

Various Initiatives in School Education Sector (2017-2021)

1.0 Learning Outcomes: As part of the ongoing process of improving learning outcomes of students since 2017 through *Padho Punjab Padhao Punjab* (PPPP) Programme the learning levels target to be achieved for different subjects in classes I to V are determined every year by the Department of School Education. The overall percentage of targets achieved by students in classes I-V in the Base-line Test conducted in September-2019 was just 45.51%, which through PPPP programme rose up to 88.44% in End-line Test held in March 2020 (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Class Wise Percentages of Achieved Targets (2019-20)

Class	Baseline Result (%) September-2019	Post Test Result (%) March-2020	Progress (%)
First	31.11	90.28	59.17
Second	39.97	87.30	47.33
Third	45.28	86.59	41.31
Fourth	45.99	85.87	39.88
Fifth	58.44	91.72	33.28
Overall	45.51	88.44	42.93

Source: SCERT, Punjab

The PPPP has been extended to 9th and 10th classes and thereafter to 11th and 12th classes. The impact of '*Padho Punjab, Padhao Punjab*' project was positive as was evident from the Punjab School Education Board Results for the session 2018-19 vis-'a-vis the preceding year 2017-18. But this year the Board Result is computed on the basis of CCE and it is declared in different format; as such we can't compare this result with that of the previous year for classes 8th and 10th.

However, it is clearly visible (see tables 1.2 and 1.3) that all students have passed different subjects in classes 8th and 10th and remarkable proportion of students have passed with A+ and A grade in their results.

Subject	A+ (%Age) 91-100	A (%Age) 81-90	B+ (%Age) 71-80	B (%Age) 61-70	C+ (%Age) 51-60	C (%Age) 41-50	D (%Age) 1-40
PUNJABI - L1	49.36	29.20	15.59	4.18	1.06	0.42	0.18
PUNJABI - L2	27.11	29.24	25.97	11.93	3.80	1.21	0.30
HINDI - L1	27.22	29.55	25.67	12.02	3.67	1.14	0.32
HINDI - L2	47.49	29.38	16.29	4.81	1.29	0.51	0.21
URDU - L1	50.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
URDU - L2	24.74	31.93	27.14	10.94	4.35	0.60	0.15
ENGLISH	42.26	29.19	18.78	6.68	2.00	0.75	0.27
MATHEMATICS	39.78	30.31	19.02	7.40	2.25	0.82	0.33
SCIENCE	41.33	29.43	19.02	7.12	2.04	0.71	0.28
SOCIAL SCIENCE	42.55	29.91	18.24	6.42	1.85	0.67	0.27

Source-pseb.ac.in

Subject	A+ (%Age) 91-100	A (%Age) 81-90	B+ (%Age) 71-80	B (%Age) 61-70	C+ (%Age) 51-60	C (%Age) 41-50	D (%Age) 1-40
PUNJABI	57.75	20.57	17.16	2.91	1.41	0.14	0.07
ENGLISH	46.05	28.41	17.10	5.96	1.73	0.55	0.19
HINDI	45.76	29.77	16.97	5.48	1.42	0.46	0.14
MATHEMATICS	40.62	30.80	18.67	6.92	2.04	0.69	0.25
SCIENCE	41.21	30.09	18.90	6.98	1.95	0.66	0.21

SOCIAL STUDIES	44.45	29.91	17.42	5.82	1.67	0.55	0.18
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Source-pseb.ac.in

As for the results of 12th Board Class it is evident from Board result that the result of March 2020 is better than the earlier years (see Table 1.4). The information contained in Table 1.4 shows that largely the results are better than the earlier years in almost all subjects except that in Geography and Physical Education where the result has gone down slightly.

