

Decision to wind down Proj. Pride –

Minutes of the discussion on 8/7/2011 - 10:30 PM PST (08/08/2011 - 11 AM IST)

Attendees - Mrs. Kasturi, Mrs. Lakshmi (Asha Chennai), Hari and PJ (Asha Stanford)

1. The last academic year 2010-11 had 5 Asha-funded teachers. Two of them have quit. They have appointed a new teacher, Mrs. Durgadevi in place of Mrs. Dhanalakshmi (who was with Asha Honor). So now they have 4 teachers.
2. Mrs. Margaret is keen that we continue funding for the rest of the year since closing the school in the middle of the year is problematic for students and teachers as well.
3. Stanford will look at the funding needs till next May (Sept 2011 - May 2012 - Rs. 18,000/- per month - assuming 5 teachers)
4. There are 2 schools within 1km - Anna School and Olcott Memorial School and Avvai Home Girls school is within 2kms of the Kuppam.
5. Mrs. Kasturi and Mrs. Lakshmi can help coordinate the transfer/admissions to these other schools in the area. They can coordinate the purchase of notebooks, uniforms etc if Asha Stanford can fund them.
6. Mrs. Lakshmi is very confident that none of the students would discontinue since kids old enough to be in 6th can walk the distance easily. And that there won't be any harm done if the classes 6th-8th are closed down.
7. Only the Govt can close the school. Classes I-V will continue here unless the Govt decides so. And the TN Govt has decided that it won't fund any upgrades to the classes - so chances that classes VI-VIII will get Govt funding are almost nil.
8. The LVR trust is running a for-profit school and is running the Govt-aided Kuppam school as the management. (The management can recommend teachers to the Govt for their appointment. The Govt pays the teachers upon appointment ultimately).
9. The LVR trust is probably not spending anything towards the upkeep of the school. But still, they do not want the classes VI-VIII to continue
10. The Primary strength is pretty low. There is a chance that they might cancel the appointment of the teacher as well - so Mrs. Margaret might be the only teacher in the school. Asha Stanford might consider funding teachers just for the primary school. Up for discussion for later.

Hari and I also spoke with Mrs. Margaret after that. She essentially reconfirmed everything and requested that we discuss the funding for 2011-12 as soon as possible. She also mentioned that she might not need a 5th teacher this year - and she can manage with just the 4 teachers. She also mentioned that we could look into the salary amounts for the teachers.

Asha Stanford subsequently discussed in meetings that since there are well functioning middle and high schools in the vicinity of the Urur Kuppam school, the need for funding classes VI-VIII here no longer exists. Further, we just need to ensure that no student drops out of their studies due to this. Asha Stanford and Asha Chennai will work together to ensure all students get admitted to other neighboring schools for the next academic year.

Correspondence on May 16th 2012 –

Classes VI to VIII have been closed in the school.

The students are applying to the nearby schools for admission.

We have told the school headmistress and correspondent that Asha monetary support will be extended to the children for uniforms, stationery and admission & special fees if required.

After making salary payments to Pride teachers for the months April and May 2012 as the last payments we have Rs 9745 as balance in the project account.

We have estimated the amount we may need for the students entering other schools. from classes 5 to 6, 6 to 7, 7 to 8 as 50 students X Rs 2000 = Rs 100000.

So, you may allocate USD 2000 towards this. A clear picture of things will emerge in about 2 to 3 weeks.

Thanks

Lakshmi, Asha Chennai.

Correspondence on Aug 8th 2012 –

Dear friends,

students joining other schools from Urur Kuppam Pride school have been identified by Kastruri with the help of mallika and Pudiyathor (an NGO conducting after school tuition centre) at urur kuppam.

Students who needed support for school fees and uniforms have been supported in the first round.

Please see the pics attached of students who received the uniforms.

the cost of uniforms so far Rs 18,490

Their name list is available and will be scanned and sent in a week's time.

more students may need support.

best regards

Lakshmi, Asha Chennai.



Correspondence on Dec 29th 2012 –

The Uru Olcott Kuppam school is now functioning with Std 1 to 5. The HM seems relieved that the classes 6 to 8 students have been resettled in different schools as per their parent preferences. Some of the students are now with Pudiyathor an NGO running evening classes at the UrurKuppam. So we keep getting some information about the students now and again. A couple of girl students who were overaged about 16 years in class 8 have not continued their education inspite of counseling from the HM & Pudiyathor volunteers.

Best regards

Lakshmi, Asha Chennai.