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NEXTGEN EDUCATION LEADERS



SPECIAL FEATURE

Challenges for
Schools in the Corona
times



COVER STORY

Usage of
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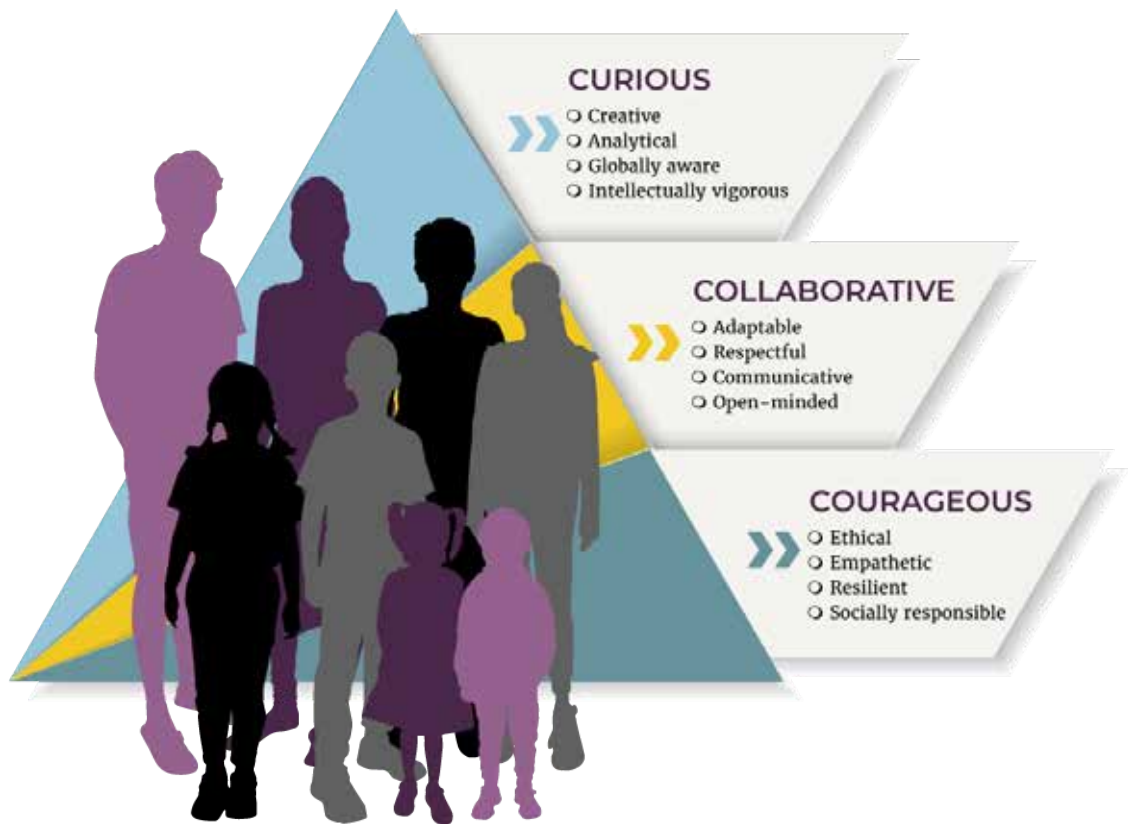
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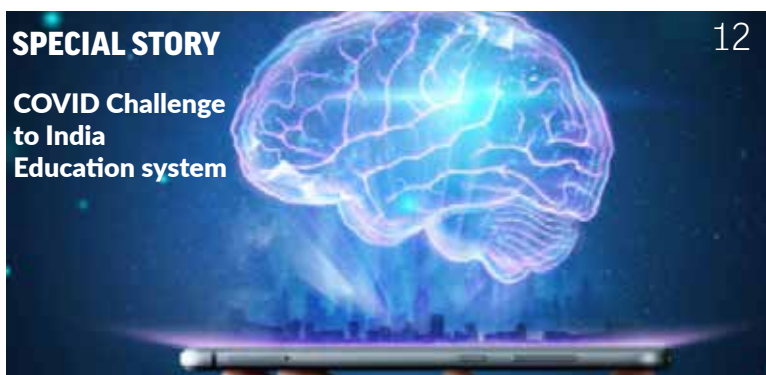


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EDITORIAL

Paradigm shift witnessed in education sector

The effect of COVID-19 pandemic has cast its shadows on the academic year of schools and educational institutions of the country. There is a possibility that the current academic year may start later than usual.

School leaders look for ways to minimize the disruption to children's learning and teachers at thousands of schools all across the country are scrambling for ways to teach children who are holed up at home.

Many teachers and their students are likely to learn new things as teachers find creative and effective ways to teach and learn remotely. Due to the disruption, a paradigm shift can be witnessed in the education sector. Online education is now the new normal for schools across the country. However, robust connectivity is undoubtedly critical for the success of e-Learning.

It seems Ed-tech platforms have come forward to save the day at a time when schools and colleges have had to close, forcing over 300 million Indian students to stay behind their syllabus.

In this month's issue on NextGen Education Leaders, we have tried to highlight how school leaders have tackled the ongoing Corona pandemic through various innovative ways. Educational Institutions are badly affected and uncertain about their future perspectives.

digitalLEARNING Magazine in its latest issue has tried to showcase the success story of schools in this pandemic. Our cover story "Usage of E-learning in the times of Corona" touches upon one of the most talked topics discussed across the globe in this crisis. With many educators calling for Hybrid or Blending learning, technology will play an important role in school education.

Along with this, we have a Special Feature on "Covid Challenge to India Education System", which underlines the challenges for a complex Indian education system in this crisis. Our latest issue also carries many success stories of schools, the way they handled the Corona crisis effectively.

With a host of interviews, articles by school industry leaders, and special features, we hope our latest endeavor would evoke an invaluable feedback of our esteemed readers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'रवि गुप्ता' (Ravi Gupta).

Dr Ravi Gupta

Editor-in-Chief, digitalLEARNING magazine
and Founder Publisher and CEO
Elets Technomedia Pvt Ltd



E-LEARNING IS THE NEW FUTURE POST-CORONA CRISIS

In the wake of an unprecedented lockdown period, the educational system is moving online as far as possible, turning classrooms into online spaces and teachers into virtual educators.

Various authorities in their respective domains and realms, at the higher educational institutions or at the school level, have been proposing the setting up of virtual classrooms for e-learning. Here is a detail analysis by **Pankaj Samantray** of **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



It's been unprecedented times across the globe. The novel Coronavirus or Covid-19 has changed how millions around the globe are educated. The spread and the fear of infection, of Coronavirus has shut down almost all educational institutions.

In the wake of an unprecedented lockdown period, the educational system is moving online as far as possible, turning classrooms into online spaces and teachers into virtual educators. Various authorities in their respective domains and realms, at the higher educational institutions or at the school level, have been proposing the setting up of virtual classrooms for e-learning. The institutions are gearing up for remote learning for students.

The new paradigm shift in education approaches have not only narrowed down equality gaps but also introduced new solutions for education and innovation in the sector. Many

schools and universities throughout the country are attempting to provide some form of virtual learning with the help of virtual teachers and virtual platforms available.

COVID-19 has forced both K-12 and higher education institutions to close their doors to prevent the spread of the virus. These risk-control decisions have led millions of students into temporary 'home-schooling' situations globally. These changes have certainly caused a degree of inconvenience, but they have also prompted new examples of educational innovation. The curriculum tools of online education and the infrastructure to communicate with students remotely are playing a crucial role in connecting students amidst the closures.

