



school choice campaign

# School Choice Campaign

## Mass Campaign



## Policy Campaign



## Legal Campaign



## Public Opinion Campaign



## Research



## Voucher Pilots

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## RIGHT TO EDUCATION OF CHOICE

The School Choice Campaign is an initiative of the Centre for Civil Society to advocate choice and competition through policy reforms that increase the involvement of parents in responsibly schooling their children by giving them ownership of the task. School Choice ideas are designed to address the acute problems facing the government education set-up by infusing accountability and efficiency into the system. The overall goal of the School Choice Campaign is to create an environment where every child has the Right to Education of Choice!

## VISION

To create an education system in India where all children receive quality education of their choice.

## MISSION

- Efficient use of public funds through innovative schemes and policies.
- Promote equity and quality through diversity (as opposed to uniformity) by comprehensive liberalization.

### Efficient Use of Public Funds

- School vouchers, conditional cash transfers and other voucher-like schemes
- Pedagogical and operational autonomy to government schools
- State schools given on learning contract.
- Performance based pay for principals and teachers
- Convert state funding to per student basis

### Promote Equity & Quality through Liberalization

- Delicensing, deregulation and decentralization (curricula, textbooks, exams, state boards, school management)
- Support for budget private schools through a credible affiliation board, independent performance assessment, and microfinance
- Legalization of for-profit schools

*We believe, whereas the Government has a constitutional mandate to educate all children, it cannot do so by building more government schools. It has to remain a sponsor and facilitator, and let edupreneurs execute the task of delivering this service. This will bring choice of schools even to the poor while improving the quality of education through competition. Thus our slogan*

**“Fund Students, Not Schools!”**

सोड़ों स्वर्च, क्वालिटी एजुकेशन गोल



The Telegraph

Members of Asha, an NGO, campaign for children's right to study in a school of their choice at Albert Ekka Chowk in Mumbai on Friday. Photo by Prasad Nair



School Vouchers are coupons that can be redeemed for educational services from participating institutions. They offer a more efficient and transparent method to deliver education. They are a policy reform tool in the bouquet of School Choice ideas to ensure accountability in our schools system. By routing government resource allocation for education through school vouchers, it is possible to offer choice of school even to those students who are now tied to government schools. Parents, empowered to choose the best school for their children, will demand the best quality education.



The Constitution of India has guaranteed every child, between 6 and 14 years of age, the right to education. Vouchers would guarantee them not just any education but quality education of choice.

### The School Voucher Provides:

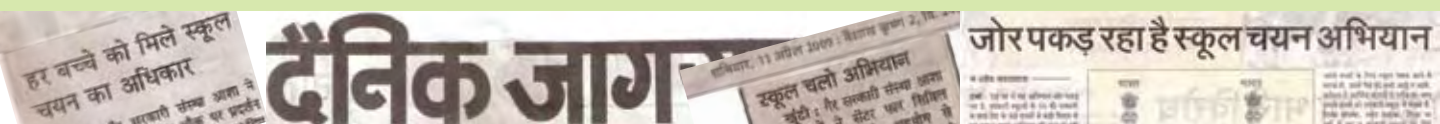
**Choice for students:** The voucher empowers poor students to go to a school of their choice. If the school does not meet their expectations, they will have the choice to change schools.

**Equality of opportunity:** The voucher guarantees the basic human right to all children that they are treated equally and are provided with equal opportunity for education irrespective of cash, caste or creed.

**Competition among schools:** Today private Indian schools compete only for students with money. With vouchers, not only private schools but also government schools will compete for all students, rich and poor, improving the overall quality of schooling delivered.

**Performance based payment:** With vouchers, the revenue of a school will depend upon the number of students it has, both who pay directly and who pay through vouchers. Therefore, schools will have an automatic incentive to improve quality, to increase enrolments and to retain students.

**Win-Win outcome:** Government school students who get a voucher will be able to change schools and do better for themselves. Evidence suggests that even those students who choose to stay in government schools perform better. First, the student-teacher ratio improves and second, schools become more attentive to retain strength leading to better learning outcomes.





School Choice Campaign work spans across seven states: Delhi, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Bihar. We have entered into long-term partnership with 250 member NGOs in these states to take the message of school choice to the people, politicians and governments.

The National School Choice Alliance, with local partners, runs the mass campaign to



build grass root pressure for change by increasing awareness among poor parents about the resources governments spend to educate their children and what they should demand for genuine empowerment.

Using various communication channels like street theatre, dance and song performances, rallies and interactive mobile vans to name a few, SCC has been successful in reaching out to more than 1, 21, 00, 000 parents directly and has till date collected 27,38,651 signatures on petitions seeking school vouchers for their children.

In January 2008, the Uttar Pradesh government announced vouchers for educationally underserved villages.



In October 2008, following a successful Jan Sunwai (Public Hearing) attended by 4,500 people from eight districts, the then Jharkhand Education Minister Mr Bandhu Tirkey, announced three voucher pilot projects in the districts of Hazaribagh, Chatra and Dumkha.





