School Education Reforms in Delhi
2015 - 2020

An independent report by
BCG Boston Consulting Group
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## Abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.Ed.</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
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<td>B.A.</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts</td>
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<td>BaLA</td>
<td>Building as Learning Aid</td>
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<td>BCG</td>
<td>Boston Consulting Group</td>
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<td>BEO</td>
<td>Block Education Officer</td>
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<td>BRCC</td>
<td>Block Resource Centre Coordinator</td>
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<td>BRP</td>
<td>Block Resource Person</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Chartered Accountant</td>
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<td>CAGR</td>
<td>Compound Annual Growth Rate</td>
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<td>CBSE</td>
<td>Central Board of Secondary Education</td>
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<td>CCTV</td>
<td>Closed Circuit Television</td>
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<td>CM</td>
<td>Chief Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>SARS-CoV2 coronavirus of 2019</td>
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<td>CS</td>
<td>Chief Secretary</td>
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<td>CTET</td>
<td>Central Teacher Eligibility Test</td>
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<td>DC</td>
<td>Deputy Commissioner</td>
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<td>DCB</td>
<td>Delhi Cantonment Board</td>
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<td>DCM</td>
<td>Deputy Chief Minister</td>
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<td>DCPCR</td>
<td>Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>DDE</td>
<td>Deputy Director of Education</td>
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<td>DEO</td>
<td>District Education Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIET</td>
<td>District Institute of Education and Training</td>
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<td>DoE</td>
<td>Department of Education</td>
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<td>EMC</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum</td>
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<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focused Group Discussion</td>
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<td>FLN</td>
<td>Foundational Learning &amp; Numeracy</td>
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<td>HC</td>
<td>Happiness Curriculum</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>HoS</td>
<td>Head of School</td>
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<td>IAS</td>
<td>Indian Administrative Service</td>
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<td>INR</td>
<td>Indian Rupee</td>
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<td>JVS</td>
<td>Jeevan Vidya Shivir</td>
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<td>M.Ed.</td>
<td>Master of Education</td>
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<td>MA</td>
<td>Master of Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCD</td>
<td>Municipal Corporation of Delhi</td>
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<td>MIS</td>
<td>Management Information System</td>
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<td>MLA</td>
<td>Member of Legislative Assembly</td>
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<td>MT</td>
<td>Mentor Teacher</td>
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<td>NCC</td>
<td>National Cadet Corps</td>
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<td>NDMC</td>
<td>New Delhi Municipal Corporation</td>
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<td>NEP</td>
<td>National Education Policy</td>
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<td>PhD</td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy</td>
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<td>PTM</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Meeting</td>
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<td>PTR</td>
<td>Pupil-Teacher Ratio</td>
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<td>PWD</td>
<td>Public Works Department</td>
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<td>RTE</td>
<td>Right to Education</td>
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<td>SCERT</td>
<td>State Council of Educational Research and Training</td>
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<td>SMC</td>
<td>School Management Committee</td>
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<td>TaRL</td>
<td>Teaching at the Right Level</td>
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<td>TDC</td>
<td>Teacher Development Coordinator</td>
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<td>TLM</td>
<td>Teaching Learning Methods</td>
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<td>TOC</td>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>UGC</td>
<td>University Grants Commission</td>
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<td>UPSC</td>
<td>Union Public Service Commission</td>
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<td>UT</td>
<td>Union Territory</td>
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<td>VC</td>
<td>Video Conference</td>
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Context of the Report

Delhi’s education reforms, carried out between 2015 and 2020, have generated significant excitement as well as debate in the Indian education ecosystem. The Government’s re-election, partly credited to the education reforms, has piqued curiosity further. In the course of our education work across the country, we have had several people, from Ministers and bureaucrats to block officials and teachers, ask us: “Dilli model ke baare mein bataiye. Kya kiya hai unhone?” (“Tell us about the Delhi Model. What have they done?”). This report is an attempt to answer that persistent question!

Over the last seven years, BCG has supported states such as Haryana (between 2014-17), Rajasthan (ongoing since 2015) and the SATH states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha (ongoing since 2017) with designing and implementing systemic transformation roadmaps cutting across various administrative and academic reforms. Thanks to the leadership in each of these states, there has been gradual improvement on both system parameters as well as learning outcomes.

Facilitated by DCPCR, the Government of Delhi provided access to extensive data and information as well as internal and external stakeholders across levels. This report, however, is an independent document, a dispassionate and objective view of our in-depth analysis and what we saw, heard, and learnt. An introductory overview of Delhi’s education system and a detailed articulation of the methodology of our study can be found in Appendix 3 and 4, respectively.

1 Over the last seven years, BCG has supported states such as Haryana (between 2014-17), Rajasthan (ongoing since 2015) and the SATH states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha (ongoing since 2017) with designing and implementing systemic transformation roadmaps cutting across various administrative and academic reforms. Thanks to the leadership in each of these states, there has been gradual improvement on both system parameters as well as learning outcomes.

Exhibit C.1
Several states in the country want to replicate Delhi’s Education Model

Indian States That Want To Replicate Delhi’s Path-Breaking Educational Model

What the Delhi school education model is and why Maharashtra is looking to emulate it

Delhi School Happiness Curriculum: Four states to replicate model, Details here

Source: Press search
Executive Summary

Has Delhi’s school system transformed?

The evidence suggests that there is definitely an impact on learning outcomes: Board results (Central Board of Secondary Education [CBSE]) have shown a steady increase (reaching 98 percent pass percentage in Class 12 in 2020) and have improved at a faster rate in both Classes 10 and 12 than private schools and the national average in the last five years. There is improvement in Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) outcomes in Classes 6 to 8 as well, although much remains to be done. New curricular elements such as Happiness Curriculum (HC) and Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC) have been received positively. Student attendance is improving and students also attested to increased teacher attendance and engagement during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

However, this is not what stands out. In our view, the true impact of Delhi’s reforms has been vitalizing the entire system and infusing a sense of renewed aspiration, belief, and deep motivation into every stakeholder - be it the parent, the student, the teacher, the HM or the administrator.

The degree to which this has happened in Delhi is not something that we have seen in any other seemingly similar education transformation efforts across the country. In our experience, systems transformation efforts in education often tend to breakdown at the last mile. Several well-intentioned reforms struggle to filter down to the school and classroom level. As a result, it is not uncommon to encounter deep cynicism about government schools in field stakeholders or even hear senior administrators opine that the best that government can do is enable private schools to provide a meaningful standard of education to the populace.

Delhi however has seemingly struck at the heart of this challenge and engineered a very different sentiment. To us, this change is the most valuable and sustainable because it will fuel further transformation and continue to amplify the student learning gains in many years to come.

2 BCG Delhi parent survey, August 2020.

Mehenat-mazdoori karne wale log pehele sapne dekha nahi karte the. Magar Dilli sarkar ne education ke liye toh unko sapne dekhne ka mauka de diya hai. Ab sab khoob bade bade sapne dekhte hai.

- Parent, Delhi government school

[“Working class people never dreamed earlier. But Delhi government has made it possible – especially for education. Now we have big dreams!”]
Executive Summary

Given this massive public movement, it is not surprising that Delhi’s education reforms have contributed in some measure to the electoral success of the government. The school education department is typically the single largest department in any state. Even in a city-state like Delhi, it has more than 50,000 employees, directly reaches approximately 15 lakh government school students and their families, and indirectly reaches another 18 lakh students in private schools. While such large systems often tend to be status-quoist, Delhi has demonstrated that the size of the system is an opportunity in disguise: If the system can be sufficiently mobilised and energised, the scale of the impact is potentially unprecedented. What can we learn from this?

Delhi has proven a simple but revolutionary idea – Education reforms can help win elections

As many as 95% of parents in our survey indicated that Delhi’s education reforms have had a significant positive impact. 95% of Delhi’s teachers reported the same. Across interviews and surveys, the vast majority of the education system in Delhi, - parents, Heads of Schools (HoS), teachers, administrators, and even students, spoke a common language, shared a mutual vision, and appeared personally motivated to be future change agents.

What did Delhi do?

One way of looking at Delhi’s education reforms is to see it as a list of interventions – In this narrative, Delhi upgraded its infrastructure, implemented key teaching-learning reforms (FLN, group by learning level), and invested in the training and capacity building of its HoS and teachers. In our experience, the typical response to this articulation is “But we are also doing the same things”. This response would not be far off the mark. It is indeed true that almost every state in India is already attempting to implement similar reforms.

In addition to what is done elsewhere, Delhi prioritised three unique sets of initiatives that potentially had the most widespread impact: ensuring inputs (teachers & high quality infrastructure), a deep level of community & HoS engagement, and introduction of Happiness and Entrepreneurship Mindset Curricula.

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The unprecedented investment in infrastructure is by far the most cited driver of change in the minds of all stakeholders including HoS, teachers, students, and parents. As many as 87 percent parents and 77 percent teachers, who were recently surveyed as part of this report, mentioned that they have witnessed significant changes in infrastructure over the past five years. Almost all of them cited it as one of the key drivers of motivation and many even credited it with an impact on learning outcomes. This was backed by the recruitment of 17,200 teachers (regular & guest) which radically improved overall PTR from 31.2 to 25.8 and was potentially a major factor in Board result improvement.\(^4\)

The strengthening of SMCs and parent engagement through PTMs, coupled with principal leadership development programs are the second set of interventions that stand out as a tool of governance. 83 percent of SMC members believe that SMCs have contributed towards improvement of school governance and 93 percent of parents reported attending PTMs, with varying frequencies.

Thirdly, while impact is still nascent and unclear, the unique Happiness and Entrepreneurship Mindset Curricula have also garnered widespread acclaim,\(^5\) were appreciated by 29 percent of teachers and most students in our FGDs, and are core to Delhi’s reforms.

A detailed and step-by-step understanding of how to design and roll-out various initiatives in Delhi is available in the accompanying “Intervention Handbook”.

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**Exhibit ES.1**

Parents appreciate key reforms in Delhi

“SMC hone ke karan ek ‘sense of ownership’ aa gayi hai, kyunki humaare bacche bhi inhi schools mey padhte hai, toh jitna hum karenge utna unko laabh hoga.”

[“SMCs have helped to create a “sense of ownership” because our children go to the schools, they will benefit through our work.”]

Happiness classes ke karan meri bacchi mey jo hesitation aur darr hua karta tha vo hatt gaya. Ab vo humse zada baat karti hai, zada cheezey batati hai aur khud ko express kar paati hai.”

[“Because of the Happiness classes, my daughter does not hesitate as much as she used to. She talks more and is able to express herself.”]

“Pehele na toh school mey saaf safai hoti thi, na hi peene ka paani. Magar abhi itna badhiya bana diya hai ki mere baccho ko private schools jaisi suvidhaye sarkaari school mey mil rahi hai.”

[“Earlier schools lacked cleanliness and clean drinking water. But now things have improved so much that my children are receiving private school-like facilities.”]

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\(^4\) Between 2015 and 2020, 13298 regular teachers were hired and net increase in total number of guest teachers was 3940. Source: Directorate of Education

Executive Summary

Delhi’s approach to education and its early success is not as much about the initiatives undertaken but more about the philosophy and Theory Of Change (TOC) that underpinned them. In other words, the second way of looking at Delhi’s reforms is that it is not about the what but the how.

Delhi is not the typical governance reform model where initiatives are designed and implemented by the leadership and tracked rigorously in the field. It is also not the ‘let many partners in’ model where numerous organisations - consultants, NGOs and other civil society organisations are invited into the state, to support an array of reforms. The Delhi Model is different. It relies on understanding and leveraging core human behaviours of the people already within the system – most critically the frontline. It is a model that puts faith as well as power in the hands of its frontline – HoS, teachers, SMCs, students, and parents. It is a model that believes that once you excite and empower this group, once you win over their loyalty and commitment, they will be the changemakers that the system needs.

Through the course of our study, we identified seven key principles that are deeply embedded into Delhi’s education reforms. These underpin every initiative and action that the government has implemented.

These are:

1. **Invest in building a compelling, powerful, and shared vision**
2. **Share power with those who are best placed to act**
3. **Win the frontline’s commitment - through respect, care, and dignity**
4. **Invite the field to play a role; give them a ‘voice’**
5. **Engage directly and deeply with the field**
6. **Develop an outcome orientation**
7. **Build a culture of celebration and recognition**

It is but natural to dismiss these themes as impractical and idealistic; that cannot be replicated in larger states. Do reconsider. After extensive study and analysis, we have come to strongly believe these principles can be applied in any state or system. State-wide transformation does not always take the form of big-bang reforms but subtle actions that reinforce these principles and drive people forward.

Exhibit ES.2 details how Delhi applied these principles to its reforms process.
1. **Invest in building a compelling, powerful, and shared vision**

All stakeholders from the Department leadership to field officials, principals, etc. should be aligned on a common vision and action plan to transform school education.

**Jeevan Vidya Shivir workshop** in Raipur where DCM and around 50 senior leaders spent 8 days away from office discussing and reflecting on how to improve education. Everyone emerged with a clear and common action plan.

2. **Share power with those who are best placed to act**

Empower critical field stakeholders, especially HoS and SMCs so that they can act independently and resolve issues at their level, and increase the efficiency of the system.

**Increased financial powers of Secretary (from INR 10 cr to INR 50 cr), Director (from INR 2 cr to INR 10 cr), Principals (from INR 5,000 to INR 50,000) and SMCs (from INR 2 lakh to INR 5-7 lakh)** allowing each of them to take decisions that otherwise took lengthy approvals.

3. **Win the frontline through respect, care, and dignity**

Identify and address the issues that truly matter the most to grassroots stakeholders. Aim to instil a sense of dignity in all stakeholders.

- High quality staffrooms and refurbished training venues for teachers
- Personalised letters/cards for parents and SMC members
- Deputy CM commenting on a teacher’s blog

4. **Invite the field to play a role; give them a ‘voice’**

Allow the field to participate in decision making and designing better solutions. This will increase field ownership of programs. Design for flexibility so that concerns of stakeholders are addressed.

- Teacher training topics and design made relevant basis bottom-up feedback from all teachers
- HoS had flexibility to modify Chunauti grouping to fit school context
- SMC given freedom to decide if summer camps are needed

5. **Engage directly and deeply with the field**

Engage deeply with schools and field stakeholders to truly understand the ground reality and concerns. Also engage strategically to increase field morale, spread program awareness, and build alternate feedback channels.

- Weekly school visits by all senior stakeholders including Minister and IAS officers
- Direct WhatsApp communication between Minister and SMC members for real-time feedback

6. **Develop an outcome orientation**

Create a culture where officials as well as principals and teachers are held accountable to measurable outcomes rather than ‘just’ inputs and processes.

- Principals expected to answer to outcomes during school visits
- 3rd party verification of learning outcomes to ensure authentic data-based outcome accountability
- Carrot and stick approach to reinforce importance of meeting outcome goals

7. **Build a culture of celebration and recognition**

Go beyond typical rewards systems. Build a culture where every progress is celebrated, change agents are motivated through public recognition, and all stakeholders are infused with pride and positivity.

- Indian Ocean and celebrities were invited to perform at awards event
- Pictures of high-performing teachers put on the Delhi Metro
- Celebratory events held at schools for incoming student batch
The final learning is about two other enabling factors, both related to leadership, that lie at the heart of the Delhi Model.

Firstly, Delhi’s model was driven by an unwavering political will and the leadership of its Chief Minister, Arvind Kejriwal and Deputy Chief Minister, Manish Sisodia

While the CM invariably led the ideation and proposal stage, the DCM personally oversaw design and implementation of almost every initiative and was always accessible to every teacher and SMC parent in Delhi. In the course of our research, we are yet to conduct an FGD where participants have not praised his personal involvement.

Exhibit ES.3
Deputy Chief Minister’s personal leadership

Communication of Clear Vision
- All senior stakeholders were taken on an 8-day workshop to align on a common strategy and roadmap
- Vision and goals for Delhi was repeatedly communicated to the field through multiple channels including school visits, speeches, conferences etc.

Personal Engagement with All Stakeholders
- Regular field visits to talk directly with students, teachers, and parents
- Direct interactions with principals who could call him or come to his house; SMC members connected through WhatsApp
- Personally familiar with entire Department – not just Directors but DEOs, NGOs, and initiative leaders
- Personally review various initiative; at least once a week; personally lead multiple day deliberations and workshops on key learning reforms

Action Bias: Get Things Done
- Take bold decisions – Think out of the box and personally sign off on decisions when bureaucrats may be reluctant
- Strong relationship with CM – to ensure education is given due importance and important decisions are expedited
- Build a team and delegate power to let them take action and get things done
Secondly, the Education Minister was backed by a well-functioning and cohesive leadership team that consisted of external experts in addition to Department officials and bureaucrats.

These experts were brought into full-time formal positions in government and were also supported by a few carefully selected NGOs who augmented the State’s capacity on specific initiatives. Each person in this collective team had unique skills and capabilities and was responsible for one to two specific elements of the roadmap. This team acted as one unit – of equals – working together and supporting each other in mission mode to make transformation a reality.

The starting point will remain the presence of a leader (ideally an Education Minister) with the personal drive, ambition, and political will to invest in school education in the manner described above. While many of Delhi’s reforms can be implemented at the bureaucratic level too, political leadership will be critical to create the kind of success that Delhi has.

**Conclusion**

Finally, we will take the liberty to repeat a cliché: “Education transformation takes decades, not years”, and the lasting impact of Delhi’s efforts will be determined by time. Delhi still has more ground to cover. Enrolment and dropout trends are yet to show a sharp reversal. Currently, only 57 percent students who enter the system in Class 6 finish Class 12, primarily because of low Class 9 passing rates. This indicates that learning in Class 6 to 8 needs to be further strengthened as well. There is also significant demand from parents and students on support pathways after school education. These are some of the challenges that Delhi will have to address in coming years.

