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Delay worry over CBSE 2nd test

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Calcutta: The CBSE's new rule offering two board exam options for Class X students to improve their results might delay the admission process and the new session for XI, said several concerned principals a day after the change was announced.

Starting 2026, students appearing for CBSE Class X board exams will have the choice to appear for a second test in the same year to better their scores, the board said in a circular on Wednesday.

Principals said the change could delay the Class IX session by almost two months — beginning in July instead of April. Schools break for a month for the summer

during this time.

"The results of the first exam will be announced in April and the second in June. There is a possibility that Class XI can only begin in July. We will have to keep admissions open till June, which will delay the process," said Arun Dasgupta, principal, Bhavan's Gangabux Kanoria Vidyamandir.

"If students don't get subjects of their choice in the first exam, they will wait for the second set of tests and study for them. Only when they get those subjects will they begin the Class XI studies."

With board exams beginning mid-February, the teaching window for schools to finish the syllabus will be reduced, principals said.

Students "not qualified in the main examination will be allowed provisional admission in Class XI, and based on the result of the second examination, their admission will be confirmed", the circular said.

School heads were concerned about the delay. "We will have to wait till the second test. It won't be fair to students if classes for XI begin before they take the improvement exams because their attention will be divided between the X and XI syllabi," said Rumjhum Biswas, principal, Swarnim International School.

Most schools admit students to Class XI based on their pre-board marks in Class X. Admissions are closed after the board results are announced in May. Now, the improvement

exams will be held in May.

Schools usually begin classes in April. Up to this year, the CBSE allowed improvement tests only in one subject.

"We will understand the challenges of keeping admissions open till June once the system is implemented," said Meena Kak, director, Lakshmi Pat Singhania Academy.

Several schools said they would keep admissions to Class XI open till June, subject to vacancies.

"We can accommodate students in June if seats are available," said Sunita Arora, principal, Delhi Public School, Howrah.

Some heads said they need clarity from the board.

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CBSE tweak

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The principal of the Newtown School, Satabdi Bhattacharjee, said: "We can fill up Class XI seats based on the results of students who don't opt for improvement tests or come from other boards. How will we accommodate those who come with results from the improvement exams? We need more clarity on this."

Several teachers, however, pointed out that it would beat the purpose if students were not given subjects of their choice after the improvement exams.

"If the board is allowing improvement tests then the higher of the two marks will be considered. Schools will have to be more flexible... Every reform has challenges," said Madhumita Sengupta, principal, BDM International.

The responsibility of finishing the syllabus lies with the school, she said.