

No.EDN-HE(15)B(15)-2025-Vibrant Libraries(Guidelines)  
Directorate of Higher Education  
Himachal Pradesh,  
Dated, the, Shimla-171001

January, 2025

23 JAN 2025

To

1. All the Principal Govt. Degree/Skt. Colleges HP.
2. All the Deputy Director of Higher Education HP.
3. The Chief Librarian, Central State Library Solan.
4. The Librarian, HP State Library Shimla-1.
5. All the Librarian District Libraries, Community Centre Libraries, Tehsil Libraries & Tribal Libraries in Himachal Pradesh.

Subject: - Guidelines regarding vibrant libraries in Educational Institutions in the State.

Memo,

Please find enclosed herewith a copy of letter No. EDN-A-Ja(1)2/2024 dated 13-01-2024 received from the Secretary(Education) to the Govt. of HP, on the subject cited above.

In this context, it is intimated that the Govt. has issued the guidelines for setting up , Development, maintenance and use of vibrant Libraries in Educational Institution in HP. In this regard, you are therefore directed to direct all the establishment working under your control to follow these guidelines in letter and spirit. You are also directed to check that the guidelines are being followed by the Educational Institutions and also send the compliance of the same to this Directorate at the earliest.



(Dr. Amarjeet K. Sharma)  
Director Higher Education,  
Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-1  
January, 2025

Endst. No. Even, Dated: Shimla-1 the,

Copy to the following for information and further necessary action please:-

1. The Secretary (Education) to the Govt. of HP w.r.t his letter referred to above.
2. The Director Elementary (Education), HP Shimla-1.
3. The State Project Director (ISSE) for information & further necessary action please.
- ✓ 4. The Incharge, IT Cell, Directorate of Higher Education, HP is requested to upload same on Departmental website.
5. Guard File



Director of Higher Education,  
Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-1

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Pa. Cell DHE...	102298
13 JAN 2025	
Branch	Library

EDN-A-Ja (1)2/2024  
Government of Himachal Pradesh  
Department of Higher Education

From

The Secretary (Education) to the,  
Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-171002.

To

✓ The Director of Higher Education,  
Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-171001.

The Director of Elementary Education,  
Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-171001.

Dated Shimla-171002, the 13-01-2025

Subject:

Guidelines regarding vibrant libraries in Educational Institutions in  
the State

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the subject cited above and to enclose here a  
copy of guidelines regarding vibrant libraries in Educational Institutions in the State for  
information and further necessary action.

Yours faithfully,

(Sushil Kumar Dhiman)

Under Secretary (Hr.Edu) to the  
Government of Himachal Pradesh.

56185718  
05-12-2024

HEAD HIMACHAL: GUIDELINES FOR SETTING UP, DEVELOPMENT  
MAINTENANCE AND USE OF VIBRANT LIBRARIES IN EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

- 1/12/2024  
A.S. (Edu)
1. All research related to learning levels and personality development of school students establishes beyond any doubt that school going children must read something other than their text books.
2. Over the years, especially with support under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (earlier under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan), every government school (including Primary Schools) has a "library" with sufficient age appropriate books. Unfortunately, the usage of these books is below expectation. This is mainly due to **wrong understanding** of a library. A large number of teachers think of library as a "separate physical space" preferably a dedicated hall, with rows of almirahs full of books and a qualified librarians to man the space.
3. **But library is not just about having books in school.** Unless and until these are used, read and re-read by children and teachers, having the books is meaningless. However, understanding library only as a room/hall with librarian as in-charge has led to a situation where in several schools the books remain locked in dust-filled dark and dingy rooms with a morose looking person manning the room and invariably this person has no love for books.
4. Field visits by resource persons and feedback given by the teachers have highlighted following points regarding use of books in **SCHOOLS** available in the schools:
- 1/12/24  
- P.J.

