GUIDELINES FOR

EDUCATION

DURING PREVALENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Submitted by
Committee for Improvement of Online Education during
Prevalence of Covid-19 Pandemic

**School Education Department,
Government of Mizoram**

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GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATION DURING PREVALENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1. INTRODUCTION:

Education is one of the most adversely affected areas of the Covid-19 pandemic not only in the state of Mizoram but across the globe. Prolonged school closures are affecting school children statewide resulting in loss of learning. A recent Survey shows that 241107 children have been affected by the pandemic in Mizoram. Under such a circumstance, and given the uncertainty of when the pandemic may be brought under control, it is imperative to find alternatives to conventional system of teaching and learning. Direct teaching and interaction with students are no longer applicable in the present situation. To keep the system of education in the state going forward, and to mitigate the impact of the pandemic upon the education of thousands of children in the state, there is an urgent need to re-imagine and remodel the way teaching and learning have happened so far, and find the best alternative for delivering quality education through a healthy mix of online, partially online and offline education and schooling at home and schooling at school.

Most schools in the State are resorting to online education which has been a compulsion rather than a choice. Though this new mode of teaching and learning cannot replace classroom learning it has its advantages for it leaves room for a more flexible and personalized learning environment. At the same time, it has been observed that online education is being run in the state without guidelines from appropriate authority which could affect the quality of education in the state in the long run. Besides access and availability of device, connectivity and location factors are a matter of serious concern when it comes to implementing online education across the length and breadth of the

state. There is a possibility that implementing online education as a single alternative might discriminate certain categories of students as recent surveys have shown.

1.1 A Survey on Access to Digital Devices by Samagra Shiksha in April/May 2021 shows that there is 38.31% percentage of students without device across the sections of School Education. There are 50.33% of children without device in the Primary section alone. A table showing detailed information is shown in Annexure-1.

1.2 The Committee constituted by the Government to make suggestions for Improvement of Online Education during Covid-19 pandemic conducted a survey through DEOs and SDEOs on the status of internet connectivity in Mizoram; results show that there are many villages where internet connectivity is an issue. Reports of irregular signals and insufficient signal strength coming in the way of online classes are also submitted by many villages. A complete report of the survey is shown in Annexure-2.

1.3 Therefore, indications derived from these two Surveys are proof that there is a technological divide that acts as barrier to learning and the barrier needs to be bridged with sound guidelines for online, partially online and offline education to help teachers reach the last child in the last mile using multiple modes – portal, apps, telecast/broadcast, Websites, YouTube, print resources, textbooks, supplementary learning materials and more.

1.4 Implementation would require systematic planning involving parents, the community, local self-governments and volunteers, effective supervision and monitoring and most of all, will and readiness to embrace a new system of teaching and learning among the teaching and parent community.

2. CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH FACILITIES:

For implementation of education both in online and off mode, households to which the general student population belong may be broadly classified into the following six broad categories:

2.1 Households with/without device:

i. Computer/Laptop/Smartphone and a 4G internet connection as well as a Television set with Cable TV connection

ii. Smartphone with 4G network

iii. Smartphone with limited (3G/2G) or no access to internet

iv. Television set with cable connection

v. Radio set or a basic mobile phone with FM

vi. No Device

Households with

- Computer/ Laptop/ Smarkphone and a 4G internet conncection as well as a Television set with a DTH/ Cable TV connection
- Smartphone with 4G network
- Smartphone with limited 3G / 2G or no access to internet
- Television set with a DTH / cable connection
- Radio set or a basic mobile phone with FM
- No digital device
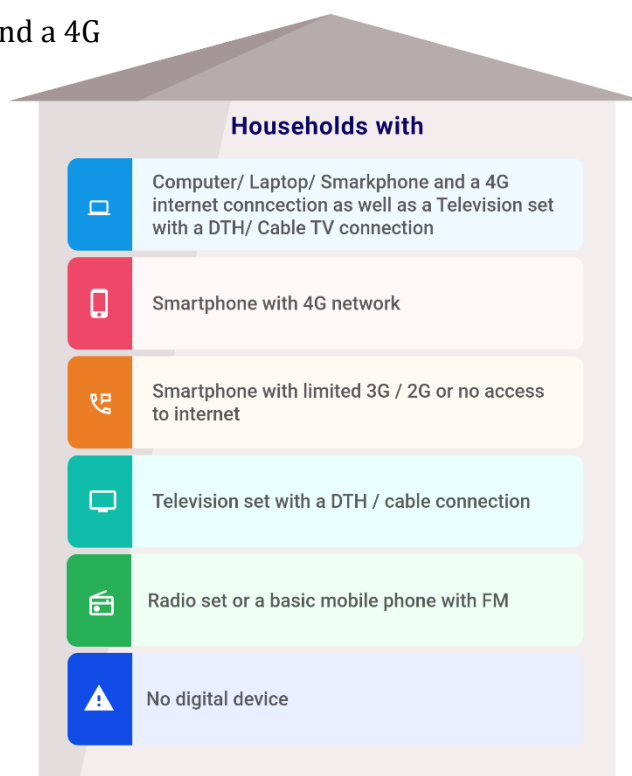
We need to focus on the mechanisms to adopt for online, partially online and offline education for households having one or none of the above facilities. There are two kinds of online learning and teaching that schools will need to balance based on the feasibility:

- **Synchronous:** This is real-time teaching and learning that can happen collaboratively and at the same time with a group of online learners or even individually, and usually a teacher, or some method of instant feedback; examples of synchronous learning are online teaching through video conference (two-way video, one-way video, two- way audio), audio conference (two-way audio) using satellite or telecommunication facilities.

- **Asynchronous:** This is anytime, anywhere learning but not connected on real time, for example, emails, SMS, MMS, surfing e-content on DIKSHA, listening to radio, podcasts, watching TV channels, etc.

Schools should not assume that teaching-learning through synchronous communication is the only requirement or even desirable in order to support effective digital learning. The goal is NOT to try and recreate face-to-face (F2F) classrooms over the internet. Anytime, anywhere, online and blended learning provide opportunities for learners to work more independently, expand their agency, intellectual horizon, learn to use tools and strategies that otherwise may not be feasible in classrooms for teaching-learning and assessment.

3. MODE OF DIGITAL EDUCATION:

Considering the diversity of student community decentralized planning and implementation is advisable depending upon the availability of ICT infrastructure. One can choose an appropriate mode for implementing digital education:

3.1 Online Mode:

Anyone of the following models can be chosen when computer/smart phone with internet connectivity is available.

