GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
DISPUR, GUWAHATI-06

No. ASE.01/2020/Pt.-II/117 Dated, Dispur the 28th December, 2020

ORDER

In supersession of earlier order No.ASE.01/2020/Pt.-III/30, dated 30th October 2020 the Government of Assam in Education Department is pleased to notify the revised Standard Operating Procedure for Continuation of re-opening and functioning of Upper Primary Schools (Class-VI, VII & VIII) Secondary Schools (Class-IX, X), Senior Secondary Schools (Class-XI, XII) /Degree Colleges/Engineering Colleges/Polytechnics/Private Educational Institutions as well as Govt. and Private Training and Coaching Institutes/Universities in the State of Assam which started functioning on staggered basis and w.e.f. 1st January 2020 the aforesaid Educational Institutions will function on normal basis until further orders.

Further the Govt. of Assam is also pleased to notify the reopening of Schools in respect of Lower Primary Section (Class-I to Class-V) w.e.f. 1st January 2021 as per comprehensive SOP as detailed below maintaining all the protocols of safety Guidelines under COVID-19 pandemic.

The comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure will come into force from 1st January, 2021 until further orders.

COMPREHENSIVE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) FOR RE-OPENING OF LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOLS UNDER ELEMENTARY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (CLASS-I TO V) AND CONTINUATION OF FUNCTIONING OF SCHOOLS/EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ON NORMAL BASIS IN RESPECT OF UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOLS (CLASS-VI TO VIII) SECONDARY SCHOOLS / Sr. SECONDARY SCHOOLS/ DEGREE COLLEGES/ POLYTECHNICS/ ENGINEERING COLLEGES/ TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES/ PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS/ UNIVERSITIES IN THE STATE OF ASSAM

1. Background

The Government of Assam had extended the Academic year till 31st March 2021 and subsequently w.e.f. 01st April to 31st March of every year, primarily to recover the loss in Academic days and also to bring the session at par with all India level.

Considering the importance of continuous education, the Government of Assam has decided to start re-opening of Lower Primary schools from class I to V onwards from 1st January/2021. However, online mode of education will continue for students who prefer to attend online classes rather than physically attend school.

This SOP is also applicable for Private Educational Institutions as well as coaching Institutes. The Private Institutes has to follow the Guidelines as cited in the following paragraphs.

2. Lower Primary (Elementary)Schools :

(a) Classes will be held on every alternate day for all the classes from Class I to Class V.
(b) In respect of class IV & V formal classes will be conducted on every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
(c) In respect of Class I, II & III, formal classes will be conducted on every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.
(d) In respect of all Classes from Class I toV, classes will start from 09:00 A.M in the morning and will end at 01:45 P.M. with lunch break (Mid Day Meal) from 12:15 P.M. to 12:45 P.M.
(e) The In-Charge Headmaster/Headmistress of the Lower Primary School shall supervise and ensure that the timing of classes, serving of Mid Day Meal, maintenance of all safety Protocol relating to COVID-19 Pandemic shall be strictly done and monitored.
(f) The Residential Hostels will not function until further orders in respect of Lower Primary (Elementary) Schools.
(g) In respect of attendance of Students of Lower Primary (Elementary) Schools attendance is not compulsory and will be based purely on parental consent.
(h) In addition to formal classes online classes will also continue if found necessary.
(i) Meetings in schools (formal and informal) will not be allowed in the Educational Institution premises.
(j) There will be no cultural function, meetings etc., until further orders.

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3. **Upper Primary Schools (Class VI to VII), Secondary Schools (Class-IX and X) and Sr. Secondary Schools (Class- XI and XII) :**

a) In respect of Upper Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Sr. Secondary Schools (both Govt. and Non-Govt. Educational Institutions), the schools will function in normal manner w.e.f. 1/1/2021 on all working school days (On daily basis) through formal education and the schools will adhere to the timing of classes, Mid-day-Meal etc., as per norms, instructions and Rules inforce issued by the Govt. from time to time prior to declaration of Lock Down in the State of Assam (i.e. prior to 24/3/2020). However the Head of the Institution will ensure that all safety COVID-19 protocols are strictly followed.
b) The Residential Hostels will not function except final year students.
c) In respect of attendance of Students of Upper Primary Schools (Class VI to VII), Secondary Schools (Class-IX and X) and Sr. Secondary Schools (Class- XI and XII) the same is not compulsory and will be based on parental consent.
d) In addition to formal classes online classes will also continue if found necessary.
e) Meetings (formal and informal) will not be allowed in the Educational Institution premises.
f) There will be no cultural function, meetings etc., until further orders.

4. **Degree Colleges/Engineering Colleges/Polytechnics/Teacher Training Colleges/ Universities:**

a) In respect of Degree Colleges/Engineering Colleges/Polytechnics/Teacher Training Colleges/ Universities etc., the same shall function normally on day to day basis as per academic calendar w.e.f. 1/1/2021/ guidelines issued by UGC/AICTE . However the Head of the Institution will ensure that all safety COVID-19 protocols are strictly followed.
b) The Residential Hostels will not function except for final year students.
c) In respect of attending Degree Colleges /Engineering Colleges/Polytechnics/Teacher Training Colleges/ Universities attendance of Students is not compulsory.
d) In addition to formal classes online classes will also continue if found necessary.
e) Meetings in the Educational Institution premises (formal and informal) will not be allowed.
f) There will be no cultural function, meetings etc., until further orders.