With this unexpected pandemic, institutions and schools have taken an online verge. However, the shift to online learning could be challenging for everyone. Though the direct interaction of students & teachers can't be replaced, still in order to motivate the online classes, teachers are leaving no stone unturned to ensure joy, warmth, and humor teacher-to-student interaction. They are trying to make it more engaging through the implementation of live lecturing, video chatting and messaging with multiple students.

However, the efforts to create a classroom environment simply cannot compete with the real thing. Moreover, the more optimistic side is that everybody is stuck at home, which is allowing us to think about personalized learning fluidly.

In fact, due to online classes conducted through different platforms, all the students are now in the front allowing teachers to be even more attentive towards the needs of the students. It has also made students explore more learning platforms and execute ideas that they have never tried before.

In fact, the lockdown situation would have proven to be very boring had there been no E-learning for these young minds. The virtual platforms have enabled teachers to at the very least start the syllabus & cover the course structure so that students learning don't suffer. The online classroom platform has maintained the regularity of the learning schedule among students. The teachers are steadily working to adapt and make learning fun, effective and imperative through virtual classes. Also, there is nothing like face to face interactions, and engagement through sharing life's lessons and creative ideas, brainstorming sessions, coupled with funny anecdotes inside the classroom.

The steps which schools can take to make studies of students will not suffer in the crisis:

Introducing online classes:

Schools can introduce online modules and classes for important subjects like Maths and Science. This will enable students to learn and relearn the basic equation.

Providing online as well as offline notes:

To ensure proper learning, the schools must sharing study plans and notes to the children of each class both offline and online. Students can utilise their time at home, learn and practice as per the progress in the notes.

Rearrange academic holidays to adjust school curriculum:

Once the school re-opens, the schools will have to plan to cut out on holidays through the academic year and adjust for the lost school classes. By reducing the length of summer vacation and adjusting it with classes will spare some time for students and they'll get enough time to prepare.

Extra classes to make for the lost class time:

As and when the schools reopen, they'll create a period-subject wise timeline for each subject, so that they can provide extra classes to students and ensure that the syllabus is completed.

Assigning class mentors:

The schools must align mentors who will personally speak with the students and their parents and advise them on what to study and how to initiate preparing for the initial chapters seating at home.

Quarantine activities for learning and fun:

While the students are at home, the teachers can assign students activities that will engage them at home. This activity-based learning can become a part of the curriculum and will help students cover a few topics even without coming to school.

Cancel the internal exams:

Schools may choose to cover more classes and focus on covering the curriculum and to achieve the same, they may reduce the number of internal or external exams.

We have three challenges- When do we start, who do we bring in and safety measures. Teaching aspect is not worrying but transaction can be an issue. Parents are not in a hurry to send their children back to schools. It's a great opportunity for teachers to use technology says, Surabhi Goel, CEO, Aditya Birla Education Academy, Aditya Birla World Academy, Mumbai



We have started new lesson plan. Training teachers and grooming parents and students to take online classes is also important. Safety and health, human touch, and communication is the need of the hour. Preparing logistics will also be important. Staggered classes and times are working on.

Teachers are coming up with new ideas to keep students busy. We need to plan out everything before moving forward says, Pratima Sinha, CEO, DSR Educational Society

Are we analyzing the outcomes of content which is provided to students. We are waiting for new norms from govt in the education sector to revive. Our focus must be, how can we engage the children and teach meaningful stuff. We need to provide application learning to kids says Kavitha Jain, CEO, MDN Edify Education, Hyderabad



One of the biggest challenge is to provide online education



in rural India. There will be apprehensions in the mind of parents over safety, when the schools will be reopened. We are facing a financial crisis as these are challenging times for all of us. Schools in USA and Canada are getting closed. Even, Canada is looking for alternative way of teaching says, Skand Bali,

Principal, The Hyderabad Public School, Begumpet, Hyderabad

There are two major challenges firstly, how to keep the students occupied and secondly, how to keep our teachers keep motivated in this crisis as we don't know when this will end. It will be huge challenge for new schools also says, Shilpa Potnis, President, Birla Open Minds Group of Schools,



The crisis is here to stay as there is no vaccine for the virus. Lockdown will be the new normal for students. We should cut down on academics and try to develop life skills within a child. We must invest in the non-academic syllabus for students.

Students must ready to cope with the new world post-COVID says, Sandeep Goenka, Founder Trustee, C.P. Goenka International School & Yogesh Patel - SVIS Kandivali, Mumbai

We were not ready for such crisis. Pre-schools were not ready to deal with online education and teachers were not ready to take online classes. We must start engaging sessions for kids. The villages are getting ready to accept online education. The engagement is important for children not the content says, Pritam Kumar Agrawal, Founder & Director, Hello Kids



In classroom it just teachers and students, but in virtual classes parents are part of it. We can provide K-studies to our children. For small children, we have storytelling sessions. The parent are connected with teachers in very way as all the assessments, home tasks, report cards are shared with them. It's a two-way road for both parents and teachers, says Dr. Monalisa Bal, Chairperson, KiiT International School



There are three phases of education Teaching, learning and assessments. Let the children learn what they have never learnt in this lockdown. Parents are always the first teachers and teachers are second. Now, it's time we can change our roles. With lockdown, the child is missing connect as he feels lonely at home. We must create an environment for children where he can learn new things. says Dr. Jagpreet Singh, former Headmaster, The Punjab Public School, Nabha. DL



ZAITOON GROUP: EDUCATION IS NOT ABOUT MARKS RATHER IT'S ABOUT ACQUISITION OF MORAL VALUES

Zaitoon aims to bring forth a generation of professionals deep rooted in moral values who can cater to the needs of self, society and national integrity says **Dr. Mohammed Muhinudheen K**, Principal & Founding Director, Zaitoon International Girls Campus in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

How's Zaitoon different from other schools in the country?

What makes Zaitoon International School different from other institutions is the philosophy it upholds. Zaitoon aims to bring forth a generation of professionals deep rooted in moral values who can cater to the needs of self, society and national integrity. Founded three years back, ZIGS has received widespread acclaim and acceptance in and out of Kerala. As a residential international school, Zaitoon houses students from all districts of Kerala, from Andaman, Tamil Nadu and UK. Within two years at ZIGS, each student goes through a formidable change in her character, dreams and aspirations. What makes Zaitoon more distinct is the satisfaction of students and parents while leaving the school and an everlasting impression of gratitude engraved in the heart of each and every student for what they had imbibed to their life ahead during their stay at this home away from their home. This year, God willing, Zaitoon is launching its boys' version too and hopefully, it will set a new model in the education history of Kerala.

How does Zaitoon provide different platforms for girls to develop their talents?

Zaitoon believes in the idea that education is not only about marks and grades, rather it's about the acquisition of moral values, development of soft skills and reinventing the hidden talents inherent in each individual to tap the opportunities outside and face the challenges ahead in the twenty-first century. So, at Zaitoon, students are motivated to do everything on their own. Zaitoon provides them monetary support and all other ideation process is done by them ranging from arts, sports, clubs to welcoming prominent personalities and even running Olea business club (an attempt to give them first-hand experience of entrepreneurship and managing accounts). So, here, our daughters, contrary to mixed schools, get more space and room to express themselves and excel in their own respective spheres.

With closure of schools due to COVID-19, how is the teaching-learning process going on?

As its higher secondary exam time in Kerala, students are hell-bent on revising their portion for the postponed exams due to COVID-19.