- 4.1. Books are there but these are not given to children as the teacher-in-charge (or the librarian) fears that she/he will have to pay from her own pocket in case of loss of books.
- 4.2. Books are lost/damaged by the students and the teacher-in-charge of the library is held responsible for this. When students damage/spoil the books, the teachers restrict issuing books and gradually the use of books stops.
- 4.3. On transfer the successor of library in-charge refuses to take charge if there is shortage of books. In order to avoid getting questioned, the teachers end up not using library books. Most of the teachers feel that since these books are to be handed over on transfer to the next teacher or shown to the Audit, or to the superiors when they visit the school therefore all books must remain in good condition and no book should be lost/misplaced/spoiled.
- 4.4. The result: Books are there but these are stored in locked book-cases or trunks or in the store. Teachers intended to keep these safe so that these can be handed over safely to their successors on transfer or shown to the audit.
5. Though some of the concerns of teachers are genuine like absence of comprehensive guidelines regarding library books yet it seems that the message (both formal and informal) that has trickled down in our "cascade mode" of training and meetings seems to be this: **keep books safe so that you are not troubled**. This "**safety saves approach**" is making our libraries ineffective and we are losing a great opportunity to inculcate reading habit among the children. Books broaden children's horizons; refine their outlook; enhance their learning levels and make them better thinkers. A good use of library will help in developing the

skills termed as 21<sup>st</sup> century skills (Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration and Communication). Not using the library is a sin, while not the having a library is just a minor hurdle that can be overcome easily.

6. The effective use of Library as reading supplementary material cannot be undermined. The main focus of library should be to improve reading skills of children, resulting in improved learning levels which is an imperative to develop reading culture. There is a need to connect children with books. Access to age/grade specific reading material is essential. Also, it is equally important that the children become competent, independent and aware readers by the time they complete primary education.
7. In order to correct the wrong impression amongst teachers and all others, these instruction and guidelines are being issued. It must be noted that these are **mandatory and shall be followed by each school that has library books irrespective of source.**
8. **Each school shall follow the following Guidelines in letter and spirit:**
  - 8.1. **There must be a library in each school. But what it means to have a library?** Having a library is not to be confused with having a “separate room” or “lockable trunks, books cases” or “at least some separate space”. If the school has a separate room, separate storage facility or dedicated space for the library, then it is a welcome situation. But absence of these is no excuse. A school needs just a **few books** other than text books (age specific supplementary reading material is the best thing to have but story books, comics, newspapers, second hand books- fiction/ non-fiction-anything will do)

and a motivated teacher to function as the nodal person or “in-charge of the library”. This in-charge can be a teacher or a non-teaching staff or a retired teacher who lives near the school or she/he can be an interested member from the community. One reason why libraries are not used is that teachers do not love books themselves. So, the first step is to get a motivated teacher/staff/community member to come forward as volunteer to become keeper of the books. If there are more teachers who are interested in books and want to be part of the READ HIMACHAL MOVEMENT, a Group/Team can be formed to make children love books. If no one volunteers then also a teacher is to be made in-charge of the library. She/ he will be the nodal person and will function as the librarian to co-ordinate the activities centered on the school library.

8.2. **Library MUST be used:** there is no fun in having books if these are not read, re-read by children. If a school has ten students and one book, **IT IS NOT ONE BOOK, BUT TEN BOOKS AND HUNDREDS OF STORIES.** Many books will get lost, misplaced, torn and spoiled in the process. **Never mind.** Each book is meant to be read again and again, so it may get old/damaged/lost/torn/ stolen. These are given to schools for safe keeping so that these can be handed over to the next teacher on transfer.

We have full faith that school teachers will keep the books safe and in good condition and school children who get to read books do not steal or spoil books and they do not tear the pages. In fact, they will take care of each and every book with their teachers. Books are a priceless treasure that is used of by generations of learners. So, the

inherent value of having a library is to make sure that books must be read and re-read by the students and teachers. While we expect that teachers and students will keep the library book in good condition always and will take care that these are not stolen, misplaced, lost, torn or spoiled yet it may happen sometimes that some books are not returned or get lost/misplaced/spoiled due to various reasons.

