The draft of New Education Policy 2016 was made public on Wednesday on www.mygov.in website. The 43-page document focuses on addressing gender discrimination, the creation of educational tribunals, and a common curriculum for science, mathematics and English.

Revision of no-detention policy, promotion of Sanskrit, and bringing back Class 10 board examinations are some of the key changes that the policy talks about. We take a look at the policy’s 20 salient features:

1) **Pre-school Education:** Pre-school education has not received the necessary attention in the past as Government schools do not provide pre-primary education, according to the draft National Education Policy. The following policy initiatives will be taken:
   a) Pre-school education for children in the age group of 4 to 5 years will be implemented.
   b) To strengthen the pre-school education in Anganwadis, steps will be taken in consultation with states to frame curricula and develop learning materials.
   c) State Governments will prepare cadres of pre-primary teachers.
   d) All primary schools will cover pre-primary education.
   e) Appropriate regulatory and monitoring rules and mechanisms will be designed for private pre-schools.

2) **Curriculum Renewal and Examination Reforms**

   a) Curricular reforms will be carried out to meet the emerging aspirations and align to national goals of social cohesion, religious amity and national integration.
   b) NCERT will undergo a re-orientation to address issues of deteriorating quality of school education and periodic renewal of curricula and pedagogy to move from rote learning to facilitate understanding and encourage a spirit of enquiry.
   c) For science, mathematics and english subjects, a common national curriculum will be designed.
d) High failure rate in class-X examination is attributed to a large extent to poor performance in three subjects: Mathematics, Science and English. In order to reduce the failure rates, class X examination in Mathematics, Science and English will be at two levels: Part-A at a higher level and Part-B at a lower level.

e) Procedural reforms will be undertaken, such as, doing away with migration certificate, school leaving certificate, etc. in order to encourage mobility of students from one institution to another.

f) It will be mandatory for the students to take class X board examination conducted by the Board to which their school is affiliated. Class X Board examination will cover the entire syllabus of class X.

3) Learning outcomes in School Education

a) Norms for learning outcomes will be developed and applied uniformly to both private and government schools.

b) Within the parameters prescribed by the RTE Act, States will have the flexibility to design and plan for the infrastructure keeping in view the local conditions.

c) The present provisions of no-detention policy will be amended, as it has seriously affected the academic performance of students. The no detention policy will be limited up to class V and the system of detention will be restored at the upper primary stage.

d) Effective steps will be taken to improve teaching standards in schools

4) School Education

a) Each State will undertake a detailed exercise of school mapping to identify schools with low enrolment and inadequate infrastructure.

b) Minimum standards for provision of facilities and student outcomes across all levels in school education will be laid down.

c) Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs) will be
expanded and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) will be expanded and upgraded

5) Protection of Rights of the Child & Adolescent Education

a) Framework and guidelines for ensuring school safety and security of children will be developed.
b) Every Principal and teacher will be made aware of the provisions of the relevant Acts, Rules, Regulations, etc.
c) The Adolescent Education Programme and National Population Education Programme will be integrated into the curriculum of schools in a phased manner.
d) Adolescent Education will be included in pre- and in-service training programmes of secondary school teachers.
e) Self-learning online programmes on child rights will be developed for the benefit of students, teachers and parents.
f) Schools will engage trained counsellors to confidentially advise parents and teachers on adolescence problems faced by growing boys and girls.

6) Inclusive Education and Student Support

a) Curriculum will cover the issues of social justice and harmony and legal measures in order to avoid social discrimination.
b) With the objective of encouraging merit and promoting equity, a National Fellowship Fund, primarily designed to support the tuition fees, learning materials and living expenses for about 10 lakh students will be created.
c) A zero tolerance approach on gender discrimination and violence will be adopted.
d) There will be dedicated funds for R&D to strengthen disability studies in higher education.
7) Literacy and Lifelong Learning

a) Existing initiatives will be strengthened and curricula revamped with multi-pronged strategies involving Self Help Groups, NGOs, Government etc.
b) The Government will set up an apex body of experts to look into remodelling and strengthening of AE programmes and develop scientific criteria for assessing the learning outcomes of adults in literacy, skill development, prior learning and equivalency for certification which may also facilitate entry into the formal education system.
c) Adult literacy programme will incorporate skill development and digital, financial and legal literacy.

8) Skills in Education and Employability

a) Skill development programmes in school and higher education system will be reoriented
b) A detailed plan for the creation of skill schools for improving employment opportunities for secondary school students in special focus districts will be prepared.
c) Joint certificates by the Sector Skill Council and the School/College authorities to help students take up wage-employment or start their own enterprise.