Dr. Mohammed Muhinudheen K
Principal & Founding Director, Zaitoon International Girls Campus

We do have our own school App to evaluate their progress and all teachers are constantly in touch with them to clarify their doubts and help them fetch good marks.

What are school plans for post-COVID crisis?

Zaitoon is all set to start its online classes from 1st June onwards. With the help of Zaitoon App, our YouTube channel and ZOOM App we will strive our level best to create an alternative through online education till the pandemic vanishes for good.

With cases rising in Kerala, how has the school tackled the issue?

This had been the case earlier. Now, Kerala has embellished an enviable model for other states in tackling this pandemic successfully. We hope that if the present scenario continues, in Kerala, school education will be as normal as it used to be a few months back. Let's hope for the best as Andy Dufrene says in Shawshank Redemption, "hope is a good thing, may be the best thing and no good thing ever dies". **DL**

COVID CHALLENGES TO INDIA EDUCATION SYSTEM

Lockdown changed the perspective of schools. With schools closed for months, e-learning came to the forefront, across the world. Even in developed countries, students have been the primary movers of this initiative. Teachers followed the new trend, hoping to return to the classrooms soon. Here is a detailed report by **Pankaj Samantray** of **Elets News Network**.



There is a paradigm shift witnessed in the education sector in India for last two months. Schools and teachers have been forced to adapt to e-learning leaving the traditional way of teaching. The adaption of technology was reluctant for many teachers and schools.

That new technology added a competitive edge to the e-learning sector. The ed-tech firms strike gold in the pandemic as both private and government schools ensure education through e-platforms. In India, online tutorials including Coursera, Collpoll and many more are gaining immense popularity during this crisis.

Lockdown changed the perspective of schools. With schools closed for months, e-learning came to the forefront, across the world. Even in developed countries, students have been the

primary movers of this initiative. Teachers followed the new trend, hoping to return to the classrooms soon.

However, such expectations are unlikely to materialise any time soon. When schools re-open, they have to operate with reduced classroom strength, to ensure social distancing. It means the scope for classroom education will remain curtailed and e-learning has to fill the gap in the education sector. With blended learning as potential solutions for schools, e-learning will continue to dominate the sector for a longer period.

The new crisis has taken us to the big question. How will complex Indian education system respond to the emerging situation? Avoiding the question is of no use as students are keener than ever. The ed-tech firms have witnessed 10-fold rise

in registration for trial or free coaching, in the last two months.

In the absence of a comprehensive action plan, for the complex Indian school education system, which are divided by multiple boards of unequal standards and the benefits of technology will be acquired by a section of teachers and students that can adapt and afford it.

In India, state governments are the largest providers of education. However, they are plagued by several challenges including large student-teacher ratios, infrastructure and lack of quality training amongst teachers. Private schools too face a problem with teacher training. These challenges combined with India's huge education market size, where 35% of its 1.3 billion population below 15 years of age, present an immense business potential for ed-tech products to scale-up by plugging gaps.

Technology will bring changes

The Ed-tech firms will change the way teachers teach and students learn. In place of the traditional brick-and-mortar classroom, schools will witness the rise of 'flipped classrooms' leveraging blended online and offline instructions, where students watch video lectures at home and do their 'homework' in class. It offers a chance to get out of boring classes and offers real-life learning opportunities and diminish the gap between what is taught in the classrooms and the real-life workplace requirements.

With technology, students can be more engaged in the classroom in various ways.

The great digital divide

There is a huge digital divide in urban and rural schools. In a recent survey, over 75 pc of students are impacted due to the lockdown as they found hard to study online, over 80 pc students said they need handholding to shift from offline to online and over 25 pc said they need proper training to pursue education through online.

This is still a dream for the majority of students in India. Most of the parents in India cannot afford OTT platforms for their wards to study. However, a concerted effort can mitigate many problems.

Until now, most ed-tech products catered to tier 1 cities and children from the high-income segment, ignoring the majority of students who come from tier 2, 3 cities and rural areas. With more students enrolling from tier 2 and 3 cities, the crisis presents a perfect playground for



“

Bharatnet is connecting all the villages with high-speed broadband network. Part of the project connecting remote areas in North-East India is already complete. Ensuring digital connectivity, therefore, may be easier.

”

various companies to modify products, adapt and contextualise them as per the needs of different customers. Firms should therefore utilise this crisis to build the best possible evidence around learning outcomes.

Bharatnet is connecting all the villages with high-speed broadband network. Part of the project connecting remote areas in North-East India is already complete. Ensuring digital connectivity, therefore, may be easier.

The 2011 project to distribute cheap 'Akash' tablets to promote e-learning in villages was unsuccessful due to quality and procurement issues. The scheme can be revived in rural areas by the state governments. States like Tamil Nadu have started distributing tabs to students for studies.

Vernacular content

There are bigger problems to solve. Adapting to online education is easier for English medium students and teachers due to the ready availability of tools or content. The situation is opposite in vernacular languages that dominate the Indian school education scene. Only a few ed-tech firms provide vernacular content.

Quality of content

The quality of content is a bigger issue. Providing quality content is a major take for Ed-tech firms. There is no check on the quality of content provided by the platforms to students. **DL**

DEMYSTIFYING GAMIFICATION IN EDUCATION: BRINGING THE FOCUS BACK ON LEARNERS

Gamification has the potential of reinventing the very basics of teaching methods to make them more engaging and relevant for the learners and enable long-term learning says **Dr. Lalit Singh**, Managing Director, McGraw Hill, India and South Asia in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

We are living in the age of incessant technological breakthroughs, which is disrupting all aspects of our lives, including education. This fast paced disruption in the field of education causes shortening of the learning curve, thereby making it imperative for learners, instructors, education companies as well as academic institutions to constantly rediscover and re-educate themselves to be able to survive.

There has been a big shift in pedagogy and the way content is being created, packaged, distributed and consumed. However, the sheer speed of such changes in education sector is the most challenging disruptor. For example, while it took a couple of decades for Radio to gain popularity, the same happened in 10 years for TV, three years for the Internet, a year for Facebook, and a couple of months for WhatsApp. These all are media for content dissemination and the accelerated pace of their popularity is a good proxy for the accelerated pace of change in the way modern learner learns.

Modern pedagogical paradigms and changing trends in education, reinforced by use of technology and digitization, create an unsaid compulsion to use new approaches and techniques to implement active learning. However, one aspect of learning that has and will always remain relevant, despite all technology disruptions, is ability to relate to the content. Benjamin Franklin once famously remarked, "Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I will learn". In a way, this was, is, and will always remain the central pillar of any meaningful teaching methodology – whether it involves technology or not! Gamification is something that many believe is the key to successfully blend these changing trends in the ever evolving pedagogical paradigms.

Gamification in Education

Gamification has the potential of reinventing the very basics of teaching methods to make them more engaging and relevant for the learners and enable long-term learning. It is a brilliant way to be a part of the digital reality and enmesh it with meaningful learning. Gamification, by definition, is the use of game mechanics and elements in the learning process to create a more engaging environment. It also includes processing the available information on students' learning behaviors and tracing their progress to arrive at tangible learning outcomes.



Dr. Lalit Singh
Managing Director, McGraw Hill, India and South Asia

The basic idea behind any game is to achieve a specific goal (to win, to move to the next level or to score points) in the presence of multiple obstacles with varying degrees of difficulty. This is what education aims to accomplish as well. However, the central issue of concern with modern education is the lack of engagement and motivation which makes the learners turn to their smartphones and other gadgets which they look up to as their instant source of information and knowledge. What learners look for is often not found in classroom lectures (even the most gripping ones) and rote textbook learning, which are still endorsed by a large number of educational institutions. This is exactly where gamification can fill the gap.

