

# Revised framework to bring down school dropout rate

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**Lucknow:** The state govt has come up with a revised framework to prevent students from dropping out of schools.

Now, children aged between 6 and 14 years who remain absent for one month cumulatively in a year will be considered as dropouts. So far, children who missed school continuously for 45 days and above were termed as dropouts. With 2.75% as the annual average dropout rate at the elementary level, Uttar Pradesh is one of the states with high dropouts.

The new framework divides dropouts into two categories – those who remain absent for three days and/or six and more days continuously in a given month, and those who are irregular to school and whose absenteeism is cumulative. In the second category, there is a subdivision that puts ‘at-risk children’ as ‘probable dropouts’ and ‘most probable dropouts’. Now, children who do not attend school for six and more days in a month, 10 and more days in a quarter, and 15 days in six months are termed as ‘probable dropouts’ (at-risk children). In such cases, teachers will take proactive steps like counselling



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parents and holding remedial classes to reduce their absenteeism.

The ‘high at-risk children’ are those who remain absent for 21 days or more in nine months, and 30 days or more in a year. Schools have been asked to pay special attention to children who remain absent for 30 days in a year and have scored below 35% marks in annual examinations/Nipun Assessment Test (NAT). “It’s a bold step taken by the UP govt that shows its sincerity in addressing the issue of dropouts. This unique framework will play a pivotal role in supporting students who are at the brink of dropping out, ensuring their continued connection with educational institutions,” said Ritwik Patra, education specialist, Unicef, UP. In cases when children do not come to school for three and six days continuously, teachers will visit the homes of such children and encourage pa-

rents to send children to school so that they can remain engaged in their education and not discontinue schooling.

Departmental insights show that almost a year after implementing the early warning system (EWS) as a pilot in four districts in Devipatan division, the average attendance of children remains low, recorded at 58% in academic year 2022-23. Over 75% of the students are attending schools irregularly. In most cases, their absence ranges from one day to three days in a week, and in some cases, they attend school for only one day in a fortnight or a month. The data from pilot on EWS on dropouts in 1,711 schools in Devipatan division reveals that out of 4.5 lakh students, 1.2 lakh were at the risk of dropping out. Of the 90,952, 63,070 were found to be irregular under the tracking response strategy of EWS.

Basic education minister Sandeep Singh said, “Re-definition of dropouts and new framework for children at risk of dropping out will help each child in our schools and also help in reducing dropout rates and hence improving transition rates for each level of elementary education.”