

Playgrounds mandatory for new schools

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board (GSHSEB) has amended its rules for approving new secondary and higher secondary schools. According to the new rules, it is compulsory for schools to have a playground. School managements however, have protested the board's decision, terming it illogical.

Representatives of Gujarat State School Managements Association (GSSMA) wrote to the state education board, raising concerns over the issue. The letter states, "According to the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (SHSE) Act, there is no compulsion for the school to own a playground space. It could be land taken on rent or lease by the school management."

"The requirement for a 1,200-square-yard playground for schools in urban areas and a 2,000-square-yard one in rural areas, was mandatory only as per the old rules of the SHSE Act. At a time when land costs are so high, it is virtually impossible for schools to get such a huge piece of land," the letter states.



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The association also raised concerns at the fact that approval for appointments of physical training (PT) teachers at grant-in-aid schools has been pending since September 2009 and that the number of students opting for PT as an elective subject in class X is going down.

Bhaskar Patel, president of the association, said, "The board's decision is not practical. It will put a financial burden on institutions."

Sources said that the government must also take into account the financial position of schools while introducing such rules, especially when the state education board has imposed a cap on the fees schools can charge by setting up a fee regulation committee.