

# Govt consults teachers, NGOs to ensure special kids face no trouble

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**C**hildren with special needs writing their exams will be escorted to respective centres by the school headmasters. Based on their needs, invigilators will ensure that the students get facilities that can keep them at ease while writing exams.

Over the past two months, the directorate of school education has collected the needs for the 2,400 children – who have disabilities such as visual impairment, hearing impairment, locomotor disability, dyslexia, autism, cerebral palsy – who will appear for the board examinations.



After consulting teachers and NGOs, the directorate has made infrastructure changes such as build-

ing ramps and setting up disabled-friendly toilets. Facilities including seating arrangements in separate classrooms on the ground floor and reclining chairs will be provided. All such students will have an additional 50 minute to one hour time to complete their exams. Already, they have been exempted from writing one of the language papers.

For some students, scribes will help to read questions and write the answers. They will be allowed to use calculators depending on their disability.

“We have made all provisions to ensure that children with special needs have no trouble in accessing the centres or writing the exam,” said a senior official from the department.

Last year, 4,635 children with special needs appeared for the higher secondary board examinations and 3,659 for the SSLC board

examinations.

“Although the department seems prepared, there are too many problems on the day of the exams. All centres don’t have a list of special children and their needs,” said S Namburajan, state general secretary, Tamil Nadu Association for the Rights of All Types of Differently Abled and Caregivers. “The data will help invigilators be prepared and keep children relaxed,” he said.

Most NGOs said the department should have conducted a survey across institutions to get an idea of the needs for all the 2,400 special children.

Kalpana Rao, principal of Vidya Sagar, an NGO which works with children and adults with special needs said, “Some children have high fatigue levels. They need frequent breaks and constant rehydration. The invigilators must be trained to help them.”