Online mode
Computer/ Smartphone with internet connectivity is available

Partial online mode
Computer/ Smartphone is available but regular internet is not available

Offline mode
Where internet connectivity is not available or available with very less bandwidth
Television   Radio   Print Resources

Model 1:
Guide learners to go through the online resources shared by teachers through instant messenger/mail etc. Students come prepared and then discuss their queries during online interaction through video conferencing tools.

Model 2:
Conduct scheduled online classes through any one of the video conferencing tools.

Model 3:
Conduct a scheduled live class through any of the Learning Management System (LMS) and students interact during the live sessions or through forums/groups in
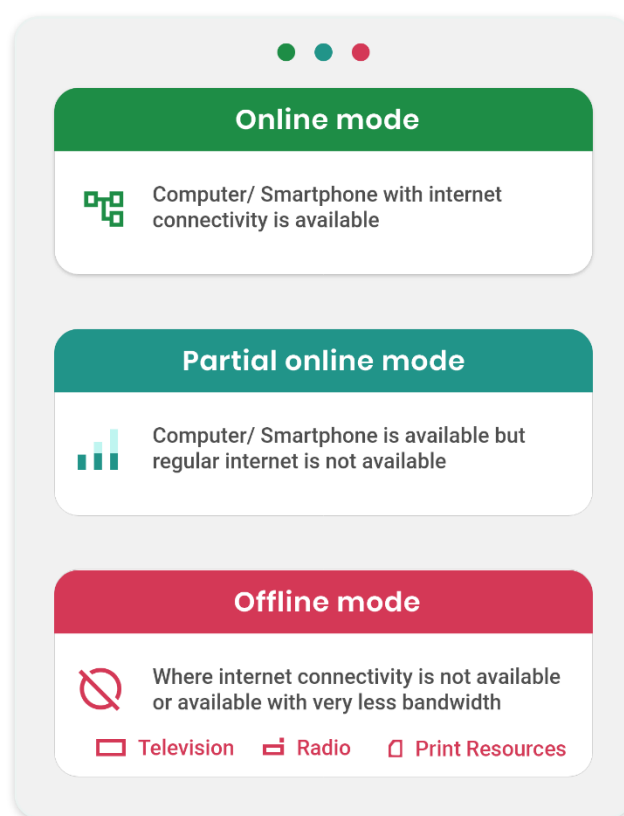
LMS. All the resources are to be shared in the LMS itself and assignment submission also happen in the LMS.

3.2 Partially Online Mode:

When computers/smart phone is available but regular internet is not available, any one of the following can be chosen:

Model 1:

Links of resources available at DIKSHA/ePathshala/NROER/NDL or any publicly accessible platform are shared with students/parents by teachers through instant messenger/emails. Students can download those resources in a pendrive/phone/computer for offline use. Teachers can suggest activities (experimenting, further reading etc.) to be done offline for further exploration.

Model 2:

Teachers instruct students to read textbooks and other reference materials physically available with the students and then teacher (once a week) interacts with students through WhatsApp, phone call, video call to clarify/enrich/teach the content.

Model 3:

Sharing DVD/CD with class wise topic wise resources like video lectures/ demonstrations/stimulation etc. for students to learn using the resources. The teacher comes online to discuss and clarify doubts, queries or explain concepts (may be once a week)

3.3 Offline Mode

In situations where internet connectivity is not available or available with very less bandwidth, resources are shared through various platforms like television, radio etc. that do not depend on internet connectivity. Print resources can be used extensively in offline mode of education.

USING TELEVISION

Model 1:

Class wise and topic-wise resources are transmitted on TV channels (DTH and cable TV). Such contents can be easily accessed and utilized by students and teachers using television available at home.

Model 2:

Sharing through pendrive/DVD/CD with class wise topic wise resources like video lectures/ demonstrations/ stories etc.

Model 3:

Incase TV is not available with students, community television or television in public places can be used for mass education.

USING RADIO

Model 1:

Class-wise, topic-wise audio content can be broadcasted through dedicated radio channels with support of AIR.

Model 2:

Community/FM radio channels can be utilized to broadcast teaching-learning resources and at times it can be customized to address local needs.

Model 3:

Incase radio is not available with students, community radio or a public radio can be utilized along with loud speakers for mass education in some generic areas.

USING PRINT RESOURCES

Phase 1: Access to textbooks

Every child should have access to grade appropriate Textbooks/ Supplementary Readers/ other teaching-learning materials must be made available to students. Supplementary and grade-wise subject-wise print materials must be prepared and shared with students.

Phase 2: Content Identification, Creation and Curation

Step 1

The first and foremost action to continue learning at home is identification and creation of content which must be Grade, Subject and Topic appropriate and mapped to specified syllabus/textbooks and identified learning outcomes. Contents need to be both in physical form (for children without device) and in digital form.

If necessary, content created may be curated and be based on various free digital e-learning platforms provided by MoE:

(i)   The DIKSHA Portal (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing And Learning - https://diksha.gov.in/),

(ii)   MOOCs on SWAYAM (https://swayam.gov.in/),

(iii)   e-Pathshala (https://epathshala.nic.in/),

(iv)   NROER (National Repository of Open Educational Resources - https://nroer.gov.in/welcome) and State Portals (SCERT – https://scert.mizoram.gov.in; MBSE – www.mbse.edu.in), Apps, TV, Radio etc.

Phase 3: Re-enforcement of learning

At an interval to be decided by the teacher or preferably at the end of each chapter worksheets and exercises based on their textbooks must be prepared by teachers and given to students. This will enable teachers to keep track of their student's learning achievement and to plan remedial teaching for students who might need it.

Phase 4: Assessment of Learning/ Evaluation

Assessment will focus on prescribed Learning Outcomes in the lessons. The activity will require development of activity sheets by teachers to promote practice and test papers for evaluating learning achievement of each child. The frequency of evaluation and assessment must conform to the Academic Work Plan for Home Learning 2021-2022 for elementary Schools and the Week-wise Plan for Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools.

Phase 5: Monitoring

Monitoring in any programme is a crucial factor for its success. Monitoring therefore should be carried out in a systematic way. Two factors should comprise of the monitoring programme: Academic Monitoring and Physical Monitoring. The Monitoring Team must address these two issues and monitoring should be conducted at regular intervals.