General Guidelines

1. Attendance of students must not be enforced and shall be purely based on parental consent.
2. Students below the age of 5 years cannot attend the School.
3. The Head of the Institution, President of SMC/SMDC of the Schools shall ensure that the cook cum helpers are to do COVID test (Swab test) before resuming regular cooking and serving of hot cooked midday meal in the schools. Regular COVID test for cook cum Helpers is required to be ensured and has to be done after a gap of every 30 days or in case of any symptoms of fever, cough, difficulty in breathing etc.,
4. All concerned stake holder/ functionaries are to take necessary steps for resuming regular cooking and serving of hot cook midday meal to the children in the school campus based on the attendance of the students as per staggered timing mentioned in the SOP. However SMC/SMDC shall distribute food security allowance to the eligible absentee children as per entitlements/ norms following the guidelines of distribution of food security allowance.
5. The Schools/Educational Institutions shall have to be sanitized on every weekend (preferably on every Sunday).
6. Regarding sanitization of schools it will be the joint responsibility of the SMDC/SMC of the schools, Deputy Commissioner of the District , Joint Director of Health Services, Inspector of Schools, DEEO, BEEO.
7. On every Sunday there will be community mobilization involving the head of the Educational Institution, Village Headman (Gaonburha), Parents, Guardians, interested NGOs, SHG, Volunteers regarding precaution and awareness on physical social distancing about COVID-19 etc., maintaining health and hygiene, Yoga, Meditation, commuting, prepare and disseminate posters, banners, brochures, info graphics etc., on COVID-19 related issues.

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8. Students should be made aware about proper and scientific use of Mask, frequent change of Mask, sanitization, maintenance of physical distance of minimum 6 ft. both inside and outside the classroom.
9. The Teaching and Non-Teaching staff of all Educational Institutions and Cooks/ Helpers engaged in preparation and serving of Midday Meal among the students should be medically tested for COVID-19 after every 30 days and in case of symptomatic case the testing should be done immediately.
10. Regular cleaning and disinfection of the classrooms toilets corridor etc., shall have to be done.
11. Compulsory use of Masks/ Sanitizers by all.
12. Arrangements for potable water for hand washing with soaps. Install hand washing station, hygienic drinking water points, toilets and urinals to allow physical distancing of at least 1 to 2 meters and ensure these facilities are accessible to children with disabilities.
13. Social distancing in classes/ assembly/dining hall for distribution of Mid-day-Meal etc. space will be created in the classroom/hall to ensure that the children desk stands one meter apart and responsibility for such arrangement would lie on the Head of the institution.
14. **Before the schools reopen in respect of Lower Primary Schools (Class-I to V) , R.A.T. of all Teachers/Cooks/ Staff members have to be done and thereafter periodic testing at an interval of 30 days from time to time. And considering the huge number of teaching and non-teaching staff of institutions the time factor involved in testing (both testing and value of results) testing has to be planned by District Administration in view of the various challenges posed in conducting such large number of test.**
15. Temperatures check of all students/teachers etc. shall be done every day through thermo scanner.
16. Contact with the nearest PHC/CHC in case of fever, cough, difficulty in breathing/ medical emergency.
17. A District level task force Chaired by Deputy Commissioner of the District and consisting of District Heads of the concerned line Department as members will be responsible for ensuring enforcement of the SOP. Notification already issued by Education Department.
18. The Schools used as quarantine centres should be properly sanitized before re-opening. Those educational institutions where quarantine centres were/are setup are to be thoroughly sanitized. Sanitization should not merely be limited to the school building and it should include the entire premises, desks and benches, toilets etc. it should be an extensive sanitization.
19. Schools shall not be opened in containment zones till further instructions from the Govt.
20. Students/teachers/school administrators who have been quarantined (home/institutional) can attend school provided they produce medical fitness certificate relating to COVID-19 issued by competent medical authority. Care must also be taken to avoid stigmatizing of students and staff who have been exposed to COVID-19.
21. Whenever any single COVID-19 positive case is detected in the premises of educational institute (both Govt. and non Govt.) , thereafter the school should be opened next day only for COVID 19 testing (R.A.T) of the students teaching, non-teaching staff, cooks cum helper etc. The District Administration/ SMC/SMDC/Head of the Institution shall jointly take necessary steps for R.A.T.
22. Whenever multiple COVID-19 positive cases are detected in the school premises of educational institutes (both Govt. and non Govt.) and thereafter immediately the school/Educational institution 9both Govt. and non Govt.) will be closed for a period of 7(seven) days. Subsequently after closure of the school/ educational institution the school building including the entire premises desk and benches, toilet stations/ drinking water station etc., should be thoroughly sanitized. Thereafter, after 7(seven) days the school will be re-opened with due permission from Deputy Commissioner of the District.
23. In respect of Govt./Private educational institutions social/physical distancing shall be maintained and buses will carry 1/3 intake of the students in the bus. The school buses should be properly sanitized twice daily.
24. In respect of those educational institutions which do not have potable water/drinking water facilities/stations, the school shall not be re-opened on 1st January,2021 and decision in this connection will be taken by Deputy Commissioner of the District.
25. **Online mode of education will continue for students who prefer to attend online classes.**

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26. The health, hygiene and safety protocols of COVID-19 as issued by the Health & Family Welfare Department/NHM, Assam has to be followed in coordination with the District Administration.
27. Every School/College authority should coordinate with the nearest Health Centre/Joint Director of Health service, in case of emergency and related health checkup.
28. Students commuting in School/College transport should feel safe and all safety protocols to be followed.
29. Use of face cover/masks by students, teachers, staff and all stakeholders is mandatory and there should be thorough sanitization and cleaning of all areas inside the School/College premises prior to re-opening. Working hand washing facilities should be available in the School/College and Coaching Institutes.
30. There will be no cultural function, meetings etc., until further orders.

The STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR HEALTH, HYGIENE AND OTHER SAFETY PROTOCOLS are as follows:

A. Proper cleaning and sanitation facilities.

1. Use of face covers/masks by students, teachers, staff and all stakeholders is mandatory.
2. There should be arrangement for thorough cleaning and disinfecting of all areas, furniture equipment, stationary, storage space, water tanks, kitchen, canteen, washroom, laboratories, libraries, etc., on School/College campus.
3. Working hand washing facilities in the School/College should be arranged.
4. There should be availability of key supplies like thermometers, disinfectants, soaps, etc., and the thermometer to be used should be a calibrated contactless infrared digital thermometer.
5. Ban on spitting shall be strictly enforced.
6. All garbage should be disposed in dustbins and must not be allowed to be piled up anywhere in the School/College premises.
7. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting of washrooms during the School/College hours should be ensured.
8. Mandatory hand washing for all students and staff at regular intervals must be ensured. Hand washing time should be minimum of 40 seconds as health protocol.
9. Availability of safe and clean drinking water for students must be ensured. Drinking from water bottles by students maybe encouraged.
10. Cleanliness and hygiene should be maintained during mid-day meal preparation, serving, during eating and after eating. Utensils should be properly cleaned.
11. Each Educational Institute will constitute a Multi stakeholder Committee to address the Covid-19 related issues within the Institute, as Institutional Disaster Management Plan. Representative from DTE, Health & Family Welfare Department and District administration should also be included in the Multi-stakeholder Committee in addition to students, parents, guardians, faculties. The minutes and meeting of the Committee shall be uploaded in the public domain.
12. A sub Committee for Hostel Management may be formed from the members of the multi stakeholder Committee to address the hostel matters as and when permission is granted by the Govt. in due course for re-opening of Hostels.

B. Seating plan(Schools/Degree Colleges/Universities/Engineering Colleges/ Polytechnics/Teacher Training Institutions/Coaching Institutions(both Govt. and Non-Govt.)).

1. Physical distancing of atleast 6 feet has to be strictly followed.
2. Physical and social distancing shall be maintained in the staff rooms, office area and other places of public interaction.
3. Wherever available, temporary spaces or outdoor spaces (in case of pleasant weather) may be utilized for conducting classes in view the safety and security of the children and physical distance protocols.
4. Seats maybe designated with adequate distance for teachers in the staff room and other available rooms/halls.
5. The number of seats in the reception area maybe limited with atleast 6 feet distance between them.

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C. **Ensure physical/social distancing in the entry and exit points of the Schools/Colleges/Universities.**

1. Earmarking different lanes for entry and exit of students/teachers/non-teaching staff. Visit of outsiders should be strictly prohibited.
2. Opening of all the gates at the time of entry and exit in case of Schools/Colleges which have multiple gates shall be done to avoid overcrowding.
3. Displaying posters/signage/stickers at appropriate places reminding students about maintaining physical/social distancing must be ensured.
4. Display communication materials (info-graphics) etc. on COVID-19 prevention in different areas within the School/College premises and the community.
5. No outside vendors should be allowed to sell any eatables inside the School/College premises or at the entry/exit gate points.
6. Ensure Soap (Liquid) is available at each hand washing station, near every door of toilets, in the Mid-Day-Meal distribution areas/ school Canteens and school entrance points.
7. The Headmaster of the respective school will assign one teacher to stand at the entry point of the school during entry of the students and one teacher at the exit point during the exit of the students.

D. **Parents/Guardians consent**

1. Students will come to the schools/Colleges provided their parents have no objection and as such written undertaking/confirmation from the parents should be produced in the schools/Colleges.
2. Parents should ensure that their ward goes to schools/Colleges wearing a mask and sensitize them not to exchange mask with others.
3. Parents may take care not to send their ward to school if the child is not feeling well.
4. Students willing to study from home through online mode maybe allowed to do so.
5. Attendance must not be enforced and must depend entirely on parental consent.

E. **Schools/Colleges/Universites events, meetings, etc.**

1. Schools/Colleges/Universities should not undertake any school events/College events /Universities events.
2. Functions and celebration of festivals should be avoided in schools/Colleges.
3. School assembly maybe conducted by the students in the respective classrooms/outdoor spaces/other available spaces and halls under the guidance of the class teachers and maintaining physical distancing of atleast 6ft.

F. **Formation of different Task teams.**

The schools/Colleges will ensure formation of different Task teams such as Emergency care support/Response team/General support team for all stakeholders, hygiene inspection team, etc. The members of such teams may be identified from amongst the Teachers, Professors, Associate Professors, students and other stakeholders who will work collaboratively to take strategic and immediate action.

