

Conference Call Minutes

Date: 30th June 2009 (Austin) /1st July 2009 (India)

Attendees: Vijaybhai, Omprakash (Project coordinators, Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, Reoti)
Arvind Rao, Rahul Rao, Ganesh Krishnamoorthy (Asha Austin)

1. Final exam results for academic year 2008-09

- Vijaybhai needed to travel out of town due to some emergency. Hence the delay in sending the results
- The results should be typed up within the next couple of days
- Vijaybhai will also send the intern report (Prateek, an MBA intern from IIIT, Noida)

2. Teacher Training (Ekalavya /Activity-based learning techniques) and Teachers' status

- The training could not be held in May since both Vallabh and Vijaybhai were busy with other activities and hence did not have the bandwidth to conduct the training.
- The plan is to have remaining teachers (from ASV schools) to come to Ballia during the functioning of the school and get a hands-on experience and see how it is implemented. This is likely to happen in July.
- Vijaybhai was of the opinion that it is difficult to estimate the amount of training required further. The teachers need to be very well acquainted and confident of using these techniques.
- There was a discussion during the Asha India Conference on how to improve quality of education at ASV. One of the conclusions was that getting experts in science / math / arts may be helpful.
- Vijaybhai and Vallabh are looking into the availability of these experts, may be professionals who could consult with the teachers on a periodic basis.
- The original Ekalavya trainers were involved with other activities and hence cannot devote regular interaction with them. They are in Kanpur and may be free during the end of July (rainy season).
- Last year someone from Pune had conducted the training.
- The school is trying to find a resident expert for a year or so. They have contacted the Ekalavya center in Madhya Pradesh, but they are citing lack of availability of such an expert. They do have periodic training in the center itself. The school can try to avail of the same, by sending teachers there, if it occurs during the vacations.
- Laxmibehn, an Asha trustee from Madras teaches at one such camp. The school is in contact with her. Uma, works with Pratham, an NGO. They are in touch with her as well. Vallabhji is following up these.
- Rekha, one of the teachers got married and is no longer working at the school. The school is looking to hire someone else to replace her.
- The school has currently decided to continue with status quo in July. They are looking for someone to come on board in August.
- The plan is to have an introductory test for teachers, instead of directly hiring them, and then have a trial evaluation period (voluntary). Depending on the responses, the teacher will be selected.

3. Medical Camp

- Homeopathic Camp around August 15
- Allopathic camp was conducted on 28th February. A few kids required some medication. The school provided them with 1 week of medication plus follow up
- A few children had some skin issues (primarily during winter). One or two kids still have them, but the rest of them have recovered completely. During the vacation, since students were away, continued treatment couldn't happen very well. But now that they have returned, this treatment will continue. Omprakashji takes care of this.
- There are no vitamin deficiency issues.

4. Other Issues

- There was some uncertainty on the status of one of the students. It was learnt that she had quit the school.
- Vijaybhai and Omprakash talked to the child as well as her parents to convince her to return.
- The child is reluctant to learn and currently helps her parents with work (the parents are day laborers).

- Her brother studies in a nearby school.

5. Updates for the new academic year (2009- 2010)

- 20 new kids will join the school in the forthcoming year
- Today (July 1st 2009) is the first day of school and around 75 students are in school (the call happened when Vijaybhai and Omprakash were in the school)
- The kids from 5th grade will be enrolled in government school.
- Total strength is expected to be around 140 students for the next academic year after accounting for dropouts and newly admitted kids.
- In a week, the final count will be known and then a budget will be sent to Asha Austin

6. Funds

- Teachers have not received salaries for May and June.
- Funds were sent from Asha Austin in early June. So they should have received it.
- Need to check with Vallabh Bhai.
- Vijaybhai will send the new Budget for the next academic year (2009-2010)