The policy campaign increases understanding of school choice ideas and reforms through meetings with people in the government, political parties, and unions. We consistently interact with policy makers to bring about innovative policy changes.



Our ideas go beyond vouchers. We also advocate reforms to improve government schooling through per-child funding, decentralization and regulatory reforms - **to expand the supply of schools** - and increase transparency.



We have so far conducted over **250 meetings**, workshops, seminars and presentations with various Union Ministers, Chief Ministers, Governors, State Ministers, Senior Officials of Education, Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Departments, Leaders of Political parties, Members of the Planning Commission, State Education Boards, NGO Leaders and Civil Society Activists, International Aid Agencies, Editors and Columnists, Academicians and Researchers.

In July 2008, we conducted a full day workshop for the Rajasthan Education Department officials which ended with the public announcement of the two voucher based PPP (Public Private Partnership) schemes Gyanodaya and Shikshak Ka Apna Vidyalaya.

## LEGAL CAMPAIGN

### Public Interest Litigations (PILs)

Where strategic and feasible, the campaign has been taking its cause to the nation's highest courts. We have filed a PIL in the Delhi High Court seeking the judiciary's intervention to ensure equitable distribution of government money for education through per child funding. We are also fighting a legal battle in Orissa to secure government sponsored private schooling opportunities for children in areas where there are no government schools.

### Action for School Admission Reforms (ASAR)

ASAR is an initiative to streamline admission process in private schools and to usher in market transparency. CCS approached the Delhi High Court in 2008 seeking its intervention to ensure transparent admission procedures and availability of redressal mechanism for parents who have been unfairly dealt with. The court ruled in our favour following which the Delhi Directorate of Education (DoE) put in place a complaint mechanism on its website and the schools published the break-up of points that secured seats for children who were admitted. This year, the DoE has also introduced a common admission schedule that ASAR has been advocating.

ASAR will go to other cities soon. **If parents in your city too are suffering, please write to us at [schoolchoice@ccs.in](mailto:schoolchoice@ccs.in)**

Our public opinion campaign targets a broader group of opinion makers in the fields of education and policy making - columnists, editors, activists, NGOs, academics, foundations – through a variety of instruments and initiatives.

**Events:** Through innovative and interactive dialogues, seminars, conferences and workshops, the School Choice Campaign is networking with various stakeholders in the education sector to facilitate exchange of information and sharing of experiences, and create a platform to discuss existent policies to generate new ideas for policy reforms.

**Research and Publication:** Our researchers and scholars study the practical applicability of school choice ideas like school vouchers, independent accreditation of schools and per-child funding in the Indian context. We continually update ourselves with data and evaluations of school choice programs from world over. Through publications and research studies, which are disseminated to targeted audience, we have been making a strong case for the role of choice and competition in improving the quality of education.

**Media outreach:** The focus of our media outreach efforts is on building a strong network of media professionals, authors and columnists who put our ideas to rigorous tests of reasoning and then champion the cause as their own. Promotion through all forms of media - print, electronic, radio and web - is an integral part of our project design and planning. In 2009 alone, the campaign garnered over 150 articles and 50 television coverages in English and regional language media. We also partnered with FM Rainbow to co-produce a talk show on education policies.

## STUDENTFIRST!

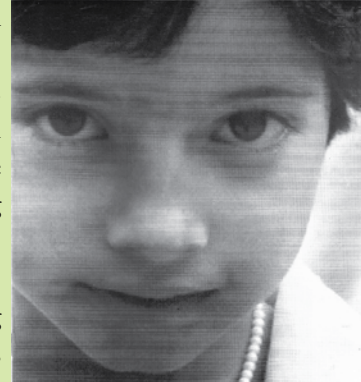
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### through Private Initiatives

1 a planned target of 'universalizing  
2 elementary education in India. This goal  
3 was divided into three broad initiatives –  
4 universal access, universal retention and  
5 universal achievement – aimed at making  
6 education accessible to children, making  
7 sure they continued their education, and  
8 finally, ensuring that they completed their  
9 goals. By the end of 2003, an estimated  
10 90 per cent of India's rural population

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शिक्षा क्षेत्र में नई क्रांति  
गरीब भी अब निजी विद्यालयों में

**inspired india**  
EDUCATION  
2009  
hindustantimes | special | 13

**Let India Inc into the classroom**

**STARTING A PRIVATE SCHOOL**  
It's a battle. Yet, about half the students in government schools can barely read. Here's how we can open up the sector to private schools.

**Starting a Private School**  
The teacher system may seem to be getting cheaper for the government, but it's currently spending Rs 4.50 per year on education, 50 per cent of the total cost of a private school. It has shown remarkable results. Of the 486 children who were given vouchers, 89 per cent showed marked improvement in learning, while 50 per cent of the parents have begun to save more money in education.