Gamification in learning focuses on the art of creating a learner-centric teaching environment. It also enables learning beyond the convention by creating “do-it-yourself” tasks which are conducive to development of key skills. Teachers must learn to be facilitators and should utilize these tools to nurture communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity among the learners. For Gamification to be effective, the learning objectives of the game should be clear, the profiles of the participating learners should be carefully defined, the game should be able to induce a sense of competition and active participation among the learners, and finally the game tool should have the ability to deliver measurable outcomes for the learners.

How to meaningfully incorporate Games in Education

In order to meaningfully gamify the learning process, course content must be built keeping the learner's needs at the center. It is important to make the learners understand that their true potential is unknown and they can achieve anything when they work with passion, effort, and practice.

Course creation should follow a systematic process to drive the desired behavior among the learners. This process can be broken down into 4 steps, repeated over and over again with collected experience and feedback:

Step 1 – Understanding the Target Audience

To begin with, we need to understand who the target learners are, what is their current level of understanding, what are their specific learning needs and their specific challenges. This, of course, includes an understanding of the pain points in the current education system also. The pain points of their existing learning system could range from availability of technology infrastructure, motivation, engagement and skill level of the teachers, learning environment at the institution and homes, and the very nature of the course in question.

Step 2 – Defining the Learning Objectives

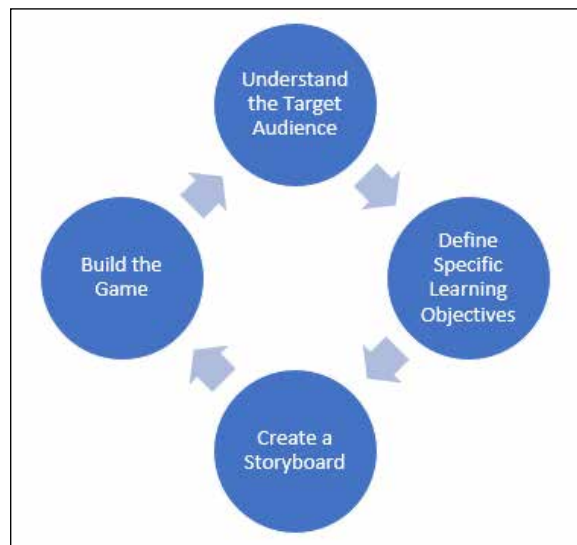
Once we have developed a good understanding of the target users, the next important step in the process is to define specific, achievable and measurable learning objectives for the target users. For example, a good learning objective for a game on Class 6 Mathematics could be to help the student achieve better understanding of principles of multiplication. While for a student of computer science engineering, the learning objective can be as simple as writing effective algorithms to optimize the code.

Step 3 – Creating the Storyboard

Now, the learning objective has to be broken down into smaller elements, which, when put together in a logical order, will help the learner reach the overall goal. These elements, in our example, could be reading about various ways to multiply numbers, solving some simple sums, interpreting some word problems and understanding the relationship between multiplication and division. And for the aspiring computer science engineer, it can be elements like effective use of flowcharts and modularity of code. All these elements of the story then need to be stitched together into a nicely flowing story to keep the users engaged while they play and learn.

Step 4 – Build the Game

The last step in the process is to add interesting gamification features to the story to let it unfold for the user. It includes constructing



an entire universe of learning with a range of activities that lead up to the final objective while building a strong sense of competition and/or achievement for the learners. These elements can include achiever's badges, simple time restrictions, levels, virtual goods, cooperation and teamwork activities, etc. Irrespective of the elements used, in the end the game has to create a sense of winning, reaching a goal or accomplishing something for the learners to stay engaged.

Using such elements helps provoke different reactions from the learners. For instance, to complete a certain level, a student may have to acquire and apply certain skills. However, if the stage is tedious and wrought with obstacles, learners might feel discouraged at the onset itself and may need some social elements to make through, like communication, teamwork, community building, etc.

For learners to be pushed to consecutive stages, it is important to ensure that they are repeatedly motivated with bonus points, winning opportunities, or any other element of surprise and excitement that will want them to come back despite the challenges. The learning program shall surely have an edge if it allows learners to participate at different times with a leader board that refreshes on a regular basis. This avoids the feeling of not being able to catch up and creates a sense of hope and motivation to contest again with the aim to lead.

The ultimate goal is to design the program with a perfect understanding of the overall objective so that each element can make the requisite contribution to the global aim and lead to the desirable, measurable outcome. However, like with any other process, the process of building an educational game is also an iterative one. The feedback from the learners who have used the application is of paramount importance and should guide revision and further development of the game.

In the end, it would be apt to conclude that real-time, long term learning takes place when technology is seamlessly integrated into the learning process, keeping the learners' core needs at the center of innovations, rather than treating technology as an add-on or an after-thought. The seemingly evolving landscape of digital learning has to blend within the existing landscape of education. **DL**

EDUCATIONISTS CALL FOR USE OF TECHNOLOGY WISELY IN SCHOOLS



With Coronavirus taking toll on the education sector, the schools, colleges and universities are closed for indefinite period. To tackle the crisis, educational institutions have adopted online teaching. Technology has come to the rescue for education sector. But as the educationists believe that learning should not stop, hence physical education has moved to the virtual world.

Elets Technomedia in association with digitalLEARNING Magazine has organized a webinar on "Can COVID-19 situation be helpful in reshaping school education". The webinar was attended by some eminent speakers from the education industry.

Speaking over the issue, Roshan Gandhi, Director of Strategy, City Montessori School said, "Schools will be the last thing to come back to normal and must prepare for the worst situations. We have to learn a lot of from the ongoing crisis. From now, technology will be a crucial part of education sector."

He also said, technology can be used for schools in any given situation. It is difficult to get 100 pc attendances in online classes. It's a huge question how much students have learnt during online classes.

Gandhi also said, there are huge opportunities for schools in this crisis as apart from live classes technology can be used for online assessments, feed backs and personalized learning.

Kanak Gupta, Director, Seth M. R. Jaipuria Schools said, "The pandemic has given us a change to use technology in a new way. Earlier, we have been trying to use blended learning and flip classes in schools. We need to appreciate the parent in this crisis. Everyone has started taking online learning serious."

He also said the economy is a huge challenge for all of us and need to be handled with care. He even felt the world is not going come out of this crisis very soon.

Gupta also emphasized on making new policy for education sector post COVID-19 crisis as schools need clarity.

Speaking on the issue, Chandrashekar DP, CEO, Jain Group Of Institutions said, "The challenge is changing every day. Firstly we were looking to conduct exam but now we are facing new challenges. The big question is assessment of students. We don't know where it is going and what will be impact on education. This challenge will change in coming days. This is a wake up call for schools and need to prepare for such crisis. We need new policies for education sector."

He also said there are fewer opportunities and more challenges for schools. He also hailed teachers and said now they are tech savvy and can handle any situations.

Vivek Varshney, CEO, SpeedLabs, said "The schools will face challenges after the live classes. How to take care of other things? We are entering to a new age of learning as students are getting comfortable with it. The technology will play an important role in education from now."

He also said online classes are a necessity today but it's an inferior way of teaching. We need face to face classes and online classes cannot substitute physical schools.

Vivek also said schools have to think how to use technology for teaching and readiness will be most important to tackle the crisis.