9) Use of ICT in Education

a) A concerted effort will be made to make ICT an integral part of education across all levels and domains of learning.
b) Online maintenance of all records of a child from the time of admission till the time of leaving the school will be made mandatory.
c) IT reporting systems will be a powerful tool to better school management and performance.
10) Teacher Development and Management

a) A transparent and merit based norms and guidelines for recruitment of teachers will be formulated in consultation with the state governments.
b) All vacancies in teacher education institutions and all positions of head teachers and principals will be filled up.
c) At the National level, a Teacher Education University will be set up covering various aspects of teacher education and faculty development.
d) A separate cadre for teacher educators will be established in every state.

11) Language and Culture in Education

a) All states and UTs, if they so desire, may provide education in schools, upto Class V, in mother tongue, local or regional language as the medium of instruction.
b) Indian culture, local and traditional knowledge will be given adequate space in the school education.
c) Educational institutions will instill among students civic sense, discipline, punctuality, cleanliness, good conduct, empathy towards elderly.
d) Keeping in view special importance of Sanskrit to the growth and development of Indian languages and its unique contribution to the cultural unity of the country, facilities for teaching Sanskrit at the school and university stages will be offered on a more liberal scale.

12) Self-Development through Comprehensive Education

a) Physical education, yoga, games and sports, NCC, NSS, art education, Bal Sansad, covering local art, craft, literature and skills, and other co-scholastic activities will be made an integral part of the curriculum and daily routine in schools for the holistic development of children. Facilities for the above will be a pre-requisite to the recognition of schools.
b) Funds will be earmarked by the government/ school management for all co-scholastic activities in schools.

13) School Assessment and Governance

a) The framework of school standards with various parameters and indicators to measure school quality, professional competence of teachers, school leadership and the school management, as well as, self-appraisal and performance assessment will be used throughout the country
b) A mechanism will be put in place for accreditation of school boards.
c) Principals/head teachers will be held accountable for the academic performance of the schools and its improvement.

14) Regulation In Higher Education

a) An independent mechanism for administering the National Higher Education Fellowship Programme will be put in place.
b) A Central Educational Statistics Agency (CESA) will be established as the central data collection, compilation and consolidation agency with high quality statistical expertise and management information system which will be used for predictive analysis, manpower planning and future course corrections.

15) Quality Assurance In Higher Education

a) An expert committee will be constituted to study the systems of accreditation in place internationally. It will draw from the experiences of some of the best practices followed by countries having well performing systems and will suggest restructuring of NAAC and NAB as well as redefining methodologies, parameters and criteria.
b) Evaluation/ Accreditation details of each institution will be available to the general public through a dedicated website, to enable students and other stakeholders to
make informed choices.

16) Open and Distance Learning & MOOCs

a) The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), in collaboration with Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, will redefine itself to address the large potential demand for vocational education. The issues of management, monitoring and oversight of NIOS will be addressed appropriately.

b) A quality assurance mechanism for accreditation of all universities/institutions offering ODL / MOOCs will be put in place to ensure quality, promote, innovation and reshape and modernise the ODL / MOOCs courses and programmes.

17) Internationalisation of Education

a) Selected foreign universities, from the top 200 in the world, will be encouraged to establish their presence in India through collaboration with Indian universities.

b) In order to increase acceptability of Indian students abroad and to attract international students, Indian HEIs will be encouraged to work towards internationalization of curricula aligned with international levels so as to make it globally compatible with best ranked institutions of the world.

c) Internationalisation will be included as one of the components for allocating additional financial resources to government-funded HEIs.

18) Faculty Development in Higher Education

a) A task force of experts will be set up to study the recruitment, promotion and retention procedures, followed by internationally renowned universities and institutions and suggest measures to promote intellectual and academic excellence in HEIs.

b) A national campaign will be launched to attract young talent into the teaching
profession. In order to attract young talent into teaching profession, a career growth of research students, such as M.Phil & Ph.D scholars, will be created.
c) A mechanism of assessment of academic performance of faculty including peer review will be put in place so as to ensure academic accountability of public-funded institutions.

19) Research, Innovation and New Knowledge

a) A clear reorientation of research agenda of National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) will be undertaken to reflect actual issues on the ground.
b) Steps will be taken to promote generation of new knowledge and their applications and introduction of these new domains into the curricula of higher education to consolidate and strengthen India’s position as a soft power.
c) In order to promote innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, 100 more incubation centres will be established in HEIs over a period of next 5 years.
d) International collaborations and networks will be promoted for developing human resources required to sustain new knowledge with special focus on inter-disciplinary research and studies.

20) Financing Education

a) The government will take steps for reaching the long pending goal of raising the investment in education sector to at least 6% of GDP as a priority.
b) Instead of setting up new institutions, which require huge investments, priority of the Government will be to expand the capacity of existing institutions.
c) In order to encourage excellence and efficiency, performance-linked funding of higher education institutions will be implemented.