encouraging students to make small gifts for their friends as a token of love and appreciation.
 - iii. Assigning caring activities to students like keeping water for birds, helping to keep the premises clean etc., to build positive feelings of sharing and being responsible.
 3. **Acknowledge the change and offer help:** Accept and help the students to accept that the present times are difficult. Make sure that the students know that you are there for them if they require any assistance or have any concerns to share.
 4. **Conduct reflective activities in the classroom:** Reflective activities have huge benefits in increasing self-awareness in an individual and in developing a better understanding of others as well. Reflective practice can also help us to develop creative thinking skills and encourages active engagement in the classroom.
 5. **Tell Life stories:** This activity will help the students get to know something significant about each other in a very short time. Students rarely get a chance to talk about themselves without interruption, (and without advice or judgment). Each student may speak without interruption for 5 minutes about his/her experiences during lockdown that has shaped her/him in significant ways.
 6. **Three-Minute Pause:** The Three-Minute Pause activity can be used in the classroom at the end of the day. It provides a chance for students to stop, reflect on the concepts

and ideas that they have learned, make connections to prior knowledge or experience, and seek clarification. Students have to ask themselves: 'I empathized with...'; 'I changed my attitude about...'; 'I am more aware of ...'; 'I was surprised about...'; 'I felt...etc'.

C. GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS FOR PROMOTING EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF THEIR CHILDREN

1. **Get the child mentally ready for a new routine:** Point out the positive aspects of starting school. Reassure children that if any problems arise at school, parents will be there to help resolve them.
2. **Be patient:** Exercise patience and refrain from using punishment as transitioning once again from home to school may be challenging for the students.
3. **Encourage children to extend Positive offerings:** Children may be asked to draw and colour cards for their friends, teachers, and also family members as preparation for school reopening thus setting a positive tone and hope.
4. **Collect Motivational resources:** Students can be asked to collate good audio(podcasts) songs developed for and during the Covid-19 that they find motivating for sharing with school mates
5. **Ensure their emotional safety:** Parents need to make children feel safe and wanted by giving them the feeling that they can share anything and everything with them as they prepare to go to school as well their concerns while they are in school.
6. **Acknowledge their emotions:** Stay calm especially when the children are anxious. Pay attention to their feelings and give them space to share their fears, if any. Ensure that there is adequate time for sitting together and talking freely at different times.
7. **Encouragement:** Parents also need to encourage and guide their children to plan their daily schedule for school, studies at home, play, sleep, activities to maintain good health and hygiene, etc.
8. **Appreciate your child:** Recognize and praise even small accomplishments and efforts made by children. This not only develops confidence and self-esteem but will lead to the formation of good habits and better performance in different tasks. □
9. **Set a good example:** Before expecting children to be disciplined, empathetic, healthy, and hygienic, parents need to practice such things. Parents need to manage their stress by getting good sleep, exercise, healthy diet, connected with friends and family.
10. **Acknowledge your feelings:** Understanding and recognizing one's own emotions is vital for one's well-being. As a parent one can help himself/herself and their children to navigate each one of their emotions and responses.

11. **Focus on the things that can be controlled:** Focusing on things that are out of one's control can make one feel drained, overwhelmed, and anxious. So, focus on what can be controlled.
12. **Taking care of the self:** Make sure to indulge in physical exercises like yoga. Have a healthy diet and take care of your body.

D. SUGGESTIVE ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

1. **Maintain a reflective diary:** Make a habit of writing your experiences every day before going to bed.
2. Take time to engage in observing your surroundings by identifying the smells, textures, and visuals.
3. Perform any activity which helps you to connect with your own self - meditation, yoga, walking, reading, etc.
4. Think of the small changes which you can bring in your life.
5. Make sure to take care of your physical health as well by sticking to regular meals with the correct nutritional variety, maintain healthy sleep habits, and engage in pleasant and relaxing activities.
6. Engage yourself in such activities which challenge your creativity and make you feel productive like writing, drawing, or something else of your interest.
7. Attend such online courses which enhance your professional abilities.
8. Ask for help from a colleague or expert when needed.

