

Hindustan Times

Thousands of teacher positions vacant in Delhi

In April, Pramod Mishra was a happy man. His son was admitted to class 11 in a school run by the Delhi government.

But by August, both father and son were angry and frustrated -- the youngster had allegedly learnt very little in the first five months of his commerce course. Last month, Mishra decided to pull out his son and will now send him to a public school. Even if it means paying more for the education.

The reason for this is not too far too seek.

Most schools run by the Delhi government are suffering from an acute shortage of teachers, one of the several reasons that make state-run educational institutions less attractive for parents and students in India.

When the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government organised a parent teachers' meeting recently in the 1,000-odd schools, the most common complaint from guardians was about the shortage in teaching staff.

The Right to Education Act mandates one teacher for 30 children. In the Delhi schools, each teacher has to look after 80-90 students on an average, official data show. On paper, however, there is one teacher for every 42 students in Delhi government schools.

“I will have to work extra and pay for the fees in a public school But I cannot leave him like this. The school does not have teachers...(The) government should do something otherwise what will the children write in the boards (exams),” said Mishra who owns a shop in Molarband on the Delhi-Faridabad border.

When the government recently created 9,000 more teachers' posts to fill the gap, the move raised eyebrows. For, the government is yet to fill vacancies in about 30,000 posts lying vacant for many years out of a sanctioned strength of 64,000.

In effect, Delhi has only 33,000 permanent teachers to look after more than 15 lakh students between classes 1 to 12. Add to that, 17,000 guest

teachers working on a daily stipend of Rs 800 per day, just a little over what daily wagers earn.

Teachers say the problem needs to be fixed at the earliest.

“Quality education cannot happen without giving schools the required number of teachers,” said Ajay Veer Yadav, representative of the Government School Teachers’ Association.

The situation gets worse in the Outer District where one teacher has to look after a class of at least 50 students. There are also schools with as many as 150 students in one class. Officials attribute this to an uneven distribution of teachers across schools.

“It is a known fact that teachers do not want to go to schools in the Outer District...If this uneven distribution can be taken care of then the ratio will be fine,” said Khagesh Jha, an advocate and member of Social Jurists, an NGO that works in the field of education.

For example, at the Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya in Molarbandh, there are 48 teachers for 3,000 students, which means one teacher per 62 students.

A teacher who handles many students in Mubarakpur said, “Out of the 40-45 minutes time for one class, almost 15 minutes go in taking attendance. The remaining time I am trying to maintain silence in the class so that I can teach.”

But the AAP government is confident that by the next academic session, 5,000 vacant positions will be filled.

“There was a gap... much before we came to the government,” said Atishi Marlena, advisor to education minister Manish Sisodia. She said 2500 posts will be filled this year.

“With the new 9,000 posts that have been created the shortage issue will be solved,” said Marlena.

However, Lieutenant Governor Najeeb Jung is yet to approve the new posts. Officials said the proposal was rejected as the L-G did not agree to the recruitment rules that gave extra points to guest teachers.

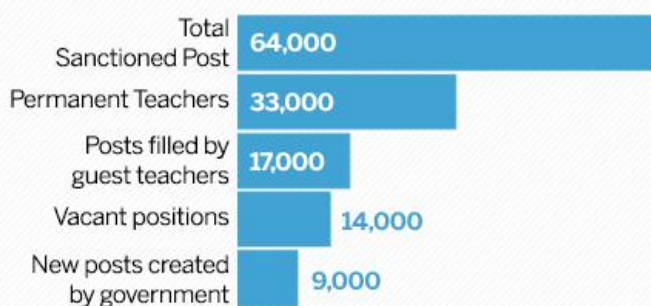
As a temporary measure, the government is looking at a practice followed by Kendriya Vidyalayas (KV), schools under the jurisdiction of the central government.

“KVs employ ad-hoc teachers for three months. We will also allow the principal and school managing committee to locally hire teachers till the long-term plan is implemented,” said Marlena.

Teachers employed in Delhi government schools

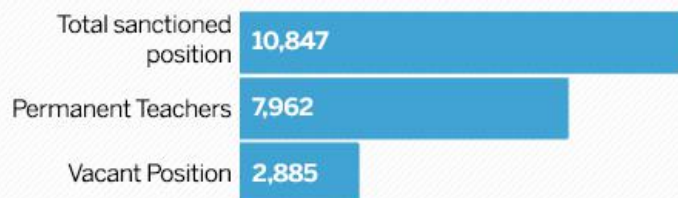
1,011
Total Number of Schools

15,40,691
Total Number of Students

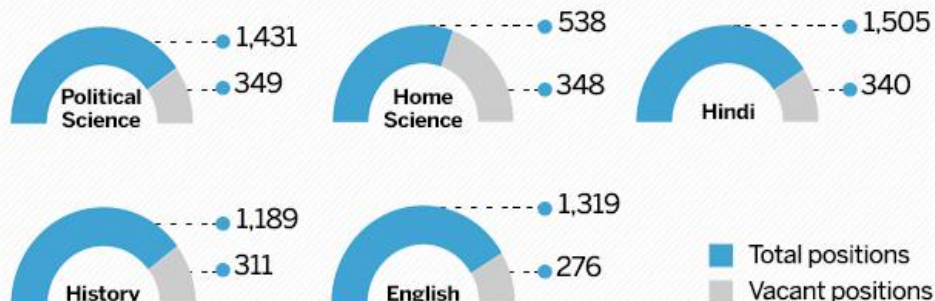


Vacant positions at senior secondary level (Data till February 2015)

868
Total number of schools which have class 11-12



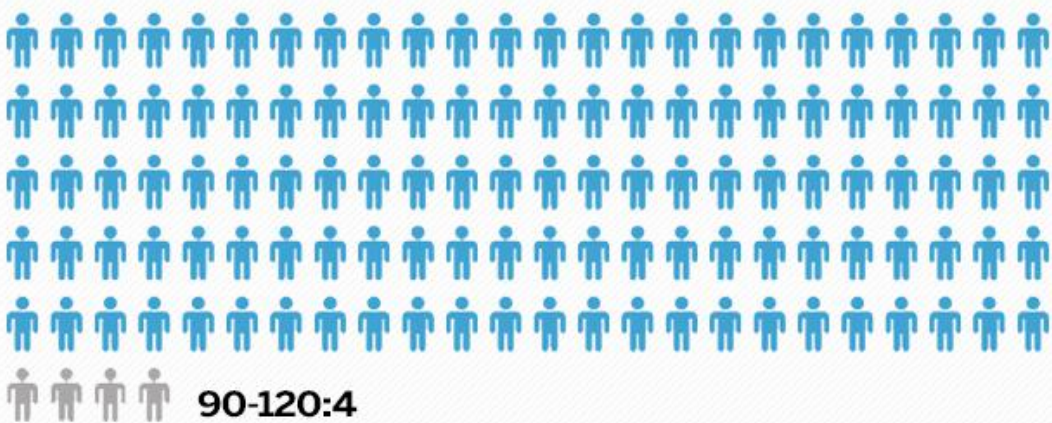
Subjects with highest vacancy



Teacher-student ratio as per Right To Education



FOR PRIMARY CLASSES 1-5



FOR CLASSES 6-8

■ Teacher student ratio: **1:35**

■ For more than **100** children: Full time head teacher and part-time instructors for art education, health and physical education and work education.