Sr.No.	Subject Name	%age March 2018	%age March 2019	%age March 2020	%age increase
1.	General English	84.32%	96.19%	97.82%	1.63%
2.	General Punjabi	96.06%	98.27%	99.15%	0.88%
3.	Punjabi Elective	83.17%	94.52%	98.08%	3.56%
4.	Hindi Elective	91.12%	97.19%	97.98%	0.79%
5.	English Elective	95.83%	98.64%	99.07%	0.43%
6.	History	82.70%	94.03%	99.28%	5.25%
7.	Economics	87.54%	93.94%	99.59%	5.65%
8.	Mathematics	75.75%	93.80%	99.84%	6.04%
9.	Political Science	80.50%	90.65%	99.47%	8.82%
10.	Sociology	92.99%	97.29%	98.68%	1.39%
11.	Geography	85.75%	98.54%	98.08%	-0.46%
12.	Physical Education & Sports	94.22%	97.84%	96.49%	-1.35%
13.	Physics	71.26%	88.75%	96.04%	7.29%
14.	Chemistry	69.43%	93.19%	95.66%	2.47%
15.	Biology	77.77%	92.87%	94.16%	1.29%

Source:pseb.ac.in

2.0 Various government initiatives in School Education Sector: In order to improve various aspect of schools and schooling the Department of School Education, Government of Punjab has taken various initiatives. Some of the prominent initiatives of the Department are briefed below:

2.1 Smart School Project: In order to strengthen school education and improve learning levels of students through ICT based education in Government schools, the Department of School Education Punjab has been converting government schools into Smart Schools. These schools have been developed as model schools in which state of the art facilities are provided to impart quality education. Smart School Policy has been notified by the Department on **25.10.2019**. Main features of the policy are

2.1.1. School Development Plan: School Development Committee (SDC) is constituted in the school which prepares School Development Plan (SDP) clearly showing cost estimate of funds required to convert the school to be the smart schools.

2.1.2. Sharing Pattern (60: 40): The requirements of funds for developing smart schools is met by the concerned school and the State in the ratio of 60:40. The school commits to contribute 60% of the total required funds for developing the school into smart school from its different sources and the balance s 40% is provided by the Department.

2.1.3. School Management Committee: The funds are provided in the bank account of School Management Committee of the school which is jointly operated by head of the school and the Chairman of the School Management Committee. The transfer of funds under this scheme is made through online mode. The bank account details of the School Management Committee are

made available on the school website to enable donor for online transfer of funds.

2.1.4. Parameters for Smart Schools: The smart schools have the following parameters:

2.1.4.1 Smart Classrooms

2.1.4.2 Coloured Coordinated Buildings

2.1.4.3 Building As Learning Aid (BALA) Work

2.1.4.4 Landscaping

2.1.4.5 CCTV cameras

2.1.4.6 Green board/white board

2.1.4.7 Furniture for all students

2.1.4.8 Lecture stands for students and teachers

2.1.4.9 Beautiful Gate/Entrance

2.1.4.10 Availability of potable drinking water facility

2.1.4.11 Separate adequate number of functional toilets for girls and boys

2.1.4.12 Well equipped Principal/Head Master room including staff room

2.1.4.13 Well equipped science laboratories, vocational laboratories, ICT laboratories, etc.

2.1.4.14 Well maintained play grounds with the provision of adequate sports facilities (at least 2 games in each school)

2.1.4.15 Well equipped library with sufficient number of books

2.1.4.16 Swings/ toys, attractive and colourful furniture for pre-primary and primary wing Educational parks

2.1.4.17 Well maintained classrooms, toilets, school campus

2.1.4.18 Display of Board of Honours in the school for both staff and students in the school for showcasing achievements of the students and staff

- 2.1.4.19 Sound system and school band
- 2.1.4.20 Sign boards outside the schools
- 2.1.4.21 Dining hall/shed for Mid-Day-Meal
- 2.1.4.22 Smart Uniform with tie and belt.

So far 7842 schools out of 19107 have been converted into smart schools with state funds.