He also said it's a big opportunity for new types of teaching and learning. Reekrit Serai, Managing Director, Satluj Group of Schools said, "It's difficult for everyone and we have to take cognizance of the situation. This is new new for us. The world has drastically changed in this crisis. Many schools have to adopt the new technology. If we want better future we have to change with the new world."

He also said, "The policy for education is different in every state as it's not centralized. We can ease off the pressure from staff and parents. We have assured all the parents that the syllabus will be revised after the school opens."

He also said schools must prepare for the worst and should emphasis on what to learn not how to learn for students. **DL**

Date: April 14, 2020

Innovation in School Education through Remote Learning

ELETS EXCLUSIVE | DIVYA LAL, FOUNDER & MD, FLIPLEARN EDUCATION: ONLINE EDUCATION WILL LEAD WAY IN THIS CRISIS

In the view of COVID-19 outbreak in the country, conventional educational systems seem to take the back seats. The schools and colleges are closed over the pandemic from mid-March.

The Ed-Tech sector is taking online education to the next level in India and growing at a rapid pace. The growing and maturing Ed-Tech industry encompasses technology that facilitates learning for kids and adults. That includes classroom assessment tools for teachers, reader-adaptive e-books and many more.

Speaking during a webinar with Elets Technomedia and Digital Learning magazine, Divya Lal, Founder & Managing Director, Fliplearn Education Pvt Ltd, said, "A new thing started in the education sector in the country. The purpose of live sessions must be done for human connect and doubt clearing sessions. There are a variety of things can be done by teachers through online learning. In online teaching, homework can be created for different sets of students."

She also emphasized on personalized teaching system for students and very user friendly.

She also said, "The idea of Fliplearn is to connect teachers and students. Our assessment platform is unique from others as we have teachers platform which no others have."

Fliplearn has made content free for schools and they cover ICSE, CBSE, and most state Boards also.

Divya Lal said they have content from Nursery to Class 12th and content for every school is different. They even provide online demonstrations for schools.

She even added, "Things are not going to be simple after July as many new education models are coming and online education will be a part of it."

Fliplearn not only have educational contents but also have gamified quizzes for students.



Divya Lal
Founder & Managing
Director
Fliplearn Education Pvt Ltd

digitalLEARNING.eletsonline.com

#ReinventEducation

#EletsWebinar

THE NEW EMERGING PERSPECTIVES #POST COVID'19



This global situation has caused concern to all the stakeholders in the field of education, as their prime objective remains, imparting knowledge with competencies; leading to wisdom says **Arti Chopra**, Principal, Amity International School, Sector 46, Gurgaon in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

The COVID'19pandemic has led to an unprecedented period of confusion and dread for everyone across the world, with the emerging global belief, that safety comes first, and money can no longer buy good health. The realization that has begun to seep in, is that the good habits like personal hygiene and social distancing with a concern for others can save many from becoming a Corona victim. The world community has unanimously committed to fight the battle against the deadly disease, which has impacted over 1.5 million, causing thousands to die already. As per a report published by The Economic Times, till date, over 1.5 million people had been affected by COVID-19 and about 80,000 people have died worldwide. As we know, the pandemic-driven crisis is constantly changing and countries are desperate to flatten the curve for COVID-19. Our Government and district administration has been working round the clock to reach out and offer safety and protection to the citizens.

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a concern for others can save many from becoming a Corona victim. The world community has unanimously committed to fight the battle against the deadly disease, which has impacted over 1.5 million, causing thousands to die already. As per a report published by The Economic Times, till date, over 1.5 million people had been affected by COVID-19 and about 80,000 people have died worldwide. As we know, the pandemic-driven crisis is constantly changing and countries are desperate to flatten the curve for COVID-19. Our Government and district administration has been working round the clock to reach out and offer safety and protection to the citizens.

This global situation has caused concern to all the stakeholders in the field of education, as their prime objective remains, imparting knowledge with competencies; leading to wisdom. Schools have been shut down, with the students depending only on virtual support, not only for academics but also for co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic raging across the world; parents are playing the part of "Teacher at home" for the homeschoolers, teachers are racing between running their own households and on-screen content delivery norms, students have extremely limited contact with friends and virtually no physical

activity and all known and recognized boards like IB, A-Levels, ICSE, CBSE, etc; have had to postpone or cancel examinations.

Most of the School Principals are concerned that though many fantastic resources are available to provide on-line guidance; like MS Teams, Google Hangouts, Zoom, Skype or Cisco Webex; there are not many that could mimic the nurturing environment of school, which provides multidisciplinary learning, instills inquisitiveness, encourages connections across different domains, helps in building a competitive edge and inspires ideas which help a child develop 21st century skills. Though a home-based tech-enabled learning environment is emerging, this contradicts the basic human need for being social by hanging out with peers and clinging to their mentors for emotional support. Amidst all this, expecting a parent to do multi-skilling to enable holistic development; without the coherent support of a school is simply beyond anyone's imagination.

Safe social distancing and self-protection are the new emerging life skills in the post-pandemic era, that shall certainly find their place in the school curriculum. Being driven by the motive of enhancing immunity to guard against the pandemic, people are finding a lot of truth in Ayurveda, naturopathy, yoga and meditation and eating right to foster immunity. Some natural immunity supplements include ginger, gooseberries (amla) and turmeric. Several herbs also help in boosting immunity like garlic, Basil leaves and Black cumin. Certain seeds and nuts like sunflower seeds, Flaxseed, pumpkin seeds and melon seeds are excellent sources of proteins and vitamins. Many of these immunizers are common ingredients in Indian dishes and snacks.

There are also certain advantages to the lockdown situation, like the optimism ushered in by the parents being able to give loads of time to their children, teachers creating many valuable e-resources, the boom in technological learning programs reaching out to all generations, the fostering of self-management instead of dependence on the domestic helps etc. Not only the learning programs but family meetings, neighborhood congregations, even wedding and other celebrations have moved to the virtual space; thus cutting down on travelling costs, wastage of time & fuel thus conserving valuable resources which has amounted to lesser pollution and more greenery across the planet.

This trying period has however, also brought issues and problems for which solutions are yet to be found. Not only is the economic recession a huge cause of worry, the unorganized sector is the worst hit. The problems faced by the teachers are generally, about disciplining the students during the on-line teaching and the writing practices because all the controls on most of the gadgets used for classes are as accessible to the tech savvy students. Some of the assessment patterns that our schools have been following do not have a parallel in the on-line learning mode or if they do; it requires the kind of competence that has yet to be achieved by the teachers.

The expected writing style while attempting subjective studies, as per the board standards in India, and practiced over the years, has so far used technology-driven solutions only as a classroom

teaching aids. Therefore, it is necessary to change the entire pattern of planning, curriculum delivery, recapitulation and assessments itself in case we wish to do justice to our students. Otherwise, on-line learning mode, especially up to secondary level, which is currently in practice during the lockdown period could be considered only as a stop-gap arrangement, till the situation improves.

We must embrace THE NEW NORMS that are essential for survival. Frequent washing of hands, keeping oneself masked, not touching the eyes and face, avoiding crowded places, maintaining social distance, sanitization of user spaces, etc are the new rituals that must be adopted. The students must be involved in dispensing information, creating new knowledge and be made accountable for their behavior during the on-line classes. The education patterns of assessments must include more challenges that could be addressed through open-book tests. The parent community must appreciate the way, schools are helping students come to terms with the changing patterns of learning, instead of raising unnecessary expectations about marks scored in the class tests. A change in perspective is required wherein every citizen acquires global values and checks his/her behaviors, to stop making a mess in someone else's life.