In the meantime, we hope that this report will serve as a useful tool to better understand the Delhi model and draw learnings for other states and systems around the country.

Can Delhi’s efforts be replicated?

It can be safely concluded that Delhi has made significant strides both in terms of student outcomes as well as an overwhelming change in people’s perceptions of the public education system. This has translated into massive public support for the reforms and for the Government. While Delhi seems unique on some fronts, we want to re-emphasize that what Delhi has done can easily be replicated, perhaps surpassed, anywhere across the country - even in larger, more complex states.
Pehele school mey na safai thi na paani peene ki vyavastha. Ab itna badhiya ho gaya hai ki kya batau. Mere baccho ko private school ki suvidha govt. school mey mil rahi hai!

[“Earlier schools lacked cleanliness and clean drinking water. But now things have improved so much that my children are receiving private school-like facilities.”]

School mey naye ped- paudhe, saaf - safai etc, ke baad attendance badh gayi hai kaafi. Yeh toh ‘human nature’ hai ki hum acche environment ki taraf jayenge!

[“Attendance has increased in school after cleanliness and better plants. It is ‘human nature’ to gravitate towards better environment.”]

Pehele bacche ke baare mey kuch pata nahi chalta tha. But, ab PTM ke karan teachers se baat karke pata chalti hai cheezey aur hum apne bacche ki madat kar paate hai

[“Earlier it was difficult to find out what our children were up to. After PTMs, teachers share with us issues and we can help our children better.”]

Mega PTM ke baad mere teacher ne mujhe accha feedback diya toh mere parents ne mujhe blackboard khareed ke diya taaki mai aur acche se padhu aur teacher banu

[“After Mega PTM, my teacher gave me good feedback and my parents bought me a blackboard so that I can study better and become a teacher”]
**Exhibit ES.4**
Select quotes from Focus Group Discussions

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**PTMs were very helpful, especially for students in Class XII. We could get their parents involved, which then helped us improve our school’s boards results**

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**SMCs ke karan hum ab school ke ‘governance’ ka hissa ban chuke hai. Humein ab badlav aur progress ke baare mey pata hota hai. “Equal partners” ban chuke hai hum.**

[“Thanks to the SMCs, we have become a part of the school’s ‘governance’. We know about the change and progress around us and are “equal partners.”]

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**Grouping ke karan ab baccho ki acchi mapping ho payi hai. Iske kaaran teachers ab zada concentrated dhyaan de paate hai weak baccho pe**

[“Because of the grouping, teachers can better concentrate on those students who need more attention”]

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**Annual teacher trainings badhiya ho gaye hai ab. 2 - sided hoti hai trainings ab toh acche se seekhne ko milta hai, jo ki hum fir classrooms mey use karte hai.**

[“Annual teacher trainings have become quite good. They are now 2-sided and this helps us to implement the learnings in the classroom”]
1. Delhi: A Model that Delivered On-ground Impact
**Key Takeaways**

**Improvement in learning outcomes, especially Board results**
- 98% passing in Class 12 (6 percent higher than Delhi’s private schools)
- 82.6% pass rate in Class 10; 13% increase in 2 years
- 10%-20% annual improvement among classes 6 to 8 students on foundational competencies

**Significant impact on system strengthening**
- Unparalleled motivation, energy, and momentum amongst all stakeholders (91% teachers who saw improvements believe that their motivation towards teaching has increased)
- Parents see themselves as partners in this journey (72% cite increased parent awareness and involvement)
- Large number of vacancies filled; visible improvement in infrastructure

**Several areas identified for further work**
- 58% pass percentage in Class 9 - still quite low
- 25% of students in Class 8 still do not possess foundational competencies
- Yet to see significant shift in enrolment from private schools to public ones (though erosion to private has reduced)
1. Delhi: A Model that Delivered On-Ground Impact

The Delhi Model has garnered a lot of publicity and attention. However, many still ask - *Is the impact real?* During this study, BCG investigated the stated impact of the reforms extensively. The methodology is detailed in Appendix 4. We examined the Central Board of Secondary Education’s (CBSE) results and Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) outcomes data deeply, corelating different data sets across time horizons and sources to test for veracity. In our qualitative conversations, we spoke not only with the leadership, middle management, and partner organisations, but also spent extensive time with the frontline – School Management Committees (SMCs), parents, Heads of Schools (HoS), students, and teachers. In-depth surveys of parents and teachers were also conducted – the results have been included across this report and summarized at the end.

### Systems Reforms at Boston Consulting Group

As BCG, we look at systems reform from two broad lenses.

1. **Did student outcomes improve through the reforms process?**
   - This could be students’ learning outcomes/academic success and also their enrolment and attendance.

2. **Did the system itself become stronger over the reforms period?**
   - Have the foundations of the school and Education department strengthened? Is the system better equipped to provide quality education in the longer term?

In this chapter, we will briefly explore both aspects.

### 1.1 A system that provides more to its students than before

The first indicator of the impact has been improvement in Board results, represented in Exhibit 1.1. In Class 12, the pass percentage has steadily increased from 88 percent in 2014-15 to 98 percent in 2019-20, outperforming private schools. It should, however, be kept in mind that the number of students appearing for Class 12 Boards has decreased over the years from 1.40 lakh students in 2015 to 1.11 lakh students in 2020. Beyond aggregate impact, there is improvement at a school level across the board. 580 out of 916 schools saw an increase in pass percentage in 2019-20, and 98 percent schools had a pass percentage in the 90-100 range, compared to 80 percent the previous year. The fact that the number of students who passed JEE mains has increased ten-fold from ~50 in 2015 to 510 in 2020 further substantiates the improvement at the senior secondary level.⁶

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### 1. Delhi: A Model that Delivered On-Ground Impact

Class 10 results also indicate a similar story. The overall pass percentage for the year 2019-2020 was 82.6 percent, a huge thirteen percent increase from 2017-18. At a school level, the share of schools with a pass percentage of less than 70 percent decreased from 37 percent in 2018-19 to 16 percent in 2019-20, indicating better performance in previously lagging schools. This has helped Delhi start catching up with the national average. However, some of this improvement may be attributed to as many as 72 percent of students taking the ‘Basic’ version of the Math exam, leading to a 15 percent increase in Math pass percent.

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7. 2017-18 has been taken as the base year for results analysis since it is the year that CBSE reverted from Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)-based internal-heavy evaluation to the mandatory Board exam and external evaluation format.
8. CBSE introduced the option for students to take ‘Basic Level’ of Mathematics for students who do not want to pursue Mathematics in higher studies. The Basic Level paper has a reduced difficulty level compared to the ‘Standard Level’.
1. Delhi: A Model that Delivered On-Ground Impact

Delhi’s class 10 results have been critiqued on the grounds that students have been failed in class 9 in large numbers. However, BCG’s analysis suggests that this is a superficial understanding.

Since 2015, the share of class 8 and 9 students writing the class 10 examination has not changed significantly. The transition rate from class 9 to 10 has in fact improved marginally – from 55 percent in 2015 to 59 percent in 2019.\(^9\)

While the transition rate reduced in 2014 & 2015, it has not deteriorated between 2015-20 and therefore does not account for the improved Board results thereon.

It is worth keeping in mind that all Delhi schools are affiliated to CBSE and therefore are subjected to much higher standards than typical state boards in any other state. Delhi is the only state in the country to ensure consistent year-on-year improvement over five years in Board results, eventually outperforming even private schools. However, the fact that private school and national average pass percentages (see Exhibit 1.1) have also increased (though by not as much) suggests that the Boards success story is still in its early days.

There has also been improvement in FLN because of programs like Buniyaad and Chunauti. For example, the percent of students who can perform division and the percent of students who can read advanced stories in Hindi increased by an average of 22 percent across classes 6 to 8 in 2018 and by an average of 10 percent in 2019. The gains were highest in class 6 in the range of 20-30 percent for different competencies. Similar gains were seen in classes 3 to 5 as well.\(^10\)

Although these gains need to be amplified in coming years, Delhi achieved its mission of “No Neo-Nishtha group” as there were only 0.4% and 0.7% students left in the beginner category (students who are at letter or number level) of Math and Hindi respectively as per the 2019-20 baseline.

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\(^9\) Transition rate is calculated as the share of total Class 9 enrollment that is enrolled in Class 10 in the successive year. Please note that transition rate may be low because of repeaters and double repeaters in Class 9 and is therefore different from the passing percentage (which does not include repeaters).

\(^10\) BCG analysed Class 3-8 school-level data from Chunauti and Buniyaad baseline-endlines but was not able to verify the accuracy inside classrooms because of the COVID-19 lockdown.
Lastly, while overall enrolments are stagnant, it is offset by two considerations:

- Primary school enrolments have increased at a rapid rate of 4.7% CAGR in the last three years while private schools’ growth slowed to 2.7%, indicating that students are beginning to prefer DoE schools over private and MCD schools.\(^{11}\)

- Although class 6 enrolment has seen a drop, this drop (11,000 in three years) is significantly lower than the corresponding drop in class 5 enrolments (24,000) in MCD schools that feed into the DoE schools. This implies that enrolments are actually increasing in DoE schools relative to the incoming cohort from MCD schools every year and may indicate a shift from private schools.

\(^{11}\) While in 2012, Municipal Corporation of Delhi was split into three new bodies, we use MCD as a blanket term across the report to denote municipal schools.
1.2 A system that has tasted success and is infused with ‘pride’ and ‘positivity’

The above outcome improvement, however, is only a small part of the impact of Delhi’s education reforms. Having worked in a number of states on education reforms, we often see fatigue within two to three years of the reforms exercise. Middle management and frontline workers are, at times, found wishing that the pace of reforms would lighten. In these instances, mission-mode, top-down implementation starts to bear diminishing returns.

Delhi, on the other hand, has been able to create real momentum across all stakeholders towards its reforms’ agenda. Whether it is the Department leadership or the middle management and District Institute for Education and Training (DIET) staff, or the frontline stakeholders like HoS, teachers, students, and parents – the entire ecosystem seems to be infused with positivity, motivation, and energy to drive Delhi’s education system further forward. This mindset change is potentially the biggest success of the Delhi model and may have far more long-term impact than some of the early gains in learning outcomes.

As many as 91 percent teachers reported having renewed enthusiasm and motivation, a fact corroborated by 73 percent of those parents who witnessed an overall positive change in teacher’s attitude and dedication (see Exhibit 1.3). Interestingly, it was not improved infrastructure, better leadership, or rewards and recognition programs, but teacher training that was the most cited driver of this motivation.

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Exhibit 1.3
Drivers of teachers’ motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved teacher training</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall positive environment</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved teacher facilities</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation from HoS, SMC and Parents</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation, rewards &amp; recognition</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect with Leadership</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 6,137 teachers - with improved motivation for teaching
2. Question: “What is the most important reason for this improvement in motivation”
3. These teachers couldn’t choose a specific reason and hence mentioned “overall positivity”
As detailed in subsequent chapters, Delhi started exposing some teachers to elite institutions in India and abroad. While only a small subset of teachers experienced this, Delhi also undertook a few simple steps such as making teacher training more interactive and activity-based and increasing the relevance of training by selecting topics on the basis of teacher feedback through a bottom-up process. These simple changes affected each and every teacher and transformed the value of teacher training, an exercise which engages every teacher in every state for many days in a year.

These motivation levels amongst teachers were often eclipsed by principals. Across each of our Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with school principals, the vast majority of participants clearly articulated an increased sense of empowerment and ownership over their schools. This was primarily attributed to the devolved financial and administrative powers and the various leadership development trainings to which they were exposed. Most of them were able to reflect on their own growth as school leaders and expressed a strong conviction that their self-improvement was leading to tangible improvements in school governance and, eventually, learning outcomes.

In a survey conducted across a representative and random sample of parents and teachers, over 95 percent parents and 95 percent teachers believed that the quality of education has improved significantly in Delhi in the last five years. (see Exhibit 1.4).
Overwhelmingly positive perception, of change at the ground - Primary credit given to infrastructural changes

The data above clearly highlights the role of infrastructure upgradation in bringing a sense of pride and positivity back into the system. First, 54 state-of-the-art schools were established across Delhi, which served as ‘model’ government schools. Additionally, 8,000 classrooms were added and 12,000 more were later commissioned in the second tranche. Beyond quantitative numbers, Delhi government also focused on qualitative improvements such as white-washing and painting of existing buildings, installation of new and modern mosaic tiles, electrical fittings, blackboards, benches, etc. Irrespective of stakeholder, infrastructure was cited as the primary driver of change in each of our FGDs. As many as 87 percent parents have mentioned that they have witnessed a tangible improvement in infrastructure in their child’s school. Across HoS, teachers, parents, and students – the fact that they now have access to a school that feels like a private school; the fact that they are in an environment which is both comfortable and appealing; the fact that inputs such as cushioned chairs, coffee machines in staffrooms, and high quality lighting and ventilation in classrooms has been made available has been a big driver in generating commitment and momentum. This may have had a learning impact as well. In our discussions with secondary school teachers, the pride and motivation from improved infrastructure stood out as a major contributing factor towards the improved Board results.
The school environment has changed – trees have been planted, and cleanliness and sanitation has improved a lot. We definitely enjoy going to school more. Teachers have also become more supportive and so student attendance has increased a lot.

- Student, Delhi government school

The increased mindset shift and energy isn’t limited to HoS, teachers, and parents, but is also palpable in SMC members. At least three out of four SMC members in each of our FGDs with SMCs expressed their increased role in school governance and the consequent impact on things like teacher attendance, infrastructure maintenance, etc. Delhi’s SMC reform is already the subject of a study by Harvard University.\^12

In our school, we received complaints that one of the teachers was not teaching properly. We therefore confronted the teacher and understood the reasons behind her lack of interest. Ever since, this has not been a problem anymore. In case we need to fix minor issues in the school, we have full autonomy over usage of funds and therefore get the issue fixed in a very prompt manner.

- School Management Committee Member, Delhi government school

"Earlier, the teacher would not come to the class. They would sit in the staffroom. Sometimes the class monitor was asked to take the class. Now the teachers have become very regular and also don’t get angry with us as often as before."

- Student, Delhi government school

Another visible shift is the changing nature of relationships across stakeholders – from distrust and distance to appreciation and collaboration. For example, the relationship between the HoS and SMCs, which was often a power struggle, has now become one of a true partnership in the shared mission of bettering the school. The parent community today genuinely appreciates the teachers and respects their commitment to their child’s development and the teachers in turn have come to value the role of the parent. As many as 73 percent parents credited the interaction with teachers and their increased commitment as one of the fundamental shifts in the system. Many students that we spoke to also spoke about the increased attention and care shown by teachers in recent years.

And finally, there is widespread belief that the political leadership of Delhi is well intentioned and mission-aligned to improving education.

Voices from the ground

substantiate the impact created

“Poore lockdown ke samay mera beta keheta raha ki, papa, school jana hai wapas”
[“During the entire lockdown my son kept insisting on going back to school”]

“itna badlav aa gaya hai ki mai apne bacche ko government school bhejke garv karta hu”
[“There is so much change, I am proud to send my child to a government school”]

“Bohot behtar huva hai, meri agli 20 saal ki family bhi sarkaari schools me hi padhegi!”
[“Things have improved a lot. For the next 20 years, my family will go to government schools”]

“Dilli ki padhai bohot better! Baccho ka system hi alag bana diya hai bikul!”
[“Delhi’s education system has improved. The system has changed completely”]

Exhibit 1.5
Parents’ feedback on Delhi’s reforms

13 BCG conducted a survey in August 2020 to capture parents’ feedback on the Delhi reforms.
1.3 This is not to say that Delhi’s reforms are complete

In our view, the biggest challenge for Delhi is that the class 9 pass percentage is still as low as 57.8 percent (for 2018-19) and has not improved significantly despite the learning reforms in classes 6 to 8.

To add to that, majority of students who fail in class 9 have not been able to avail meaningful opportunities through the modified Patrachar scheme which has seen a low enrolment of about 3000 and pass percent of 27-32%. Data as well as perception amongst the students suggest that Patrachar scheme has fallen short of its stated objective of supporting students who have failed regular exams.

While the increase in Board results is impressive, the number of students appearing for the Board exams has decreased from 1.67 lakh to 1.54 lakh in class 10 and 1.30 lakh to 1.11 lakh in class 12 between 2015 to 2020. Despite many years of remediation efforts, around 25 percent of students in class 8 still do not possess foundational competencies in literacy and numeracy (ability to do division and read advanced stories). The gains in Class 6 to 8 need to be strengthened much more to have meaningful impact in higher classes. Implementation of reforms like Chunauti also continue to face challenges such as inter-student discrimination.

Finally, otherwise successful interventions still have headroom for deeper implementation. To take one example, despite excellent progress in SMC strengthening, 63 percent of parents are not aware of SMCs and the role of SMCs is yet to be adequately strengthened in a few schools.

In terms of systems strengthening, Delhi has taken large strides forward but a few core challenges remain – 20% teacher vacancy and the long-pending implementation of DIET and State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) reforms. The role and capability of middle management (district staff) can also be further strengthened.
In summary, while we point out several areas of further action, we also feel extremely confident in endorsing the undeniable and substantial positive impact of the education reforms in Delhi – much more so than that we have observed in other parts of the country in similar timespans. The learning impact is nascent but improving every year; more importantly several key system reforms are in place that sets Delhi up for true transformation in the next few years.
Voices from the ground
highlight future focus areas for the government

“Padhai aur rozgari mey sambandh hai. Government ko jobs dii ana chahiye baccho ko ab”
[“There is a link between education and livelihoods. Government should give jobs to students”]

“Agar sarkari school mey ‘skilling courses’ padhaya jaye toh private se mukabla hoga”
[“If government schools start skilling courses, then it will be possible to compete with the private sector”]

“Sarkar ko saare schools samanta se dekhne chahiye - kuch schools mey kami hai kaafi”
[“All government schools should look the same – some schools still have gaps.”]