- 2.2 **English as a medium of instruction:** With an aim of improving English Language communication skills and help the students keep abreast of worldwide developments the Department has introduced option of English medium in around 15000 government schools in which presently nearly 3.72 lac students have opted English as medium of instruction.
- 2.3 **Each one Bring one Enrolment Drive:** State is running special enrolment drive to motivate the parents for admitting their children in Government schools. It has resulted into increase in enrolment in the current year by **14.9%** from Pre-primary to Senior Secondary level. This itself is a record increase in enrolment in a single year.
- 2.4 **Launch of Pre-Primary Schooling:** The State of Punjab has launched pre-primary classes for students of age group 3-6 in all Government Primary Schools since 14th November 2017. The enrollment in pre-primary sections is rising every year Approximately 3.30 lac students are enrolled in schools in the pre-primary sections in the session 2020-21. Child friendly material in the form of story books, story cards, flash cards etc. has been prepared and circulated to all schools. E-content has been prepared according to the prescribed syllabus to create interest and to enhance the learning. Trainings for pre-primary teachers and school head teachers have been organized throughout the state to acquaint them with the concept and contents related to pre-primary curriculum. Different type

of supplementary material and grants have been sent to schools to strengthen pre-primary schooling. Following grants have been disbursed in year 2020-21 for pre-primary classes: -

- Health & Hygiene practice grant @ 12000/- per school
- .Grant for different activities/material to develop cognitive abilities among students @ 2900/- per school
- .TLM grant for pre-primary teachers @ 2500/- per school.
- Grant for development of psycho-motor skills @ 220/- per schools.

2.5 **Separate Cadre for Border Areas:** It has been observed in Punjab, that many posts of teachers in backward and difficult areas normally remain vacant; even though the State has sought to fill posts in such areas on priority basis, yet after some time teachers get transferred to places of their preference around more developed areas for different reasons. In this background the State of Punjab has created a separate cadre of teachers for borders areas in order to address the problem of shortage of teachers in border areas. The teachers once recruited or opted for these districts will remain in these districts only. In recent past, the Department of School Education has recruited 3582 Master cadre teachers and most of them have been posted in Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozepur, Fazilka, Tarn Taran and Pathankot districts.

2.6 **Creation of Exclusive Cadre for School Administration:** There are evidences that some schools perform better than others because of the leadership of the principal or the headmaster. Department has notified Exclusive Cadre of Educational Administrators vide notification dated 07.06.2018. Provision has been made for direct recruitment of officers of senior level. Recruitment for 2797 posts of 154 Principals, 672

Headmasters, 38 BPEOs, 375 Centre Head Teachers (CHT) and 1558 Head Teachers (HT) has been completed. Recruitment of Principals Headmasters and BPEOs is done by PPSC and for CHTs and HTs it is done by the Departments itself.

- 2.7 **Parho Punjab and Parhao Punjab:** Taking serious note of the unsatisfactory learning levels of students particularly at primary stage of schooling, the State of Punjab launched, the state flagship Learning Enhancement Program 'Padho Punjab Padhao Punjab (PPPP) in all government schools from classes 1st to 8th to ensure age and class appropriate levels of learning of students in a time bound manner since 2017. This programme focuses on enhancement of creativity of the brilliant students and emphasizes on strengthening their capabilities. It also puts stress upon educating each child with the thrust on their understanding of concept. Under this programme the students' learning is assessed and they are put into different groups as per their learning levels. Teachers have been trained to use activity-based teaching learning techniques to improve the learning levels of the students and to move students to the next higher level of learning in a time bound manner. It is heartening to note that the Programme PPPP, as shown in the section ' Learning Outcomes', is effectively improving the learning outcomes of children.