It is essential that all our senses be driven to fight against Coronavirus. Synergizing the strength of the 3 H'S; ie. head, hand and heart can act as a preventive measure-

- remembering (through your head) the social distancing norms and eating "right" to build up the immunity
- wash hands or sanitize all new things/places you get acquainted with
- infected people to remain in quarantined spaces; other to empathize with the ailing and express love for all in your heart, by following the prescribed regulations.

We still do not know, for how long this situation shall continue as there seems to be no coherent solution to beat the pandemic; offered by WHO except social distancing. In some schools of China where schooling has resumed after a long break, children are seen wearing headgears that automatically allow distancing from others of around 1.5 meters. Schools must prepare SOPs for running, with corona prevention in mind; to give confidence to the students to join back fearlessly. The teachers should continue to harness new skills that are very intrinsically required to conduct virtual teaching & learning platforms. Students should aim at taking up research-driven projects, deliberate & debate on important issues amongst themselves and their teachers and be creative in their thinking, writing and reading.

This is the time when we need to keep ourselves spiritually inclined, so that it would eventually help us to combat any new situation and build the resilience to embrace love and harmony. We have to embrace the NEW norms and evolve & emerge as stronger individuals, not only physically, but spiritually and emotionally too! **DL**

SUCCESS STORY OF GREEN FIELDS SCHOOL DURING THE LOCKDOWN

Our endeavour to facilitate the academic process while both teachers and students are under lockdown has reached new dimensions says **Mini Khanna**, Principal, Green Fields School, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Mini Khanna

Principal, Green Fields School, Safdarjung Enclave
New Delhi

Vedanta says, every experience of life is unique & has a learning for us.

In these times of turmoil, the duty and responsibility of a Principal primarily includes to bring in calmness in the minds of all stakeholders.

We were to begin the new Academic Year, 20-21 with great enthusiasm and planning. However, the unprecedented COVID-19 lockdown did not let our spirits dampen.

The students had to be engaged gainfully and positively with a new Learning- The Virtual.

Our endeavour to facilitate the academic process while both teachers and students are under the lockdown has reached new

dimensions.

Teachers reached into the homes of the students virtually and took the opportunity to connect with parents and students. There were mixed emotions as the new session was underway and all faced this uncertainty in the wake of what the whole world has been experiencing.

We at GFS, are dealing with the situation as it unfolds and taking learning forward.

Through optimum use of technology via E-learning which included PPT's, videos, modified lesson plans, YouTube, webinars etc. a concerted effort was made.

Our teachers are working tirelessly and making best efforts to take the curriculum forward under the given circumstances.

Participation and follow up action by both, parents and students at home is an important factor to ensure successful implementation of E-learning.

Students are thoughtfully guided to follow a routine and see that it is adhered to.

The day begins by sending them the Assembly-virtually which covers Word for the day, interesting facts, riddles, health tips, news updates, exercises, yoga and music. The importance of staying positive, adaptable, determined and come out of this as more responsible and caring citizens was emphasised upon.

Students made handmade masks, were given hand wash/ skipping/ push-up challenges and the videos were shared on the FaceBook page/ WhatsApp group of the school. Students remained motivated as all events and programs were conducted virtually.

Be it the Bhangra dance on Baisakhi or the Mother-Child dance on Mother's Day. The Meal Planning/ Home Science department taught students to prepare dishes and get involved in household chores- Cooking, cleaning, watering plants, washing and drying clothes to make them independent, active and responsible.

Family bonding was encouraged by sharing common interests with friends and relatives. These trying times for children is a great opportunity for imbibing the all-important Life Skills- what better time than this!

Stay Healthy, stay Safe !! **DL**

SOLAN PUBLIC SCHOOL INCULCATE LIFE SKILLS, CRITICAL THINKING WITHIN STUDENTS

With the usage, most of the teachers overcame the fear and hesitation, and used tools effectively says **Preetee Kumar**, MD, Solan Public School, Solan, Himachal Pradesh in a conversation with Elets News Network (ENN).



Preetee Kumar
MD, Solan Public School, Solan, Himachal Pradesh

History of Solan Public School and how it is different from other schools ?

Solan Public School does everything incapacity to give children the right foundation and a head start by instilling the right values in children and transforming them into lifelong learners. By exposing students to Arts, Sports and co-curricular activities, we inculcate life skills, critical thinking and intellectual curiosity within them. Solan Public School has extended the world-class infrastructure facility to the students.

How Solan Public School has handled the COVID crisis?

Solan Public School has taken many adequate measures to handle the Covid-19. The curb the spread of the virus, the school was closed when the lockdown was announced. It followed the Govt's directives and protocol. All teachers worked from home and conducted teaching through online mode and still continuing the hard work. Periodic maintenance, horticulture, etc was being done by limited staff. All

salaries of staff are dispersed through online mode.

According to a survey, only 8 pc school students in India have computers with net link, how has the school handled the crisis, especially in rural areas?

We had no such problem as Solan is a well-developed Town with wifi and net links and all the students has the necessary infrastructure at home too. With Digital India in the boom, there is good internet connectivity in the city.

Merely moving classrooms online would not mean effective remote learning. One-to-one interactions among peers and teachers are very important for learning, how will the school tackle the crisis post Covid?

The school took lessons for students through many online modes, one of them being through the ZOOM App. Since the App has all the features of video, text, and PPT along with the teachers' and students' screen presence, hence it was the best mode of knowledge transfer. There were also other modes where the homework and students' responses were corrected by the teachers through projects on a daily basis.

Alongside teaching, teachers are also mentored for honing their skills using online tools, through webinars, micro-teaching sessions, which was a compulsory part of their routine work throughout the day.

How will the school tackle ailing disparity in the virtual world could translate into widening educational inequalities among learners?

The old cliché "necessity is the mother of inventions". Before the COVID lockdown, one never imagined that technology would become the single largest tool to disseminate education. Many teachers were not familiar with it, but then it became necessary and hence it was made a compulsory part of the life for effective communication. With the usage, most of the teachers overcame the fear and hesitation and used tools effectively.

In a similar manner, there will be other avenues opened up as we cross each day, to tackle this new post COVID scenario. Truly speaking, we have to live with Coronavirus and carry on just the way we could move on with HIV or other dreadful diseases, whose cure is still pending. Nature will find its way and we will learn new and better ways of coping with the present scenario. We need to be positive and hopeful. **DL**

“THE SUCCESS STORY OF JAIN GROUP OF SCHOOLS DURING LOCKDOWN”

The change makers in this whole scenario are none other than teachers who were branded as Naïve digital Zombies by the whole Society, their quickness in adapting themselves to this new medium or platform is certainly commendable says **Dr. K. Lakshmi Rao**, Academic Director, Jain Group of Schools, Hyderabad in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Dr. K. Lakshmi Rao
Academic Director, Jain Group of Schools, Hyderabad

Change is constant !!

This adage is heartily absorbed by the Jain Group of Schools, without an iota of hesitation or delay. Thus, though the Schools have shut down physically, the learning never ceased ! The reason being the belief in the new adage “Survival of the Quickest” !