Exhibit 1.6
Parents’ feedback on Delhi’s reforms

BCG conducted a survey in August 2020 to capture parents’ feedback on the Delhi reforms.
2. Vision and Theory of Change
Key Takeaways

Delhi’s bold and unique vision for education

- Every child must have access to high quality public education, rivalling the best private schools anywhere in the country
- Redefining the purpose of education – not just academic knowledge but creating conscious and public-spirited citizens who contribute to progress of human society

What leads to change?

- Establish a culture of celebrating successes
- Engage deeply with the field and give stakeholders a voice in intervention design
- Provide dignity to the frontline including parents and teachers
- Put power in the hands of those who are closest to the ground – HoS & SMCs

Supported by unparalleled political will and personal involvement of political leaders
2. Vision and Theory of Change Behind the Reforms

Before we begin to understand ‘what Delhi did’, it is critical to understand the thinking that drove this model. For this, we lay out two elements - Delhi’s vision and goals for its education system and Delhi’s theory of change (TOC) with respect to the transformation.

2.1. Delhi’s education reforms aim to achieve two core purposes:

A. Every child must have access to high quality education, rivalling the best private schools anywhere in the country

High quality education is not charity, it is a human right for any child born anywhere in India. And therefore, providing high quality education to all is the primary duty of any elected government.

- Shri. Arvind Kejriwal, Chief Minister, Delhi government

Quality education, usually associated with expensive private schools, has typically been the preserve of the privileged in India. Despite increasing migration to private schools, few are able to access the quality of education afforded by elite private schools. Even within government schools, inequality persists with a few islands of quality while the majority of schools have poor conditions. The Delhi government’s primary belief was the need to address this inequality in education by ensuring equal access to quality education for all.

This sentiment has been repeated and reinforced by several senior leaders such as the Deputy Chief Minister (DCM), Manish Sisodia: “Our education model is only breaking the mindset and system where 5 percent get the best education and 95 percent the worst kind” and Atishi (Advisor to DCM): “To provide quality and accessible education to all, regardless of one’s ability to pay.”

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B. Beyond employment, education must create conscious and public-spirited citizens who contribute to the progress of human society

Public education in India typically tries to achieve a very narrowly defined set of goals. While most school systems will target improved Board results or learning outcome metrics; others may explicitly orient their system towards ensuring employability after school. A unique aspect of the Delhi government’s vision is its articulation of the objective of education as not being limited to just academic knowledge; but the development of good human beings and public spirited citizens of society.

In order to understand this guiding principle, it is also important to understand the Jeevan Vidya Shivir (JVS) discussions that inspired it – a visioning workshop to which thousands of HoS, teachers, and Department officials have been exposed.

Jeevan Vidya Shivir: Co-existence model of education

JVS encourages reflection on a model of education that inculcates the concept of co-existence among students. At the core of this vision is a critique of a model of education that is based on competition rather than collaboration and that aims to create resources that can be deployed as little more than tools in a market economy. The co-existence model of education, on the other hand, also places equal value on developing children’s emotional quotient and personalities such that they learn to prosper through collaboration and sharing of resources. In such an environment, children can grow into individuals who are self-confident, who can build organic and deep relationships with family, society, and nature, and lead a healthy lifestyle, contributing to societal development.

Inspired by the above thinking, Manish Sisodia explicitly links education as the solution to current social challenges in his book. “When we talk about world peace or global warming or ending wars, we think that governments or armed forces or science will achieve these aims….but we never ask if education can stop it? We have to show that education not only teaches a child math and science but also guarantees positive thoughts and good behavior.” While such quotes are typically perceived as romantic ideals, Delhi is probably the only state in the country to have adopted this ideal and tried to give it concrete shape in the form of the ‘Happiness Curriculum’.

The new curriculum is a firm step towards shaping better, happier human beings with improved values.

- Shri. Arvind Kejriwal, Chief Minister, Delhi government on launch of Happiness Curriculum

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2.2. Delhi’s theory of change for education transformation

There are several different models of transformative change in public education systems - both in India as well as in similar contexts in other countries.

Within India itself, different states and organisations have articulated competing theories of change. Some have laid emphasis on outcome-based incentives, accountability and governance systems, while yet others have championed middle-management capacity building and state capacity as the key drivers of education transformation. In the context of Delhi, the reforms were based on a unique theory of change that is described below.

A. Lead from the top – The Education Minister as the day-to-day champion of the reforms

In most states, the role of the political leadership in education has historically been limited. In Delhi, however, from day one of the Government formation, school education was identified and publicly announced as one of the primary political priorities. The first steps included bringing in the DCM as the Minister of Education and immediately increasing the education budget. This wasn’t just a superficial display of intent. Over the last five years, the involvement of the DCM has been higher from that observed in other states. Some examples of his deep involvement include:

- Leading the eight-day JVS workshops with his leadership team.
- Visiting schools regularly - and spending time engaging directly with students, parents, and teachers. These visits are not highly-managed affairs where everything was cleaned and shaped before his arrival, but a genuine and deep immersion.
- Attending every large awards function and many training events and speaking with the audience for hours to engage and motivate them.
- Spending personal time with SCERT teams and external experts to design new learning interventions (for example, the Happiness Curriculum (HC) and teacher training reforms).
- Connecting directly with all HoS and SMC members, and interacting with all NGOs, experts, and other officials in the Department over WhatsApp.
- Being available to any stakeholder for addressing an issue or a grievance.
- Reviewing progress frequently of various interventions to make sure that everyone was action oriented and momentum never lagged. For example: progress of infrastructure upgradation was personally reviewed once a week along with PWD, vendors, & relevant officials.

We estimate that the Education Minister visited 2-3 schools per week and spent more than half of his time on education despite being the DCM as well as holding the Finance portfolio.

The nature of the Minister’s engagement seems to have been highly reflective, collaborative and supportive. Across stakeholders spoken with, from HoS to SMCs to parents as well as NGO partners, we saw the Minister emerge as an inspiring and collaborative team leader and not a demanding commander.

Exhibit 2.1
Manish Sisodia’s active field involvement has been witnessed prominently

Manish Sisodia Terminates Services Of Government School Vice Principal

Manish Sisodia visits govt schools for inspection, tweets progress report

Delhi: Manish Sisodia visits government schools to inspect construction activities

Source: Press search

The benefits of such political involvement include:

- **Bolder decisions are taken faster**, especially those that require large budgets (for example, increasing the salary of contract teachers), innovative efforts (for example, foreign exposure trips for HoS and teachers, or the Happiness Curriculum) or significantly impact field staff (for example, asking all teachers to implement summer camps).

- **Easier to win the trust and the commitment of the larger ecosystem** (HoS, teachers, SMCs, and parents). When a political leader is involved it motivates the frontline, seeds the ‘winds of change’, and generates belief in transformation. It also sends a strong message of ‘*this must be done*’.

Role of MLAs

The intent of the senior political leadership permeates to other elected leaders like Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA) as well. MLA representatives played a crucial role in strengthening SMCs. They attended meetings and helped support parent members to play a deeper role in school governance. MLAs also personally supervised the school admission process, construction progress and grievance redressal during SMC Sabhas. Some MLAs even moved their own children to government schools to generate trust in government schools and change the mindset of people.²³

2. Vision and Theory of Change Behind the Reforms

Delhi’s education reforms were premised on the principle of building autonomous learning institutions.

While seemingly simple, this is a radical shift. In most public sector contexts in India, it is the district or state that is the unit of governance, where decision-making power is concentrated. Envisioning the school as an autonomous learning institution, however, necessitates reducing central control and devolving key powers to the HoS and the SMC.

Typically, school systems have attempted to reign in the power of these institutions through a web of rules and norms to prevent ‘misuse’. Delhi took a different approach by firstly, giving them substantial financial powers.

Every HoS was given increased financial powers of up to INR 50,000 for day-to-day school expenditure and SMCs were given increased funding up to INR five to seven lakh per school.

What this effectively meant was that expenditure requests that lay unattended in departmental offices were now processed quickly at the school level. Another significant power devolution was the ability of the HoS to hire contractual staff and experts as per requirements. This allowed schools to hire estate managers, cleaning staff, expert teachers for subjects like arts, sports, music, etc. as needed with minimal effort and procedural complications.

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Sisodia Ji ne mujhe mere birthday pe personal message bheja tha and appreciate kiya tha mera work ko. Yeh sabse zada motivating factor tha mere liye. Aisa kabhi bhi nahi socha tha ki koi minister personally appreciate karega mujhe.”

- School Management Committee Member, Delhi government school

[“Sisodia Ji sent me a personal message on my birthday and appreciated my work as well. This was the most motivating factor for me. I had never imagined that a minister would personally appreciate my work.”]
A consequence of empowering stakeholders at the grassroot level as the driver of both governance and transformation is that the role of the State becomes providing high-quality inputs (be it infrastructure, teachers, academic material, etc.) and creating the right enabling environment by motivating and empowering teachers to do their job. As noted by the Chief Minister (CM), “If we bring local community and school together with autonomy and state provides inputs, the state can almost move aside; schools will run on their own.”

The government invested funds and time in ensuring that schools had high-quality infrastructure, significantly increased the number of teachers through regular and contractual recruitment and provided additional manpower in the form of estate managers, safai karamcharis etc. to support day-to-day functions inside schools. A detailed breakdown of these inputs is available in the Intervention Handbook report.

Secondly, the HoS were given considerable autonomy to manage the school. For example, they were allowed to recommend the transfer of up to two teachers. While this was a power that could potentially be misused, instead it was rarely invoked and ended up empowering HoS to take ownership of their school. In another example, while clear norms were created for academic programmes like Buniyaad, all circulars reinforced the autonomy of the HoS to modify the intervention as per the needs of the school. While this meant sacrificing some efficiency and uniformity, it allowed the schools to implement the vision of the programme according to their own context.

Similarly, SMCs were also empowered. For example, they could ask for any voucher or bill in the school to be submitted to them for audit, could solicit explanations for non-performance, non-compliance, attendance, etc., from teachers, and recommend disciplinary action against teachers.

The principle of empowerment was not limited to HoS and SMCs but was extended to administrators and students as well. The financial powers of the Secretary were increased to INR 50 crore, while those of the Director were increased to INR 10 crore. This allowed the Secretary to sanction construction of a new school building, while a Director could sanction the upgradation of an existing building to add new classrooms. Another illustrative example was the practice of teachers giving books from school libraries to students to take home every week, whether they read it or not. It was premised on the similar belief that empowering and trusting students will likely have greater impact than top-down enforcement and rules.

"Delhi govt has done a lot to empower SMCs by giving them powers to inspect schools and even question teachers. As an SMC member I try to ensure that teachers are maintaining discipline in classes and repair works are completed timely."

- School Management Committee Member, Delhi government school

State’s Role in Ensuring Inputs

A consequence of empowering stakeholders at the grassroot level as the driver of both governance and transformation is that the role of the State becomes providing high-quality inputs (be it infrastructure, teachers, academic material, etc.) and creating the right enabling environment by motivating and empowering teachers to do their job. As noted by the Chief Minister (CM), “If we bring local community and school together with autonomy and state provides inputs, the state can almost move aside; schools will run on their own.”

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Across education as well as the broader public sector in India, there is deep cynicism with respect to the government within frontline workers and beneficiaries. In education, few teachers or parents believe that government really understands them, values them or cares about them. Few teachers, if any, feel a deep sense of motivation in their jobs. It is not uncommon to hear a government teacher say “Humare kaam ki koi value nahi hai”.

The Delhi government was clear that this cynicism had to be reversed. They recognized that teachers will not work with true commitment to the system or the students unless they feel cared for and valued by the Department.

This was achieved by prioritizing the needs and grievances of these stakeholders through several major actions as well as nuanced but subtle nudges.

First was addressing the grievances of guest teachers. Despite legal challenges, the government increased their salaries by up to 80-90 percent and granted them the provision of casual leave to win their trust. Salaries of PGTs were increased from Rs 21,000 to Rs 34,000 per month and those of TGTs were raised from 18,000 to 33,000 per month with the Minister noting that this was essential for guest teachers to live a ‘dignified life’.28

Another significant reform was ending the non-academic duties of teachers. With direct intervention from the Minister of Education, all departments and district officials were banned from utilizing teachers for any work other academic duties (barring elections and disaster related work).

Efforts at giving teachers respect and dignity wasn’t limited to big bang reforms. Subtler but equally impactful measures included separate staffrooms with amenities such as coffee machines and fridges, refurbishment of training centres with cushioned chairs, and round tables and clean tablecloths. During trainings, teachers’ lunch reimbursement, for example, was increased significantly. While these were not education-related reforms, they were critical at winning the trust of the teachers and were taken as first steps before pushing teachers for bigger changes, such as better learning outcomes. Sometimes, the smallest of steps such as the DCM commenting on a teacher’s blog had a profound impact on teachers.

**Restoring a feeling of pride to parents**

Similarly, Delhi activated the involvement of its parent community by imbuing them with a sense of self-respect. Small nudges like issuance of certificates from MLAs to newly elected SMC members tried to instill a sense of pride in first-time SMC members. Personal invitation cards to parents before Parent Teacher Meetings (PTMs), and a guard of honour from National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets or tilak\(^29\) on the forehead when entering schools conveyed the important message to parents that the school and system cares about them and their wards – and likely succeeded in increasing their personal investment in their children’s education. Imagine the pride of a parent or SMC member from a poor family when they share the dais with a CM or DCM, and are asked to discuss their problems and offer solutions!

Delhi’s investment in infrastructure is similarly motivated by the principle of dignity. During a discussion on the increased financial burden of providing modern infrastructure, the DCM had remarked – “Why do our children not deserve the same desks and chairs as those in a private school?” It is difficult to quantify the dignity that students feel when they sit on polished, modern desks and benches.

> “We decided that the infrastructure we upgrade in schools will not be run of the mill infrastructure. There will be green boards instead of black boards in every schools. The classrooms and bench-desks will be sleek and modern. The water coolers will be state of the art. We invested double the money to ensure that every piece of infrastructure was not of usual quality but the best possible quality. Do you understand why?

> Take an average government school. Right next to it is an elite private school. What does this do to the self-esteem of children? We were very clear that we need to ensure dignity and equality – Government students have to feel that they are as equal as any private student even if they come from a very poor and underprivileged background. That lay at the core of it.”

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D. Give the field a ‘voice’ – in design decision and implementation plans

Delhi’s strategy of empowering stakeholders wasn’t restricted to a one-time action of devolving power and autonomy. It was accompanied by a continuous process of participatory decision making. Three primary methods were employed:

- **Designing major initiatives in collaboration with field stakeholders:** All HoS were extensively consulted during initiative design. Mentor Teachers (MTs), another cadre who were regularly visiting schools, were asked to contribute to design of key programmes. Even today, the decision on re-opening schools post the Coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown is going to be on the basis of HoS feedback. These are not ad-hoc examples but part of a deliberate effort at giving a voice to field stakeholders such that they feel involved in the state’s reform efforts.

- **Setting up regular feedback channels:** Post the design and initial implementation phase, Delhi actively sought feedback on its initiatives on a regular basis through both formal and informal channels. This made stakeholders feel like they were co-owners of the system and allowed the state to react quickly to on-ground realities and course correct accordingly. The continuous design evolution of several programmes, like Chunauti, and Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC) over the years, demonstrate that these channels were in action. The WhatsApp group and volunteer network, which were connected to SMCs, were important feedback channels that connected parents directly with the senior leadership and gave them a real sense of ground realities.

- **Giving every individual a voice:** To the best extent possible, the government was determined to ensure that every individual had a say in policy making. In its early years, the Department was keen to increase Board results. Senior leaders spoke individually with over 1,000 HoS (around 100 every day) to understand their challenges and suggestions and devise a plan for addressing them. Seminars, webinars, and meetings were similarly transformed to ensure interactivity rather than one-way engagement.

**Teacher Engagement Workshop**

The annual teacher training in May 2016 underwent a paradigm shift in Delhi. Instead of a typical training session, Delhi utilized the opportunity to undertake a mass engagement workshop with all its teachers. For four days, teachers of Classes 6-9 were divided into subject-wise groups and asked to sit together and study the textbooks. The aim was to reflect on whether each line and page of the textbook aided the teachers in their classroom instruction and were relevant for the learning level of the average child in their class. Senior leaders, including the Deputy CM, personally attended some of these workshops and asked teachers for their inputs. The inputs across thousands of TGTs were aggregated through the Mentor Teachers and eventually led to the design of Pragati material and the Chunauti program – reflecting a truly participatory and teacher-led process of decision-making and program design.
E. Build a culture of celebration and recognition

This sense of respect and dignity was amplified by building a culture of recognition and celebration. Delhi’s operating model was based on the belief that in any system, 20 percent actors would not work no matter how much punitive action was taken against them. Their focus was on transforming the next 60 percent - middle-ground actors who could be influenced positively; and celebrating the success of the top 20 percent - high-achievers who deserved to be recognized and rewarded by the system.

More recently, six teachers from Delhi government schools were selected for the prestigious Fulbright Teaching Scholarship to travel to the US and attend special programmes at various universities.  

It is crucial to not reduce this principle to one of ‘rewards’ but interpret it as a culture of celebration. For example, when students take admission in Class 6 after transitioning from MCD schools, they are usually welcomed to their new school through a large event and celebration to make them feel welcomed. Similarly, even routine award functions with high performing teachers and SMC members were elevated to marquee events. For example, a famous band - Indian Ocean - performed at one such event. These were not lone annual events either, but regular affairs aimed at creating a culture of celebration.


