

Now, Delhi Govt clears way for more schools

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TO tackle the huge demand for admissions, the Delhi government has paved the way for setting up more schools. In a significant move, the Education Department has lifted the cap on the number of “essentiality certificates” that are granted to each district.

As per the rules, any application for starting a new school must be accompanied by an “essentiality certificate”, granted after surveying the needs of the district. So far, there was a fixed cap on the number of these certificates issued per district, varying according to the population.

But the new rule means that anyone who wants to start a new school can do so, regardless of the number of existing schools in the district. Of course, the proposed school will have to meet the other basic criteria — budget, teaching staff, structured transportation and registration with the land agency concerned.

There are approximately 12 lakh children out of schools in Delhi.

“Everyone keeps harping about admissions,” said Education Minister Arvinder Singh Lovely. “The best way to address the situation is to provide more schools and more seats,” he added.

Clearly, this is the government’s way of throwing the floor open to private concerns that will provide these seats. “If a private organisation wants to invest its money in setting up an educational institution, there is no reason for the government to say no. We believe that the school is coming up because there is a demand for it. If the demand is being fulfilled, we will not interfere,” said Lovely.

According to the Minister, a survey of the old system was carried out last year. “For instance, we saw that in Najafgarh district only two or three schools were allowed. Things will change now,” he said.

3,400 and counting

The number of schools in Delhi:

- * Over 900 government schools
- * Over 1,500 MCD schools
- * Over 1,000 registered public schools