In order to promote the mental health of students and teachers, the schools can develop well-being policy or plan with a specific focus on promoting resilience among them. Students, teachers and schools may also be encouraged to visit the website <https://mhrd.gov.in/covid-19> of MHRD and avail of the tele-counselling services to be provided on National Toll-free helpline 8448440632 under the MANODARPAN initiative of MHRD to provide psychosocial support for mental health and emotional wellbeing of students, teachers and families during the COVID-19 outbreak and beyond.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS

I. State Education Department

II. School Heads

1. The Head of the Institution needs to create a preparedness plan for reopening of the school including physical/social distancing, health and hygiene, and teaching-learning based on the guidelines issued at the National and State levels. This detailed plan should be worked out with SMC members, local health authorities, and community leaders and depending on the availability of space, weather and Teacher Pupil ratio, etc. The plan may include the following:
 - a. The comprehensive academic calendar for conducting classes in the school as well at home.
 - b. Assessment and Examination plan for all the classes and subject areas.
 - c. A detailed plan for safe operation and safe stay of students and teachers in the school.
 - d. Sharing of this plan through Whatsapp or email or sanitized hard copy with teachers before reopening of school. Their feedback should also be sought.
 - e. Making a duty chart for every teacher besides their routine teaching-learning activities as follows:
 - One teacher can be assigned duty at the entry point of the school in the morning.
 - One teacher can stay at the exit point of the school during the closing of the school.
 - One teacher along with some selected senior class students on rotation can take continuous rounds for observing physical distance among children, their health, their sanitization, etc.
 - One teacher to observe mid-day meal cooking and distribution.
 - One teacher to talk to students on their queries on corona and to keep an eye on their mental health likewise- other teachers need also to be given other duties as per school requirement.
2. Calling every teacher on the mobile phone asking them, to prepare a new timetable based on the guidelines – for the execution of an alternative comprehensive calendar mentioned in an earlier section.
3. Collecting all the essential emergency contacts.

4. In case of most marginalized children having no technological tool at home for connecting to school, school heads can plan some innovative way to reach out to them to reduce the gap in their education with those who are using technological tools and can come to school.
5. Schools can create a dedicated task team and ensure adequate manpower is deployed for managing COVID related issues with teachers, members of the SMC, volunteers from the community for the implementation of a comprehensive plan for the reopening of the school.
6. Before reopening the school, the head needs to work with local health officials to execute the plan including actions for prevention and control of COVID 19.
7. All teachers and school heads must be made aware and sensitized of all aspects mentioned above through briefing, visuals, and ICT resources.
8. Maintaining cleanliness and hygiene in school premises and in school transport facility. Sarpanch (in rural areas) and NGOs or some corporate houses (in urban areas) can be roped into this endeavour.
9. It is advised that schools have greater collaboration with parents and enhance communication to obtain their support

III. TEACHERS

Teacher may take the following steps:

1. Before reopening of the school

- a. Prepare a comprehensive plan for subjects and classes he/she teaches and time-table as well as interesting activities for the execution of this plan. While preparing this plan, teachers need to keep in mind the arrangement being made by schools related to physical/social distancing and maintaining health and hygiene, as these need to be linked with the syllabus and learning outcomes.
- b. Prepare posters on precautions related to COVID-19, on physical/social distancing, about COVID-19, etc.
- c. Survey availability of technological tools (smartphone with the internet, television, radio, laptop, tablets, etc.) at the home of the students and their accessibility to students; parents'/guardian's or sibling's educational details, etc., and make a database of the same for the students of every class (this will help them make a plan of their study at school and home).
- d. Develop flexible attendance and sick leave policies; discourage awards for perfect attendance.

2. On re-opening of schools:

- a. Allow children to attend school with written consent of their parents.

- b. Advise, instruct, suggest, explain about the COVID-19, precautions to be taken, safe stay at home, commuting, etc., repeatedly by conducting fun activities involving students and focusing on learning outcomes even if they are awareness activities.
- c. Study alternative academic calendar by NCERT/SCERT for making classroom plans and also giving home tasks.
- d. In case of availability of technological equipment in the school, utilize the following resources:
 - e-contents and e-textbooks for students learning and for the professional development of teachers link: <https://ciet.nic.in/ict-initiatives.php?&ln=en>
 - Energized Textbooks and e-content through Diksha app and portal
 - DTH - TV channel of NCERT #31 Kishore Manch under SWAYAMPPrabha network telecast video programmes based on Alternative Academic Calendar (AAC)
 - Local Radio and TV stations for the development and delivery of e-contents and sensitizing stakeholders on prevention of COVID-19.

Capacity building of teachers on use of these resources should be done through online modes like MOOCs, TV Channels, Web portals, and Apps.

- e. Make use of Flipped learning pedagogy where students have access to TV at home. The upcoming dedicated class wise TV channels can be used for that wherein students attend the TV programs at home and only discussions and formative assessment happens in class.
- f. Observe every child in the class continuously for physical health and mental health issues. In case of any symptom of this kind, parents may be informed and seek medical help for the child.
- g. Prepare and disseminate posters, banners, brochures, infographics, etc., on cyber safety and security to keep students safe in cyberspace. Cyber safety is an international concern.
- h. Maintain students' medical record including a history of infection of the disease in the family/community.