3. What did Delhi do?
A Summary of Major Initiatives
Exhibit 3.1
Key initiatives in Delhi

Learning Initiatives

**Chunauti** - grouping of students to ensure teaching at the right level

**Buniyaad** - a dedicated intervention to strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy

Shift from syllabus completion to achieving learning outcomes via assessment reform and specialised TLM like Pragati

22% increase in students who can do division and read advanced Hindi stories in classes 6 to 8 in 2018

87% teachers reported HC has had a tangible impact on students

Transformative Learning

**Happiness Curriculum** to build emotional awareness in younger students and help develop socio-emotional skills to have a positive impact on society

**Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum** to develop an entrepreneurial ‘mindset’ in life including career choices and work-life balance

87% parents said improved infrastructure has made school education better

School Infrastructure

**Construction** of new buildings and additional classrooms with high quality and modern facilities

Upgradation of amenities like desks, blackboards, drinking water, clean toilets, CCTV cameras, sports facilities, and libraries

84% of the parents who attended PTMs cited increased awareness of their child’s education

Community Engagement

**Empowerment and strengthening of SMCs** through training, handholding, and devolution of financial and administrative power

**Mega PTMs** to increase connect between parents, students, and teachers

41% teachers cited improved teacher training as the strongest motivator

Capacity Building

**Exposure visits** and immersive learning programmes for teachers and HoS in the best national and international institutions

**Cluster-level leadership** development programme for continuous capacity building for HoS

**Mentor Teachers and Teacher Development Coordinators** to provide day-to-day mentorship and academic support for teachers in schools

23% more schools meet PTR norms

Organisation Strengthening

**Recruitment** of regular teachers and guest teachers to improve PTR

**Outsourcing** of non-core functions such as sanitization, maintenance, and security

**Private school regulation** - Fee regulation and Article 12(1)(c) enforced for private schools

**SCERT and DIET restructuring**
3. What did Delhi do? A Summary of Major Initiatives

This chapter lays out the key educational reforms implemented in Delhi. While there are several reforms, many are inter-related and can be combined into six broad themes. These are:

- Reforms in core teaching-learning methods
- Introduction of human values and transformative learning
- Infrastructure enhancement and providing an enabling, dignified environment
- Meaningful and continuous community engagement
- HoS and teacher enablement and capacity building
- Organisation and governance strengthening

3.1. Reforms in core teaching-learning methods

'Every child can learn' is a core component of the Delhi government’s vision for education. However, the current education system in India has severe gaps along this dimension. A baseline assessment conducted in Delhi by DoE in 2016, for example, suggested that 46 percent of children in class 6 could not read a class 2 level story.

Against this backdrop, the Delhi government introduced four key shifts in classroom learning and pedagogy.

**Grouping by learning level:** In June 2016, Delhi launched *Chunauti* 2018, aimed at improving FLN skills in all students from Classes 6 to 9. Under this approach, students were grouped as per learning-levels (*Pratibha*, *Nishtha*, and *Neo-Nishtha*) within their classes. Further, all teachers and students were also given supplementary learning material – *Pragati* – which explained concepts in a simpler and more level-appropriate manner than the textbooks. In addition to *Pragati*, additional Teaching Learning Materials (TLM) ranging from specialized learning charts to activity booklets were also distributed. These interventions represent a key pedagogical shift under the Delhi Model where class-and-syllabus-entrenched teaching has been replaced by 'teaching at the right level', or TaRL. Its importance has also been realized at the ground level, where as many as 17 percent teachers believe that TaRL has been the most impactful change in the past five years.
Campaign-mode FLN focus: In Delhi, most students enter DoE schools in class 6 without learning foundational skills in municipal schools till class 5. This creates large gaps in higher classes and leads to failure and dropouts in later years. To build further momentum towards FLN, the Delhi government undertook additional targeted ‘campaign-mode’ initiatives. These range from the two-month long Reading Campaign launched in September 2016 to the four-month long Mission Buniyaad launched in April 2018 and continued every year thereafter. Unlike Chunauti, these initiatives were targeted at specific students who lacked basic FLN skills, used specific TLM, and redirected all possible resources including leveraging summer holidays to ensure that every child could read, write, and perform basic numeracy. This has been an all-out effort to ensure that no child is left behind and was appreciated by 18 percent of teachers who mentioned that this focus on FLN was the most impactful academic change.

Shifting from syllabus to competencies: To complete a lengthy syllabus, teachers focus more on teaching instead of learning. In this design, ‘completing a chapter’ becomes more important than ensuring that students learn through the chapter. To change this mindset, the Delhi government made a conscious effort to shift the vocabulary of education towards developing competencies and learning outcomes. This was achieved by, first, ensuring that the new material (for example, Pragati) was in simple and easy to understand language, and, second, by reducing the curricular burden. As early as 2015, the Delhi government reduced the curriculum for students in classes 1 to 8 by 25 percent. Students in some learning groups were also allowed to focus on just 20 to 60 percent of syllabus. The department also conducted an at-scale teacher consultation process (by inviting inputs through online channels) to determine how to reduce the syllabus. The compiled findings revealed that teachers recommended nearly 50 percent reduction in syllabus. However, for the first tranche, Delhi opted to reduce the syllabus by only 25 percent.

Redesigning assessments: Typical assessments in the current education system are designed to test for students’ knowledge of the syllabus. However, as teaching-learning processes were shifted from syllabus completion to learning, assessments also started reflecting that change. Specific assessments were added for FLN competencies to emphasize their importance. Summative assessments (only for classes 6 to 8) were also redesigned to map to the grouping of students by learning level. Lastly, challenges with accuracy of learning data were addressed by putting in place robust cross-verification systems where DIET students externally verified the validity of in-school assessments. An open culture of accepting the on-ground learning gaps (for example, naming the academic plan Chunauti – indicating acceptance of the challenge) also encouraged an honest and robust reporting of learning levels in these assessments.

Exhibit 3.2
Pragati supplements textbooks with easy to understand explanations (shown here), reflective questions and provides practice for other competencies

Excerpt from NCERT
Excerpt from Pragati

3.2. Introduction of human values and transformative learning

As stated by the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, released by the Ministry of Education – “The aim of education will not only be cognitive development, but also building character and creating holistic and well-rounded individuals equipped with the key 21st century skills.” Delhi started two initiatives to address this aspect of education even before the NEP. These include the Happiness Curriculum (HC) and the Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC), which were together cited by roughly 30% of teachers as the key learning related intervention in Delhi.

The Happiness Curriculum goes one step further than just defining the goal of creating holistic and well-rounded individuals. It tries to build emotional self-awareness in students with the eventual goal of helping students grow into ‘better human beings’ who contribute to social progress.

This first-of-its-kind curriculum is targeted at students from pre-primary to class 8 and introduces new concepts through a variety of classroom activities (such as mindfulness meditation, stories, and activities) - there are no textbooks. Instead, the teacher is expected to facilitate discussion, reflection, and self-expression by students with the help of a guidebook full of stories and activities.

Another key intervention that aimed at transformative learning is the Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum. The Government launched EMC with the objective of inculcating an entrepreneurial mindset in students, in turn, enabling them to apply the same in their life, including career choices and work-life balance.

EMC has been designed with the underlying philosophy of making students learn an entrepreneurial way of doing things – different from other entrepreneurship courses that largely focus on hard entrepreneurial skills – and, thus, holds relevance for all senior school students.

As stated by the Education Minister, “Starting and managing your business is called entrepreneurship while entrepreneurial mindset is all about learning and taking on a solution-centric approach whether working for someone or managing one’s own business.”

The EMC has been carefully designed to reflect the experimental and experiential nature of the curriculum. Its key components – Mindfulness, Thematic Units, Student Specials, Live Entrepreneur Interactions, Field Project, and Career Exploration – aim to develop entrepreneurial abilities such as communication, critical thinking, decision-making, etc. Like in a Happiness Class, facilitation by teachers forms an integral part of classroom experience in an EMC session with the teacher only acting as a guide.

When the Delhi government assumed charge in 2015, most schools had dilapidated infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms. To make schools a welcoming environment for students and teachers, the government initially prioritized infrastructure upgradation. These were initiated with 54 ‘model’ schools across Delhi. The schools were furnished with new classrooms, labs with modern facilities, well-equipped staffrooms, high quality furniture, etc. Facilities included a variety of sports infrastructure ranging from swimming pools to hockey grounds. Libraries and sports complexes have also been constructed in select schools. Subsequently, a plan for the construction of 20,000 additional rooms in more schools was introduced - out of which 8,000 have been constructed and 12,000 are under construction.

In addition to increasing the number of buildings, labs, and classrooms, Delhi also focused on upgrading the quality of infrastructure. For instance, existing buildings that were dilapidated and worn out were repaired, white-washed, and painted with a fresh colour scheme. Moreover, mosaic tiles, new plants, updated electrical fittings, and Close Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras were also fitted in schools.

These improvements in infrastructure are probably the most visible and universally accepted indicators of progress with over 84 percent of parents and 77 percent of teachers citing it as the biggest change in the last five years. In recent years, improvements to security in the form of guards and CCTV cameras have also been lauded by parents, especially those with girl children.

The introduction of dedicated Estate Managers, safai karamcharis, and increased financial devolution in every government school has been crucial for improving overall cleanliness and maintenance of school infrastructure, thereby lifting this burden off the HoS.

Although the impact of some of these interventions is difficult to quantify and is open to debate, anecdotal evidence suggests that there are already visible results in schools and classrooms. 79 percent of teachers have reported positive impact of the HC such as empathetic and polite behaviour, increased interest and motivation amongst students, and improved inter-personal relationships.

Most teachers and parents in our FGDs cited students’ increased confidence and awareness of career choices as direct consequences of the EMC. Many students said that these programs helped them feel confident, refreshed, and concentrate better.
3.4. Meaningful and continuous community engagement

A key differentiator of Delhi’s education reforms vis-à-vis other states has been its emphasis on bridging the gap between the school and the community, and recognizing the importance of involving parents, not just in the education and development of children but also in the management and running of the school itself.

Delhi became one of the only states in India to comprehensively reactivate and strengthen SMCs. In many ways, this may have been the single biggest reform. Recognizing that the involvement of parents will bring a sense of accountability to all schools, Delhi invested in its SMCs, hosting large-scale elections, coupled with strong awareness drives and direct monitoring. Elected parent members were given comprehensive training, supported with an army of volunteer frontline workers, and empowered with additional funds and powers. Thanks to the efforts to ensure cooperation between HoS and parents through frequent community outreach programmes and a communication strategy to ensure that the voices and concerns of SMC members were heard directly by the Minister and senior officials, several SMCs in Delhi have now become a critical governance institution responsible for school-level transformation. The success of SMCs in Delhi has been further substantiated through our parent survey, where out of 118 SMC members surveyed, 111, i.e. 94 percent members believed that a combination of aforementioned measures has led to SMCs being successful. The story of SMC reforms in Delhi stands out as a model that should be replicated in most other states in the country.

Another popular initiative was Mega PTMs that were held on common days for all schools. During these PTMs, the focus was on leveraging media channels for mass awareness among parents, and making students and parents feel welcome in the school. Specific attention was paid to gestures like sending personal invitation cards to parents, instructing every teacher to engage directly with parents of children for whom they were responsible, and requesting teachers to always start by saying something unique and positive about the child. Not only did these efforts succeed in transforming the relationship between parents and schools, but they also encouraged parents and teachers to take a deeper interest in their students and fostered positivity and self-belief in students. The impact of this initiative is evidenced by the fact that as many as 90 percent of parents reported having attended PTMs and credited it with increased teacher and parent involvement in their child’s education.

In addition to the above, parents and SMC members were kept regularly involved with schools and their child’s education through a conscious strategy of regular parent events every few months such as community Reading Melas, Parental Workshops in schools, and SMC Sabhas, among others.
3.5. HoS and teacher enablement and capacity building

Any education system is only as good as the quality and motivation of the teachers and HoS in the system. Delhi's next step was, therefore, to win the trust of its teacher cadres and leave no stone unturned to ensure their capacity building and development.

Consequently, Delhi invested in the **capacity building of its HoS and Headmasters (HMs)**. Rather than the standardised training, they were sent to elite institutions in India (like IIMs) as well as abroad (Cambridge and Oxford in the UK, and Finland, etc.) for residential programmes in order to get exposure to how a top institution is run. In addition, Delhi also ran a cluster-level leadership development program where HoS would gather every month in order to develop self-awareness, understand key principles of leadership through self-reflection, as well as jointly conduct school and classroom observations.

Secondly, Delhi identified the need to invest in its teachers by creating a network of those teachers who could support teachers’ continuous professional development directly at the school level. In order to facilitate this, Delhi set up a **separate cadre of 200 MTs** who were also provided the best possible exposure and capacity building programmes from across the country. They were tagged to five schools each and tasked with supporting state efforts as well as visiting the schools to support teachers, disseminate pedagogical skills, and inculcate creative teaching practices. MTs were, in turn, supported by a Teacher Development Coordinator (TDC) at the school level who organized regular academic discussions between teachers and fostered a cohesive academic environment at the school under the guidance of the HoS.

Lastly, Delhi also innovated to **improve the quality of its in-service teacher training programmes** that aimed at building subject-specific expertise. Teacher training was reformed to ensure high quality training infrastructure and a bottom-up design process to make the content and training more relevant for teachers. As many as 93 percent of teachers believe that the quality of training has improved. Flexibility to attend trainings as per the needs of the teacher and the introduction of online, digital trainings have also recently been initiated to further improve the effectiveness of teacher training.

3.6. Organisation and governance strengthening

In order to ensure that the above initiatives were successful, Delhi invested in its own state capacity and addressed some aspects of governance.

Firstly, Delhi **addressed human resource constraints** with dedicated focus. For example, in order to fulfil Right to Education (RTE) and Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) norms, almost 17,200 teachers were recruited. This reduced average PTR from 31.2 to 25.8 amongst all Delhi government schools, and potentially had a large role to play in Board result improvements.

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36 Between 2015 and 2020, 13298 regular teachers were hired and net increase in total number of guest teachers was 3940. Source: Directorate of Education
Beyond teachers, the state has also ensured adequate manpower in all schools for a variety of functions such as cleanliness and sanitation (safai karamcharis), infrastructure maintenance (Estate Managers), and security staff. This is a critical cadre of non-teaching staff that has been put in place through contractual or outsourced options. Similarly, external experts and contractual staff has also been leveraged in the Public Works Department (PWD) for the infrastructure strengthening effort as well as in DIET and SCERTs.

This was in addition to the complete re-structuring of SCERT and DIETs, the core academic institutions of the state and essential for driving learning improvement in schools. The qualifications and pay scales for staff were increased to match the standards set by the University Grants Commission (UGC), all staff were brought under a common Teacher Educator Cadre allowing for seamless movement and integration of staff and DIETs were also made the home for mentorship programmes like MT and TDCs. The implementation of this restructuring is yet to be completed but will likely have manifold effects in coming years.\(^\text{37}\)

Further, SCERT at state level and DIETs at district level were made to anchor Delhi's vision of “every child can learn”. DIET faculty members were made an instrumental part of the reforms with various sections within these organizations leading core initiatives. The faculty members were sent for exposure visits to educational institutes

in Finland, Cambridge, Singapore and within India to study the best education practices. The government also made efforts to improve the infrastructure in DIETs by providing sound technical equipments. Overall, a serious attempt was made to strengthen the DIET ecosystem by building their capacity and involving them in all state initiatives.

Lastly, despite its clear mission to improve government schools and restore faith in public education, Delhi had the foresight to understand and recognize the reality that around 30 to 40 percent of students went to private schools and, therefore, it was the government’s responsibility to ensure a strong private school regulatory and governance framework. This was achieved through four key mechanisms.

- First, Delhi setup a fresh reimbursement committee[^38] that reduced delays through clear communication and frequent monitoring of reimbursements.
- Second, the DoE demanded formal proposals from private schools that desired fee hikes and then instituted a “fee regulation committee”[^39] consisting of qualified chartered accountants (CAs) who would then examine these proposals.
- Third, a strong grievance redressal system for RTE 12(1)(c) and fee regulation was established.
- Finally, various workshops were conducted for disseminating best practices for inclusive education and schools that promoted inclusive education were widely publicized and awarded.

### Select observations from choice of initiatives

There are some interesting insights to be drawn from the selection rationale, sequencing and day-to-day working model of these interventions.

**First, the sequencing of initiatives was different from what we see in other states.** For example, the core priority of the academic community is typically learning interventions and launching those quickly. In Delhi, especially between 2015 to 2017, the focus was on building infrastructure, strengthening HoS, enhancing teacher salaries and recruitment, and strengthening SMCs and PTMs. These interventions infused positivity and power in the frontline and built trust and legitimacy. In Delhi’s view, this created the enabling environment and condition to then launch other interventions such as learning reforms.

**Second, Delhi launched only one to two new initiatives every year keeping in mind the system's ability to absorb too many simultaneous interventions.** For example, over five years, Delhi went through only five to six ‘big-ticket’ reforms and left many off the table as well.

**Third, Delhi internalized that change takes time and interventions need to be implemented over several years with iterations, rather than changed or withdrawn in a few years.** Often, public systems feel an intervention is old after two to three years and needs to be phased out. “We have been doing remediation for two years. This year should be last” is something we have heard many times. In Delhi, Chunauti and Buniyaad have had a steady run for four years and will continue to be a part of the system for years to come.