4. EIGHT STEPS FOR ONLINE/ PARTIALLY ONLINE/ OFFLINE EDUCATION

To ensure continuity and minimize loss of learning there are 8 (eight) steps for online education given below:

4.1 **Planning** – Planning must be done considering a few common factors.

- Learning styles of children
- Nature of subject
- Accessibility of digital devices with children, teachers, schools and all other resources
- Duration of classes
- Types of assignment and assessment

4.2 **Identification** – Identification and availability of tools and resources required for conducting online classes. This includes the entire plan in terms of the duration of each class, cyber security, methods of assessment, etc.

4.3 **Arrangement**– Arrangement and organization of daily/weekly classes collecting all available resources.

4.4 **Guidance**– Guidance must be given to all stakeholders especially at the initial stage. Keeping everyone involved and well informed is very important. Thus, the school must guide the teachers and they must further guide the students/parents about the themes, topics, assessments, etc.

4.5 **Communication** – Communication is an important factor and teachers must talk and discuss things clearly with parents and their wards.

4.6 **Assign** – Assigning group activities or individual assignments, depending upon the technological tools available with the children.

4.7 **Monitor** – To ensure that the students do not lose interest in studying virtually, teachers must monitor their development and engagement with assignments through suitable means

4.8 **Appreciate** – Teachers must praise students to motivate them on their performance to boost their confidence and to build interest in the work they are doing to ensure that online/offline education does not become de-motivating.

5. GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS HEADS, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS

5.1. Guidelines for School Heads and Teachers

Teachers play an important role in a child's life. Teachers convey their affection, warmth, care, comfort as well as control to the students through verbal and non-verbal communication. Therefore, teachers may be more careful about the verbal and non-verbal communication they make through various digital platforms. Teachers being the first level counselors, also have the responsibility to take care of the mental and physical health of their students.

5.1.1 Need Assessment

- School leaders could consider conducting an informal survey to identify various ICT facilities available at home for each child. This data could be analyzed by school leaders to group or create differentiated plans.

- Ensure that for each class, teachers and students:

  i. mode of communication

  ii. learning plans and

  iii. necessary well-being support has been identified.

5.1.2 Planning

- School heads to take adequate measures to facilitate ICT infrastructure for teachers (laptops/tablets, connectivity etc.), encourage and lead them in using different ICT tools in teaching-learning and assessment.

- Orientation of teachers, parents and students about using digital technology for teaching-learning and assessment may be done at the initial level and repeated, if so needed.

- School heads should not expect teachers to be engaged in six to eight hours of online teaching in a day. Rather they may be engaged for about two to three hours of online activities per day for the classes they teach. However, teachers may continuously explore, create and share learning resources with their students and/ or parents.

- Class-wise instant messaging groups may be formed for smooth communication with teachers, parents and students. For lower classes, the parents may communicate on behalf of students.

- Do not make adoption of digital learning burdensome for students and their parents. Avoid setting unrealistic goals for students as well as yourself.

- Involve teachers and representatives of parents in chalking out modalities of digital education. A systematic timetable (with detailed online and offline activities) for each class may be planned in consultation with all the teachers.

- Do not rush for the sake of completing the syllabus, rather focus on the consolidation of learning. Plan the interventions keeping in mind students' level, age, resource availability, nature of content etc.

- Plan ICT enabled engaging activities which have scope for tapping the creative pursuit of students leading to the acquisition of important life skills.

- Children exposed to digital technologies/gadgets for a longer time are prone to severe health issues. Hence sitting with digital gadgets for long hours or their excess use can be avoided by designing age appropriate schedules of digital education.

- If possible, parents and guardians may also be involved in selection of appropriate resources for e-resources and ICT tools for their children.

5.1.3 Screen time recommendation

CLASS	RECOMMENDATION
Pre Primary	On a given day for interacting with parents and guiding them, not more than 30 minutes.
Classes 1 to 12	- Academic Work Plan for Home Learning 2021-2022 for Elementary Schools. http://scert.mizoram.gov.in - Week-wise Work Plan for High Schools and Higher Secondary Schools. www.mbse.edu.in
Classes 1 to 8	Online synchronous learning may be undertaken for not more than two sessions of 30-45 minutes each on the days the schools decide to have online classes for primary sections.
Class 9 to 12	Online synchronous learning may be undertaken for not more than four sessions of 30-45 minutes each on the days as decided by the schools.

5.1.4 Actual implementation of online/0ffline mode of education

- Use Instant Messaging/Chat groups/emails involving parents (wherever required) for sharing important information, resources, suggestions and follow up activities.

- Post a weekly announcement to provide an overview of the coming week's topic or a recap of the previous week's work, or both.

- Teachers may share e-content with students and parents and guide them how to use those contents using available gadgets at home.

- Provide time to time feedback on the responses and performance of students in the assigned tasks.

- School head may interact regularly with teachers and parents (at least once a week) to get feedback.

- Where parents are not in a position to support students in digital learning, suggest alternative support like peer learning and seeking help from neighbours, identified local volunteers, etc.

- Teachers may themselves select the contents based on the following criteria and circulate among students and parents to help them choose appropriate digital media:
  - o 'age-appropriate' so that it matches with children's needs, abilities, and interests
  - o clear learning goals
  - o content meaningfully presented
  - o contextualized and culturally responsive

5.1.5   Suggest activities that

- are age appropriate, simple to do at home and have learning goals that focus on building concepts/ skills among children.

- are meant for holistic development, and parents can easily assist their children in doing the activities.

- encourage children to explore, observe and experiment using objects easily available in their surroundings/ localities.

Note: It is important to have presentations which are easily readable, slides must follow certain rules like not more than 5 bullet points, maximize the use of infographics/graphs/charts and avoid tables as much as possible.

5.1.6   Cyber Safety and Privacy Measures

- Students, Teachers, and Parents may be oriented on Do's and Don'ts of cyber safety and security.

- Make students aware about cyber bullying and how to avoid getting bullied. Also, encourage them to refrain from cyber bullying.

- Do not share personal information, textual communications, videos or images of students on social media for any purpose including advocacy and

showcasing your work. Create a congenial, safe and secured online learning environment. Communicate often with students with utmost clarity on do's and don'ts of engaging with digital learning.

5.1.7   Specific Guidelines Related to Preschool, Class-I & Class-II

- Plan joyful learning experiences for digital/online learning as you do for face-to-face.