IV. PARENTS / GUARDIANS

Parents /guardians may take the following steps:

1. Provide written consent for their children to attend school if they wish to send to school.
2. Ensure that their ward goes to school wearing a mask and sensitise them not to exchange masks with others. Masks can be made at home also. Face masks made of cloth may be reused after thorough washing with soap. Disposal face masks are to be disposed safely.

3. Encourage their ward to wear full-sleeved clothes to minimize the interaction with any public surface.
4. Parents may take care not to send their ward to school if the child is not feeling well.
5. Drop and pick children from school, as far as possible. If sent by school bus then maintain physical/social distancing and ensure that everyone is wearing a mask.
6. Ask their ward to practice physical/social distancing at all times once she/he leaves home.
7. Clean and sanitize their ward's uniform and other belongings daily.
8. Ensure that their ward maintains personal hygiene such as bathing, brushing teeth properly twice a day (in the morning and before sleeping) and trimming of nails.
9. Provide two clean small napkins/clean cloth daily with their ward for wiping hands.
10. Give healthy food, fresh fruits, and clean water in their lunch box or send a tiffin box for mid-day meal and advise their ward not to share their tiffin and water bottle with others.
11. It is advisable that parents/guardians download the AAROGYASETU APP and let their ward commute only when the App shows safe and low-risk status.

CHECKLIST FOR SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

1. Checklist for School Administrators, Teachers and other Staff

S. No.	Task	Yes/No
A	Healthy Hygiene Practices are promoted and ensured	
1	Students and Staff have been sensitized on good personal hygiene practices and proper hand washing technique (minimum 40 seconds)	
2	Signages on Healthy Hygiene Practices have been displayed at prominent places in the school like classrooms, corridors, washrooms, reception area, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop handshaking – use other noncontact methods of greeting• Wash hands at regular intervals (wash for at least 40 seconds)• Avoid touching face cover coughs and sneezes	
3	Adequate, clean and separate toilets for girls and boys	
4	Soap and safe water are available at age appropriate hand washing stations	
5	Key supplies like thermometers (calibrated contact-less infrared digital thermometer), disinfectants, soaps, hand sanitizers, masks, etc., are available in adequate quantity in the school	
6	Health and hygiene lessons are integrated in every day teaching	
7	School building, classrooms, kitchen, water and sanitation facilities, school transport facilities, surfaces that are touched by many people (desks, railings, door handles, switches, lunch tables, sports equipment, window handles, toys, teaching learning material etc. are cleaned and disinfected at least once a day	
8	Adequate cleaning staff is available in the school	
9	There is enough air flow and ventilation in the school premises	
10	Regular health screening of all staff and students in the school	
11	Trash is removed daily and disposed of safely	
12	There is full time nurse or doctor and counsellor available in the school.	
13	The school has tie up with the nearby hospital for dealing with emergency.	

B	Physical / Social distancing Measures have been implemented	
1	School arrangements have been adjusted to avoid crowded conditions.	
2	Enough space has been created between the desks of the students.	

2. Checklist for Parents

S. No.	Task	Yes/No
1	Regular monitoring of child's health.	
2	Keeping of child at home if s/he is ill or has any specific medical condition that may make them more at risk.	
3	Teach and model good hygiene practices at home. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands with soap and water frequently or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol • Ensure availability of safe drinking water • Ensure clean and safe toilets at home • Ensure safe collection, storage and disposal of waste • Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth, nose 	
4	Ensure emotional safety of your child through different means.	
5	Prevent stigma by using facts and teach your children to be considerate of one another.	
6	Coordinate with school to receive information.	
7	Offer support to the school to strengthen school safety efforts.	

3. Checklist for Students

S. No.	Task	Yes/No
1	You avoid stressful situation by talking and sharing with others and help keep yourself and your school safe and healthy.	
2	You protect yourself and others by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing hands frequently, always with soap and safe water for at least 40 seconds 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not touching face • Not sharing cups, eating utensils, food or drinks with others 	
3	<p>You act as a leader in keeping yourself, your school, family and community healthy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing what you have learnt about preventing disease with your family and friends, especially with younger children • Model good practices such as sneezing or coughing into your elbow and washing your hands, especially for younger family members. 	_____
4	You don't stigmatize your peers or tease anyone about being sick.	_____
5	You tell your parents, another family member, or a caregiver, if you feel sick, and ask to stay home.	_____

REFERENCES:

1. https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/MHAOrderDt_30092020.pdf
2. <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/ImmunityBoostingAYUSHAdvisory.pdf>
3. <https://nroer.gov.in/welcome>
4. <http://epathshala.nic.in/https://diksha.gov.in/>
5. <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/fight-against-covid-19><https://www.mygov.in/>
6. <http://ncert.nic.in/aac.html>
7. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUgLcpnv1YieVe-Epsww-engrBFIntgBh>