4. How did Delhi do it? Delhi’s Unique Operating Model
Key Takeaways

Large and diverse leadership team
External experts in formal positions and carefully selected NGO partners

One Vision and Theory of Change across all stakeholders
8-day long Jeevan Vidya Shivir workshops with senior leadership and staff to get to know each other and align on a common roadmap

Action bias in bureaucracy
Mix of strategies such as leveraging independent institutions like DCPCR and media, and well-researched precedents, used to expedite signoffs and file work

Frequent and ‘real’ engagement with field stakeholders
Frequent school visits to learn rather than ‘inspect’; direct communication between field and senior leadership

Accountability for outcomes as well as culture for celebration
Tangible rewards linked to clear outcomes, monitored through robust on-ground mechanisms; consequently, celebration of success for all stakeholders
4. How did Delhi do it? Delhi’s Unique Operating Model

Almost all the initiatives mentioned in the previous chapter have been tried in other parts of India. But the success of the Delhi Model as laid out in Chapter 1 is not just because of ‘what was done’ in Delhi but ‘how it was done’. Over and above the theory of change described in Chapter 2, we believe that Delhi organised itself into a unique ‘operating model’ that allowed it to extract far greater results than typically observed. This chapter lays out five elements unique to Delhi’s operating model.

4.1 Build a large and diverse leadership team

Includes politicians, bureaucrats, department officials, civil society, and NGO leaders

Delhi has a dedicated leadership team that leverages the best of government and involves civil society in a significant manner.

Civil society members range from prominent experts to senior members! from select NGOs working in specific areas (for example, SMCs, HoS development, HC, and MTs). This entire team worked collectively – each owning specific parts of the agenda and supporting each other in the execution of the whole.

There are three critical factors to note about this leadership team:

- **It is important to differentiate Delhi’s leadership collective from the typical committee-based structure that is often seen in government systems.** Typical committee structures (often including a few token outsiders) mandate formal meetings and signoffs. On the other hand, this leadership team had a flexible, agile structure, with the aim of working collectively yet rapidly. The team met as a collective as well as small groups, as needed – often multiple times in a day. Each member was deeply entrenched in both design and implementation and had specific roles (for example, some looked at academic interventions and teacher training while others led SMC reforms and community engagement).

- **External experts were not brought in as outsiders for occasional advice and guidance but were given full-time positions of authority so that they could bring the full weight of their experience to bear on a day-to-day basis.** For example, Atishi (Advisor to DCM), Shailendra Sharma (Principal Advisor to Director, Education), and Anurag Kundu (now Chairperson, the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights [DCPCR]). These experts were also strategically placed at different levels of government to cover breadth and allow for distinct roles.
While the Government of Delhi was supported by several external partners, this was done in a systematic manner – quite differently from other states. The involvement of too many partners without coherence can end up being counterproductive for both the field and the goals of the state.

However, Delhi did a few things differently.

- In many states, partners tend to approach states with their own ideas and models. Delhi followed the opposite approach – rather than NGOs approaching the state, the leadership identified specific areas that needed external support and then invited specific organisations based on research. At times, small NGOs without prior large-scale experience were also invited because of their niche expertise.

- Partners had to work in strict consonance with the theory of change and timelines of the Delhi government. This meant that even established NGOs had to adapt to the state’s vision, roadmap, and ongoing interventions.

- The state ensured complete ownership over the intervention. No intervention was owned or implemented by a partner independently – the NGO only provided technical support and advice.

- External partners did not work in silos with specific sub-departments. The role of various partners was aligned between senior officers like the Secretary, Director Education, Director SCERT, etc.

- Lastly, NGO partners’ work and impact was reviewed periodically, and several of them were asked to exit if the impact was found to be unsatisfactory.
Exhibit 4.1
Delhi built a collaborative leadership team, leveraging both government and external talent

Sh. Arvind Kejriwal
Chief Minister, GNCTD

Sh. Manish Sisodia
Deputy CM and Education Minister, GNCTD

Secretaries
- Ms. Punya Srivastava
- Mr. Sandeep Kumar

Advisors
- Ms. Atishi
- Mr. Shailendra Sharma

Directors (Education)
- Ms. Padmini Singla
- Ms. Saumya Gupta
- Mr. Sanjay Goel
- Mr. Binay Bhushan

Directors (SCERT)
- Ms. Anita Satia
- Dr. Sunita Kaushik

Independent Institutions
- Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR), Government of NCT of Delhi
- Anurag Kundu, Chairperson, DCPCR

Education Task Force/Deputy CM Office
- Akshay Marathe
- Anil Saini
- Vikram Bhat
- Hemant Pothula
- Hrid Bijoy
- Ishita Choudhry
- Munish Kaushik
- Prianka Singhal
- Rahul Tiwari
- Shailesh Srivastava
- Shijoy Varughese
- Tarak Goradia
- Tarishi Sharma
- Vaibhav Srivastav

NGOs/ Civil Society Organisations
- Pratham
- Room to Read
- Teach for India
- Jodo Gyan
- STIR
- Saajha
- Ahvaan
- Creatnet
- Kaivalya Education Foundation
- Central Square Foundation

This team played a significant role during the launch and consolidation phase. Some of them are still part of the team, others have moved to different roles, while many more have joined as well to take the process of reforms forward.
4.2 Ensure a common vision and theory of change across all stakeholders

Clear, aligned vision across state leadership, HoS, MTs, teachers, SMCs, and parents

Delhi government’s vision and theory of change was described in Chapter 2. Often in other states, as one gets deeper into the field – the articulation of vision and goals is lost and what is left in terms of common vocabulary are names of initiatives and programmes.

However, all our interactions with field functionaries in Delhi – HoS, teachers, and MTs – showed that the field also has a strong common language of the vision and theory of change.

Most stakeholders that we spoke with had the same vocabulary – ‘respect and dignity’, ‘decentralised action’, ‘academic outcomes and human values’; etc. SMCs, teachers, and HoS spoke the same language and seemed to be mission aligned with each other and the leadership.

Aligning the senior leadership to a common goal

Such widespread buy-in has been hard earned for Delhi. Early in his tenure, the DCM took all senior leaders of the Department (IAS officers, Deputy Directors, DIET officers, Principals, etc.) on an eight-day Jeevan Vidya Shivir workshop to Raipur. In hindsight, the importance of this workshop is impossible to overstate because it allowed the entire senior leadership to not just bond together but to reflect on the deeper questions of education and align on a common strategic agenda, while keeping away from professional and personal obligations.

40 As noted in Chapter 2, the Jeevan Vidya Shivir
If there is one thing that every Education Minister in the country should do, it is to take all his/her senior bureaucrats and leaders away for a workshop and align on a common agenda. It is critical that this happens away from the office and the day-to-day hustle and bustle of files and offices.

- Delhi Education Task Force Official, Delhi Government

All 1000 Heads of Schools attended the same JVS residential workshop. Subsequently, SCERT & DIET faculty and thousands of teachers were also exposed to this workshop – effectively, creating a mission-aligned cadre of senior functionaries who subscribe to the same philosophy and have a common understanding of the strategic vision and agenda to transform education in Delhi. In several cases, where reform efforts met with field pushback (example: initial implementation of Chunauti or Happiness Curriculum), a strategically aligned leadership ensured that the system spoke with a common voice and was able to resolve differences within itself. The cluster-level leadership development program also played a key role in this regard.

In 2015-16, Delhi identified additional ‘positive outliers’ who could be the change agents for the rest of the system. Through this process, they created an army of around 200 MTs, and around 1000 TDCs, who were also deeply exposed to the same theory of change and who, then, went on to advocate for the same among their peers and in the community. As a result, almost every teacher in Delhi today has begun to speak the language of “every child can learn”.

Why is this important? It is not enough to have a lot of driven people rowing a boat. It is also important that everyone rows in the same direction or else one risks a lot of effort with no forward momentum. The end outcome of these efforts in Delhi is a sustained and cohesive push for a set of education reforms that all stakeholders believe in and are aligned to. Such democratised ownership of reforms is especially crucial in the context of education, where impact often requires 10 to 15 years of persistent effort.

4.3 Maximise action-bias in the bureaucracy – ‘file-file nahin khelenge’

Urgency and mission-mode mentality was deliberately linked with due process

Many of the reforms proposed in Delhi were disruptive and contrary to existing processes (for example, devolving financial power to SMCs, shifting away from the syllabus’ to competencies, etc.). ‘Campaign-mode’ reforms require following due process and working through administrative constraints while managing for speed. It was not acceptable to the state that reforms be stuck in files for months at end – going back and forth within and across Departments. There were a few key techniques that were applied in ensuring files moved at the requisite pace.
New initiatives were put up for approvals along with extensively researched precedents from other states to enable easy approvals by the authorities. Executive orders from the CM or the DCM’s office were also deployed to overcome bureaucratic reticence and make signing-off on files easier.

Several independent institutions (such as DCPCR) were leveraged in a strategic manner. For example, DCPCR was staffed with independent experts who increased the visibility of the institution amongst parents and exerted its *locus standi* on child rights to hold the DoE accountable and address grievances on a range of issues such as implementation of 12(1)(c) in private schools, complaints of SMC members, sexual assault, and many more.

The media was also encouraged to cover success stories of specific reform efforts. This had a dual effect – in some cases, this highlighted the work of certain officials and inspired them to take bold decisions and cut through administrative red-tape more easily in future. In others, it built momentum and pressure for further reforms which had been stymied till now.

In addition to this, senior bureaucrats such as Secretaries and Directors themselves heavily invested in the change process. A key element was the involvement of these officials in the day to day academic agenda in addition to administrative elements.

One needs to understand that education is not like PWD. It is more than signing files, making regulatory and administrative changes etc. Senior bureaucrats in education must invest themselves in developing a perspective of education transformation that is not just regulatory in nature. I had senior Advisors who coached me in the academic understanding of school education over time. I even faced some pushback from bureaucratic peers who asked me if I wanted to get a B.Ed and advised me to stick to ‘my administrative role’. There is a whole cadre that needs to be committed to education.

- Senior IAS Officer, Delhi government
4.4 Ensure frequent and ‘real’ engagement in the field

Field interactions revolve around ‘talking AND listening’ and are not ‘sanitised’

While field-visits by politicians and officials are a mainstay for most public systems, in the Delhi Model the quantity, quality, and coverage of field engagement are noticeably different. Regular field visits – not just by the Minister but senior officials across all levels, were a key part of the daily routine.

Being inside schools and classrooms and connecting with students, teachers, and on-ground realities of schools was seen to be a critical part of officials’ jobs. This speaks to the underlying philosophy of the Delhi reforms once again – and the importance of the ‘human connect.’

In order to develop a culture of field engagement, Delhi leveraged the Transaction of Business rules in the GNCTD Act that requires the Department to send a weekly report to the Minister on pre-identified action items. The last clause even asks senior officials to list the number of field visits undertaken every week. This archaic & hitherto unused section of the Act became an effective tool to not just develop a culture of accountability (Minister received a weekly report on 60 critical action items) but also ensured that all senior officials set the tone by personally increasing their field engagement.

Our conversations with various HoS also reveal a marked change in the tone of official visits. While earlier visits were typically seen as planned ‘inspections’, now they are recalled as unplanned ‘open and honest conversations’. A school visit typically consisted of observing teaching-learning inside a classroom, direct interactions and Q and A sessions with students, two-way conversations with teachers and SMC members, and a desire to ‘listen to concerns’ rather than preach. Most importantly, school visits were also structured and had a clear agenda which was usually tied to reinforcing the importance of the key state intervention at that time (example: Happiness Curriculum, Buniyaad etc.) “Instead of feeling scared of a visit, now students and teachers eagerly await the next visit by the Minister”. This is not to say that school visits did not have a monitoring function. On occasions where gross negligence or misdemeanours were observed during a school visit, administrative action also swiftly followed.

The field engagement has had multiple benefits. Firstly, it provided accurate inputs into schools’ and parents’ aspirations and experiences, hence improving design of interventions. Secondly, it drove greater rigor in implementation at the school level. And finally, personal visits by senior leaders also conveyed the priorities of the government in a clear manner and drove higher motivation and accountability in the field.
4.5 Develop an outcome orientation

Drive accountability towards clear and measurable outcomes

In Delhi’s operating model, everyone understood that what mattered was the end outcome. This represents a shift from typical government operations, where most actors are focused on inputs (such as infrastructure and MDM) and doing their part in the ‘process’ (for example, monitoring schools while losing sight of learning outcomes).

Delhi’s shift towards an outcome-oriented culture can be best understood by exploring three different aspects:

- **A culture shift that happened through day-to-day conversations.** For example, during field visits, if a school’s classrooms had cobwebs, the HoS was not allowed to make excuses such as “safai karamchari did not do it”. It was repeatedly reinforced to the HoS that they were responsible for the outcome i.e. a clean school. Similarly,

- **Clear and measurable learning outcomes were repeatedly reinforced as the goal.**
  - Board results in particular was an outcome goal that was the consistent theme and focus in press conferences, cluster development workshops, school visits, and all review meetings. Over time, both principals and teachers understood that Board results are a critical outcome metric and need to be prioritised. This drove responsibility and innovation in several schools with some principals even setting and tracking to targets with different teachers.

  - In a similar manner, in Class 6-8, Delhi also tried to institute rigorous learning outcome measurement through FLN assessments. These assessments were independently verified by DIET students and MTs (after the baseline/end-line) so that data was accurate and could be used to drive accountability towards learning outcomes. DCPCR has also instituted a School Development Index with independent verification of learning outcomes to ensure that authentic, 3rd-party assessed learning data was the basis of holding schools accountable for outcomes.

  - Several review systems tried to reinforce the importance of data-based tracking and measurement. For example, middle-management’s infrastructure reports were cross-verified with time-stamped pictures submitted by Estate Managers. Every teacher was given a tablet device so that all data was digitised and could be reviewed easily. Many a time, officials were shown on-ground reports and pictures directly collected from SMCs and shared through WhatsApp to remind them of their fidelity to eventual outcomes

- **Lastly, an outcome orientation was mainstreamed through increased accountability with a “carrot and stick” approach.** If Delhi was prepared to act and send a message (terminating a HoS, or issuing show-causes to Deputy Directors of Education [DDEs]), they also ramped up celebration of successes (letters of commendation, award ceremonies, etc.). HoS understood that end-outcomes mattered because performance on outcomes was linked to tangible rewards like foreign exposure visits. The combination of increased rewards and recognitions with rigorous monitoring, specifically of outcomes, helped Delhi drive outcome accountability across all levels in the system.
5. Building a Public Narrative: Delhi’s Communication Strategy
Key Takeaways

Unprecedented move of making school education reforms the most publicly talked about political agenda

Clear and bold political commitments laid out from day 1

Strategic use of multiple communication channels to publicise action

High frequency multi-channel communication; rich and compelling content

Several innovative moves to ensure deep reach

Direct communication with education journalists, strategic use of CM, and eminent figures; supported by a dedicated media advisor
5. Building a Public Narrative: Delhi’s Communication Strategy

A simple media search reveals that in the last year, the words ‘Delhi’ and ‘education’ appear together around 5,300 times per month in online websites. This is partly because of Delhi’s status as the national capital and the inherent success of its reforms, but more importantly it is because of the focused communication strategy that was designed and followed over time. Analysing Delhi’s education reforms, therefore, would be incomplete without addressing this unique aspect that potentially led to its electoral success as well.

5.1 Why is communication important?

There were four broad objectives behind this large communication effort:

Communicate an electoral and political agenda: Delhi was attempting something revolutionary and unprecedented – to make education a priority political agenda. Therefore, there was a need to communicate clear political commitments regularly from the beginning and remain in the public eye. Moreover, talking about the reforms publicly, the Chief Minister and the Education Minister got the system – including bureaucrats and frontline workers – committed towards it.

Build trust and legitimacy: One of Delhi’s priorities, especially in the first few years was to build trust and legitimacy among grassroots stakeholders – especially teachers, SMCs, parents, and the broader electorate. The government needed to overcome decades of collective cynicism. This required consistent communication – many cycles of promises made and delivered upon – which indicated to all that the government’s efforts were genuine rather than business as usual.

Create awareness regarding specific initiatives: In several cases, mass communication, especially radio and TV, was used extensively to generate public awareness on specific initiatives such as Mega PTMs, reading campaigns, and summer camps. Radio messages from the CM and DCM addressed not just government school parents but even upper-middle class audiences who were encouraged to communicate with their employees and helped build widespread public awareness of such initiatives.

Create space for policy reforms: Lastly, in several cases, especially in the context of difficult reforms such as the need for co-ed schools or learning interventions like Chunauti and Buniyaad, sustained and frequent public communication through multiple channels including press conferences, media releases, and SMC engagement, was used as a means of establishing an argument and building support for reform broadly.
5.2 Four key elements of Delhi’s Communication Strategy

A. Multi-channel communication

Every possible communication channel, ranging from press releases to radio broadcasts was utilized to fulfil the government’s communication objective - of creating mass awareness, with each medium utilized in a conscious manner to convey different messages, different themes, and achieve different objectives.

Exhibit 5.1
Delhi government used all communication channels to get their word across

- **Print Media**
  - Coverage of work done and impact created through almost all major newspapers like The Hindu, The Times of India, etc.

- **NGO Collaborations**
  - Official posts on NGO websites, social media channels and research reports on education - e.g. Saajha, STIR etc.

- **Word-Of-Mouth**
  - Use of SMC members, MTs, TDCs etc. to spread awareness through discussions and door-to-door visits

- **Television, Radio, SMS and IVR**
  - Interviews on TV shows, news channels, radio specials etc, and sending messages through mass media

- **Official Press Releases**
  - Official source of news communication about initiatives, changes etc. maintained by the DCM’s office

- **Social Media**
  - Official social media handles and profiles maintained by the government on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.

