

Conference Call Minutes

Date : Wednesday March 24th, 2009 (Austin) / Thursday March 25th, 2009 (India)

Attendees : Vijaybhai (Project coordinator, Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, Reoti)

Rahul Rao, Ganesh Krishnamoorthy (Project stewards, Asha Austin)

1. Teacher training and updates

- The second teacher training session for 2009 did not happen due to lack of trainers from Ekalavya
- The trainers may be potentially available only in May, so that is the earliest when the next training session can be planned
- An alternative to address this issue might be to conduct the training through Gramin Shiksha Kendra (GSK), Rajasthan, which is another project supported by Asha Austin and offers such teacher training sessions at their campus as well as on location in other schools
- Vijaybhai seemed open to this idea and the logistics of doing this will be explored further
- Lalji, one of the teachers in the school, wanted to pursue a computer training course. So he has left and is not working at the school presently
- There are five teachers currently in the school: Omprakash, Babulal, Sangeeta, Lallan, Anupama
- Anupama is the temporary teacher hired to replace Rekha (the teacher who left the school last year)
- She has taught in the school before and has been teaching well since she joined
- Her appointment has not been made permanent yet
- Vijaybhai said that it would be good to have one more teacher
- The school will let the chapter know before the next academic year in July or August

2. Health check-ups

- The school has not yet contacted the doctors yet to arrange for the health check up for this year (2010). Vijaybhai mentioned that they would be doing this soon
- The doctors are located both in Ballia and Varanasi
- The children who had the skin issues during the winter last year did not have it this year
- During the last health check-up, homeopathic doctors were consulted and preventive medicines were given to all the kids

3. General Updates

- Classes 4 and 5 have been joined together due to lack of adequate teachers.
- The combination of class 4 and 5 is not too bad, since the number of students in each of these classes is low to being with.
- About 15 kids were not attending school for almost a month

- During the harvest season the parents used to take the kids along or the parents used to go to work and the kids just spent the day playing
- The teachers went to the children's homes and talked to the guardians and attendance has improved since then
- Vijaybhai mentioned that sometimes the teachers are worried about continued funding for the project
- The stewards on the call emphasized the Austin chapter's continued support of the school and assured them that the chapter will try its best to continue funding as long as it is needed
- The students in classes 6 and 8, who study in the nearby government school, also take additional exams in the ASV school(although these kids do not actually attend the ASV school)
- The education in these higher classes is fairly satisfactory in the government school
- Also, some of the exam papers for classes 6-8 are available externally (i.e. standardized tests), while some are set by the teachers at ASV
- The teachers in the ASV school are experienced in teaching up to class 8 and hence they can set the exam papers for these students
- After the 8th standard, the ASV school helps the kids to get admitted to intercollege (classes 10-12)
- Although the school has been tracking their progress on and off, a regular effort has not been made to track their progress.
- Vijaybhai said they might follow up these kids more regularly to check if they need anything in terms of books, monetary support, etc.
- The Austin chapter has requested for the receipts for all the disbursements sent to ASV from 2009-2010.
- Vijaybhai will work with Vallabh on getting the receipts sent as soon as possible