The smooth transition from physical classes to virtual classes became possible in our institutions due to the core philosophy of investing on the human resources. The teacher training being the crucial element in this new era, we have prepared our teachers well in advance, though it is an unexpected crisis. In fact, JGI has adapted to integration of technology since 2007. Now the platform has been moved from digital interactive boards to Google Classrooms, Google hangouts or ZOOM meeting rooms. Whatever may be the platforms chosen the learners are connected instantly as early as 23rd of March. The change makers in this whole scenario are none other than teachers who were branded as Naïve digital Zombies by the whole Society, their quickness in adapting themselves to this new medium or platform is certainly commendable. This adaptability of our teachers proves their quest for learners, irrespective of the location they are in. Thus changing the norms of classroom Pedagogy and Heutagogy to Andragogy, which focuses on self-directed learning - a key skill in 21st c and need of the hour.

My teachers have not only learnt to develop essential skills of

lockdown and virtual classrooms but also percolated down to their learners. The students started developing self-directed learning which made them assimilate the information shared by the teachers and there by applying them in day to day operations.

The best part is when no one thought of engaging Toddlers our teachers have engaged them online by conducting Gross motor and fine motor activities, art and craft, rhymes and so on with less stress on academics. Kudos to teachers as well as Parents for engaging kids below 5 years productively online for almost a month.

How was it Possible?

We followed 5 P formula.

- Identified safe Platform in addition to planning and understanding the learners.
- All the stake holders were prepared well to get adapted to this change. Teachers were attending virtual conferences parallelly while conducting virtual classes to their learners, Parents were informed and students were guided well.
- Practice sessions were conducted to teachers and constant rehearsals were organized to ensure seamless implementation of online classes.
- The relentless Practice with a cognizance for perfection made us absorb the system well to perform conducting the online classes uninterruptedly.
- Partnership between parents and school is crucial to make the learning more effective, hence we created broadcast groups through what's app and E-mail to strengthen the communication through newsletters. The learning objectives and outcomes were shared with parents and children well in advance to ensure proper guidance from the parents. Various mediums like voice messages, video & audio clippings were shared with all Parents to increase the bond between Parents and School as at this time of lockdown the contribution of parents is crucial in any child's learning.

Thanks to COVID-19 for making us unlearn, learn and relearn !! The school is now prepared for the new norm of redefining the school schedule as curricular activities are designed and scheduled as per the convenience and pace of the learners and also working on the online assessments to ensure continuous learning among all learners with a philosophy of “No child is left behind” **DL**

“THE HYDERABAD PUBLIC SCHOOL’S SUCCESS STORY”

Even students in remote areas attended our online classes as the tools being used were mobile-friendly as well as computer-based online tools, says **Dr Skand Bali**, Principal, The Hyderabad Public School, Begumpet, Hyderabad in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Dr Skand Bali
Principal, The Hyderabad Public School, Begumpet
Hyderabad

The Hyderabad Public School, a co-educational, day cum residential school established in 1923 with 5 students, has grown leaps & bounds to be one of the best schools in India and Telangana. Though it is one of the oldest schools of the state, it has always been at the forefront in providing world-class education with an excellent infrastructure, well-trained staff and a leadership team driven by its strong vision.

When the unprecedented COVID lockdown was declared mid-march and schools asked to shut down. We were yet to complete our 2019-2020 academic year. Just like all other schools, we were unprepared for this lockdown but eagles don't complain they are problem solvers and so are we!

We took this storm as a challenge to spread our mighty wings of learning and used the unseen current to soar to greater heights.

Our Teachers set the ball rolling by embracing e-learning techniques in a big way to ensure children do not lose their academic front. We reached out to the parents and students to join classes on mobile or computer. Simultaneously, our teachers identified topics from the content and recreated lesson plans to immediately provide online classes using zoom followed by google meet & Google classroom apps later. They also used many other

tools like Educational YouTube videos, video/presentations, etc. to make the sessions more engaging. Even students in remote areas attended our online classes as the tools being used were mobile-friendly as well as computer-based online tools and we completed all our sessions minimizing the disruption to the academic schedule and significantly increasing student engagement during the lockdown period before closure on 30th April.

Our highly enthusiastic team simultaneously prepared themselves for the next academic year by redesigning their lesson plans and skilling themselves with required skills to conduct online classes more effectively by attending various online works shops and also by a team with required expertise from the school itself.

Thus, we seamlessly adjusted ourselves to the new normal of remote teaching and learning.

Though we had our set of challenges as our school has students coming from all status of the society as we follow RTE rule to the “T” and we are a unique model of social inclusion. We are having both synchronous and asynchronous modes of lesson delivery, these recorded classes enable the student community to compensate for the frequent disconnection even from remote areas.

We are due to begin our new academic year for the middle, primary and pre-primary classes and we are all prepared to start from June 1st as per schedule. In a recent online staff meeting, we were discussing how effortlessly the online classes were conducted and we were pleasantly surprised by the positive participation from students making them more interactive and effective. We still miss our students in our school premises but as the health & safety of students has always been our first priority we are prepared to sail through the new normal of teaching online till the lockdown is completely lifted and schools open to receive students.

As every adversity comes with an opportunity, this adversity has certainly taught us one of the biggest lessons that “learning doesn't happen only in classrooms, but can happen anywhere anytime provided a right the environment is created around students with wholehearted efforts by teachers”

This adversity has brought all stakeholders responsible for the education of children –Teachers, students and parents closer than before. Lessons learned from this adversity are sure to stay in school ecosystems for times to come. **DL**

SSVM INSTITUTIONS' SUCCESS STORY DURING LOCKDOWN

SSVM CONNECTS STUDY FROM HOME – A PRODUCTIVE EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE

SSVM has created well-planned home engagement modules and online classes for all subjects, says **Dr Manimekalai Mohan**, Managing Trustee, SSVM Institutions with a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Dr Manimekalai Mohan
Managing Trustee, SSVM Institutions, Coimbatore

Amid COVID-19 outbreak, SSVM has begun the new academic session as scheduled, albeit digitally. The school started resorting to online classes, assignments and live courses for middle school, secondary and senior secondary students. Many tools and techniques are being used by teachers, such as live classes with students in attendance, recorded lectures, online worksheets, app updates. SSVM shares productive activities for students of Kindergarten to grade VII, which involve authentic educational online links, daily tips, fun quizzes based on vocabulary and mental Mathematics.

SSVM has created well-planned home engagement modules and online classes for all subjects. Students between grades one and seven are engaged with hands-on activities. Live lessons for grades X and XII commenced from the fourth week of March. After successful implementation, the live classes started for grades VIII, IX & XI and have fetched good results with positive feedback. The school conducted trial sessions and launched the teacher-student model in sizeable ratio. Teachers are keeping track of daily attendance, classwork, homework and assessment. The existing school app portal and class groups are

being used to share worksheets, activities and fun games with students at all levels. Students used this opportunity to connect online, and clarify doubts, interact with teachers, access resources shared by the teacher during individual sessions.

SSVM students are following a daily timetable of three to five hours of home study according to their class levels. The timeframe includes enhancing practical communication skills, experiential learning, and doing activities designed as self-learning lessons, webinars and assignments posted on learning portals. Online learning is the better way to educate learners, who otherwise would have suffered immensely because of the mandatory closure of schools to maintain social distancing because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

With this increased focus on digital learning, students will be accessing subject-related content online.

Why Online Classes?

- To offer highly effective as well as a relaxed learning environment.
- Parents get a chance to observe the child's home-learning process.
- To offer complimentary interactive reinforcements that allow students to study and work at their own pace.
- To provide flexible but systematic scheduling.
- Available in any location, with an internet connection; students can attend using their devices (e.g., computers, tablets, etc.)
- Direct teacher and parent feedback
- Parents become mentors at home for students and monitor them and get them complete the work assigned to them.
- Teachers and parents work hand-in-hand toward every child's progressive learning journey.