In order to continue this programme during COVID-19 pandemic time capacity building of teachers of all subjects has been done on how to use IT tools for effective teaching learning. Punjab Educare App has been developed as a reservoir of all study materials for all subjects for all the classes 1-12. Continuous 11 hour online teaching is being done through e-Vidya and DD-I. Further, online tracking, evaluation and monitoring of

each child is being done regularly in a systematic way. Parent-Teacher Meetings have been organized regularly after an interval of two months.

- 2.8 **Mission Sat Pratishat:** As discussed earlier, the State flagship Learning Enhancement Program ‘**Padho Punjab Padhao Punjab**’ (PPPP) has been launched in all government schools from classes 1st to 12th to ensure age and class appropriate levels of learning of students in a time bound manner. The learning level of students has started improving through the Learning Enhancement Program PPPP. The ASER report shows a significant improvement in the learning level of students of Punjab.

Further, the Board results for the year 2019-20 for class 10+2 has gone up to **96.95% from 88.36% in the year 2018-19; thereby, recording an improvement by more than 28% over a period of three years.**

- 2.9 **Welcome Life:** Apart from the focus on the academic learning of children in schools, the state of Punjab has initiated various programs like making school children aware of ill effects of drugs, and how to be protective from the incidences of sexual abuse. The school curriculum contains contents relating to sensitizing our students about human rights, gender equality promotion of a culture of peace and non violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversities within India and at the global level. New subject 'Welcome Life' is introduced in all classes from 1st to 12th to inculcate values like ethics, positive attitude, gender equality etc. through stories, activities, mind maps, situation-based questions and role plays.

- 2.10 **E-governance in the working of the Department:** To expedite the completion of teachers’ service-related matters without any delay in a transparent way, the department has initiated the process of inducting e-

governance dispensing with the necessity to apply through papers and by visiting offices personally. Virtually all data related to schools, students and teachers are computerized and uploaded on e-Punjab portal on the website of the Department. Special instructions have been given to officers at the Head Quarter and districts not to demand any information from schools if it is already available on portal. Routine service matters of teachers like their leaves, transfers and grievance redressal are done online. Some of the IT interventions and e-Governance initiatives undertaken are listed as under:

2.10.1 Online School Management System ePunjabSchool.

2.10.2 e-office: For tracking of diary/dak and file movements.

2.10.3 GIS Mapping of schools: GIS coordinates of all Government Schools have been collected and mapped on online system.

2.10.4 Unification of portals: All portals and websites of the Department of School Education have been clubbed into single portal.

2.10.5 Mobile Applications: School Login, Staff Login, Mobile Biometric Attendance System, My office, MDM Monitoring.

2.10.6 Biometric Attendance system has been implemented in All Government schools across Punjab.

2.10.7 Following Software have been introduced during last one year:

2.10.7.1 Online Leave Management System

2.10.7.2 Online tracking of Disciplinary Actions of employees

2.10.7.3 Online Medical Bills and Service Books

2.10.7.4 No dak is being collected from schools

2.10.7.5 Mid-Day Meal Register is done away with

2.10.7.6 Online clearance of extension in service

2.10.7.7 Online pension clearance

2.10.7.8 Online attendance of students

2.10.7.9 NOC to private schools

2.10.7.10 RTE recognition to private schools

2.10.7.11 Retirement / resignation applications

2.11 Recruitments: The Department has been making efforts to fill all posts of teachers and school heads through direct and promotion method on regular basis. In the year 2020-21 department has been filling 15080 posts under various cadres, break up thereof is as under:

Name of Post	Number of Posts
Pre-Primary Teachers	8393
Elementary Teachers	2364
Subject Teachers	3704
Lecturers	21
Head Master	337
BPEO	75
DPE	13
Principal	173
TOTAL	15080

2.12 Rationalization Policy: Because of variations in enrolment in schools over the years, the deployment of teachers needs to be reviewed from time to time in order to utilize the services of teachers optimally. Rationalization policy for deployment of teachers was proposed by the department and same has been approved by CM in the meeting held on

