



केन्द्रीय माध्यमिक शिक्षा बोर्ड
(शिक्षा मंत्रालय भारत सरकार के अधीन एक स्वायत्त संगठन)
CENTRAL BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
(An Autonomous Organisation Under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)



CBSE/ACAD/AHA/Circular/2026/

Date: 10 July, 2026
Circular No. Acad-49/2026

To,

All Heads of CBSE Affiliated Schools

Subject: Guidelines for Implementation of Three-Language Scheme from academic Session 2026-27 onwards

Dear Principal,

The National Education Policy 2020 recommends learning three languages, with *at least two of the three languages being native to India*. While CBSE aims to **equip learners with competence in multiple Bhartiya Bhashas (native Indian languages)** and **promote the vibrancy of language learning**, it is equally committed to ensuring that the process of learning and growth remains balanced. The objective is to make language learning a **meaningful, engaging, and enriching experience** that contributes to the holistic development of every learner. Further, the introduction of the third language (R3) in Secondary Stage (Class IX and Class X) is an extension of language learning from the Middle Stage (Classes VI to VIII). In pursuance of the above objectives, it is considered necessary to issue guidelines regarding the implementation of the Language Policy in CBSE-affiliated **schools** with effect from the Academic Session 2026–27.

Scheme

- Two out of the three languages opted for must be Bhartiya Bhashas.
- A non- native language can be opted for as the third language (R3), provided that the other two are Bhartiya Bhashas.
- Relaxations during the transitional period and exemptions have been given below.

A. Students in Class X (2026–27)

- It is reiterated that **there will be no change** for students who are in Class X during 2026–27, and they will continue with the old system of two languages.
- **No third language** is required to be taken by this batch.



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B. Students who are in Class IX (2026-27)

- Every student in Class IX would study three languages. Out of these three languages, at least two would be Bhartiya Bhashas, subject to the relaxation and exemptions given below.

Examples of Bhartiya Bhashas: Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Bengali, Punjabi, Gujarati, Odia, Assamese, etc.

Examples of non-native languages: English, French, German, Arabic, Spanish, etc.

The following situations will help clarify the doubts, if any, in the minds of students in Class IX.

Situation 1: You already study two Bhartiya Bhashas.

Example: Hindi + Tamil

You can choose as your third language:

Another Bhartiya Bhasha

OR

A non-native language such as English or French.

Situation 2: You study one Bhartiya Bhasha and one non-native language

Example: Tamil + English

You can choose any Bhartiya Bhasha as third language (R3).

Situation 3: You study two non-native languages

Example: English + French

As a special one-time relaxation for students who are already in Class IX during 2026-27, you may continue with those two non-native languages and need to add one Bhartiya Bhasha as your third language (R3).

Important points for Class IX students (2026-27)

- **Assessment:** The third language (R3) will be assessed by your school through an internal school-based assessment only.
- In case, a current Class IX student does not qualify the school-based assessment of R3 in the academic year, the student will still be promoted to Class X for the academic session 2027–28. However, the student would need to clear the Class IX R3 assessment while studying in Class X.
- **There will be no CBSE Board examination for the third language (R3) when this batch progresses to Class X 2027-28.**
- However, students need to clear R3, i.e., the third language, in the school-based assessment in Class X for the award of the CBSE Secondary School Examination Pass Certificate. Students who are unable to qualify in R3 in Class



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X shall be reassessed by the concerned school before the declaration of the Class X result.

- The students of class IX (2026-27) will continue the same 3 language combinations that they studied in the Class VIII in the previous year. Out of these three languages, 01 language will be opted for as R3.
- Class IX R3 Language Assessment Framework has been released and is available at www.cbseacademic.nic.in.
- NCERT has already started making the class IX R3 Language Learning Resources available at its website www.ncert.nic.in. To access the R3 Language Learning Resources, please click on the link displayed as '**R3 Language Learning Resources**' on the home page of the NCERT website www.ncert.nic.in. If schools are offering languages other than the 22 scheduled languages, age appropriate SCERT/ State level material is available and can be used as per past practice.

C. Students who are in Class VII or VIII in 2026-27

- When you reach Class IX and X, you will continue studying three languages, with two of them being Bhartiya Bhashas.

Relaxation

- For the current batch of Class VII (2026-27) and Class VIII (2026-27), the students who have already selected and started studying 2 non-native languages need to study 01 Bhartiya Bhasha and continue the same till class X.