8.3. **Each School is authorized through these Guidelines to make rules regarding number of books to be issued/loaned at a given time; the period for which these will be issued/loaned for home reading; how to make use of these books within the school time (by having special book reading sessions/library time/reading sessions etc.); how much fine (in cash or kind: several innovative methods can be thought of for this also) will be imposed on defaulters or those who misplace the books etc.**

8.4. It is expected that the schools shall come up with innovative practices and out of the box methods to make the library books a valued treasure that belongs to the school and that has to be passed on to the next generation of students. The State Project Office, SSA shall create a feedback loop to document innovative methods/practices devised by the schools to set up and use library books. These methods, ways and techniques will be shared with others so that all schools implement these. **So, these Guidelines are being issued to give this message to the teachers of all schools: Don't panic if books get damaged/lost etc.** Books, if used, will become dog-eared, stained and weathered over a period of time. Some of these will be torn (if there is a really good and popular book, then every child will want to read it. Some will get

misplaced/lost. We need to believe the child if she/he says that her goat ate the book or her jealous brother tore it. We must encourage the children to tell the truth about the book and we will get a feel about the real issues that the child faces: *may be her parents don't like that she reads books other than text books, maybe she is so much in love with the book that she does not want to return. It can be anything.* Teachers must explore the reasons along with the child and this is going to be fun). So, these Guidelines mandate that books should be issued/loaded to every student for home reading as well. **The goal is to make every child love books not to keep books safe and in the same condition in which these were handed over to you.**

8.5. **Display books and make these accessible:** Books are like any other object of desire (sweets/toy/clothes), a good display that make the books "visible" and "accessible" makes a lot of difference. If the students "see, touch, feel and flip through" the books on display (these are not be locked in trunk/boxes/almirah) they would want to read these. If the children can touch, feel and smell books and they browse through them the teacher has done a great job.

8.6. **Make Active Book Clubs:**

- Schools should form Book Clubs/Reading Clubs where children talk about the books they like.
- Involve students in management of library.
- The members of the book club must have at least one activity in a week (may be on the bagless day). Children can recite a poem/story; discuss what they have read; write book reviews; a



message board can be created where students can pin poems/ drawings/sketches/quotes. **Let children “own” the library,** then only they will value and take care of books.

- The schools may hold several competitions under the book club and, may also give books as prize. Funds under school grant and TLM grant should be used for this purpose. Funds can be arranged by way of donation also.
- **Acquire Books/ Magazines/ other reading material from the community:** Every school should make an effort to acquire books/supplementary reading material for the library from community by way of donation or through active contribution of teachers. Several activities can be done through book clubs, for example: teachers and students can make **scape books** by taking out interesting articles from newspapers/old/used books and compiling these in age appropriate files which can be used as reading material; engage **parents** and **community members** to make vibrant libraries; organize competitions such as debates; declamations; poetry recitation and create a book loving culture.

8.7. **Stock Taking and Managing Books:** Books are not desks, benches or other furniture in the school. Books are fragile and repeated use will always render some books unusable and as mentioned above some books will always be short due to various reasons.

- Stock taking of the books should be done every year if the total number of books in the school are less than 500. In case books

are more than 500 then the stock taking of all books should be done at least once in three years (books can be audited in the lots of 500 each or more annually but all books should be accounted for at least once in three years).

- If at the end of the year number of the books are same as were at the beginning of the year or at the time of earlier audit, it would mean one of the two things: either the library is not being used at all or the teacher and students have started loving the books so much that they take care of them. The Department would want to have second situation where books are used loved and valued.
- If there is a shortfall at the end of the year the teacher in-charge (or the committee of teachers) shall record a Certificate in the book stock register indicating the total books at the start of year, new additions, books lost/misplaced and total books available at the end of the year.
- This Certificate shall be the ONLY REQUIREMENT for the purpose of record and Audit. There shall NOT be any explanation required from the teacher (or committee of teachers or committee of students and teachers regarding the shortfall due to loss/damage.
- The same practice (of recording the Certificate) shall be followed if the teacher has to hand over the charge of the library during the year due to transfer/retirement/any other reason.

