

# NO-DETENTION POLICY [NDP] AND CONTINUOUS & COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION [CCE]

MAY, 2015

Kiran Bhatta, Geetha Nambissan, Poonam Batra, Gunjan Sharma, Anuradha De and Anjali Mody

## BASIC FACTS ABOUT NDP AND CCE

- “No detention” does not mean “no assessment”. CCE is the evaluation method under NDP, where assessment is for learning” and not mere passing/ failing. The twin deas of NDP and CCE must therefore be seen together.
- Research evidence indicates that detention of students by a year or more does not improve learning. Even the Gita Bhukkal Committee admits that there is no research (anywhere in the world) that shows that repeating helps children perform better. But research does say that repeating has adverse academic and social effects on the child.
- NDP and CCE make for a better system of teacher accountability as the teachers can be held to task for “learning levels”, not just passing or failing the child. Failing children only punishes the child [and his/ her parents].
- The older system of failures and detention was recognized as detrimental to quality education and learning, being only “exam-oriented”. Reverting back to an acknowledged poor system would be a retrograde step.
- This clause is also linked to the provision of Special Training for age appropriate admissions. Unfortunately special training

is not being conducted systematically. It is conducted as a general programme, not geared to individual needs, with children ‘pushed’ into the age appropriate class at the beginning of the session. Unsurprisingly these children perform badly, and if there is an amendment to the NDP they are likely to ‘fail’, leading to their dropping out once again.

## I. Rationale for NDP and CCE:

- NDP and CCE are based on sound **principles of pedagogy and assessment** recognized worldwide.
- There are very strong **equity considerations** behind the NDP policy, especially for children from low-income families and girls. Failure for these children implies dropping out. Wastage in the schooling system due to high repetition and high dropout rates has been a major concern since the nineties. This clause seeks to address that concern.
- There are also **legal implications** of the NDP policy as it is part of the RTE Act. The State is obligated to keep a child in school for at least 8 years and ensure that s/he is provided the requisite learning. The onus is thus on the school/ system to ensure that a child learns in that period without fear of failure. Failing a child penalizes the child, but not the system and goes against the spirit of the RTE Act.

## II. Reasons for teachers’ criticism of NDP and CCE:

- They do not understand the ‘philosophy’ behind NDP or CCE. Therefore own motivation towards the new system is low.
- They have not been trained to implement CCE and use it to adapt teaching methods and improve learning levels.
- The present formats of CCE make their work extremely tedious and time consuming.

## III. Reasons for parents’ criticism of NDP and CCE:

- Promotion and failures are familiar indicators for them to calibrate their child’s learning.
- CCE indicators are not familiar to them.
- They do not understand the ‘principles’ behind CCE. They need to be orientated to understand the significance of the new system.

## LESSONS LEARNT THUS FAR

### I. Inadequate teacher training

- Pre-service training does not include a module on CCE.
- Pre-service training has made the paper on “assessments” optional.
- In-service training having been reduced from 21 to 7 days a year makes it very difficult to provide the required inputs for CCE, especially in the early days of its implementation.
- The training that has been given on CCE does not explain the ‘philosophy’ behind it. Thus teachers’ motivation towards it remains low.

### II. Design of CCE

- The instruments for applying CCE have not been properly thought through. They are difficult to understand and are leading to mechanical filling by teachers.
- The tools for assessment and evaluation thus leave the teachers and children confused, besides being extremely tedious to use.

### III. Awareness amongst parents

- Parents have not been made aware of the new system and why it has been introduced.

Parents have not been told about the new indicators of assessment and the fact that they include a wide range of learning outcomes to the benefit of the child.

- That evaluation and “tests” have **not** been done away with and their child/ward will still be evaluated on how well she/he is learning. In fact this system will “test” learning and not simply pronounce “failure”.
- This is a better system of teacher accountability as the teachers can be held to task for “learning levels”, not just passing or failing the child.
- Teachers have found that with consistent dialogue, parents come to appreciate NDP.
- Parents do not want the children to fail and to feel burdened.

### THE WAY FORWARD

- No drastic reversal in policy without wider discussions and consultations with experts and stake-holders.
- Re-look at current design and implementation failures to find solutions to them, instead of throwing baby out with the bath water.
- Carrying out studies on good practices on NDP and CCE from states and schools.