- **Government Circulars**
  - Official source of internal communication about initiative details, schedules and timelines etc. maintained by the Department of Education

- **Press Conferences**
  - Direct interaction platform between the government, and journalists. Often has presence of CM and/or DCM
B. High-frequency engagement

To stay in the public eye, the Delhi government ensured frequent release of communications – be it through formal press releases, or conferences, or informal communication through social media – covering their work and progress made in the field of education.

For instance, Delhi released over 50 official press releases between 2016-17\(^{41}\) compared to other states, where the number is around 15 per year.

Similarly, high activity can be seen on the DCM, Manish Sisodia’s Twitter account, that logs in between 80 to 90 education-related tweets and retweets every month.\(^{42}\) These tweets often use hashtags like “#DelhiGovtTeachers” and “#DelhiEducationRevolution” which have compelled others to further spread the word.

Additionally, Delhi government maintained an active eponymous YouTube channel.\(^{43}\) Between 2017 and 2018, over 70 videos were posted on education-related initiatives, with content ranging from CM’s/ DCM’s press conferences and speeches in various events to videos showing daily activities inside government schools – like teachers teaching in the classroom, students reading, writing and laughing, etc. The videos of Manish Sisodia personally visiting and inspecting schools have garnered millions of views over the years.

Exhibit 5.2

Active use of social media by high ranking officials boosted awareness on the ground

Education Minister tweets regularly with #tags

Further re-tweeted by parents, teachers and other supporters

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\(^{42}\) Manish Sisodia (@msisodia) on Twitter. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://twitter.com/msisodia?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp5Eser-p%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor.

\(^{43}\) Learn more here https://www.youtube.com/c/DelhiGovernmentDG/videos.
C. Content-rich and impactful messaging

While different communication channels were utilised for different purposes, the content being shared was always ensured to have utmost richness in depth and detail.

Each press release contained a clear rationale for the initiative, detailed data to justify the assertions, and often referred to the overall vision and objectives of the Delhi government – to keep the vision statement ever-prevalent. On social media, infographics and data points were utilised extensively. The ‘numbers speak for themselves’ ideology was leveraged across media channels to show the impact of the initiatives. Press conferences, lasting between 10 to 15 minutes each, covered the need for the initiative, often through data-backed arguments, and the details and objectives for implementation of specific initiatives. Moreover, these press conferences included a question and answer session at the end to encourage dialogue and for the audience to voice their queries and concerns.44

Almost all communication contained direct quotes from the political leadership – especially the DCM to reinforce the importance of the initiative or announcement. Substantiated by the fact that more than 60 percent45 of Delhi government’s educational press releases had a direct quote from the CM, DCM or other senior officials as opposed to less than five percent in a representative sample we analysed from other states.

Radio Advertisements for Mega-PTMs

Delhi used radio advertisements extensively to spread awareness of Mega-PTMs amongst parents. Several advertisements were recorded directly using the voice of children. Others had messages from the CM and DCM. In some advertisements, the CM appealed not just to parents of students but also middle/ upper middle-class segments of the population: urging them to talk to their employees and give them a day off to spend the day at their children’s school. These advertisements played continuously for a week and had a major role to play in ensuring that the message reached every parent; eventually resulting in very high participation.

45 BCG analysis of official press releases.
D. Leveraging the power of grassroot stakeholders to spread the word

To ensure that the narrative percolates down to the grassroot level, the government directly communicated with all stakeholders.

SMC members were given formal trainings on how to use WhatsApp groups to communicate parents’ grievances to the system as well as spread awareness on government initiatives among parents. Moreover, they were also given instructions on how to use social media, like Twitter, to amplify government’s messages.

School visits by the CM, DCM, and other leadership members were also a tool of direct communication. Beyond a review of the school, every visit always had a clear communication objective – usually to reinforce the importance and aim of the latest critical initiative. There was also always an element of direct interaction with children – who would then go home and spread the word to their parents.

An extensive network of volunteers was also leveraged to directly engage with SMCs, parents, and teachers and ensure almost real time communication of government policies, efforts, and circulars.
5.3 Other strategies used to deepen impact

In addition, various tactical strategies were also deployed to advance the change narrative:

- There was a strategic effort to map key journalists on the education beat of major newspapers and media organisations. The senior leadership made it a point to always interact with them, keep in touch with them, treat them with respect and dignity, and communicate directly with them whenever any initiative was launched.

- The **CM's and DCM's statements** always receive the maximum press attention in any state. Therefore, whenever required, the CM or DCM puts the spotlight on education or specific initiatives at other events or gatherings. In this way, the office of the CM was also leveraged to raise the profile of education initiatives in a strategic manner.

- **Eminent personalities**, such as the Dalai Lama were often invited to events and schools to increase media coverage around the education-related initiatives and to underscore their importance and uniqueness.

- Delhi government **did not shy away from addressing criticism**. Often, the DCM directly countered criticism during press conferences – quotes from which were often reused in multiple media publications which further supported the Delhi government’s stance and confidence in their initiatives. Towards later years, negative press coverage was monitored, and critical articles were responded to actively.

- A **dedicated Media Advisor** was appointed to the DCM’s office who ensured consistent media communication on education in addition to other responsibilities.

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**Summary**

It is important not to underestimate the importance and impact of Delhi’s communication efforts. Delhi leveraged an omni-channel communication strategy not just as a publicity tool but specifically to drive momentum and impact. It helped communicate a clear vision, create awareness, improve program implementation, build momentum for further reforms, and potentially played a critical role in translating education reforms into electoral benefits as well.
Way Forward for Delhi

Key Takeaways

First 5 years of reforms seen as fixing the base/strengthening the foundation

Next 5 years to focus on the ‘transformative agenda’- e.g. extensive reforms in school curriculum and related assessments (Boards)

However, recognition that the reforms from last 5 years still have some way to go

Delhi’s education transformation remains an unfinished story. Continuity in political leadership for another term creates the opportunity to build further upon the base that has been strengthened in the last five years. In this chapter, we will highlight the key priority areas, as defined by the Government of Delhi, for its new term. These were developed based on our conversations with the senior leadership of the education team in September 2020 and by leveraging the policy points outlined by the DCM in his book.

There are six major agenda items that the Government wants to focus on over the next five years:

6.1. Rigorous implementation of the Happiness and Entrepreneurship Mindset Curricula

The two curricula were introduced in line with the Government’s vision to impart holistic education to students who will grow up to become socially responsible citizens and emotionally mature adults. Despite their recent introduction, both curricula have already begun to show results amongst students as described earlier in Chapter 1.

Buoyed by this progress, the Delhi government plans to deeply integrate them as part of the overall coursework and has already started analysing the curricula of other subjects to identify overlaps. This exercise is also expected to significantly reduce the overall coursework.

6.2. Introduction of organizational reforms to strengthen the education department

The government also intends to introduce structural reforms to strengthen the role played by stakeholders across the education ecosystem and enhance efficiency. At the department level, promotions for district-level and zonal-level officers have been proposed and the proposal is currently under legal review. The move is expected to alleviate their position that has for a long time been at par with school HoS. The implementation of SCERT-DIET restructuring and related recruitment is another critical gap that will be addressed.

Finally, at the school level, there will be a continued drive to address teacher vacancies. The government has partly addressed this by regular recruitment as well as increasing the number of guest teachers. However, teacher vacancy still stands at around 5,588 and overall shortage of teachers at almost 17,000, both of which need to be addressed urgently. In addition to closing the vacancy gap, the government will aim to recruit 10 percent more teachers than the sanctioned number in order to create a surplus. This will enable teachers to avail their leave entitlements and attend international teacher trainings without hampering classes for students.
6.3. Setting up of a Delhi Board and reforming assessments

At present Delhi does not have an exclusive education board and operates under CBSE. The Government believes that there are gaps in the current curriculum and assessment structure as these promote rote learning and are not in sync with the requirements of students and their potential career options. For example, students continue to rely on private coaching while preparing for engineering and medical entrance exams as CBSE’s prescribed curriculum does not comprehensively cover the topics on which they are tested.

The government, therefore, envisions the creation of a Delhi Board that will be responsible for developing a practical, innovative, and new-age teaching system and a curriculum that addresses the unique needs of different students.

Further, a new assessment system that promotes critical thinking skills and tests students’ grasp over concepts (rather than their ability to memorise topics) is also being planned.
In order to promote specialization of specific streams, a major restructuring of the school structure is being considered. Currently, each zone has around 50 schools, with several zones making up a district. In the proposed structure, zones will be reorganized into smaller ‘hubs’ with around five to ten schools, headed by a senior HoS.

For example, if one school is set up for science, it will improve its teacher and infrastructure capacity to exclusively provide the best possible science education.

Every hub will ensure access to all possible streams so that students have access to a school according to their interest and aptitude within a reasonable distance. Such a system will help optimise the use of resources as well as provide opportunities to gain in-depth knowledge and understanding of the subject through aligned practices, conversations, and systems.

First, a University for Skills & Entrepreneurship has been established to create formal graduation and post-graduation programmes for vocational courses taken by students in classes 11 and 12. As a part of this, there would be courses starting from three-month modular courses all the way up to the doctoral (PhD) level. The overarching goal is to shift the mindset around vocational courses by providing respectable degrees that will be accepted in the job market.

Second, a University for Sports will be established to provide formal graduation and post-graduation courses in sports and related activities. Faced with an increasingly competitive environment, students tend to move away from sports early in the Indian education system. This university would provide a platform for athletes and sports enthusiasts to attain formal graduation in their choice of sports-related subject.
6.6. Setting up a university for teacher training

Given that, currently, there is no established system that ensures systemic and continuous training of teachers, the government is also working towards establishing a Teacher Training University. The university will be affiliated with Ambedkar University and would offer various programmes including a regular Bachelor of Education (B.Ed), four-year integrated Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)-B.Ed course after class 12, Master of Education (M.Ed), Master of Arts (M.A.), and PhD programmes. It will provide best-in-class training programmes for new teachers as well as for existing teachers who have completed five to seven years since getting their B.Ed degrees or clearing their Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET) examinations.

Summary

As we look at the above initiatives, it’s important to note two things. First, a focus a few elements. Second, there is a continuity in agenda – with the objective of staying the course. No new initiatives or reforms around learning or community engagement are added – only a strengthening of the previous ones. Such an approach will ensure that efforts are targeted towards priority areas in order to reach the government’s overarching vision.

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7. Adapting the Delhi Model: Implications for Other States
Key Takeaways

Four learnings that all states can take from the Delhi Education reforms

- What initiatives to focus on and what to leave behind
- How to design initiatives such that they are more than ideas and have impact
- How to organise a winning team to guarantee success (Political leaders, Department leaders and external partners)
- How to create a groundswell of real change – where its seen and felt by every teacher, student, and parent
7. Adapting the Delhi Model - Implications for Other States

The education system in Delhi has several unique advantages by virtue of Delhi being a city-state. Delhi government runs 1030 schools, half the number of schools of a large Indian district. All schools are easily accessible and are headed by HoS who are uniquely selected by the UPSC. Delhi’s position as a national capital accorded it with certain privileges in 2015. For instance, Delhi has one of the highest literacy rates at 86 percent, according to the 2011 Census.\(^\text{47}\)

It is tempting to attribute Delhi’s early success to such factors and assume that the model cannot work in other states with different contexts, for example, in areas with significant tribal diversity, scattered rural population, low literacy, or limited budgets. However, Delhi is not altogether unique, especially in terms of scale. Delhi government schools currently cater to almost 15 lakh students. This is the same as eight averaged sized districts in India. Additionally, around 33 percent\(^\text{48}\) of regular teachers’ posts were vacant in 2015, 29 percent\(^\text{49}\) of Delhi’s teachers are guest or contractual teachers even today, and Delhi’s government school students come from equally underprivileged backgrounds (poverty levels are higher and adult literacy levels lower than states like Kerala and Chandigarh).

We, hence, do believe that the lessons from Delhi can inform systemic reforms elsewhere, along with the necessary contextualization.

"The Delhi Model can be replicated in any state. In education, funds are not the key concern. In any case 95 percent of the funds are for teacher salaries and infrastructure. And every state has enough money to fund the remaining 5 percent of core initiatives if it wants to. I have already implemented most of Delhi’s reforms in another state in the last one year and we are already beginning to see the fruits of that.

- Senior IAS Officer, Delhi government"

In this chapter, we will recap three things:

1) What are the major initiatives that create positive impact in systems?
2) How can we succeed in implementing similar initiatives?
3) Other relevant learnings

Investment in infrastructure: The importance of this cannot be underplayed. Small investments in a school – adequate number of classrooms and toilets, painted walls and a playground, functional drinking water, electricity, and fans, and a comfortable and clean staffroom go a long way in motivating everyone to come to school and participate in the learning process. For teachers, students, and parents alike this has been the most motivating factor to work harder and learn better. Delhi also went a step ahead and invested in the quality of infrastructure – investments in modern buildings, desks, and granite flooring wasn’t an exercise in excess but designed to give students and teachers a sense of dignity – that they deserve the same quality of education as that of any private school.

Deep and continuous community engagement by making parents a true stakeholder in the change process. We often undermine the value of a parent in the learning process – especially since many in government schools are poor and illiterate. Delhi Model showed that bringing parents into the learning journey of a child can achieve huge dividends. They did this first by strengthening and empowering SMCs – not just financially and administratively but also by building direct channels of communication through WhatsApp and volunteer networks. Mega PTMs organized and publicized as huge events where teachers spoke with each parent’s child at length, parent workshops on academic topics, and other forms of communication (report cards or WhatsApp messages) were leveraged to involve parents in their child’s education. This led to improved school governance, higher attendance, more study time at home, and, sometimes, even involvement of parents in academic activities at home.

Multi-year learning initiatives: The biggest impact on learning outcomes in Delhi came from a combination of academic initiatives that didn’t shy away from recognising the huge gap in learning outcomes in upper primary classes and tried to address it head on. The interventions ranged from grouping of students to ensure teaching at the right level (Chunauti), to dedicated FLN programmes (Buniyaad) as well as additional mission-mode initiatives like the Reading Campaign. These were designed with attention to detail, implemented thoughtfully over many years and continue, given their relevance in bringing students up to speed. The impact of these interventions isn’t just in the learning outcome improvement but in shifting the mindset of teachers to understand that each child matters. Many teachers have credited this mindset shift for improving Board pass percentages during our FGDs.
Bringing real-life skills and values to students (some version of social-emotional learning): Delhi’s most unique and lasting contribution to education in India is probably the recognition and advocacy that education should not just be about academic learning but should also help children grow into good human beings and develop critical life skills such as strength of character, mindfulness, interpersonal and communication skills, knowledge about the external world, etc. Through HC in classes 1 to 8 and EMC in classes 9 to 12 respectively, Delhi introduced regular time in the day for a child’s development – including social and emotional development. These innovations have received significant appreciation from all stakeholders, and many believe that these have contributed to students’ academic learning as well.

Significant investment in deep capacity building of teachers and HoS: In order to undertake the reforms, investing in building capacity through trainings and on-going support was critical. However, Delhi adopted a new approach to capacity building. First, rather than envisioning training as a standardised five-day curriculum, Delhi sent its teachers and HoS to elite institutions across India and the world to expose them to world-class teaching-learning and crafted immersive learning programmes based on these visits. Secondly, Delhi also envisioned capacity building as a long-term and continuous process that never ends and is ideally premised on self-reflection and peer learning. In order to support this, cluster-level leadership development for HoS was institutionalized as a monthly process and a large cadre of high quality MTs and TDCs (at school level) was carefully selected and trained to support schools and teachers on a day to day basis. This is a strong long-term asset built by Delhi.

Continued strengthening of the internal organisation: Lastly, Delhi also gradually improved its existing organisational and governance setup. First, existing human resource constraints were minimized. In many cases, this was done through regular recruitment as well as by recruiting contractual or guest teachers, where required. In many cases, functions such as sanitation, security, and maintenance were also strategically outsourced to vendors. Second, Delhi recognised that a large number of students study in private schools and the government is equally responsible for them. Comprehensive fee regulation and diligent implementation of Section 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act were major pillars of this. Delhi also restructured its DIETs and SCERTs, recognizing the seminal role they play in the delivery of quality education.

It is important to note that Delhi chose to focus on a gradual and phased approach to education reform. Several initiatives such as vocational reforms, digital transformation, extensive assessments reforms, super-achiever programmes, etc., were not prioritised in the first phase. Instead, a few interventions were selected and undertaken, gradually phased out over five years, and each of those was designed with great diligence and implemented with focus and rigour over many years – till the benefits reached all 15 lakh children in Delhi.
If we look at the list above, a majority of the states in the country are probably already pursuing similar reforms in school education. Most states have a range of initiatives and a large set of partners – at state, sub-state, district, and block level supporting them. There is limited difference from Delhi in that respect.

In order to reflect on this, we ask you to consider eight questions. These relate to the core principles and theory of change underpinning the Delhi reforms:

**1. Do we, as a leadership team (including political leadership and department leaders), have a clear and sharp articulation of our goals and plans? Does the field also understand and align with these goals?**

Few states begin long-term transformations with a clear vision and theory of change. In even fewer cases is the entire senior leadership and the broader system completely aligned with this vision. If one asked the political leadership and the Department leaders of a state what their goals are, it is quite possible to hear divergent views. As one goes into the field, District Education Officers (DEOs) and Block Education Officers (BEOs), may produce a separate articulation of the vision.

Delhi shows us that early investment in ensuring that all stakeholders have a clear, unified vision and plan and are both excited by it and deeply committed to it ensures fast paced and convergent action. In this scenario, everyone is clear about where the system is headed and knows what role they need to play in moving in that direction.

