

# Long road ahead

Significant progress has been made at the primary schooling level, but much needs to be done to stem senior secondary dropout rates.

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**THE** announcement of examination results for classes X and XII hit the headlines recently, and the performance of students in Central and State schools has once again shone the spotlight on the health of school education in the country. In this context, a look at data over the past year gives a clearer picture of how well we are doing as a nation in educating the younger generation and where there is room for improvement.

According to educational statistics for 2014 put out by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, there were more than 14.25 lakh school education institutions as of 2013-14, with 7.9 lakh of them focussing on primary education. The total number of teachers exceeded 82.68 lakh, with the vast majority of them in primary and upper primary schools. The pupil-teacher ratio was the lowest at the primary level, at 28, and the highest, at 40, at the

senior secondary level. While it is heartening to note that enrolment at all levels of schooling runs into several crores of students, it is also distressing that overall dropout rates are high and alarmingly high in the case of students from the Scheduled Castes (S.Cs) and Scheduled Tribes (S.Ts), respectively. While the dropout rates at the

## No. of teachers and pupil-teacher ratio

Type of institution	No. of teachers	Female teachers per 100 male teachers	Pupil-teacher ratio
Primary	26,84,194	88	28
Upper Primary	25,12,968	83	30
Secondary	12,86,498	74	28
Senior Secondary	17,85,099	96	40

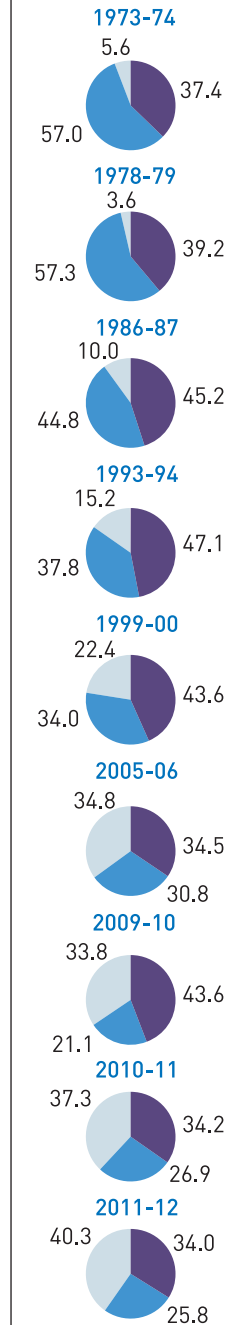
primary level (classes I-V) are below 20 per cent for all students and among S.Cs, the rate jumps to 31.3 per cent in the case of S.Ts. The rates keep rising as the level of education rises, and more so in the case of marginalised sections. Genderwise data show that the dropout rates are lower for girls at all educational levels and across sections.

The gross enrolment ratio, which is defined as the total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population corresponding to the level during any academic year, was nearly 100 for the overall school going population at the primary level, and significantly high up to class X, but drastically lower at the senior secondary level (classes XI and XII).

Ministry data showed that the expenditure of Central and State education departments has recorded a steady rise from 2011-12. For the Centre, the total expenditure rose 11 per cent from Rs.60,260.80 crore in 2011-12 to Rs.66,818.97 crore the next year but zoomed by 18 per cent to Rs.78,701.04 crore in the year ended 2014; for the State departments, the figure grew by 22 per cent from Rs.2,09,830.99 crore to Rs.2,54,935.21 crore but saw a rise of only 13 per cent the next year to reach Rs.2,87,264.19 crore.

## Distribution of senior secondary schools by management (percentage)

- Govt+Local Body
- Private (Aided)
- Private (Unaided)



## Expenditure by education departments (Rs. crore)

	2011-12 (A)	
	Centre	State
Plan	50,769.20	34,404.42
Non-Plan	9,491.60	1,75,426.57
Total	60,260.80	2,09,830.99
Share of Plan Expenditure*	84.25	16.40

	2012-13 (RE)	
	Centre	State
Plan	56,207.97	51,040.82
Non-Plan	10,611.00	2,03,894.39
Total	66,818.97	2,54,935.21
Share of Plan Expenditure*	84.11	20.02

	2013-14 (BE)	
	Centre	State
Plan	65,107.00	60,432.51
Non-Plan	13,594.04	2,26,831.68
Total	78,701.04	2,87,264.19
Share of Plan Expenditure*	82.72	21.03

\*in percentage, A: Actual, R.E.: Revised Estimate, B.E.: Budget Estimate