Assessment

The third language (R3) will be assessed by the school through an internal school-based assessment only. The assessment criteria applicable to class IX (2026-27) & class X (2027-28), as given at point 'B' above, will also be applicable to these batches. **There will be no CBSE Board examination for the third language when these batches progress to Class X.**

D. Class VI 2026-27

- Out of the three languages, two would be Bhartiya Bhashas for this batch and onwards.
- When this batch and the subsequent Class VI batches progress to Class X, they shall take the Board examination of R3.
- The dedicated R3 textbooks for class VI in 22 scheduled Bhartiya Bhashas are being made available on www.ncert.nic.in

E. General Exemptions



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The following categories are exempted from the three-language policy:

- I. Children with Special Needs (CwSN): Relaxations and exemptions from the compulsory third language requirement are granted as per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016.
 - II. Schools outside India: Full exemption from a native Indian Language as third language (R3) is provided to all CBSE schools situated outside India.
 - III. Foreign students returning to India are also exempted from studying a native Indian language as third language (R3)
- F. In the case of parents/guardians migrating to another state, the student may continue with the existing combination of languages they opted for as R3 in Middle Stage in Class IX also. In such cases, schools must necessarily provision adequate resources to support the student's choices.
- G. **Human Resources (teachers):** Flexible Staffing provisions have been provided. Schools are required to engage existing teachers (with functional proficiency), retired teachers, postgraduates, or use Sahodaya clusters (inter-school sharing) and virtual/hybrid teaching.
- H. The Board has been taking measures to promote positive learning experiences for students, which include innovative and joyful learning resources, focus on conceptual clarity, not on rote learning, and maintaining continuous assessment practices incorporating examination reforms. The Board reiterates that these implementation guidelines are issued to align with NEP 2020 while protecting student interests. No student shall be disadvantaged due to this alignment. The focus remains on joyful, meaningful language learning, not on examination. CBSE will endeavor to hand-hold schools, in the best possible manner, through additional learning resources (as required) and capacity building in the implementation of NEP 2020. Schools are requested to communicate these provisions positively to teachers, students, and parents, emphasizing the long-term benefits of multilingual proficiency and cultural rootedness.

For any further clarifications, schools may contact the CBSE at cq26-27@cbseshiksha.in

Yours sincerely,

(Dr. Praggya M. Singh)
Professor and Director (Academics)



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Copy to the respective Heads of Directorates, Organisations and Institutions with a request to disseminate the information to all the schools under their jurisdiction:

1. Secretary ,NCERT, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-110016.
2. The Commissioner, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, 18 Institutional Area, Shaheed Jeet Singh Marg, New Delhi-16
3. The Commissioner, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, B-15, Sector-62, Institutional Area, Noida-201309
4. The Secretary, Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS), Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.
5. The Secretary, Sainik Schools Society, Room No. 101, D-1 Wing, Sena Bhawan, New Delhi-110001
6. The Chairman, Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan, N-1/9, Near Doordarshan Kendra, PO Sainik School Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751005
7. The Director of Education, Directorate of Education, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Old Secretariat, Delhi-110054
8. The Director of Public Instructions (Schools), Union Territory Secretariat, Sector 9, Chandigarh-160017
9. The Director of Education, Govt. of Sikkim, Gangtok, Sikkim –737101
10. The Director of School Education, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar –791111
11. The Director of Education, Govt. of A&N Islands, Port Blair – 744101
12. The Director of School Education, Ladakh, Room No.101-102, Ground Floor, Council Secretariat, Kurbathang, Kargil – Ladakh
13. The Director of School Education, Andhra Pradesh, 3rd Floor, B block, Anjaneya Towers, VTPS Rd, Bhimaraju Gutta, Ibrahimpatnam, Andhra Pradesh – 521 456
14. The Director, Jharkhand Education Project Council, Old HEC High School, JSCA Stadium Road, Jagannathpur, Sector-III, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004 (Jharkhand)
15. Navy Education Society, Dte of Naval Education, Naval Headquarters, Ministry of Defence, West Block-V, RK Puram, New Delhi-110066
16. The Additional Director General of Army Education, A –Wing, Sena Bhawan, DHQ, PO, New Delhi-110001
17. The Secretary AWES, Integrated Headquarters of MoD (Army), FDRC Building No. 202, Shankar Vihar (Near APS), Delhi Cantt-110010
18. DS to Chairperson, CBSE
19. Secretary/ Controller of Examinations/ All Directors, CBSE
20. All Regional Directors/ Regional Officers of CBSE with the request to send this circular to all the Heads of the affiliated schools of the Board in their respective regions
21. All Joint Secretary/ Deputy Secretary/ PPS/SPS/Under Secretary/ Assistant Secretary, CBSE
22. All Head(s)/ In-Charge(s), Centre of Excellence, CBSE
23. In charge IT Unit with the request to put this Circular on the CBSE Academic Website
24. In-Charge, Library
25. Record File

Sd/-
Professor and Director (Academics)



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