G. **Health checkup**

- Regular health checkup of students and teachers maybe organized.

H. **Ensure safe commuting of students who avail school/college transport.**

1. Sanitization of school/College transport should be done on regular basis atleast twice a day- once before children board the transport and once after.
2. Driver and conductor should ensure physical distance at all times alongwith students.
3. If possible, thermal screening of students may be done by the bus conductor at the time of their boarding.
4. All commuters are to wear face cover/masks. School/College transport authority should not permit students without masks and as per as possible provide them with masks.
5. No curtains should be there in the windows of the school/College bus. Preferably all windows should be kept open.
6. For air conditioned buses, the guidelines issued by CPWD will be followed which include temperature setting at 24-30 degree Celsius, relative humidity at 40-70% with provision for intake of fresh air.
7. Students should be oriented not to touch surfaces unnecessarily.

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I. **Ensure safety norms in classrooms**

1. Teacher must ensure that students sit at allocated seats maintaining physical distancing and wearing face covers/ masks. Teachers too wear face masks.
2. In case of practical works, it should be done in small groups maintaining physical distance.
3. Students should not share any material (textbooks, notebooks, pen, pencil, eraser, tiffin box, water bottle, etc.) with each other.
4. All the necessary learning material may be kept in the classroom.
5. No sharing of food among students should be allowed.
6. Overcrowding in washrooms should be discouraged.
7. For air conditioning within the school, CPWD norms shall be followed which prescribes temperature setting in the range of 24-30 degree Celsius, relative humidity in the range of 40-70% and provision for intake of fresh air and cross ventilation.

J. **Protocol to be followed in case of detection of suspected case of COVID-19.**

1. The sick student or the sick staff should be placed in a room or area where they are isolated from others.
2. The nearest medical centre should be contacted.
3. A risk assessment will be undertaken by the treating physician.
4. Disinfection of the premises to be taken up if the person is found positive.
5. The school authorities/College should coordinate with the nearest health centre/Joint Director of Health Services, in case of emergency.
6. All protocols as advised by Health and Family Welfare Department/ NHM should be followed.

K. **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR SERVING MID-DAY MEALS IN SCHOOL**

These Specific Guidelines have been framed to prepare for resuming the normal cooking and serving of midday meal in Elementary schools of Assam with focus on food safety, health and hygiene alongwith physical/social distancing. In respect of schools falling under Elementary Section (Class I to VIII) Midday-Meal will be served from 12.15 PM to 12.45 PM.

The specific Guidelines are as follows:

a) **Entry of cook cum helpers (CCH) in schools.**

1. It shall be the responsibility of District/Block Administration related to MDM to ensure that the CCH is not COVID positive.
2. All CCH to give self-declaration to the Headmaster of the respective schools with regard to the wellness of self and family members before starting their work in school.
3. Thermal scanning of the CCH must be carried out at the entry point of the school.
4. The CCH must sanitize/wash their hands for minimum 40 seconds upon entering the school.
5. Wearing face masks will be mandatory during cleaning, washing, cutting, cooking and serving of meals.
6. Handmade face covers should be washed daily.
7. Nail polish or artificial nails should not be worn because they can become foreign bodies and might compromise on food safety.
8. Spitting and nose blowing should be strictly prohibited within the premises by CCH or any other person during school hours.
9. The CCHs should wear head covers and gloves.

b) **Safety norms in kitchen and storage space.**

- The kitchen cum store place of cooking must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before 24 hours of actual cooking after re-opening of schools. The Headmasters of the respective schools as well as the SMC are responsible for the purpose.
- The floors of the kitchen and the cooking top should be cleaned every day before and after the food is cooked.
- The drainage system should be efficient enough for disposal of refuse.

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c) **Cleaning of utensils for cooking and serving.**

- The utensils used for cooking and serving should be thoroughly washed, cleaned and dried after use.
- Clean clothes should be used for wiping utensils, wiping hands and for cleaning surfaces.
- Leftovers or crumbs from plates and utensils should be removed into dustbin and properly disposed.
- Adequate waste disposal system should be arranged so that the risk of contaminating food or the potable water supply is eliminated.

d) **Checking of old stock of food grains, oil and fat and condiments before use/washing and cutting of vegetables and cleaning of food grains and pulses.**

- Use of left out food grains, oil and fat and condiments should only be done after careful inspection of quality.
- Vegetables, fruits and perishable food commodities should be thoroughly cleaned before use preferably with a combination of salt and haldi (turmeric).

e) **During cooking and serving of mid-day meals.**

- Wherever possible, kitchen activities must be performed maintaining appropriate physical distance.
- The cook cum helpers should use face covers, head covers during cooking and serving.
- The serving and dining areas should be thoroughly sanitized before serving.
- The CCH while distributing the food should wear hand gloves and maintain appropriate distance from the school children.
- The school children should also wear masks while food is being served and at all times in the dining area except while eating/drinking.
- Ensure that students wash their hands thoroughly before and after eating.

L. **SOP regarding re-opening of Hostels**

Residential hostels in Educational Institutions for final year students have started functioning w.e.f 15/12/2020 as per Govt. order No. ASE.01/2020/Pt-III/99, dated 4/12/2020 and the same will continue until further order. A copy of the said SOP is enclosed **as Annexure-A**.