02.01.2019. The rationalization policy is available at www.ssapunjab.org.

- 2.13 Teacher Transfer Policy:** With the objective of deployment of human resources in an optimal, fair and transparent manner and to protect academic interests of students and to maximize job satisfaction amongst employees of education department, a policy was prepared and approved from the Cabinet. A software has been prepared to do transfers of teachers on-line. Transfer policy has been implemented and online applications were invited for transfers in 2019-20. Transfers of teachers have been done on-line as per policy this year. The transfer policy is available at www.ssapunjab.org. Now department has also notified the transfer policy for Non-teaching staff, Computer Teachers and Education providers/EGS/AIE/STR volunteers working under PICTES.
- 2.14 Regularizations of Teachers:** Approximately 9.000 teachers have been regularized working under different societies. Department has also regularized the services of teachers recruited under 5178 recruitment process.
- 2.15 Grading of Schools:** In order to develop healthy competition among schools, the Department of School Education of Punjab has institutionalized a system of grading all the Senior Secondary and High Schools. Grading of schools is being done on the parameters such as annual result of students, infrastructure of school, co-curricular activities: attendance of students, involvement of SMC and public in schools. Based on this grading system the Department identifies the best school in the block, district and in the State. The policy of grading of

school in available at www.ssapunjab.org. The parameters for grading of schools along with marks assigned to each parameter are:

Sr.No	Parameters	Marks
1	Annual results of students	50
2	Infrastructure of school	20
3	Co-curricular activities	15
4	Attendance of students	10
5	Involvement of SMC/Public	5

2.16 Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan: The scheme of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan is being implemented from Pre-Primary to senior secondary level. The objective of the scheme is 100% school access, 100% enrollment of children of age group 4-18, 100% retention, zero dropout, quality education and enhanced learning outcomes. The fund sharing pattern of the scheme is 60:40 for Central and State respectively. Under this scheme, an amount of Rs. 1294.42 crore has been approved by Govt. of India for the year 2020-21. The approved budget is being utilized for various activities given as below:

- 2.16.1** Free uniforms are being provided to all girls and SC/ST/BPL boys studying in classes 1st to 8th in govt. schools.
- 2.16.2** Free textbooks have been distributed to Non-SC students of classes 1st to 8th in government and government aided schools.
- 2.16.3** Special training is being provided to 2593 Out-of-School children (OOSC) identified in the age group 7-14 years for mainstreaming them into regular schools.
- 2.16.4** As many as 67716 Children with special needs are being provided home based education.
- 2.16.5** Pre-Primary classes are being run in all primary schools for children in 4-6 year age group.

- 2.16.6** Solar panel system is being installed in govt. schools.
- 2.16.7** Smart classrooms are being established in government primary, middle, high and senior secondary schools.
- 2.16.8** For enhancing the learning level of students *Padho Punjab Padhao Punjab* (PPPP) project is being carried out at primary & upper-primary level.
- 2.16.9** Vocational Education is being provided in 955 government senior secondary schools.
- 2.16.10** To enhance quality of education, systematic teacher training is being imparted to all the government school teachers.
- 2.16.11** Computer Education is being provided from classes 6th to 12th in government schools of Punjab.
- 2.16.12** Sports equipments and library material have been provided in all the government schools of Punjab.
- 2.17 Green Boards and Furniture Drive:** 24145 Green Boards and 41000 dual desks have been provided in primary schools. Apart from this, department has also provided 14010 tables and 70050 chairs to the schools for Pre Primary students. By the end of this financial year the furniture will be provided in all the primary schools. Department has also started a drive to rationalize the furniture in schools.
- 2.18 Sports and Physical Education:** The Department has notified Sports Policy 2018 under which sports and physical activities have been made inseparable part of school activities. In addition, it also involves students in various types of co-curricular activities for fostering creative and developing other potentialities of the students. In the year 2020-21, funds of Rs. 18.16 crore have been released to all the government schools of Punjab @ Rs 5000/- , Rs 10000/- and Rs 25000/- to Primary,

Middle and High/ Senior Secondary schools respectively for providing sports equipment. An additional grant of Rs 6.36 crores has been disbursed to 498 schools for development of play grounds. For the renovation of 45 Gymnasium Halls, the department has disbursed Rs 2.64 crores.

