

Suggestion for a Policy to improve Primary Education in India

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1. Abolish the posts of District Inspectors, Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of Schools.
2. Mandate that the Panchayat Sarpanch form a five-member school board for each school. If more than five villagers want to serve the village school board, the Sarpanch will conduct an election to choose five members based on the most votes by villagers of the area served by the school. Any villager can nominate himself/herself or another person for such election. If less than five members are so nominated, the Sarpanch will nominate the remaining members to serve the school board.
3. Mandate that parents of the children studying in a school be asked to evaluate the teachers - within a week before annual grading of children in every school year based on (i) regularity in attendance of the teacher, (ii) effectiveness in teaching, and (iii) student performance - on a scale of 1 (lowest) through 5 (highest). The parents of the students will submit these ratings in writing to a village school board member. The school board will then take averages of these ratings and send its report signed by all school board members to the Sarpanch. Teachers receiving less than 2 out of 5 for two consecutive years will be sent for retraining at teacher training centers for half-pay; the letter of authority for such training will be signed by the Sarpanch and school board members. The training centers will receive the other half of the teacher's pay. Teachers receiving between 2 and 3 will not be given their annual salary increase. Teachers receiving between 3 and 4.5 will receive their standard annual increase. Teachers receiving between 4.5 and 5 will receive a bonus salary increase (in addition to the standard) for the following year. After returning from training, if a teacher continues to perform at less than 2 for two more years, he/she will be removed from the school by written order signed by the school board members and Sarpanch.
4. The Panchayat Sarpanch will be responsible for submitting feedbacks (signed by him and village school board members) about every schoolteacher to the state education department, which will feed the data into a computer system for schools. Sarpanch not submitting such feedbacks within a month after the end of the school year will lose their pay as well as job. If some school board member does not sign the teacher evaluation form, the Sarpanch must note it and submit it to the State education department on time. The Sarpanch will then seek to replace any non co-operating school board member through nomination as well as election, if more nominations are submitted than the vacancies on the school board.
5. The state's education department will mail salary checks to each schoolteacher through the block development officers, based on reports from the Sarpanch.

This is a policy that could actually work!

