

# NEW EDUCATION POLICY: FIVE BIG CHANGES IN SCHOOL, HIGHER EDUCATION EXPLAINED

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The Indian government Wednesday replaced a 34-year-old National Policy on Education, framed in 1986, with the New Education Policy of 2020. The NEP, approved by the union cabinet, makes sweeping reforms in school and higher education including teaching.

## **New Education Policy 2020: Some of the important highlights**

### **Schooling starts at the age of 3 years now**

The New Education Policy expands age group 6-14 years of mandatory schooling to 3-18 years of schooling. The NEP introduces hitherto uncovered three years of pre-schooling, age group of 3-6 years under the school curriculum. The new system will have 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadi/ pre-schooling.

With an emphasis on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), the 10+2 structure of school curriculum is to be replaced by a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively.

### **Mother tongue as medium of instruction**

The NEP puts focus on students' mother tongue as the medium of instruction even as it sticks to the 'three language formula' but also mandates that no language would be imposed on anyone. The NEP only recommends the mother tongue as medium of instruction, and not make it compulsory.

The policy document states that children learn and grasp non-trivial concepts more quickly in their home language.

"Wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the home language, mother tongue, local language or the regional language. Thereafter, the home or local language shall continue to be taught as a language wherever possible. This will be followed by both public and private schools," the policy states.

### **NO UGC, AICTE, NCTE**

Higher Education Commission of India(HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education. Public and private higher education institutions will be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards.

Govt will phase out the affiliation of colleges in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges.

### **Science, arts, commerce gets blurred**

Under NEP 2020, there will be no rigid separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams. Students

can select subjects of their liking across the streams. Vocational education will start in schools from the 6th grade, and will include internships.

### **FYUP Programme Returns & No More Dropouts**

Under the NEP, undergraduate degree will be of either 3 or 4-year duration with multiple exit options within this period. College will be mandated to give certificate after completing 1 year in a discipline or field including vocational and professional areas, a diploma after 2 years of study, or a Bachelor's degree after a 3-year programme.

Govt will also establish an Academic Bank of Credit for digitally storing academic credits earned from different HEIs so that these can be transferred and counted towards final degree earned.

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