Community Mobilization

The School Management and Development Committee (SMDC)/ School Management Committee (SMC) Meeting, Parent Teacher (PT) Meeting are important part of our education system for the purposes to develop a conducive school environment, academic development. SMC/PT Meetings are also the best platform for community mobilization programme like promoting information sharing as well as to create awareness on COVID-19 pandemic among the teachers and parents/students Community. The detail Guideline regarding involvement of SMDC/SMC/Local Clubs/NGOs/SHG and role of parent teacher meeting for a conducive school environment and to create awareness on COVID-19 is enclosed **as Annexure-B**

The checklist for School Administrators, Teachers and other staff for promoting health hygiene practices is enclosed at **Annexure-C**.

B Kalyan

(B. Kalyan Chakravarty, IAS)
Principal Secretary to the Govt. of Assam
Education Department

Memo No. No. ASE.01/2020/Pt.-II/ 117- A Dated, Dispur the 28th December , 2020

Copy to:

1. All Registrars of Universities (State of Assam)
2. The Deputy Commissioner (All), Assam
3. The Director of Information and Public Relations, request for wide publicity.
4. The Director of Higher Education, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19.
5. The Director of Secondary Education, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19.
6. The Director of Elementary Education, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19.

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7. The Regional Director, CBSE, Panjabari, Guwahati-781037.
8. The Inspector of Schools (All), Assam.
9. The Secretary, Board of Secondary Education Assam (SEBA), Bamunimaidam, Guwahati
10. The Secretary, Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (AHSEC),Bamunimaidam, Guwahati-21.
11. PS to Addl. Chief Secretary to Chief Minister, Assam for kind appraisal of the Addl. CS.
12. Staff Officer to Chief Secretary, Assam for favour of kind information.
13. P.S. to Hon'ble Minister, Education, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Hon'ble Minister.
14. P.S. to Hon'ble Minister of State, Education, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Hon'ble Minister of State.
15. P.S. to Hon'ble Advisor, Education, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Hon'ble Advisor.
16. P.S. to Principal Secretary, Elementary and Secondary Education Department, for kind appraisal of Principal Secretary.
17. P.S. to Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Department, for kind appraisal of Principal Secretary.
18. P.S. to Commissioner & Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Department, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Commissioner & Secretary.
19. P.S. to Commissioner & Secretary, Elementary, Secondary and Higher Education, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Commissioner & Secretary
20. P.S. to Chairman, Board of Secondary Education Assam (SEBA), Bamunimaidan, Guwahati-21.
21. P.S. to Chairman, Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (AHSEC), Bamunimaidan, Guwahati-21.

By Order etc.,

(Preetom Saikia, IAS)
Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Assam
Education Department

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Annexure-A

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
DISPUR, GUWAHATI-06

No. ASE.01/2020/Pt.-III/99 Dated, Dispur the 04th December, 2020

ORDER

In continuation of earlier SOP issued by Education Department vide communication No. ASE.01/2020/Pt.-III/30, dated 30/10/2020 regarding re-opening of Schools/Colleges/Engineering Colleges/Polytechnics/Private educational institutions as well as Govt. and private training and coaching institutes/universities in the State of Assam from class VI upwards and which came into force from 2nd November, 2020, the Education Department is pleased to notify further guidelines on the matter relating to re-opening of Hostels in the Educational Institutions located in the State of Assam.

The earlier SOP issued vide order No. ASE.01/2020/Pt.-III/30, dated 30/10/2020 will remain in force until further orders with relaxation of the provision regarding re-opening of Hostels of Educational Institutions as detailed below:

(A) **GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

1. Hostels will be re-opened in all the Educational Institution of the State of Assam from 15-12-2020 positively until further orders in respect of final year hostel students of Engineering Colleges/Degree Colleges/ Polytechnics/Universities/Residential Schools (Class X & XII of both Govt. and Private Schools)/Coaching and Training Institutes.
2. Before re-opening of Hostels RAT shall have to be done (Compulsory) in respect of all Hostel Superintendents/Wardens/Hostel Supervising Officers/Cooks/Helpers engaged in management of hostels, preparation and serving of food among the Hostel students including Cleaners who are entrusted with the task of cleaning and maintaining cleanliness of the Hostels.
3. The Hostels shall have to be fully sanitized including Kitchen, Toilets, Bedrooms, Dormitories, Dining halls, Seating halls etc., before re-opening of Hostels.
4. Regarding Sanitization of Hostels, R.A. Test among the Hostel Superintendents/ Wardens/Hostel Supervising Officers/Cooks/Helpers/Cleaners, etc., full responsibility will rest with the Head of the Institution.
5. In respect of students willing to come and stay in residential Hostels, consent will have to be obtained from the parents of the students in writing.
6. In respect of students and teachers of Degree Colleges/ Polytechnics/Universities/Residential Schools (Class X & XII of both Govt. and Private Schools)/Coaching and Training Institutes who will stay in Hostels RAT shall have to be done among the Teachers and Students before entering the School/College/Universities/Educational institution hostels.
7. Students will report to Hostel in a phased manner (Group wise). Groups' entry will be fixed and finalized by the Head of the Institution.
8. Staying in hostel for students will not be compulsory and will depend entirely on parental consent. However, after joining in Hostel, attendance is to be regularly monitored.
9. Students will be accommodated in the dormitory in alternate beds i.e. by keeping one bed vacant between two students by reducing the number of inmates in each dormitory to 50% as per the requirement. Beds which are not to be occupied are to be properly labelled.
10. Temporary partitions may be erected to separate inmates/boarders, if required and feasible adequate distance between beds may be ensured.
11. Physical/social distancing must be maintained at all the times in hostels. Signage and messaging at prominent places should be ensured relating to COVID-19 precautions and protocols.
12. Alternative space may be arranged to accommodate students to enable physical/social distancing.