- 2.19 Children with Special Needs:** In the year 2019-20, as many as 70219 children with special needs were provided various facilities like home based education, resource room support, treatment and surgical correction. During the year 2020-21, home based education is being provided to 67716 children with special needs.
- 2.20 Mid-Day-Meal:** During the financial year 2019-20 Mid-Day Meal has been provided to 13.81 lac students with the expenditure of Rs 265.49 crore. In the year 2020-21, 16.95 lac students have been provided foodgrains directly at their doorsteps and the cooking cost has been deposited in their bank accounts with an expenditure of Rs. 273.75 crore till 31-12-2020.
- 2.21 Vocational Education:** In the year 2019-20 vocational education was provided to students of 955 Govt. Senior Secondary Schools. Vocational Education is being continued in these 955 Govt. Senior Secondary Schools during the year 2020-21. Trades such as Agriculture, Automobile, Beauty & Wellness, Healthcare, IT/ITES, Physical Education, Retail, Security and Travel & Tourism are being taught under this program.
- 2.22 School Leadership Development programme:** The Department has imparted training on Leadership and Motivation to 672 Head Masters and 154 Principals in collaboration with Indian School of Business (ISB).

2.23 Teacher Training: To enhance quality of education, rigorous teacher training was imparted to all the Govt. school teachers in the year 2019-20. In the year 2020-21, training has been provided to 65462 teachers through online mode.

3.0 Initiatives taken by the Department to provide online education to the students during COVID-19 pandemic time: Ever since the declaration of closure of schools in the last week of March 2020 in the state, in an attempt to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of School Education, Government of Punjab has been making multiple efforts to mitigate the immediate impact of school closures. Several initiatives are being taken to facilitate the continuity of education of children through different modes of remote teaching and learning. Punjab state, which already had been taking many initiatives for digital education in schools in the state, immediately came on its toes in making their teachers use various available modes to teach children from distance. Fortunately, the e-content had already been prepared for almost all classes and for almost all subjects and was being streamed through Edusat. With the help of its teachers, officers, and some NGOs, many initiatives have been taken in the field of education to wade through the current scenario. Some of the prominent initiatives taken by the Department of School Education are listed below:

S.No.	Initiative	Description
3.1	Mobile App(s)	Some mobile apps launched to facilitate e-schooling of students in Punjab amid the COVID-19 pandemic, 1. " <i>Isuela Learn</i> " which was started by Department in Aug 2019 was a great help in handling the problems of students as fallout of school closures. Presently more than 1.45 lac users are using this app

		<p>which caters to students from class 1st to 10th.</p> <p>Material like syllabus content, training videos, instruction videos are provided by the Department through this app. The app also has an in-built monitoring system to track how the users are using this app.</p> <p>The app is child friendly and compatible with Android as well as iPhone and also has various other features including Feedback, Dashboard with Push Notifications, Knowledge wall, Quizzes and Interactive modules.</p> <p>ii) Another app named '<i>Parho Punjab Parhao Punjab</i>' is also quite popular which is developed by teachers of the Department. This app provides reading material separately to teachers and students. Teachers are teaching (6 main subjects viz. Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Punjabi, Hindi and English subjects) to classes 6th to 10th through this app. It has syllabus, books, related videos, solutions, online tests and assignments. Apart from this some other features are also added in the app e.g. <i>Today's word</i>, <i>Uddan</i> and assignments sent by the Department which are updated on daily basis.</p> <p>The Department has now merged different mobile apps into one app to avoid any sort of duplication and confusion.</p>
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3.2	YouTube Channel (named “Edusat Punjab”)	The Department of School Education had compiled all the lectures delivered to the students of various classes. These lectures have been put on a single “You Tube” channel which has been created by the Department. All lectures particularly pertaining to the syllabus to be covered in different month have been put at one place and specific link has been conveyed to the schools and the teachers.
3.3	Radio	The Department of School Education started streaming lectures on All India Radio, Patiala FM 100.2 daily 1 hour w.e.f. April 30, 2020 for Social Science. Hindi, Science and English from classes 6th to 10th.
3.4	E-books	Punjab School Education Board uploaded e-books on its website. SCERT further segregated the chapters on all subjects and made PDF files. These PDF files had been individually made available to the schools through various social media and also put on the website of the Department. A link has been provided through the Google Drive from where these specific chapters to be covered in specific month can be taken out by the students and the teachers. Some of the schools are even exploring the possibility of taking the books from the senior students and giving it to the junior students without compromising any restrictions imposed due to lockdown.