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**Student First!** Bi-monthly Campaign Newsletter

**Student First! News** Weekly E-Newsletter

**School Choice Blog**

**Facebook**



Sunday special  
**Nursery CRIMES**



INSIGHT  
**School Vouchers Work**

**Choice as an International Human Right**

Article 26 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights states that

दैनिक जागरण  
विद्यालयों में वाउचर व्यवस्था लागू करना जरूरी

School Choice Campaign designs and runs pilot projects to test customization of school vouchers and identify implementation strategies. The pilot projects are also a source of research information and knowledge that feeds in to the advocacy of the School Choice Campaign.

### India's First Voucher Pilot - DELHI VOUCHER PROJECT



The Delhi Voucher Project, launched on 28 March 2007, is one example of providing educational choice through vouchers. School Choice Campaign awarded vouchers worth up to Rs. 3600 per year to 408 students in 68 wards of Delhi. At the time of applying for vouchers, the children were studying in class six or below in government schools. These vouchers were awarded to the winners on 26 July 2007 by the Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit, Education Minister Arvinder Singh Lovely and School Choice Ambassadors Gurcharan Das, Nafisa Ali, and T K Mathew.

As a fair and transparent method of selecting the beneficiary students from the **more than one lakh applicants**, we had a public lottery led by the local Ward Councillor to pick 6 students in each ward. Those who did not win in the lottery and others submitted petitions



to their respective ward councillors demanding school vouchers from the government. More than 2.5 lakh parents submitted these petitions!

For these 408 voucher students, it has been a dream come true to finally study in a school of their choice. A third party assessment study by the Centre for Media Studies has shown remarkable improvement in the learning achievement of these children.





### SCHOOL VOUCHERS FOR GIRLS

SCC's second voucher pilot, School Vouchers for Girls was launched on 22 July 2009. The project has provided an opportunity for 400 girls who had completed Class 1 in state run schools to enroll in a school of their choice to complete their primary education.



The project is running in seven wards of North East Delhi: Welcome Colony, Chauhan Bangar, Zaffrabad, New Usmanpur, Maujpur, Janta Colony and Babarpur. This region has a high concentration of minority, and socially and economically backward communities where girl children are less likely to be educated well. Our project seeks to address this gender-based discrimination through school vouchers which increases both educational

opportunities and aspirational levels by targeting a traditionally disadvantaged group – girl children from socio-economically disadvantaged families – this project hopes to demonstrate the empowerment potential of school vouchers.



### HIGHLIGHTS

- Counselling for parents
- Parent's Handbook
- Choice of 52 Empanelled Schools
- RBI approved vouchers upto INR 4,000/-
- School Choice to every fourth child in the target group
- Continuous monitoring and assessment

**School Choice**  
Empowering Students, Shaping the Future

स्कूल वाउचर्स फॉर गर्ल्स  
२००९-२०१३

अभिभावक निर्देशिका

स्कूल धवन अभियान      स्कूलों को नहीं, छात्रों को दे फंड!



Progressive state governments in India have started adopting School Choice ideas to devise innovative solutions to specific problems in their states.

## UTTARAKHAND: PAHAL

Pahal provides education vouchers to urban deprived children (6-14 yrs) in three districts of the State. A child becomes eligible for the voucher if she/he has never been enrolled or has been a drop-out for at least a year. The Pahal scheme began in Dehradun on a pilot basis in 2007 – 08 and later extended to Udham Singh Nagar and Haridwar demonstrating a successful Public Private Partnership



## MADHYA PRADESH: PARASPAR

Inspired by the success of voucher and PPP models in other places, the Madhya Pradesh government has launched Paraspar which is set to benefit urban deprived children of four cities: Bhopal, Jabalpur, Indore and Gwalior. Under this scheme, the government will proportionately compensate private schools for mainstreaming out of school children.

## RAJASTHAN: Gyanodaya & Shikshak Ka Apna Vidyalaya

Gyanodaya would facilitate opening up of new PPP schools for classes VI to XII on a BOO (Build, Operate & Own) basis. In the first phase, a maximum of 5 such schools will be set up in each district where 50% of the seats will be for government sponsored children. Shikshak Ka Apna Vidyalaya aims to enhance the access to and quality of primary schools by encouraging trained unemployed teachers to adopt government run one-teacher primary schools or to open new schools in PPP mode in the rural and the backward areas of the state. Here too 50% of the seats will be for voucher children

*“Centre for Civil Society is playing an important role in guiding policy reforms in the field of education. I particularly appreciate their concept of ‘Fund Students, Not Schools’ which holds great potential for ensuring quality education for India’s children.”*

**Arvinder Singh Lovely, Delhi Education Minister**



## SCHOOL CHOICE AMBASSADORS



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## COUNTRIES WITH GOVERNMENT VOUCHER SCHEMES



### Voucher Schemes across the world

- Italy
- U.S.A.
- England
- Sweden
- New Zealand
- Denmark
- Colombia
- Chile
- The Netherlands
- Czech Republic
- Cote d' Ivoire
- India

## United Nations Declaration of Human Rights-Article 26

- Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
- Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- *Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.*



## School Choice Campaign

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Winner of 2009 Templeton Freedom Award for Initiative in Public Relations