- Give interesting assignments to children such as listening, and reading, stories followed by activities like drawing inferences, adding/changing the climax at the end, picture reading, art and craft, puzzles, simple observation projects, learning new words etc.

- Occasionally organize brief and casual meetings with the parents and children through video conferencing and give them a chance to narrate their feelings and experiences.

- Encourage parent to document the child's work through a photo or a short video in order to stay connected to the child's early learning experience without making it stressful or going for rote learning.

- Guide parents regarding monitoring TV programs viewing, about what cartoons/ programs are being watched by children.

5.1.8   Specific Guidelines Related to Class-III and above

- Give 10-15 minutes break between two consecutive classes for students to freshen up, relax and re-energize themselves to focus on the next class

- Encourage peer discussion and interaction during online classes

- Develop and use formative assessments for immediate and continuous feedback, this would help the teacher and students improve in the learning process

- Talk regularly to students in understanding and encouraging the responsible use of the internet and netiquettes.

5.1.9 Points to remember

- To manage, despite the digital divide among students, activities and resources have to be planned keeping all the categories of students (with minimum and maximum facilities) in mind.

- Activities can be carried out using audio, video and audio-visual media so that all the students get an opportunity to learn according to their learning styles and need.

- Ensure disadvantaged, first generation learners, and Children with Special Needs (CWSN) find opportunities to learn through online/offline learning processes. Encourage all children to participate and help each other in the process of online/offline learning.

5.1.10 Teacher Preparation

Teacher Preparation for digital education is a twofold process. (i) The first is the requirement of teacher preparation for adopting digital technology for teaching their students more efficiently. (ii) The second is to use digital medium to keep abreast of new development in education for their professional growth. Teachers must be ready to harness the potential of digital technology to keep them professionally up to date. The teacher may:

- Explore digital technologies (LMS, Apps, Web Portals, Digital Labs etc), repositories of Open Educational Resources (OERs) at national/ State/global level.

- Attend webinars, online training programmes, online courses on ICT-Pedagogy- Content integration.

- Use appropriate technology for Teaching, Learning & Assessment.

- Use resources embedded in Academic Work Plan for Home Learning 2021-2022 and the Week-wise Plan 2021-2022 developed by SCERT& MBSE for different stages.

- Be part of forums, interest groups and online communities to interact with peers and know how the rest of the world is doing with digital education.

- Get acquainted with copyrighted as well as Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) e-contents and tools for learning. Teachers can be made aware to use open resources as everything on the Internet is not available for free download or sharing.

5.2. Guidelines for Parents

The COVID-19 has brought with it many new challenges in the learning spectrum for parents, families and especially children. Parents' role will now be amplified to keep their children engaged in learning and at the same time to look after their emotional well-being as well as physical health. As the child will feel a range of emotions during this time, the role of the parent may include providing encouragement and support.

Especially young children do not have so much vocabulary to express/describe their emotions and thus parents and family members need to be very careful to watch over the digital behaviours. Keeping in mind the detrimental effects of the internet and gadgets, judicious use of the internet may be monitored by the parents. Following are some of the suggestions made in this guideline that parents can follow.

5.2.1   Physical, Mental Health and Well-Being

- Parents may interact with children on a regular basis to know their physical and mental well being.

- Watch out for signs of anxiety, depression /anger during digital learning.

- Check if your child is becoming very secretive about his or her online activities. For example, not talking to you, deleting history of the internet browser, using encryption software, or quickly flicking the screen display when he/she sees you. It's better to talk openly about your own internet use and encourage your child to do the same.

- Explain and talk about basic hygiene and healthy lifestyle practices for protection during COVID-19 using digital resources. There are plenty of digital resources (videos, animations, booklets, etc.) available in the web.

- Combine online time with fun filled offline play, games and other activities, so that there is a balance between the screen time and the concrete play time

- Parents may ensure the involvement of their wards in physical activities such as outdoor games, exercises, etc. during breaks from digital learning.

5.2.2   Safety Measures

- Keep TV/laptops/computers etc. in a common area and definitely out of bedrooms. This will help in restricting usage time and you can easily keep an eye on the child's overall usage of digital devices.

- Develop digital rules in consultation with children, and follow it. The plan could cover things like screen-free areas in home, internet safety rules, duration of watching TV, surfing the web, etc. Talk with children regularly to help them understand the importance of responsible use of the internet rather than scolding.

- Discuss with children about netiquettes such as (i) not to post hurtful messages about others (ii) not to post photos, videos and other information without permission of that person online. They must be advised to think before posting one's photos, videos or other data in social media and other places.

- Discuss and enquire if the child is spending too much time on the Internet or mobile, predominantly in instant messengers, forums, texting messages, etc.

- If aware, parents may use parental controls in devices and enable safe search in browsers while children are surfing the web.

- CBSE has recently released a manual on cyber security for learners. It may be accessed on http://cbseacademic.nic.in/web_material/Manuals/Cyber_Safety_Manual.pdf and also scan the QR codes in the manual and watch the videos related to it.

5.2.3   Teaching and Learning

- Have a regular communication channel with the school (counsellor, teacher, other staff) to better monitor and help children in their progress.

- Try to create and maintain a routine for your children, particularly the younger ones with respect to all daily activities. This includes digital learning activities suggested by teachers and educational institutions as well.

- Consult with teacher, parents of other children and create simple yet effective learning plans by reflecting on following questions:

- What would the children learn this week?

- What digital resources, instructions and support children need to achieve the learning outcomes/lesson/unit?

- How will children receive these digital resources, instructions and support?

- How will I know that my children are learning?

- Ensure that your children use assistive aids (glasses, hearing aids etc.) during online sessions.

- Do not force the child to sit continuously in front of the TV, laptop, mobile and never stress or pressurize the child to continuously do online activities when the child is not ready for it.

5.3 Guidelines for Students

The most important stakeholder and primary beneficiary of school education are students. The following are guidelines for students to maintain health and mental well-being while ensuring continuity in learning.

5.3.1   Balanced Online/Offline Activities

- Maintain a schedule for sleep, food, noting time spent on the internet for learning and time spent on the internet for socializing etc.

- Besides online learning, every day read from textbooks and read other books as well

- As a follow up to online class, explore further through activities, experiments, creative expressions etc.

- Access the digital resources provided through the various national ICT initiatives

- Take notes during the online class and review them offline

- Restrict time for surfing and regulate screen time for scrolling/reading information on every issue (not more than 2 hours for secondary level students)

- During online activities take small breaks to stand up and move away from the screen. During this break, take a quick walk indoors, do few stretch exercises, practice deep breathing, catch up with family members etc. Do not continue to sit and surf or chat online.