3.5	WhatsApp	Teaching learning process had been actively initiated by the Department even before the lockdown in the state. Students' whatsapp groups for each grade had already been created. Subject teachers post daily assignments in such groups according to the distribution of syllabus. Teachers also organize classes, give assignments and check the homework assignments through whatsapp group. Small tests in the form of quizzes are being conducted through whatsapp using Google form link and reports are automatically generated for the participants. The analysis of data of results can be easily done by the teachers.
3.6	Orientation of teachers, heads and district administration	Department is doing orientation of teachers, heads & district administration through Zoom App
3.7	DTH/Cable TV Channel	Daily 4 hrs slot on DTH channel Swayam Prabha-20 for classes 6th, 7th, 8th, 12th Classes (available on DD free dish, Dish TV, Fastway cable Jio TV App) Daily 5hrs slot on DTH/Cable TV channel DD Punjabi for 9th, 10th and Primary (3rd to 5th classes) (available on DD Free Dish, Airtel Dish, Videocon d2h, Tata Sky, Fastway Cable, Dish TV, Sun Direct and Reliance Big TV).
3.8	Online Admission	Each school created Online performa as directed by state HQ for online admissions. School heads and teachers individually interacted with parents/ students

		and motivating them for online admissions. Dedicated nodal officers have also been deputed at state level for all districts for this purpose.
3.9	Virtual Parent Teacher Meeting	As physical PTM is not possible amid the COVID-19 pandemic scenario, Virtual Parent Teacher Meeting are being organized in collaboration with <i>Sanjhi Sikhya</i> , an NGO to understand the concerns of parents, build meaningful relations between parents and teachers and to inform the parents about the department's policy on learning and take feedback from parents.
3.10	Smart Phones	Due to COVID 19, the studies of the students have affected badly. Punjab Government has introduced a new scheme named as Punjab Free Smartphone 2020 to connect and empower the students of the state. Under this scheme, the state government is giving smart phones to students of 11th and 12th classes studying in government schools. There are approximately 1.78 lakh beneficiary of this scheme.
3.11	Punjab Achievement Survey (PAS)	After aligning the curriculum, text books and assessment system to Learning Outcomes as per the guidelines of NCERT, Punjab is conducting Punjab Achievement Survey (PAS) online on the pattern of National Achievement Survey (NAS) to assess learning status of government and aided school students and find gaps for taking remedial measures

		and to strengthen the school education system of the State. Students from primary to 12th class are participating in this assessment test.
3.12	Online teacher training	With the help of Dev Samaj College of Education, Chandigarh, the Department has conducted a training program 'Learning to Teach Online' for our 100 teachers to build their capacity specially to teach through various online modalities amid the COVID-19 pandemic time. As this programme has been highly appreciated by our teachers, the Department of School Education has entered into an MOU with Dev Samaj College to upload online module of this course on Diksha portal to provide this training to all our teachers.