In order to do this, states could learn from the JVS workshops that Delhi leveraged. Offsite leadership workshops that include political and bureaucratic leaders with the agenda of open conversations and shared vision development are extremely valuable. States do not need to replicate JVS workshops specifically, but the key element will be such an effort happening far away from office and structured to allow for open deliberation. This will help create the space for the leadership to understand each other as well as reflect deeply on the agenda. It is critical to not do this as just a one-time effort with leadership, but do it across levels (DEOs, BEOs, SCERT and DIET staff as well as HoS) and do it repeatedly over the years.
Once the vision is clear, it is important to also examine if the leadership team has the knowledge and the bandwidth to execute against this. Often times the answer is a ‘no’. Internal bureaucracy and department leadership often have policy and process expertise but lack in academic and pedagogical know-how and occasionally in areas such as data and technology. Sometimes the department may also suffer from vacancies and a paucity of time and / or manpower.

Inviting expert organisations (for example, consultants, NGOs, or others) as well as individual advisors can support departments in gap-filling for key skills. What is critical here is how these organisations and individuals are leveraged. In the case of Delhi, the government chose to bring on-board one or two senior and full-time dedicated individuals. Formal positions were created so that they could act directly, rather than only sharing ideas in meetings.

Similarly, from NGOs and private sector organisations, a select set should be carefully chosen and brought on-board. The most important element here is not to have a plethora of organisations. For most states, with multiple organisations working at different levels, this may mean examining the full range of partners and then seeing which ones to keep and let go of and where gaps may still exist.

Lastly, it is critical for the state to ‘own’ the entire process rather than let an external organisation run an intervention independently in ‘project’ mode.

2. Does our leadership team have the ability to take on this agenda? What external support do we need?

It is important that the individuals or organisations that are invited have deep expertise, an ability to work with others collaboratively, and deep multi-year commitment to the effort.
3. Where should I devolve responsibility and power to other institutions/people?

The HoS and the SMC are core institutions that must be strengthened significantly for school transformation in any state. Delhi invested in their strengthening and capacity building first and then devolved significant financial resources and administrative powers to them. This was done out of the recognition that schools need to be autonomous learning institutions to allow school-level issues to be resolved quickly. Financial powers were devolved at administrative positions (such as the Secretary and Director level) too, enhancing efficiency as proposals and critical requirements were cleared immediately without bureaucratic delays.

While some states may be averse to devolution of power because of fears of mismanagement and corruption, the learnings from Delhi indicate that when devolution is backed by accountability, capacity building, and clear communication, it can significantly improve the system.

4. Why should we expect the HoS and teachers to move mountains for us? What can motivate them and win them over?

Identifying and addressing the issues that matter the most to grassroots stakeholders is critical to win loyalty and build field momentum. In some states, this may mean addressing the grievances of a large cadre of contractual and administrative staff by providing them with an insurance policy. In others, it may mean policy-level changes in salaries or promotions. Sometimes, it may just be about easing the process of leave applications and reimbursements, or making the staffroom a better place to sit in.

Most importantly, it is about prioritising the dignity of the individual. Whether it is a policy reform, a large meeting, or just a letter or a school visit, one should reflect on whether any action/decision will increase a field stakeholder’s sense of self worth or motivation or not before implementing it.
5. As we lead the change effort, do we know enough about the ground realities? Are we engaging directly and meaningfully with the field?

A key learning from the Delhi Model is the need to engage directly with the field – and that too regularly. Political leaders, Principal Secretaries, Directors, and external partners must spend adequate time in the field engaging with students, parents, teachers, and HoS through the change process. This has three benefits.

- **Benefits of deep field engagement**

  First, it gives one a truly grounded picture of the field reality and concerns. It forces one to confront commonly held misconceptions, provides clarity on challenges, and allows to design better solutions in a participatory manner. Second, it helps to raise the morale and trust of field stakeholders. One motivating visit from a senior leader every few months can do wonders for the field morale. Third, it keeps the field on their toes. Implementation is much better when one knows senior officers may visit anytime.

Consider visiting schools frequently and travelling to different districts for field visits every two weeks. In addition, regular video conferences (VCs) can be held with randomly selected samples of parents, teachers, and even students. WhatsApp can be considered as a powerful interaction tool and ensures peoples’ voices and concerns are heard in real time.
States often use a standard set of monitoring processes to understand what is happening on the ground. Block Resource Persons (BRPs) and Block Resource Centre Co-ordinators (BRCCs) visit schools with monitoring forms, inspect the school and fill a report. HoS and head teachers are asked to file self-declarations of tasks being done. Middle management is reviewed and asked for an update. It is also known that this does not provide a true picture in many instances. Electricity connections may be declared as functional if there is one light in the entire school. Toilets are considered built even if not connected to a water supply. An academic intervention is declared effective even if implemented as a tick-box formality.

In the case of Delhi, a number of innovations were used to get feedback from multiple places on the same theme. Direct communication of senior officials through WhatsApp with SMC members was an invaluable feedback system across the board. Other trusted change agents – MTs and TDCs were also asked for input frequently. Direct interactions with HoS, teachers, and students through field visits and large conferences were also used. The idea was that unless we know that each intervention is happening in the most robust manner in every school, the overall effort is useless.
7. Are we celebrating our successes and our change agents adequately? Are we creating positivity and forward momentum?

Often times, there is a lot that is happening in a system, but it is neither celebrated nor communicated adequately. Most systems, as described above, are based on accountability. There are many more instances of ‘pulling up’ people, issuing show-cause notices etc. rather than recognizing those who have done well. In order to motivate the doers – it is important to celebrate them – not just through digital certificates – but in big and public ways.

Large award functions with senior leaders (district collectors in the field and chief secretary, education minister, or celebrities at the state level) are great motivators. Photos of change agents in local newspapers and announcements on radio are also effective. Similarly, to infuse positivity in the stakeholders like parents and the larger community – it is important to showcase successes. Media interactions, press releases, external visits to schools, and announcements, etc. may be used to bolster the reach.

Correlated to this are also consequences. Delhi went the way of establishing ‘real’ consequences. Often the system has become immune to things like show-cause notices or a ‘pulling-up’ by an officer. Delhi went the way of suspending or terminating officers and teaching staff publicly in cases of gross negligence or inaction. While limited in number, this also demonstrated to everyone that the consequences of inaction will be material.

8. Are we trying to do too many things? Are we staying the course with a few interventions or changing our agenda too often?

Sometimes, well-intentioned states or leaders find it difficult to say ‘no’ to new ideas or new partners. This leads to launch of several initiatives which the system may not have the capacity to execute. We would recommend phasing interventions in gradually over many years like Delhi (one Big Intervention each year) and focusing on the rigour, quality, and stability of individual interventions. Similarly, existing interventions should be continued over 5 to 10 years rather than be implemented for a few years and changed.
The ideas above represent a broad possible archetype of the Delhi Model applied to all states. Some highly urban and developed states like Punjab and Haryana, urban bodies like Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), or other small states with rationalised school structures may want to immediately apply these learnings across all their schools. Larger states that face bigger scale or inefficient school structures may want to prioritise resources in select schools. In such states, the concept of Model Schools that are manageable in number but account for a sizeable chunk of the student population (20 to 40 percent) may be considered. Initiatives constrained by resources may be implemented in Model Schools while others may be implemented across all schools.

1. How can large states or those with limited financial and human resources do this?

The two major heads of financial expenditure tend to be teacher salaries and infrastructure. If financial resources permit, states should prioritise addressing essential gaps in teachers and infrastructure first. If financial resources are limited, we would recommend prioritising infrastructure in Model Schools first, since teachers can be moved around with rationalisation. However, if financial resources do not permit significant infrastructure improvements even in Model Schools, it implies that the current structural organisation of schools and teachers itself is faulty. In such a situation, states may want to consider reforms such as school re-organisation, teacher cadre restructuring, or insist on increased funding as a precondition for meaningful reform. Lastly, states need to think through the field capacity required to implement initiatives. Some initiatives like SMC strengthening and MTs are unlikely to succeed at scale without significant field resources and support. In such cases, alternative implementation ideas need to be thought through which are referenced in the Intervention Handbook Report.
If an Education Minister had to do three things based on learnings from Delhi, they would be:

**Align the Department on a common vision:** Arrange for a retreat or offsite workshop with the entire senior leadership of the state with the core aim of the officers getting to know each other and having meaningful discussions about education. This should be far away from the daily bustle of files and offices. The vision and roadmap that emerges should then be aligned with all levels of the system.

**Invest in infrastructure and quality:** Infrastructure is the most visible change in schools. Investing in high quality infrastructure has immediate gains in terms of motivation and positive momentum. In the long term, it is cost effective as well. In a similar vein, invest in an increased level of quality in other initiatives. Do not shirk from increased funding for learning interventions, high quality training or exposure visits for teachers and bring in the best external talent or vendors for support on initiatives as needed.

**Engage deeply and directly with the field:** Visit schools frequently and with a clear agenda to align schools on the vision of the state. Interact deeply and meaningfully not just with teachers but also with students, parents, and non-teaching staff. Set up multiple channels of communication so that you can get direct feedback from the ground on a regular basis. Hold regular events through video conferencing and in person to recognize teachers and parents and create a culture of celebration and recognition.
3. What are three things that the Secretary of Education can take away from Delhi?

If a Secretary had to do three things based on learnings from Delhi, they would be:

**Build a leadership team:** This should be a stable, long-term, and cohesive team with the right mix of external experts and NGOs or civil society organisations. Identify them yourself based on the needs of the Department. Create formal positions for the experts so that they have leverage and space to create change.

**Engage with the technical and academic side of education:** The education department is not like the PWD. In other words, avoid reforming education through administrative or regulatory changes alone. Use the support of external experts to orient oneself with the academic side of education and the technical vocabulary of education. True reform is only possible if senior leaders address both the administrative and academic side of education equally.

**Identify what is likely to motivate field stakeholders:** Engage directly with the field to understand the steps and actions that will convey a sense of respect and dignity to lower level administrators, teachers, and parents. These may be subtle things like office infrastructure or larger reforms like payment or promotion norms. If key pain points can be resolved in the early years, it can act as a huge force multiplier for the entire system.
Absolutely not. The context of Delhi, as stated in the beginning of this chapter, is unique. Moreover, this report contains a prioritised articulation of select initiatives.

Delhi is a city-state with the municipalities running schools from classes 1 to 5. The absence of primary education or panchayat institutions, for example, means that Delhi has very different priorities from other states.

There are several other important aspects, such as equity concerns, to take just one example, that are not prioritised in this report. While Delhi’s infrastructural efforts, like installation of CCTV cameras, provisioning security guards, etc. were universally appreciated by parents for making schools more comfortable and safer for girl students alongside promotion of several inclusive educational programmes, they are not the focus of this report. Other states, for example, with greater tribal diversity or high inequality may need to prioritise different interventions (for example, Multilingual Education).

We recommend that states do not try to blindly replicate Delhi’s reform efforts but absorb the key lessons and principles that underpinned these reforms.

Every intervention in Delhi will have to be carefully studied for relevance in other states – if states want to replicate certain interventions such as SMC strengthening, teacher training, or other learning interventions for example, they may refer to the Intervention Handbook Report for a step-by-step understanding. However, before doing this, it is important for states to conduct a comprehensive diagnostic and field engagement process to first identify its core challenges and potential roadmap.

Lastly, states should be wary of copy-pasting interventions from Delhi as this could prove to be counter-productive. It is very unlikely that all interventions mentioned in this report will have perfect relevance in any state. For example, TDCs will not be relevant in a state with a lot of low-enrolment schools. As mentioned before, each state will have to deeply analyse the relevance of each initiative in their state.
School Case Study: Chirag Enclave – SBV (Kautilya)

This case study captures the journey of Chirag Enclave school, which has seen inspirational transformation as a result of Delhi’s education reforms over the last 5 years. It aims to strengthen readers’ understanding of Delhi’s reforms and provide a blueprint for other schools to learn from and implement initiatives as per their own context.

1.1 Background

Back in 2014, the school was struggling with basic facilities (unhygienic toilets, lack of drinking water, improper student desks, etc.) and presented a typical case of student absenteeism with even occasional cases of violence among students. There was also a considerable room to improve communication between the school and the parent community. The below par condition of the school was reflected in the below average class 12 performance (85.7%) and Quality Index score (257.8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Performance indicator</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 12 pass %</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality index score</td>
<td>257.8</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fast forward to 2020, the school has achieved 100% class 12 pass percentage and a Quality Index score of 349 (more than 35% improvement). It also now boasts of a state-of-the-art infrastructure (including smart classes, science laboratories, cricket ground, open gym, etc.), near-zero student absenteeism, drop in cases of student violence, and a cooperative parent-teacher community. The school has improved to a point that the principal and a few teachers have transferred their children from private schools to study here.
So, what did Kautilya SBV do differently to achieve this turnaround?

1.2 HoS: Leading the school from the front

Dr. Chitendra Singh Verma was appointed the HoS in 2014 after being associated with the school as a teacher since 2006. “Bacche ke liye hum kya rahein hai?” [What are we doing for our students?] is a question that stayed with him from the motivational Jeevan Vidya Shivir Leadership program.

The first thing Mr. Verma did was to write a **compelling vision for the school** – “To empower students to acquire, demonstrate, articulate, and value knowledge and skill that will support them as life-long learners and contribute to the global world.” This vision, pasted on his study wall, guided him through the school transformation.

Realizing that overall development of the school required collective effort, he then set out to **build a strong relationship with his teachers**. He created a safe space for teachers where they would connect with each other and talk exclusively about their personal lives. This created a culture of understanding each other leading to positive momentum in the school.

The next logical step was to inspire his teachers. The HoS started **multiple initiatives to motivate his teachers** – Teacher of the Month award, gratitude wall, etc. – and recognized teachers in front of the entire school, creating a sense of achievement among them. Further, Mr. Verma started a co-teaching model, where a teacher was supported by another teacher of the same subject for a few topics based on their mutual strengths and weaknesses. Teachers were also asked to coordinate with SMC members to closely monitor student absenteeism.

Next, a **monthly PTM cadence** was set up to **build better relationship with parents**. These PTMs are also attended by SMC members to connect with parents and understand their needs. Further, the HoS proactively and regularly communicates with the SMC members and ensures a collaborative approach to his work. He also directly calls 10-15 parents every week, motivating them to be more involved in their child’s growth.

The HoS took personal interest in **engaging with students and creating an environment to foster learning** – regularly visiting classrooms, counselling students, ensuring best possible infrastructure, and encouraging overall development through extra-curricular activities – created an overall environment of learning.
1.3 SMC: Driving change by involving the community

In the initial years of the transformation journey, the Delhi government mobilized parents through awareness campaigns and conducted re-elections for SMCs. The newly elected members were also regularly trained on SMC’s roles and responsibilities. The SMC members of SBV (Kautilya) took a series of targeted efforts to reach out to the parents – building a mutually respectful relationship between parents and teachers and developing a seamless communication channel between them.

They started playing a **proactive role in PTMs**, closely following up with parents who regularly failed to turn up and resolving their concerns. This has resulted in a massive improvement in PTM turn out (16% in 2014-15 to 86% in 2019-20) over the last 5 years.

They started **making frequent visits to the school to monitor three key areas** – infrastructure, teaching-learning within classroom and established processes such as Mid-Day Meal distribution and cleanliness routine. Issues related to any aspect of the school are intimated to the HoS and discussed for swift action.

**Strong relationship with school staff:** SMC members have developed a mutually respectful association with the school staff. Any complaint by a parent/student is immediately flagged to the respective teacher or HoS, ensuring quick follow-up.
SMC members felt motivated as their voices were heard and respected, for instance – SMC got the school uniform changed to boost student morale through an extensive process that required parent’s approval, and got the school to employ two additional safai karamcharis to ensure cleanliness.

1.4 Going forward

The school plans to focus on further improving the Quality Index Score and ensuring that students clear competitive examinations such as JEE, NEET, etc. On the SMC front, a serious attempt to engage other parents as SMC Mitras for greater engagement and better communication can be seen. The school has also begun to think about various facets of the National Education Policy 2020 and has set up Sports, Arts and Science committees for the same.
Appendix 1: Summary from Parents’ Survey

95%+ of surveyed parents believe “Delhi Schools have become better”

- 95.5% Things have become better
- 4.2% Things are the same
- 0.3% Things have become worse

1. N = 577 parents
2. Question: “Over the past 5 years, what is your take on the changes which have been brought about in Govt. schools?

23% of surveyed parents had moved their children from private to government schools

- 77% Always in government school
- 23% Shifted to government school

1. N = 131 parents who shifted their child
2. Question: “why did you shift your child to a Delhi govt. school?

BCG conducted a survey in August 2020 to capture parents’ feedback on the Delhi reforms.
Within schools, *infrastructure, teacher attitude & learning environment* most cited improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Improvement Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School infrastructure</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s attitude</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcome of students</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline in school</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness Curriculum</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New academic interventions</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 551 parents - Who saw positive change
2. Question: “In which specific segment have you seen an improvement in school?”

55% parents cited better *academic performance* and 42% cited *regular attendance* as biggest changes in their children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Improvement Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased acad. performance</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More regular attendance</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More disciplined</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More confident/inquisitive</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More calm/considerate</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No major difference</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 551 parents - Who saw positive change
2. Question: “What change have you witnessed in your child over the past 5 years?”
### 80% parents benefited from increased awareness about their child due to PTMs

- **Increased parent awareness**: 80%
- **Clarity on how to support child**: 38%
- **Increased teacher awareness**: 32%
- **Spend more time with child**: 12%
- **No benefit/can’t articulate**: 12%

1. N = 517 parents who have been to at least 1 PTM
2. Question: “What changes or benefits have you witnessed due to PTMs?”