- Avoid using mobile/internet surfing 40 minutes prior to going to bed because engaging in passive communication just before sleeping makes the brain active and makes it difficult for the brain and body to relax.

5.3.2 Safety and Ethics Related Precautions

- Seek parents' permission before sharing any personal information on the Internet

- Be careful about cyber bullying and also stop yourself from bullying others.

- Follow netiquette and behave responsibly while online.

- Use the internet constructively. Do not waste your time in playing online games.

- While participating in real-time teaching and learning through video conference, make it a point to wear formal attire. As far as possible, one should wear one's school uniform.

5.4 Supporting Online Learning of Children with Special Needs (CWSN)

Children with special needs may require assistance and support from respective teachers. Following are the guidelines that may provide clarity on ways to ensure a hassle-free access to online teaching.

5.4.1 Create/Curate and Share Content

- Develop/Identify and use resources like audio books/ talking books, TTS, sign language videos, audio tactile materials, etc.

- Prepare chapter briefs in advance so that the same may be shared with the CWSN prior to actual group teaching in online mode. Care should be taken to prepare these briefs in multiple formats such as text,

- CWSN may be encouraged to watch programs in sign language e.g., the NIOS sign language TV channel and other such programs in sign language.

- Allow flexible ways (types, recorded, audio visual with gestures, adult/ sibling supported) of responding or submitting assignments/ completed tasks, projects, homework etc.

- The accessibility curriculum of NCERT may be referred for enhancing participation of CWSN in online mode (https://ciet.nic.in/pages.php?id=accesstoedu&ln=en&ln=en)

5.4.2 Measures to be taken for CWSN

While creating learning groups of students for online teaching learning, as far as possible separate groups for students with special needs, may be avoided and they be treated at par with peers.

6. GUIDELINES FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH AND MENTAL WELLNESS DURING DIGITAL EDUCATION

Adequate physical and mental health practices need to be adopted while pursuing digital education. Poor ergonomic practices, prolonged exposure to digital devices and lack of physical activities can have a negative impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of a person.

6.1 Ergonomic Aspects

- The postures and practices a person adopts throughout the day while using digital devices can have a significant impact on one's health and well being. Staying in the same posture for prolonged periods is undesirable. Besides, prolonged exposure to digital devices can have negative impacts on other aspects of health and wellbeing also.

- How to sit on a table for learning through laptop or mobile is very important. Straight and upright postures may be maintained for each device used for online classes. Best postures for each device is depicted below:

Feel bad if you've assume bad posture after being at your desk a while
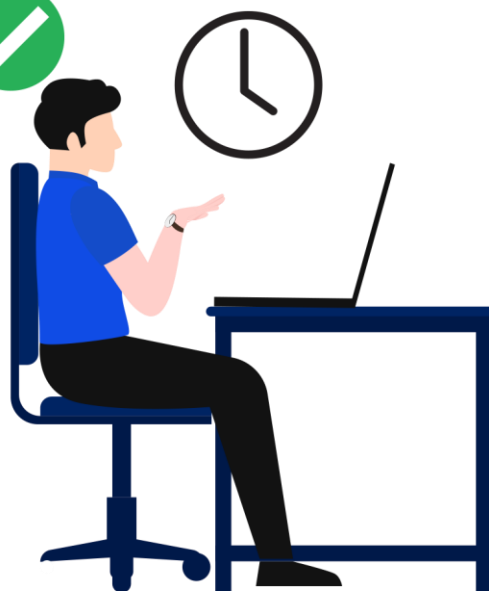
Check your posture and position every 20 minutes or so and read just or move around
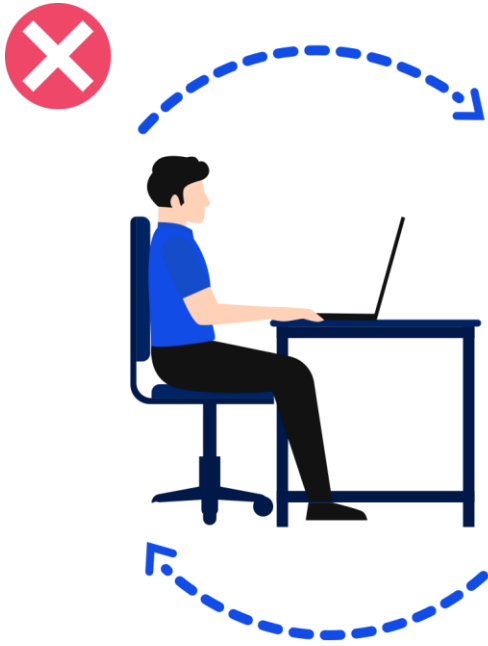
Sit or stand for long periods of time without interruption.
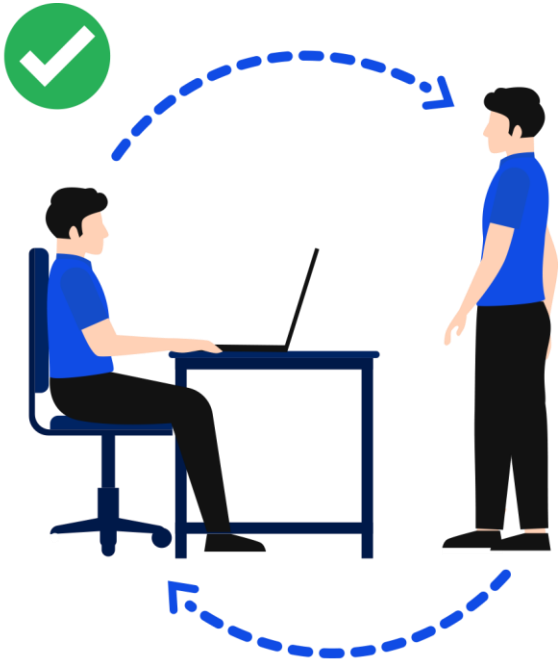
Alternate between sitting and standing as much as possible.
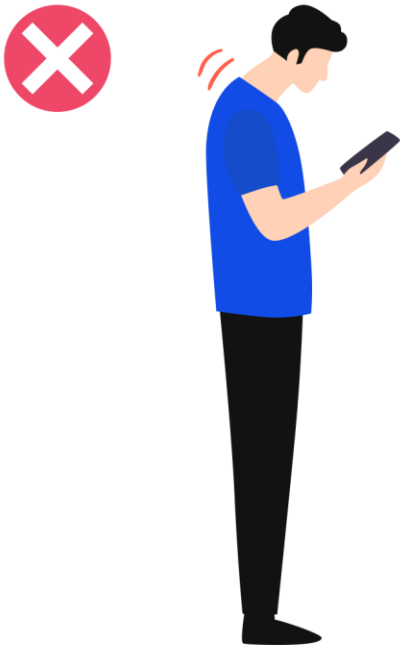
Hold your phone below eye level and tilt your head forward.