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13. Initial preference for calling students to join back hostels may be given to students who do not have any support at home and also no facility for online education.
14. Students of final year classes may be called first as per accommodation facility of the educational institutions.
15. Screening of every hostel boarder needs to be done before they start staying at the hostel. Only asymptomatic boarders shall be allowed to stay in the hostel.
16. Since students may be coming from different locations by using public transports such as buses, trains etc., it is important that they should minimize their contact and interaction with others on arrival at hostel, and effectively, maintain quarantine as per State/UT requirement. Their health status should be monitored during the period by the Head of the Institution through engagement of a Nodal Health Officer.
17. Hostel should be out of bound for all persons except essential staff with known and acceptable health status.
18. Medical team should inspect kitchen and mess at least once a week to ensure maintenance of hygiene.
19. Capacity building of hostel staff should be done on physical/social distancing norms, health and hygiene, clean and nutritious food, etc., for hostellers.

(B) SPECIFIC GUIDELINES:

Protocol to be followed in case of detection of a suspected case of COVID-19

1. Earmark a room beforehand for isolation with facilities for a bed and toilet, etc.
2. Place ill students or staff in this room or area where they are isolated from others.
3. Provide a mask/face cover till such time as he/she/they are examined by a doctor.
4. Immediately inform the nearest medical facility (hospital/clinic) or call the State or district helpline.
5. A risk assessment will be undertaken by the designated public health authority (District Rapid Response Team/treating physician) and accordingly further action be initiated regarding management of case, his/her/their contacts and need for disinfection.
6. Disinfection of the premises to be taken up if the person is/are found positive.
7. For a suspect or a case detected in hostel, the student/staff shall not be sent back to his/her home as it may lead to spread of the disease. He/She should be isolated and State/District health officials shall be informed for suitable follow-up action. His/Her parent/ guardian should be informed immediately.
8. All protocols as advised by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare should be followed.

(C) Physical/Social distancing during distribution of Meal

1. Methods of safe distribution can be employed by the Hostels which may include staggered distribution. Food may be provided in multiple batches.
2. Physical/social distancing norms may be observed in the kitchen as well. No other person may be allowed in the kitchen except minimum essential staff. Cleanliness of kitchen and its staff may be ensured.
3. Staggered timing for having meals is to be ensured to avoid crowding.

(D) Entry of Cook & Mess/ Kitchen Helpers in Hostels

1. It shall be the responsibility of Hostel administration related to Kitchen & Dining to ensure that the Mess/Kitchen staff is not COVID positive.
2. All Mess/Kitchen staff shall have to give a self-declaration with regard to the health wellness of self before starting their work in Hostel.
3. Thermal scanning of the Mess/Kitchen staff may be carried out at the entry of the Mess/Kitchen to check the temperature. The temperature may be recorded on daily basis.
4. The Mess/Kitchen staff must sanitize/wash their hands for minimum 40 seconds upon entering in the kitchen.
5. Wearing face cover/mask will be mandatory during cleaning, washing cutting, cooking and serving of meals. If re-usable/handmade face covers are used, it should be ensured that they are washed daily.
6. Spitting and nose blowing should be strictly prohibited within the premises by Mess/Kitchen staff or any other person during hostel hours and especially while handling food.
7. The Mess/Kitchen staff should be provided adequate and suitable clean protective apron, and head gear for covering hair and gloves. It must be ensured that the Mess/Kitchen staff at

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work, wear only clean protective apron and head covering.

8. The Mess/Kitchen staff should wash their hands at least each time work is resumed and whenever contamination of their hands could have occurred; e.g. after coughing/ sneezing, visiting toilet, using telephone. Hand washing time should be a minimum of 40 seconds.
9. Capacity building of Cook and Helper and Teacher through digital mode can be used to update them on hygiene, safety and physical/social distancing in Hostels.
10. Cleaning Kitchen cum Store or the place of cooking:
11. The kitchen cum store/place of cooking must be deep cleaned and sanitized before 24 hours of actual cooking after reopening of Hostels.
12. The Kitchen should be cleaned before the actual preparation and cooking of food on daily basis.
13. The floors of Kitchen and the cooking top should be cleaned every day before and after the food is cooked.
14. It is important that surfaces in direct content with food must be both clean and dry before use.
15. Ventilation system natural and /or mechanical including windows, exhaust fans etc. wherever required, should be designed and constructed so that air does not flow from contaminated areas to clean areas.