- It is understood that when books are used as essential supplementary reading material at the school level (especially primary school) by each and every child, then over time there is bound to be some shortfall at time of audit/stock taking. Schools Library is different, as the school students start their journey in the magical world of words and stories at the primary level. Therefore, prime objective is to get them excited about books; to develop reading habit amongst them; to make them love books.
- The head teacher/senior most teacher and in case the senior most teacher is the in-charge of the library as well then any other teacher (in case of single teacher schools no such requirement will be there to countersign the Certificate) of the institution shall countersign this Certificate and record her/his satisfaction that the books have been lost/ misplaced/ spoiled as as result of regular usage by the students. These books shall be written off accordingly. This stock taking and writing off shall happen once in a year or when the teacher-in-charge is transferred or retires or leaves the school permanently due to any reason whatsoever.
- Everyone going for purpose of monitoring/inspection to a school shall not question the authenticity of the Certificate concerned shall not be made accountable for such loss which happens as a result of using the library.

- These Guidelines shall also be applicable to the books available already with the schools. So each teacher-in-charge/staff member responsible for the library shall complete the stock taking by the end of December 2024 with respect to all the books actually available with the school compared to the entry in the stock register since the register was started. **The difference shall be written off.**

- Thereafter this should become annual exercise.
- The "Year" for this purpose shall be the calendar year.

9. The Education Department and the State Government is setting up Digital Libraries in schools in phased manner. Also, a large number of schools have been equipped with Smart Class Rooms, which are great learning tools, and the number of such schools will increase. These smart class rooms and digital libraries will function as **Knowledge Centers** for Future. The schools must use these assets to inculcate reading habits amongst the students.
10. It is further clarified that books in the library are not to be confused with normal stock and store items available in the school. It is agreed that the misuse of books should be checked and each school shall devise its own mechanism for this but the teacher-in-charge of library (staff in-charge and/or the committee of teachers and/or students) shall not be held responsible for loss of books for whatever reasons. If a school buys the books it has to be understood by everyone that books are not purchased on L-1 basis. While higher discount can be negotiated with the publisher or supplier, the guidelines issued by the Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation may serve the purpose.
11. It is worth repetition that our wrong understanding of the library has resulted in a situation where books remain locked in trunks and almirahs as teachers "fear" that they will be held accountable for loss of books and they will be made to pay for the loss from their own pocket. If required the schools can impose fines (but these should nominal), but

the better course will be to make every school student realize the value of books by following innovative mechanisms to check misuse.

- 12. The State SSA shall develop a grading system for schools where the libraries are assessed annually on the basis of objective criteria including usage, new acquisitions, donations for library, activities related to reading habit; how many books were issued to the teachers-it is an important test that how many teachers are using library books (if teachers read then only they can motivate the students to use library books), how many children used the library, how are the best readers amongst the children are identified and rewarded, which is the favorite book of the children, innovations by the school, community involvement etc.
- 13. The schools should document how reading library books helped improve learning levels. Such micro researches can be funded under SSA and the teachers can send such proposals directly to the Mission Director SSA any time during the year.
- 14. The best libraries shall be rewarded by special grants and the best teachers and the best students shall be honored at levels: cluster, block, district and state every year and their experiences will be documented and shared.
- 15. The AWARD SCHEME will function broadly in the following manner: schools will apply for award, there will be assessment by a team from DIET (assessment criteria will be made available to school in advance and will be outcome based). This scheme shall aim to active libraries and make them vibrant institutions rather than dull store houses. The best teachers and the best schools will be rewarded annually.

**Let us all join hands for a healthy book reading culture in our schools.**

Rakesh Kanwar, IAS  
 Secretary (Education) to the  
 Govt. of Himachal Pradesh  
 Shimla-2