Hold your phone or tablet directly in front of your face when using it

Slouch!

Sit Up!

too close

back pain

knee pain

ankle pain

ideal range

straight back

relaxed arm

tilted monitor

arm rest

relaxed foot

SIT 20 Minutes   STAND 08 Minutes   MOVE 02 Minutes

6.2 Exercises

- Physical exercises on a regular basis can help in strengthening the immune system as well as strengthening muscles, bones, and joints.

- A short break from Computer/Television/Mobile phone after every 30-60 minutes will help in reducing strain on eyes, exhaustion, improve circulation of blood and reduce stiffness in joints. One can walk around for a few minutes during such breaks. Switching one's eyes off the screen for 20 seconds after every 20 minutes is soothing for the eyes.

- While sitting in front of a digital device, one can stand up periodically and do some stretching exercises.

6.3 Mental Wellness

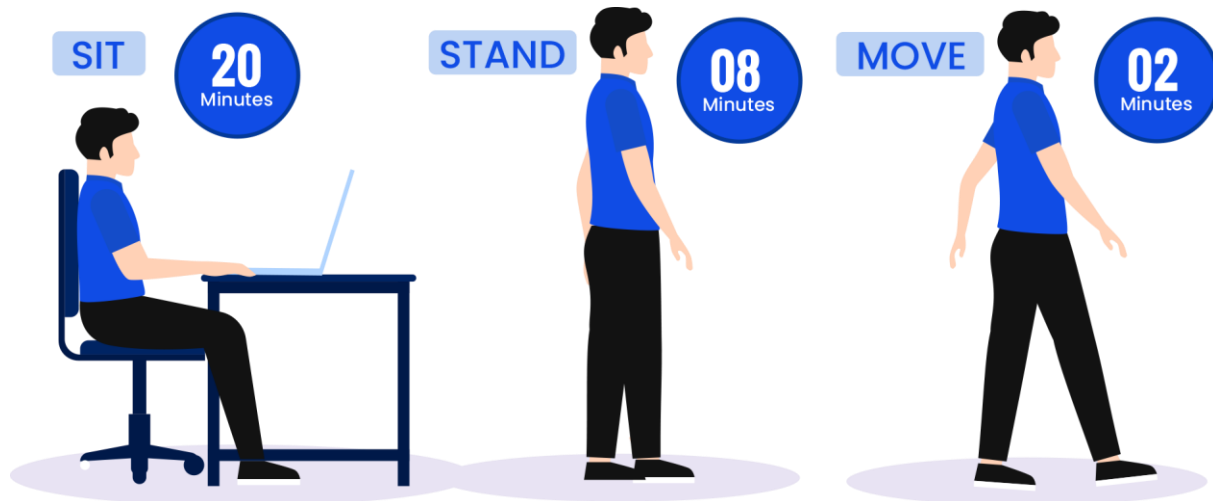- Malpractices on the internet and other safety, security and ethical issues may be reported to adults/teachers by the students. If teachers are also facing such issues they may report it to authorities and subsequently to the police.

- Students may be oriented to the responsible uses of the internet and how its misuse can cause harm to one's academic, personal, social and mental wellbeing

- Teachers and adults may be vigilant enough to pick up clues for unusual behavior of any student and connect them to counsellors for help. Examples of such behavior are negative emotional states such as

- o Depression manifested as dysphoria, hopelessness, devaluation of life, self-deprecation, lack of interest or involvement, and inertia,

- o Anxiety manifested as restlessness, fatigue, trouble concentrating, irritability, muscle tension, trouble sleeping (insomnia) and

- o Stress or tension manifested as difficulty relaxing, nervous arousal, and being easily upset or agitated, irritable or over-reactive, and impatient.

6.4   Learning Environment

The learning environment needs to have proper lighting, ventilation. One cannot participate in a video call when there is too much external noise. Audio-video content should not be played in the middle of an online session. An earphone may be used if available.

B PART

RECOMMENDATIONS – OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

For successful implementation of Guidelines for Education during Prevalence of Covid-19 Pandemic, the committee recommends the following for consideration of the Government.

Education during pandemic requires coordinated efforts of all stakeholders and effective supervision and monitoring at all levels. To create this platform in which participation of the key functionaries may be ensured, it is considered necessary to constitute committees at the State level and local level to whom the powers and functions of State Level Committee may be delegated for the successful implementation of the Guidelines. Hence, committees as given hereunder may be constituted as soon as the guidelines are notified for information of the general public.

1. **STATE LEVEL COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION DURING PREVALENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC:**

(a) They shall be a State Level Committee to be called State Level Committee for Education During Prevalence of Covid-19 Pandemic under the Chairmanship of an officer not below the rank of Joint Secretary in the State Government, preferably Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, School Education Department to monitor and supervise implementation of Guidelines for Education during Covid-19 Pandemic. This committee may be consisted of the membership of the following stakeholders:

     i.   Representatives from Directorate of School Education

     ii. Representatives from Directorate of SCERT, Mizoram,

iii.   Representatives from MBSE

iv.   Representatives from Samagra Shiksha, Mizoram

v.   Representatives of MTF and MISA

vi.   Representatives of ICT Department

vii.   Representatives of Education Department, MZU

(b)   The State Level Committee shall be the apex body for Education during Prevalence of Covid-19 Pandemic and shall be responsible for the effective implementation Page 2 of 6 of the Guidelines with support from all offices under School Education Department like Directorates and field offices. The committee may delegate powers and responsibilities to Director of School Education, Director, SCERT and Chairman, MBSE as may be deemed necessary.

