

## **Preface**

The term of reference to the High Level Committee constituted for the revision of the curriculum for the Matriculation Schools of Tamil Nadu is well focused. Our task is to revise and update the curricular composition of the entire matriculation system as a response to the emerging new paradigms in the wake of unprecedented impact of science and technology on the socio-economic rubric of the society.

The curriculum is an academic strategy and plans to achieve the intended outcomes among the learners through a number of well-structured academic courses and activities at the macro level and the syllabi are the micro details of the content of the constituent courses of studies that become a part of the overall curriculum. Our challenge was to work at both the level of reformulating the curriculum and restructuring of the contents of the chosen courses so that the matriculation scheme of education is effective, competitive and world-class.

The overall objectives of the school education that spans uniformly for 14 long years, between 3/4+ and 16/17+ years practically the world over, is to provide the basic foundations of literacy in all its dimensions and to equip the students with a strong base of general knowledge without attempting to specialize along with other academic skills including numeracy and communication along with cognitive and other transferable skills and competencies. While empowering the younger generation with these knowledge, skills and competencies, preparing them to be good citizens with the appropriate moral, social, national and global values is an additional objective.

The communities around the world are not static and their dynamics have to be understood and responded with appropriate strategies to cope with such

changes. During the past decade or so tremendous changes have occurred due to a century long impact of science and technology. Globalization of everything including economy, unprecedented expansion of knowledge almost doubling and trebling every ten years, increased mobility of knowledge seekers and workers, advent of computers to augment the mental reach gaining importance next only to the textual literacy are a few. Curricular revision should take these changes in focus and prepare the students to be a part of the new order.

The committee while redesigning the curriculum has taken adequate care to respond to these changes both at the macro (curricular) and micro (syllabi) levels. Macro level changes include, modularization of the entire 14 years of schooling into five distinctive stages and making each one as a distinct unit with their own plans and strategies taking into consideration of the age and maturity levels of the students, priorities and appropriate learning strategies. We have now prepared curriculum for pre-primary, primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary stages each one built over the earlier stage providing seamless transition. Keeping the changing context and the unique characteristics of the matriculation system the curricular strategy has been worked for each stage in consultation with various stakeholders, through interactive meetings, web based communication and curricular experts from both Head and Regional Offices of NCERT. We have for the first time included a curriculum for the pre-primary stage and for higher secondary stage in the matriculation scheme to smooth seamless transitions between stages. In the past matriculation students used to move on to State or Central Board curriculum for the XI and XII standards making it difficult for the students to adjust to the level and structure of learning of an alien system.

The other major innovations are the introduction of computer and computational literacy right from the Standard III of the primary stage and

introduction of scientific Tamil. We had also conformed to the judicial intervention of teaching Environmental Studies at all levels of school education.

In order to facilitate the schools and the teachers to keep their responsibilities in focus while transacting the curriculum, a detailed description about the profile of the students, expected outcomes at the end of each stage of school education, strategies to achieve and other details are briefly highlighted.

The major thrust in the revised curriculum is on ‘Communication Skill’ which is the basis for all learning and the development of this skill is now brought to the realm of all teachers and all classes and not restricted to language classes alone.

There has been a conscious effort to reduce the learning load of the students. Though we have done some load reduction, it could not be really substantially reduced as we have to maintain parity with the other systems of school education in vogue in the country. Any substantial reform in this aspect should be done only with a joint effort of other boards. An attempt has been made to reduce the load without lowering the competitiveness of the system as the parents’ attitude and aspirations need to be respected. It has also become difficult to prune the course content in the context of expanding knowledge base. Any unilateral reduction will reflect on the acceptability of the system by the public.

The strategic plan to achieve all the set objectives at their designated levels is broadly outlined taking into consideration the past experiences, future trends in the social structure. National and State level frameworks and the expectations of the stakeholders imparting literacy and numeric skills as well as the knowledge components are planned through a series of carefully selected and designed course works on the sound principle of pedagogy and related activities. The training for

skills and competencies are part of the transactions of the course works both inside the formal classrooms and outside. These skills and the identified values are judiciously integrated into the core syllabi of the course works. The detailed syllabus for each course of study is designed to focus the intended outcome, the relevant concept or content of the course and the suggested strategies to achieve. The learning outcome is the priority and other details are indicative ways of achieving the objective. The schools and the teachers have all the freedom to adopt their own strategies provided that they can demonstrate the intended learning outcomes are achieved and can be tested.

Curriculum though is important; it is the curricular transactions that determine the quality of education. For an effective curricular transaction, a set of strategies is recommended for adoption to help the matriculation system to achieve its mission of providing effective and competitive education. They include

- Teacher orientation programmes to the newer elements in the curriculum
- General training programmes to all teachers other than languages to train in the communication skill along with their expertise in their specialized subject areas
- Introduction of a common examination system at the end of each state of Matriculation School system to ensure quality and comparability of standards among schools in the State.
- Establishing a State level Quality Assurance mechanism to replace the existing inspectorate type of quality control without any extra financial commitment
- Preparation of Teacher's Handbook/Manual
- A common Newsletter as a forum for exchange of news, views and the 'best practices'

These are elaborated in detail in the appendices to this document.

The committee acknowledges the help and guidance of many while updating the curriculum. The encouragement it had received from the State Ministers of Education, Dr. M. Thambidurai, Thiru S. Semmalai and Thiru C.Ve. Shanmugam are gratefully acknowledged. Thiru K. Gnanadesikan, Secretary to Government, School Education Department has always been understanding and encouraging besides facilitating our efforts amongst his busy schedules for which we are much beholden to him. There are many institutions and individuals who have contributed to the successful completion of the task, particularly when we were short of resources and expertise. We acknowledge the help we have received from Fr. Paul, Principal of Pope John Paul's College of Education, Pondicherry, Mrs. G.D. Gopal, Correspondent of GD Matriculation School at Coimbatore and Mr. Thiruneelakandan, Secretary, Board of Trustees of Cauvery College, Trichy.

At the academic level, we would like to acknowledge the support we have received from the Vice-Chancellors of Bharathiar and Bharathidasan Universities in the State, Dr.S. Sivasubramanian and Dr. C. Thangamuthu for deputing subject experts to help the committee while revising the curricular details and to establish coherence between the school and collegiate education. Special mention must be made to the expert guidance we have received from Dr.P.S.Balasubramanian and also from Dr.R.Karpaga Kumaravel. We appreciate the help of Thiru.C. Jeyapaul, Assistant Director in the Directorate of Matriculation Schools. His combined expertise on school education and interpersonal relations coupled with his unlimited patience and capacity for hard labour was instrumental for what little could be achieved and could be translated into something tangible.

We are particularly happy to see the unprecedented participation in large number of the parents and public during our two consultative meets at Coimbatore and Tiruchirappalli. The contribution of media in many ways had ensured the interest of the public in our efforts and we are grateful to them.

The Committee had extensively used the National Framework for School Curriculum and related documents of the NCERT, as also the services of the faculty of its Regional Institute of Education at Mysore.

***Dr. A. GNANAM***

**Chairman**

High Level Committee  
for Revision of Matriculation  
Curriculum and Syllabus