### ‘Better staff attitude & specific inputs about child’ cited as biggest changes in PTM

- **Better staff attitude**: 53%
- **Better inputs about the child**: 45%
- **Dignified treatment**: 38%
- **Improved logistics**: 26%
- **More effective PTM notifications**: 23%
- **No change/can’t articulate**: 21%

1. N = 517 parents who have been to at least 1 PTM
2. Question: “What changes have you witnessed in PTMs in the last 5 years?”
Only 48% parents aware of learning initiatives, of which HC most prominent

48% parents aware of at least 1 student learning initiative
52% parents not aware of any student learning initiative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happiness Classes</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Buniyaad</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Chunauti</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMC</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Camps</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Mela</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 577 parents (right hand side); 279 parents who are aware of any initiative (left hand side)
2. Question: “Which Delhi govt’s student learning initiative are you aware of?”

Majority of the parents aware of initiative name, but not its objective

Happiness Classes

- Not aware: 41%
- Make child happy/calm: 38%
- Make learning fun: 27%
- Get break from studies: 21%
- Become a better human: 15%

Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum

- Not aware: 40%
- Become an entrepreneur: 25%
- Develop entrepreneurial mindset: 24%
- Build confidence: 9%
- Get a job after school: 4%

1. N = 175 parents aware of HC (left); 55 parents aware of EMC (right)
2. Question: “What is the objective of the HC/EMC?”
'Increased attention' to child is the most prominent change witnessed in teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paying more attention</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More interaction with parents</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better teaching skills</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased teacher discipline</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand every child’s problem</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 404 parents who saw change in teachers
2. Question: “What changes have you witnessed in teachers over the last 5 years?”

Future guidance/jobs & ensuring student learning most prevalent asks for improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide jobs/future guidance</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure student learning</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better teacher’s attention</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need for improvement</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better infrastructure</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better SMC</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More focus on sports</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 577 parents
2. Question: “In which areas do you think Delhi govt. can be improved further?”
Appendix 2: Summary from Teachers’ Survey

95% of surveyed teachers believe that “quality of education has improved”

- 95% Quality of education has improved
- 2% Quality of education is the same
- 3% Quality of education has declined

1. N = 7,096 teachers
2. Question: “How has the quality of education in your school changed in the last 5 years?”

Among those who saw improvements, “school infrastructure” most visible improvement

1. N = 6,769 teachers - who saw improved quality of education
2. Question: “What aspects of education have improved the most?”
91% teachers who saw improvements believe that their "motivation towards teaching has improved"

- 91% Improved motivation towards teaching
- 8% Same motivation towards teaching
- 1% Decreased motivation towards teaching

86% teachers Improved teaching skills and pedagogical understanding
80% teachers Transitioned into an "active problem solver"
78% teachers Developed better relationship with parents
74% teachers Developed better relationship with students

1. N (top) = 6,769 teachers - who saw improved quality of education
2. N (right) = 6,137 teachers with improved motivation for teaching
3. Question: “Do you think your motivation towards teaching has changed in the last 5 years?”

Those with improved motivation accredited “improved teacher training” as the primary driver for change

- 41% Improved teacher training
- 38% Overall positive environment
- 11% Improved teacher facilities
- 4% Motivation from HoS, SMC and parents
- 4% Appreciation, rewards and recognition
- 2% Connect with leadership
- 1% Other

1. N = 6,137 teachers - with improved motivation for teaching
2. Question: “What is the most important reason for this improvement in motivation?”
3. These teachers couldn’t choose a specific reason and hence mentioned “overall positivity”
“Introduction of new holistic curriculum” marked as the most impactful academic change by teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New curriculum (like HC, EMC, etc.)</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on FLN during Buniyaad</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping and teaching at the right level</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of additional TLM</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from MTs and TDCs</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved student assessment</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved teacher training</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in syllabus and curriculum</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 7,096 teachers
2. Question: “Which of the following academic changes in the past 5 years was the most impactful?”

More parent involvement and improved vocational and skills trainings most prevalent asks for improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More parent involvement in child’s education</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in skills/vocational training</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgradation of school infrastructure</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career counselling and job opportunities</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More focus on holistic education</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in TLM</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction/revision of learning curriculum</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 7,096 teachers
2. Question: “Overall - What areas should the Delhi government focus on further improving in the next 5 years?”
'HoS have become more encouraging, promote collective ownership and visit classrooms more often' cited as the most impactful academic changes by teachers

1. N = 7,096 teachers
2. Question: “Have you seen any improvement in the role played by school principals in the last 5 years?”

Annual teacher trainings were considered to be the most impactful development program

1. N (left) = 7,096 teachers
2. N (right) = 2,889 teachers who chose annual trainings as most impactful
3. Question: “Which of the following development programs has had the largest impact on you?” & “What changes have you felt in annual teacher trainings?”

- Improved training methods: 52%
- More relevant training: 41%
- Improved trainer quality: 41%
- Better communication: 30%
- Better logistical arrangements: 22%
- Teacher feedback incorporated: 21%

1. N (left) = 7,096 teachers
2. N (right) = 2,889 teachers who chose annual trainings as most impactful
3. Question: “Which of the following development programs has had the largest impact on you?” & “What changes have you felt in annual teacher trainings?”
Increased parent awareness and involvement in child’s education cited as the most dominant benefit of Mega-PTMs

- Increased parent awareness and involvement: 72%
- Useful tips about students discussed: 52%
- Parents and teachers get to know each other: 48%
- Improved student motivation: 47%
- Improved parent satisfaction: 39%
- Increased teacher awareness: 36%
- No real benefit: 4%

1. N = 7,096 teachers
2. Question: “How do you think the Mega-PTMs have helped?”

57% teachers feel SMCs helped connect with parents however up to 25% find no benefit or report detrimental impact

- Helped find parent contacts: 57%
- Maintenance of school infrastructure: 38%
- Address student specific issues: 38%
- Educate students on safety, hygiene, etc.: 36%
- Raise teacher issues to higher authorities: 17%
- No significant benefit of SMCs: 14%
- Negative impact of SMCs: 11%

1. N = 7,096 teachers
2. Question: “How do you think SMCs have helped?”
‘Ensuring access to quality education’ is the most prevalent perception of Delhi’s vision for Education

1. N = 7,096 teachers
2. Question: "When did you realize that these many students were behind their grade level?"

24% teachers had lack of clarity on 'behind grade students' before the 2016 FLN assessments

1. N = 3,883 teachers teaching in class 6–8
2. Question: "When did you realize that these many students were behind their grade level?"
Challenges of discrimination, resistance from parents and inappropriate grouping voiced by upper-primary teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students in Nishtha/Neo-Nishtha feel discriminated</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents dislike/ have strong opinions on grouping</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pratibha students feel bad when they score lower than other groups</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideally different grouping for different subjects</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher feel discriminated against</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Challenge</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 3,883 teachers teaching in class 6–8
2. Question: “What do you think are the challenges of grouping students by learning level?”

71% upper primary teachers suggest either a change in grouping methodology or to completely remove grouping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group only for 1-2 periods/day</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not group by learning level</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue with existing system</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. N = 3,883 teachers teaching in class 6–8
2. Question: “Do you have any suggestions for grouping students?”
**Most teachers use both Pragati & regular textbooks across all groups**

- Pragati & regular books used across all groups: 42%
- Regular books used by all & Pragati used as supplementary in Nishtha/Neo-Nishtha: 23%
- Regular books in Pratibha & Pragati in other groups: 14%
- I don’t use Pragati books: 1%
- Other: 1%
- There are no pragati books for my subject: 10%
- Not applicable: 10%

1. N = 3,883 teachers teaching in class 6–8
2. Question: “How is the specialized teaching-learning material such as Pragati used in class?”

**MTs/TDCs were viewed as a platform to openly ask queries by most teachers**

- Platform to openly ask queries: 63%
- Help with techniques to engage weak students: 53%
- Helped improve pedagogy: 51%
- Helped develop student relationships: 43%
- Created an academic atmosphere: 36%
- Observed classes & shared techniques: 34%
- Created a student-centric atmosphere: 28%
- Helped clarify doubts: 19%
- Increased subject knowledge: 16%
- Became a role model: 13%
- Other: 1%
- Can’t say: 3%
- No tangible impact: 2%

1. N = 1,388 teachers who believe govt. trainings helped and that MT/TDCs were the most impactful
2. Question: “What has been the impact of MT/TDCs that you have witnessed?”
Varied interpretations of the objective of Happiness Curriculum across primary & upper-primary teachers

1. N = 4,779 teachers teaching in class 1–8
2. Question: "What do you think is the objective of Happiness Curriculum?"

- Students to learn & absorb moral values: 25%
- Help students become better human beings: 22%
- Make learning a fun process: 17%
- Make the students calm & happy: 17%
- Make student understand their own emotions: 12%
- Provide a break from studies: 1%
- Other: 1%
- Don’t know: 1%
- Not applicable: 4%

Happiness Curriculum made students more empathetic, increased their interest in studies and helped develop better relationships

1. N = 4,779 teachers teaching in class 1–8
2. Question: "Please choose all that applies: Because of Happiness Curriculum, students are _______

- Become well-behaved, polite & empathetic: 60%
- Better relations with students, teachers & parents: 46%
- More interested in class and studies: 45%
- Increased confidence: 33%
- Increased discipline: 28%
- More calm and composed: 27%
- Attending school more regularly: 16%
- Other: 1%
- No change: 9%
- Not applicable: 5%
Most teachers have the same understanding of the objective of EMC

1. N = 5,492 teachers teaching in class 9–12
2. Question: “What do you think is the objective of Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum?”

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EMC made students aware of career choices, more confident and inquisitive

1. N = 5,479 teachers teaching in class 9-12
2. Question: “What do you think has been the impact of EMC on students?”
“Principal looks at the attendance every day and calls up the absentees”

"Principal ab har din attendance dekhte hai aur regular absentees ko call lagate hai"

"Har class mey blackboard, projector hai Aur ab maze aate hai padhane mey"

"Every classroom has a blackboard and projector. Now teaching is fun."

"PTMs ke karan parents ab involved hai aur iske kaaram school mey result badha hai"

"Thanks to PTMs parents are now more involved which is helping to improve the school result"

"Teaching ab ‘sanskaari job’ se badh kar ek ‘hobby’ jaisa ban gaya hai"

"Teaching now feels less like a ‘government job’ and more like a hobby"
Appendix 3: Delhi’s Education System: A Brief Overview

Delhi’s school education system consists of around 5,600 schools catering to 44 lakh students in Classes 1 to 12. There is a plethora of management options - DoE, private, Municipal Corporations of Delhi (south, east, and north Delhi corporations, New Delhi Municipal Corporation [NDMC], Delhi Cantonment Board [DCB]) to name a few. However, most of the schools fall under three primary segments – DoE (government), MCD, and private schools, as can be seen in Exhibit A3.2.

Despite constituting only 18 percent of total schools, Delhi’s government schools are large, integrated schools catering to 15 lakh students or 36 percent of the student population. Around 16 percent of students study in MCD schools, around 41 percent in private schools, and the remaining roughly eight percent in schools under other management.
A unique aspect of Delhi’s education system is that the majority of primary school students (87 percent) go to MCD schools or private schools. This is illustrated in Exhibit A3.3.

While some DoE schools do offer primary classes, the overall capacity is very limited (around 1.3 lakh, compared to the roughly nine lakh primary students in Delhi). Therefore, the intake of DoE schools primarily starts in class 6 and is based on students who pass out of MCD schools in class 5.

These 1,000 DoE schools with around 15 lakh students, spread across all 11 districts in Delhi, are taught by a total workforce of around 56,000 teachers. Around 36,400 are regular teachers (who have permanent tenure) while around 2,000 are contract teachers (hired through Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan) and roughly 17,700 are guest teachers (also employed on a contractual basis but hired locally by principals).

Exhibit A3.3: Split of enrolments across management types in Delhi

Exhibit A3.4: Split of students across classes in DoE schools
The split between primary teachers, trained graduate teachers who teach classes 6 to 10, post graduate teachers who teach classes 11 to 12 can be seen in the Exhibits below. Finally, the remaining cadre, i.e. ‘others’, comprises of work experience teachers, counsellors, etc.

Finally, a quick overview of Delhi’s outcomes may be gleaned on the basis of standardised education indices. This has been summarised in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index / Metric</th>
<th>All India Rank</th>
<th>Detailed Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAS1 (2014): Language (Grade 3)</td>
<td>24th</td>
<td>Delhi’s score 61 percent, three percent lower than the national average of 64 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAS (2014): Maths (Grade 3)</td>
<td>25th</td>
<td>Delhi’s score of 63 percent is three percent lower than the national average of 66 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGI2 (2018-19): Ministry of Education</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Delhi scores 829 out of 1000 points on the PGI index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEQI3 (2016-17): NITI Aayog</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Delhi scores 69.9 percent on the SEQI scale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1: National Achievement Survey; 2: Performance Grading Index; 3: School Education Quality Index
The DoE is headed by the Principal Secretary (Education) and supported by the Director of DoE. DoE in Delhi oversees school-level education activities across all the 11 administrative districts in Delhi. It should be noted that DoE has divided Delhi into 13 districts as per their organizational structure. These 13 districts are further divided into a total of 29 zones, with each zone having an average of 35 schools.

The Director has a team of 11 subordinates who directly report to him / her, as can be seen in Exhibit A3.7. There is one Special Director of education, four Additional Directors of education, one State Project Director, one Director of SCERT and four Regional Directors (RDs). These four RDs cover the five regions in Delhi – north, east, south, and Central and West. These RDs are further supported by 13 district DDEs, 29 zonal DDEs, one private school branch DDE and one aided school branch DDE. It should be noted that due to the small and compact nature of Delhi, there are no block level officials.

Exhibit A3.7:
Organizational structure of Department of Education, Delhi

Total 44 DDEs:
• 13 District DDEs
• 29 Zone DDEs
• DDE (Private School Branch)
• DDE (Aided School Branch)
Appendix 4: Methodology of the study

Our exploration of Delhi’s education reforms was conducted between July and September 2020 and rested on four major pillars.

**Data Analysis**
We undertook a comprehensive analysis of a variety of data sources that were available within the Department. This included, but was not limited to, DISE master data for the last five years, school-level learning outcome data from the Chunauti and Buniyaad programs over the last four years, school-level Board results data over the last five years, and other Departmental data specific to initiatives such as SMCs, infrastructure, teacher trainings, etc. Our analyses were focused on trying to derive three specific insights across various parameters:

- **Consistency of data**: Is the data internally and logically consistent and a reliable indicator of the true picture of the ground? For example, we subjected the learning outcome trends in Buniyaad to a variety of logical tests such as if the end-lines of one year were broadly consistent with the baselines of the same cohort in a new class. However, we were not able to verify the data inside schools and classrooms because of the COVID-19 lockdown.

- **Impact**: Does the data indicate that there has been a relative and substantial increase in key outcomes and impact metrics? For example, is the increase in Board results potentially explained by the decline in students taking the Board exam?

- **Drivers of change**: If there is a substantial delta in key outcomes, what are the potential drivers of this change? For example, is the increase in Board performance at the school level potentially correlated to increased teacher recruitment?

The preliminary data-driven insights were thereafter substantiated or qualified through extensive qualitative discussions as described below.

**Focus Group Discussions**
Our team conducted over 20 FGDs with a variety of different stakeholders in Delhi – including HoS, teachers, students, parents, SMC members, DIET principals, and district officials. Each FGD was conducted with a randomly selected pool of participants but was limited to those who were able to access video conferencing solutions because of the impact of COVID-19. In addition, we also held over 50 one-on-one telephonic interviews with a number of principals, teachers, students, and parents. Some of these interviews were with a carefully selected sample. For example, principals of five high-performing schools and principals of five low-performing schools in class 10 and 12 Board exams.
Recent developments such as the COVID-19 crisis and the recently passed NEP represent fundamental shifts for school education in India. However, this report does not intend to address these aspects and state’s potential responses to them. The document is an articulation and exploration of Delhi’s education reforms before either COVID-19 or NEP. As states look to fine tune their strategies and roadmaps for the next few years to account for NEP and COVID-19, we hope that they will continue to apply the learnings from Delhi.

There were also a few other constraints during the making of this report: not least the limited access to students, classrooms, and schools given the challenges of COVID-19 and the lockdown. We would have liked to spend some time inside Delhi’s schools and classrooms during the normal course of things. We apologise for not being able to bring that richness to this report.

Senior Stakeholder Interviews
The Delhi government also provided us with access to a large number of senior stakeholders and state functionaries with whom we conducted extensive interviews. These included Chairperson, DCPCR, Advisors to the Director, Education and Education Minister, members of the Education Task Force, former IAS officers (Secretary and Director) in the Department, DIET Principals, Deputy Directors who led specific initiatives, SCERT faculty, as well as all major NGO partners and civil society members who played an important role in the design or implementation of any specific initiative.

Parent and Teacher Surveys
Lastly, in order to ensure a robust quantitative lens for the reader that also reflected the beliefs and aspirations of field stakeholders, we conducted two surveys. The first survey was conducted telephonically with 556 randomly selected parents. This survey was not conducted by an external agency but in-house with each survey being implemented by a BCG consultant who worked on the project. The second survey was conducted online with a sample of 7,096 teachers. The sample of teachers was chosen to be representative of the universe of teachers across parameters like regular, contract, district, and classes taught. The sample in both surveys was independently determined by BCG.

Disclaimer
Recent developments such as the COVID-19 crisis and the recently passed NEP represent fundamental shifts for school education in India. However, this report does not intend to address these aspects and state’s potential responses to them. The document is an articulation and exploration of Delhi’s education reforms before either COVID-19 or NEP. As states look to fine tune their strategies and roadmaps for the next few years to account for NEP and COVID-19, we hope that they will continue to apply the learnings from Delhi.

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