2.   LOCAL LEVEL COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION DURING PREVALENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

(a)   There shall be a Local Level Committee for Education during Prevalence of Covid-19 Pandemic under the chairmanship of Chairman, Local Council or President, Village Council as the case may be. Recommended body of the committee is as given below:

i.   Chairman, LC/VCP – Chairman

ii.   Representative of Branch YMA – Vice Chairman

iii.   Two members each of Representatives from –

o   Teachers

o   Parents

iv.   Educationist

v.   Volunteer (if any)

vi.   Member Secretary (to be appointed by the committee)

(b)   The committee may appoint Member Secretary from amongst Headmaster or Senior Teachers of Govt. Schools within the locality in addition to Teachers' Representative in already nominated in the committee.

(c)   The committee may appoint Member Secretary from amongst Headmaster or Senior Teachers of Govt. Schools within the locality in addition to Teachers' Representative in already nominated in the committee.

(d)   Initially, Chairman and Vice Chairman of the committee may select Teachers Representative, Parents Representative and Educationist within the locality after which Member Secretary may be appointed in the first meeting of the committee.

(e)   The Local Level Committee shall be responsible for the following:

   i.   Ensure availability of textbooks/TLM for all students in the area

   ii.   Creating conducive environment of smooth and effective learning at home for all students.

   iii. Distribution and collection of Textbooks/TLM, reports, student worksheets and Test papers.

   iv.   Sensitization of students regarding Covid Appropriate Behaviour (CAB),SOPs and safety and preventive steps against the pandemic.

   v.   Organize co-curricular activities like Quiz/Debate, Painting, Essay/slogan writing, painting and story writing etc.

   vi.   Watchdog for implementation of Guidelines for education during pandemic.

   vii. Review the performance of schools within their jurisdiction in the implementation of guidelines based on the Monitoring Report.

3.   **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICIALS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THEGUIDELINES FOR EDUCATION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC:**

(a)   Directorate of School Education:

   (i)   Administering Monthly Monitoring format prepared by SCERT and MBSE for schools and field offices and enforce executive powers and control over officers under his control to ensure regular submission of monitoring report

   (ii)   Collect and consolidate Monitoring Report for submission to the State Level Committee

   (iii) Develop specific Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) educational activities during Covid-19 pandemic and enforce the same

(iv) Ensure availability of manpower resources to carry out all activities required by the Guidelines.

(v) Ensure timely distribution of Midday Meal during School closure due to pandemic

(b) Directorate of SCERT, Mizoram:

(i) Develop Monthly Monitoring Format for all Elementary Schools

(ii) Development and review of Academic Work Plan for Home Learning

(iii) Develop supplementary learning material whenever required

(iv) Develop Play-based kit for Pre-School

(v) Providing technical support to the State Level Committee in all

(c) Mizoram Board of School Education:

(i) Develop Week-wise Plan for all Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools

(ii) Develop Monthly Monitoring Format for all Secondary Schools and Higher Secondary Schools

(iii) Providing technical support to the State Level Committee in all matters pertaining to academic activities of Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools

(iv) All matters relating to assessment and evaluation relating to Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools

(d) State Project Director, Samagra Shiksha, Mizoram:

(i) Financial Support for implementation of Guidelines for Education during Prevalence of Covid-19 Pandemic

(ii) Prepare and deploy all field officers and staff for implementation of Guidelines as may be required

(iii) Providing reliable statistics to State Level Committee

(iv) All matters relating to documentation and publicity

PART
C

ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE – 1

SUMMARY OF SURVEY REPORT WITH RESPECT TO CONNECTIVITY

1.   A Survey on Access to Digital Devices by Samagra Shiksha in April/May 2021 shows that there is 38.31% percentage of students without device across the sections of School Education. There are 50.33% of children without device in the Primary section alone. A table showing detailed information is shown as follows:

Section	Enrolment	Students with Access to Devices (e.g., TV, Mobile Phone, Computer, etc.)	Students without Access to Devices (e.g., TV, Mobile Phone, Computer, etc.)
PRIMARY	50090	24880 (49.67%)	25210 (50.33%)
UPPER PRIMARY	41149	26572 (64.58%)	14577 (35.42%)
SECONDARY	16150	12997 (80.48%)	3153 (19.52%)
HIGHER SECONDARY	7616	6494 (85.27%)	1122 (14.73%)
TOTAL	**115005**	**70943 (61.69%)**	**44062 (38.31%)**

2.   The Committee constituted by the Government to make suggestions for Improvement of Online Education during Prevalence of Covid-19 pandemic conducted a survey on the status of internet connectivity in Mizoram; results show that there are many villages where internet connectivity is an issue. Reports of irregular signals and insufficient signal strength coming in the way of online classes are also submitted by many villages. A complete report of the survey is shown in the following table.

a)   DEO-WISE (covering High Schools & Higher Secondary Schools)

Sl.No	DEO	No. of villages with Internet connectivity Problem	No. of villages with Cable TV Problem
1	Aizawl	Nil	Nil
2	Lunglei	12	1
3	Siaha	17	17
4	Champhai	1	Nil
5	Serchhip	Weak Signals	Nil
6	Kolasib	Nil	Nil
7	Mamit	7 Very weak Signals	7 Weak Signals
8	Lawngtlai	Weak Signals	Nil
9	Hnahthial	Irregular Signals	3
10	Khawzawl	Weak Signals	Nil
11	Saitual	Nil	Nil

b)   SDEO-WISE (covering Elementary Schools)

Sl.No	SDEO	No. of villages with Internet connectivity Problem	No. of villages with Cable TV Problem
1	Aizawl East	Nil	Nil
2	Aizawl West	Nil	Nil
3	Aizawl South	Nil	Nil
4	Darlawn	4	8
5	Saitual	Nil	2
6	Lunglei North	3	15
7	Lunglei South	10	20
8	Lungsen	25	52
9	Hnahthial	Irregular Signals	1(+)
10	Serchhip	Nil	3
11	Thenzawl	Nil	Nil
12	North Vanlaiphai	Weak Signals	Nil
13	Champhai	9	4
14	Khawzawl	Weak Signals	Nil
15	Kolasib	3	11
16	Kawnpui	Nil	5
17	Mamit	2	3
18	Kawrthah	Irregular Signals	13
19	West Phaileng	19	3
20	Ngopa	Weak Signals	1

ANNEXURE – 2

ACTIONS TAKEN BY VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS TO IMPLEMENT ONLINE/OFFLINE EDUCATION DURING 2020 - 2021 ACADEMIC SESSION

Owing to the COVID 19 pandemic, schools could not commence as usual in the 2020-21 academic session. Hence, several initiatives were undertaken by the various sectors under the education department to ensure that teaching and learning would continue as smoothly as possible.

