

Law (Education) (1925) Department.

Ord SERIES.

G.O. No. 2144

DATED 14.12.25

[Despatch Abstract.]

Legislative Council - Resolution

Institution of a public Examination

at the end of the 3rd form Course - Not
moved. Note, Recorded

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NOTES CONNECTED WITH A RESOLUTION ON MATTERS OF GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST.

[For the meeting of August 1925.]

[SUBJECT.—Institution of a public examination at the end of the third form course.]

COUNCIL OFFICE.

Mr. L. C. GURUSWAMI :—

227. That this Council recommends to the Government that a public examination be instituted for pupils who have completed at least the third form course in a recognized school.

LAW (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

The resolution has been balloted for. The recommendation made in it is that a public examination may be instituted similar to the old Middle School Examination which was replaced by the late Lower Secondary Examination in the year 1889 which, in its turn, was abolished in the year 1905 (cf. paragraph 18 on pages 14 and 15 of the Commissioner of Government Examinations Calendar, 1922-23).

2. The Educational Conference held at Simla in 1901 recognized that the deterioration which was then found to have taken place in the system of education in India and the cramming which was one of its worst features were in a great measure due to the frequent public examinations which had to be passed by boys in the various courses of Indian schools (paragraph 6 on page 3 of G.O. No. 678, dated 28th November 1901). The Conference was of opinion that the teacher's mind was constantly directed towards preparing a boy for his next examination instead of giving him a solid and well-grounded education which would be of use in after-life. It therefore resolved that some reduction in the number of examinations then held was eminently desirable. The Government of India were accordingly of opinion that no public examination was, as a general rule, required at the end of the primary or vernacular course, but that at the end of the secondary course a public examination was required to meet the case of boys who had carried on their education beyond the primary stage but who might not wish to enter the University.

3. Again in their educational policy of 1904 the Government of India decided that in future there should be only two examinations preceding the University course:—

(1) The Primary examination which would mark the completion of the lowest stage of instruction but which would no longer be a public examination, but would be conducted by the Inspecting Officer in the school itself; and

(2) the Secondary examination which would record the educational attainments of all boys who had completed the course (vide paragraph 12 on page 6 of G.O. No. 215, dated 6th April 1904).

In their Order No. 443, dated 29th June 1905, the Government approved the proposals of the Director of Public Instruction for the abolition of the Lower Secondary Examination which took the place of the old Middle School Examination in 1890-91. Another justification for the abolition was that that examination which formed the test for the eligibility of pupils of the seventh standard or third form for results grants ceased to be of use with the abolition of that particular system of grant-in-aid (paragraph 4, page 2 of G.O. No. 443, dated 29th June 1905).

4. At the Conference of Directors of Public Instruction which was held in Delhi in January 1917 (vide India's letter on page 1 of G.O. No. 1175, dated 12th September 1917) the question of the revival of the Middle School Examination was incidentally raised. The Government of India then addressed the Local Governments for opinion

on the suggestion. The Director of Public Instruction who was consulted by this Government was in favour of the reintroduction of the examination as he considered that it would be useful for the following purposes:—

- Paragraph 2, p. 27 (F)
- (1) for directing and stimulating the work in the first three forms in secondary schools;
 - (2) for providing a certificate which would be useful for pupils whose formal education ended with the III Form in obtaining employment or admission to training schools and to headmasters in making admissions to the IV Form;
 - (3) for indicating to parents the capacities of their children and so helping them to decide their educational future;
 - (4) for affording evidence of sufficient general education for admission to elementary vocational courses; and
 - (5) for providing some check to the growing overcrowding of the three higher forms.

The Director of Public Instruction admitted that the old Middle School and Lower Secondary Examinations led to cram; but he believed that the evils resulting from it did not outweigh its advantages and therefore advocated the introduction of an improved system of examination which sought to avoid the defects of the old system. But only a bare majority of the Secondary School-leaving Certificate Board were in agreement with him. Moreover when certain representative headmasters were invited to meet the Board and the Director informally discussed the question with them, a decided majority were opposed to the idea of reintroducing the examination. Later on His Excellency Lord Pentland discussed the question with the Director of Public Instruction and it was decided that the time was then

* [It was considered unnecessary to enter into the merits of the matter.] inopportune for the consideration of the subject. The Government of India were informed accordingly in letter

No 1176, dated 12th September 1917. The Government of India, after considering the replies of the several Local Governments, withdrew their orders of 1904, prohibiting the Middle School Examination to the extent that a Local Government might, should it feel so disposed, institute a public examination at the end of the middle school course subject to the following conditions:—

- (a) that the examination should not be conducted solely through question papers but that, as far as possible, an oral test be also employed, and
- (b) that the examination be of an informal nature carried out, so far as possible, *in situ* by the inspecting officer with the aid of the headmaster and teachers of the school.

Upon this reference the Government decided not to take any further action in the matter—vide G.O. No. 708, dated 4th June 1918.

5. From His Excellency Lord Pentland's note on page 3 of G.O. No. 1175, dated 12th September 1917, it will be seen that no definite decision was then arrived at on the question of the re-introduction of the Middle School Examination. His Excellency opined that the time was not then opportune for the consideration of the subject and considered that it was unnecessary to enter into the merits of the matter. The question has since then come under the examination of the Secondary Education Re-organisation Committee which was appointed to consider the applicability to Madras of the recommendations of the Sadler Committee. The former committee generally agreed with the view that the strain of examination was heavy on pupils and that they should, as far as possible, be freed from the need for sitting for examinations oftener than absolutely necessary—paragraph 10 on page 10 of G.O. No. 239, dated 14th February 1923. They therefore declined to consider the question of an examination similar to the old Middle School or Lower Secondary Examination. At the same time they recognized that the award of a formal certificate at the end of the middle school stage would be of value to the outgoing pupil as well as to the employer. They therefore resolved "that at the completion of the middle school stage a pupil be entitled to a certificate from the headmaster containing information regarding the pupil's proficiency in the subject

"studied and in games and physical training, and regarding health, conduct, attendance, special interests, etc."—vide Resolution No. 21 on page 10 of G.O. No. 239, dated 14th February 1923.

The matter has also been referred to in the recent circular regarding 'Secondary Education of boys' issued by the Director of Public Instruction to officers of the Educational department under instructions of the Hon'ble the Minister. The Hon'ble the Minister has separately proposed that the whole question of the 'reorganization of secondary education' be further examined by a Committee consisting of officials and non-officials, and the Director of Public Instruction has suggested that one of the terms of reference to the Committee might be the making of detailed recommendations with regard to changes in the present rules and practice, necessary to give effect to the proposed reorganization, with special reference to *examinations*. The question of the Middle School examination will thus come under consideration in that connexion. If this is explained to the Member of the Legislative Council, he may withdraw the resolution.

6. For orders whether any further information should be collected.

C.V.V.—12-8-25.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—12-8-25.

I think we may promise consideration by the Committee which it is proposed to convene for discussion of questions connected with Secondary education.

V. T. KRISHNAMA ACHARIYAR—12-8-25.

The case may be referred to the Director of Public Instruction and the file may be sent to me on the 20th when resolutions are reached.

A. P. P[ATRO]—13-8-25.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

I agree with the Secretary's suggestion above.

R. G. GRIEVE—17-8-25.

The resolution at p. 1 ante was not moved during the last council meeting and it has not been balloted for the next meeting.

These notes may be

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no. 21448
14-12-25
Recorded.

Leg. Council.

Resolution - Institution
of a public examination
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