(E) Serving of Meals

1. The serving and dining area should also be well sanitized before and after food consumption.
2. The serving of meals to the Hostel Students may be done in a spread-out manner in batches to follow physical/social distancing norms.
3. However, in case the meals are served in Hostel dining halls, clear markings should guide the Students to the seating arrangement.
4. The Cook and Helper, while distributing the food should wear personal protective equipment such as hand gloves, face mask, head cover and shall maintain appropriate distance from the Hostel Students.
5. The Hostel students should also wear face cloth/ masks while the food is being served and at all times in the dining area except while eating/drinking.

(F) In respect of Universities/ Engineering Colleges/Polytechnics the Head of the Institutions will prepare their own SOP regarding re-opening of hostels for final year student based on the above guidelines /criteria.

Sd/-

(Preetom Saikia, IAS)
Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Assam
Education Department

Memo No. No. ASE.01/2020/Pt.-III/99 -A
Dated, Dispur the 04th December, 2020

Copy to:

1. All Registrars of Universities (State of Assam)
2. The Deputy Commissioner (All), Assam
3. The Director of Information and Public Relations, request for wide publicity.
4. The Director of Higher Education, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19.
5. The Director of Secondary Education, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19.
6. The Director of Elementary Education, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19.
7. The Regional Director, CBSE, Panjabari, Guwahati-781037.
8. The Deputy Commissioner, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, Regional Office, Shillong, Temple Road, Barik Point, Lachumiere, Shillong-793001.
9. The Inspector of Schools (All), Assam.
10. The Secretary, Board of Secondary Education Assam (SEBA), Bamunimaidam, Guwahati
11. The Secretary, Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (AHSEC),Bamunimaidam, Guwahati-21.
12. PS to Addl. Chief Secretary to Chief Minister, Assam for kind appraisal of the Addl. CS.

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13. Staff Officer to Chief Secretary, Assam for favour of kind information.
14. P.S. to Hon'ble Minister, Education, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Hon'ble Minister.
15. P.S. to Hon'ble Minister of State, Education, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Hon'ble Minister of State.
16. P.S. to Hon'ble Advisor, Education, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Hon'ble Advisor.
17. P.S. to Principal Secretary, Elementary and Secondary Education Department, for kind appraisal of Principal Secretary.
18. P.S. to Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Department, for kind appraisal of Principal Secretary.
19. P.S. to Commissioner & Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Department, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Commissioner & Secretary.
20. P.S. to Commissioner & Secretary, Elementary, Secondary and Higher Education, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-06, for kind appraisal of the Commissioner & Secretary
21. P.S. to Chairman, Board of Secondary Education Assam (SEBA), Bamunimaidan, Guwahati-21.
22. P.S. to Chairman, Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (AHSEC), Bamunimaidan, Guwahati-21.

By Order etc.,

(F.H. Choudhury, ACS)
Additional Secretary to the Govt. of Assam
Secondary Education Department

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Annexure-C

CHECKLIST FOR SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

1. Checklist for School Administrators, Teachers and other Staff

Sl. No.	Task	Yes/No
A.	**HEALTHY HYGIENE PRACTICES ARE PROMOTED AND ENSURED**	
1.	Students and staff have been sensitized on good personal hygiene practices and hand washing technique (atleast 40 seconds).	
2.	Signages on healthy hygiene practices, displayed at prominent places in the school	
3.	Ensuring hygiene in the washroom	
4.	Availability of working hand washing facility and soap.	
5.	Availability of supplies of thermometers (contactless infrared digital thermometer), soaps, hand sanitizers, masks, etc.	
6.	Maintenance of hygiene and cleanliness in the classroom, kitchen, school transport facilities and surfaces that are touched by many people.	
7.	Garbages/trash is removed daily and disposed off safely.	
8.	The school has tie up with the nearby hospital/health centre/Joint Director of Health Services for dealing with emergency.	
9.	School arrangements have been adjusted to avoid crowded management.	
10.	Physical distancing maintained in classrooms alongwith wearing of masks.	

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Annexure-B

Involvement of School Management and Development Committee/ School Management Committee / Local Club/NGOs and role of Parent Teacher Meeting for a conducive school environment and to create awareness on COVID-19

The School Management and Development Committee (SMDC)/ School Management Committee (SMC) Meeting, Parent Teacher Meeting are important part of our education system for the purposes to develop a conducive school environment, academic development. SMC/PT Meetings are also the best platform for community mobilization programme like promoting information sharing as well as to create awareness on COVID-19 pandemic among the teachers and parents/students Community. The SMDC/SMC /Parent teachers Meeting may helps as follows:

- A parent-teacher conference allows the parents to get a good idea of how to best communicate with the teacher, how their child is doing academically and how to best help their child continue to be successful in the classroom.
- It allows the teacher to communicate how the student is performing in the classroom and discuss ways for the student to continue to be successful or ways to improve.
- When a parent is well prepared for the parent-teacher conference then both the teacher and the parent can get the most out of the meeting which will best help the student in the long run.
- Promote information sharing Coordinate and follow guidelines from the Health and Education Authorities.
- Share known information with staff, caregivers and students, providing updated information on the disease situation, including prevention and control efforts at school.
- Reinforce that caregivers should alert the school and health care authorities if someone in their home has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and keep their child at home.
- Also be sure to address children's questions and concerns, including through the development of child-friendly materials such as posters which can be placed on notice boards, in restrooms, and other central locations.
- Help to Address Mental Health/Psychosocial support needs. Encourage children to discuss their questions and concerns and encourage them to talk to teachers/parents, if they have any questions or concerns. Provide information in an honest, age-appropriate manner and guide students.
- Work with school health workers/social workers to identify and support students and staff who exhibit signs of distress.
- The SMDC/SMC shall take all the necessary steps for the growth and development of the school leading to an education environment conducive for attainment of academic excellence by the children.
- The SMC shall try to improve the learning achievement level of the children by (i) taking up micro-planning, school mapping and optimum utilization of locally available resources,(ii)ensuring that the school functions as per the approved academic calendar and (iii) paying special attention to the children of disadvantaged group and weaker section of the society.
- The schools/SMC/SMDC will involve local, nearby Clubs, NGOs for benefit of schools environment. Various programmes, competitions may be organized in collaboration with the local Clubs, NGOs. Various resources of those NGOs, clubs like Resource Persons, Library, playground, TV etc. may be utilized by the schools for benefit of students. Awareness campaign on COVID-19 may be conducted with help of local resources of those NGOs/Clubs.

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Instructions to be followed by observing all COVID -10 protocols issued by the Government.

FOR PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

Key Messages and Actions:

COVID-19 is a new virus and we know it is possible for people of any age to be infected with the virus. The virus can be fatal in cases, so far mainly among older people with pre-existing medical conditions.

Know the latest facts:

Understand basic information about coronavirus disease (COVID-19), including its symptoms, complications, how it is transmitted and how to prevent transmission. Stay informed about COVID-19 through reputable sources such as UNICEF and WHO and national health ministry advisories. Be aware of fake information/myths that may circulate by word-of-mouth or online.

Recognize the symptoms of COVID-19 (coughing, fever, shortness of breath) in your child:

Seek medical advice by first calling your health facility/provider and then take your child in, if advised. Remember that symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough or fever can be similar to those of the flu, or the common cold, which are a lot more common. If your child is sick, keep them home from school and notify the school of your child's absence and symptoms. Request reading and assignments so that students can continue learning while at home. Explain to your child what is happening in simple words and reassure them that they are safe.

Keep children in school when healthy If your child isn't displaying any symptoms such as a fever or cough it's best to keep them in school – unless a public health advisory or other relevant warning or official advice has been issued affecting your child's school.

Instead of keeping children out of school, teach them good hand and respiratory hygiene practices for school and elsewhere, like frequent hand washing , wearing of mask, covering a cough or sneeze with a flexed elbow or tissue, then throwing away the tissue into a closed bin, and not touching their eyes, mouths or noses if they haven't properly washed their hands. Washing hands properly Step 1: Wet hands with safe running water Step 2: Apply enough soap to cover wet hands Step 3: Scrub all surfaces of the hands – including backs of hands, between fingers and under nails – for at least 20 seconds Step 4: Rinse thoroughly with running water Step 5: Dry hands with a clean, dry cloth, single-use towel or hand drier as available

Wash your hands often, especially before and after eating; after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom/ toilets/latrines and whenever your hands are visibly dirty. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty.

Help children cope with the stress

Children may respond to stress in different ways. Common responses include having difficulties sleeping, bedwetting, having pain in the stomach or head, and being anxious, withdrawn, angry, clingy or afraid to be left alone. Respond to children's reactions in a supportive way and explain to them that they are normal reactions to an abnormal situation. Listen to their concerns and take time to comfort them and give them affection, reassure them they're safe and praise them frequently.

If possible, create opportunities for children to play and relax. Keep regular routines and schedules as much as possible, especially before they go to sleep, or help create new ones in a new environment. Provide age-appropriate facts about what has happened, explain what is going on and give them clear examples on what they can do to help protect themselves and others from infection. Share information about what could happen in a reassuring way.

For example, if your child is feeling sick and staying at home or the hospital, you could say, "You have to stay at home/at the hospital because it is safer for you and your friends. I know it is hard (maybe scary or even boring) at times, but we need to follow the rules to keep ourselves and others safe. Things will go back to normal soon."

CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

☐ 1. Monitor your child's health and keep them home from school if they are ill

☐ 2. Teach and model good hygiene practices for your children

- Wash your hands with soap and safe water frequently. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty.
- Ensure that safe drinking water is available and toilets or latrines are clean and available at home.
- Ensure waste is safely collected, stored and disposed of.
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth, nose.

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☐ 3. Encourage your children to ask questions and express their feelings with you and their teachers. Remember that your child may have different reactions to stress; be patient and understanding.

☐ 4. Prevent stigma by using facts and reminding students to be considerate of one another.

☐ 5. Coordinate with the school to receive information and ask how you can support school safety efforts (through parent-teacher committees, etc.)

Precautionary Steps taken by State Government:

- 24X7 Control room established at every districts.
- Special Isolation Wards at all the Medical Colleges and District Civil Hospitals being identified.
- Adequate Ambulance Kept ready at each District Civil Hospitals.
- Testing facilities available at GMCH, Guwahati and AMCH, Dibrugarh.
- Sufficient quantity of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) kept at all Medical Colleges and District Hospitals.
- Continuous Awareness meeting is being carried out at community level at all districts.
- Establishment of CCC in each district.
- Since the first unit was donated on July 9, Assam has been using plasma **therapy** in a big scale.

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