A.   INITIATIVES TAKEN FOR CHILDREN WITHOUT DEVICES

Sl. No.	Activities for children without access to digital devices at the district level
1	(i) '4-Week Alternative Academic Calendars for Elementary Schools in Mizoram' prepared in 2020-21 by the SCERT was utilized by all Elementary Schools during the suspension of normal classes. (ii) The 'Week-Wise Plan' for Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools consisting of 16 weeks plan prepared in 2020-21 by the MBSE was utilized by all Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools during the suspension of normal classes. (iii) Dissemination of printed learning materials. (iv) Development of Bridge Course for Primary and Middle Schools by SCERT to ensure that students were taught the core components of their syllabi despite closure of schools. (v) Conducted confined classes for a small group of children without access to digital devices with the approval of Village Level Task Force and Village Councils following SOP of Covid-19 Pandemic on a strict basis. (vi) Inclusion of children without digital devices via their neighbours or their classmates with digital devices.

2	Home visits of students for supporting them in their studies especially in rural areas. Written home assignments were distributed by teachers during home visits and students submitted the assignments to the school on preassigned date and time, evaluation and assessment of the students learning outcomes were conducted with the help of these assignments
3	Collecting a small group of children without access to digital devices by Teachers in their areas for test
4	Collecting a small group of children without access to digital devices by Teachers in their areas for the exam
5	Reduction of syllabi by 30% in both secondary and higher secondary schools were made wherein dissemination of printed learning materials of the reduced syllabi were carried out.

B. INITIATIVES TAKEN FOR CHILDREN WITH DEVICES

I. **PREPARATION OF TUTORIAL VIDEO CLIP:** The Media Cell of the Directorate of School Education and the Directorate of SCERT in collaboration initiated preparation of tutorial clips with contribution from Elementary School Teachers, High School Teachers and Higher Secondary School Lecturers. 161 Tutorial video clips for all subjects at the secondary school level were prepared by MISSTA.

II. **BROADCAST/DISSEMINATION OF THE PROGRAMME THROUGH ELECTRONIC MEDIA:** Telecasting of Tutorial Classes for Elementary and Secondary School Students through DDK, Aizawl, and two private TV channels (Zonet & LPS) was started. Students in remote areas and urban areas could receive the programme equally.

III. **YOUTUBE:** The contents of Tutorial classes were made available in the School Education Department's YouTube Channel:

- Zirna Huang:

  https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC38ssuQLMmPPyo2yi8cEboQ

- SCERT Mizoram's Channel Zirlaite Puitu

  https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4rCYqo5ur0pb5OllNBcCAA

- Students who miss the Scheduled Time in Television could access through YouTube Channel as per his/her convenience.

- 161 Tutorial video clips for all subjects at the secondary school level prepared by MISSTA were made available in MISSTA ACADEMIC Channel.

  https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2TIOY_cr3R5a2d3xHlPy2w

IV. **COMPACT DISC:** Some of the contents of Tutorial Videos (Class IX and X-Science and Mathematics) was written in Compact Discs and distributed to all the District **Education** Offices and all the DEOs circulated the same in all the concerned Schools which greatly helped both the teachers and students in the rural and remote areas.

V. **EDUCATIONAL TV PROGRAMME:** The School Education Department, Government of Mizoram also started an Educational TV programme known as Zirna Huang which was telecast by DDK, Aizawl. Through this programme, various activities of the Department including Tutorial Video Clips were publicized and disseminated for the public interest.

VI. **MISSTA ACADEMIC CHANNEL:** Apart from the programme, each subject at the secondary level in Class 9 and class 10 were also uploaded in the MISSTA ACADEMIC Channel.

VII. **BOARD EXAMINATION:** In Mizoram, amidst COVID-19 Pandemic, Board Examinations viz. High School Leaving Certificate Examination, 2021, and Higher Secondary School Leaving Certificate Examination 2021 were conducted successfully throughout the state following the Government's SOP strictly.

VIII. **USAGE OF GOOGLE CLASSROOM:** Google classroom was used extensively at the secondary and higher secondary school levels for uploading tutorials by the teachers, handing out of study materials and handing of assignments, test/assignment questions by the teachers and the respective answer paper by the students.

IX. **USAGE OF ZOOM/GOOGLE MEET:** Zoom/Google meet were also used for virtual classroom teaching as well as for oral tests and for clarification of doubts by the students at the secondary and higher secondary levels.

X. **USAGE of WHATSAPP:** Formation of WhatsApp groups by the subject teachers was a common occurrence among the secondary and higher secondary schools for subject related matters and inquiry**.**

XI. **ONLINE EDU CHALLENGE:** The Online Edu Challenge programme was initiated by the SCERT in April & May, 2020, as a weekly activity to ensure that children and teachers utilise their time in a meaningful manner during the lockdown period.

C. **TEACHER CAPACITY-BUILDING:**

I. **NISHTHA on DIKSHA:** SCERT Mizoram launched the NISHTHA training programme on the DIKSHA portal on 15th October 2020 which concluded on 15th January 2021 in 6 batches. No. of Teachers who have completed NISHTHA training **6522** against the target of **8951 teachers in face-to-face mode** and **2607** against the target of **2250 teachers in online mode**.

II. **6-Month Certificate Course in Early Childhood Care and Education:** A 6-month Certificate Course on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for in-service teachers due to be launched in March was initiated online on 1st May 2020 and was completed in blended mode on 30th March 2021. Late completion of the course is due to disruptions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. 26 Elementary school teachers completed the course.

III. **Online School Health and Wellness Programme:** Capacity-building Programmes in 3 Districts (Mamit, Champhai, and Siaha) was conducted during March 2021 for School Health and Wellness Ambassadors (Heads and Teachers of High Schools) in online mode in collaboration with MoHFW under the aegis of Ayushman Bharat.

IV. **6-Month Certificate Course in English Language Teaching:** The first batch of 6-month Certificate Course in English Language Teaching (ELT) for in-service teachers was initiated on 3rd November 2019 and was completed on 5th February 2021 under severe restrictions imposed by Lockdown during the pandemic.

V. **Online Modules on School Leadership in Regional Language:** Online Modules on School Leadership in Mizo were developed by the SCERT and are available at http://pslm.niepa.ac.in/ for school heads and teachers willing to upgrade their knowledge and skills in School Leadership.

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