"At SSVM, we believe that nothing should disrupt education. So, we decided to initiate by leveraging technology to transform our teaching-learning process and provide continuous learning to our students. Faith and comradeship – the keystone of our educational ethos – and the strong parental partnership has enabled us to help the students to learn online during the COVID-19 lockdown."- adds Dr Manimekalai Mohan, the Managing Trustee, SSVM Institutions, Coimbatore & Mettupalayam

To conclude, the biggest priority for school and parents is keeping students safe against COVID-19 but not away from learning. Hence these online classes provide every student with a continuous learning process. **DL**

PROMETHEUS SCHOOL APPOINTS RASHIMA VAID VARMA AS THE PRINCIPAL OF SECONDARY SCHOOL



After an extensive search, Prometheus School has appointed Rashima Vaid Varma as the Principal of Secondary School. The appointment will be effective from May 18th 2020. Rashima has around 20 years of valuable experience in teaching as well as leading in varied roles in the field of international education.

Rashima started her career in the corporate world after completing her Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) in International Relations from Jawaharlal Lal Nehru University. However, she soon realized her passion for teaching and joined The Shri Ram School and later moved to Pathways School, Gurgaon, as a French Teacher.

Her repertoire of engagements includes:

- An IB French Teacher in both MYP and DP
- An IB examiner in French for both MYP and DP
- Spearheading the MYP authorization at Pathways School Gurgaon, as the IB MYP curriculum coordinator
- Head of School at The Ardee School, New Friends Colony.

Her rich experience in varied teaching and management capacities and in-depth understanding of the administrative intricacies in an academic setup will certainly give Prometheus School Noida, the right leadership and steer, in its journey to becoming a 21st century ready educational institution.

Mukesh Sharma, the Chairman of the School stated "Rashima is a well-established name in the educational circle. We are very excited to have her join the team, especially in the current times that call for undaunted leadership, visionary thinking, focused, result-oriented,

and creative mentoring, that looks at not just the short term way out but the long term positioning with the right balance in human connect. We strongly believe Rashima will lead from the front on all of these and more"

Rashima Vaid Varma added "I am a strong believer that each student and individual has their own pathway to success. Times, when there was one specific formula to succeed, are long gone. The current situation is calling for a strong change in how and what we understand about education. I believe that the world's current climate is a perfect opportunity to re-imagine learning. I look forward to creating synergies with the visionary leadership, experienced faculty, and the supportive parent body of the Prometheus School to enable us to create imaginative spaces where every child can carve their own path to success. " **DL**

ASPAM SCOTTISH SCHOOL'S SUCCESS STORY DURING LOCKDOWN

The whole process of online classroom teaching required a lot of forethought and had to be initiated to facilitate learning for our students, ensure their safety during these exceedingly challenging times and simultaneously make sure that there is no lockdown in 'teaching – learning' process says **Meenakshi Zarabi**, Principal, ASPAM Scottish School, Noida in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



"Online learning is rapidly becoming one of the most cost-effective ways to educate the world's rapidly expanding workforce."

Not many of us envisioned such momentous transferal in the teaching –learning process, i.e. from real classroom scenario to virtual classrooms and adopt and adapt to the non-traditional yet innovative way of teaching by incorporating technology into learning. This technology is now seamlessly integrated into our curriculum and should be viewed as an add-on and not as an afterthought.

The whole process of online classroom teaching required a lot of forethought and had to be initiated to facilitate learning for our students, ensure their safety during these exceedingly challenging times and simultaneously make sure that there is no lockdown in 'teaching – learning' process.

Thus started demo conferences with teachers where they were trained by the school's IT team on the usage and integration of online tools with teaching along with sessions with parents and students to equip them with the basics of attending the cybernetic classes. The students were also trained on prescribed netiquettes such as:

- Hand raise
- Unmuting the mikes
- Turning on the video
- Turn taking

Usage of various online tools like padlet, quizzes, screen sharing with power point presentations and audio-visual aids, demonstrations, whiteboard teaching, discussions has ensured maximization of student participation in the learning process. Thus, these online tools have supported in mapping students' learning outcomes to their actual achievements by the way of differentiation, plenary and feedback in the form of assessment for and assessment of learning and thereafter devise methods to fill in the learning gaps. Extended learning tasks and assignments further help the students to reinforce their concepts.

We have also initiated online teachers' observation as peer and collaborative observations yield its greatest benefits of sharing instructional techniques and ideologies between and among teachers with high quality feedback and support tools to enable them to improve their online instructional practices and facilitate students' academic success in particular.

An online Parent teacher meet was also organized to enable interaction between parents and teachers for implementation of remedial and diagnostic recommendations. Periodic assessments and Interventions are also undertaken to assess students' learning accomplishments.

Thus the present online sessions besides enhancing academic attainments of the students will also inculcate in them self-restraint, netiquette, understanding and using the new technology with aplomb. **DL**

DARBARI LAL FOUNDATION WORLD SCHOOL'S SUCCESS STORY DURING LOCKDOWN

DLF World School is constantly redefining the role of a teacher to a facilitator and now a coach to articulate a vision for rearing experiential thinkrooms in a virtual setting says **Dr. Mrignaini**, Executive Director, Darbari Lal Foundation World School, Noida in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Dr. Mrignaini
Executive Director, Darbari Lal Foundation World School, Noida

In a matter of no time, the corridors have fallen silent, dining areas lie abandoned, and no more the sounds of laughter emanate from the playgrounds. The Covid-19 pandemic has left the schools bereft of the presence of the students. The pandemic is a vicious storm and we are travelling on different boats, where each boat presents its own set of challenges. As a collective, what we need to do is to open our minds as we navigate this pandemic.

Even as the world battles the crisis with lockdown and we face an unknown, unseen and unpredictable future that is going to require problem-solving and innovative thinking, educators at Darbari Lal Foundation World School, Greater Noida have taken up a challenge to quickly put the systems in place and have smoothly transitioned from in-person to remote learning with the same exacting standards.

The core of our school's implementation plan in response to trying times has been to plan for quality, flexible and sustainable learning options which includes the

- Readiness for e-learning,
- Professional development of teachers in the e-learning environment,
- Designing 21st-century tool kit based upon synchronous and asynchronous instruction.
- Conducting creative online assessments,
- Emotional well being of students teachers and parents
- Most importantly using technology to the advantage of the

unique learner in each Delfite.

Having realized the purpose of providing learning continuum, DLF World School auditioned the available online resources accessible to parents through an online parental survey. Google Meet and Zoom have been the platforms identified to put the collaborative classrooms in place to deliver high quality, engaging learning experiences for all our students. Teachers are motivated to build expertise in online learning design by accessing external knowledge through webinars, expert talks, MOOCs and online trainings. This endeavour is helping them to create a repository of online pedagogical and assessment tools aligned with the 21st-century skills. These technological tools like Podcast, Flipgrid, Kahoot, Adobe Spark, and Quizlet are enhancing the learning experiences of Delfites enabling them to sync with the vision statement of the school to create caring courageous and concerned citizens of the world, for the world. A smart and dynamic curriculum is the best investment educational stakeholders at DLF World School are making to prepare students for the foreseeable future. The school has created a weekly learning schedule for students divided into morning and evening cycle based upon synchronous and asynchronous instruction through numerous digital resources. With the academic year moving online due to the spread of COVID 19, one question has been in the mind of every student, parent, and teacher: What about assessments as school closures are prolonged? Teachers of DLF World School have explored alternate assessment tools like Open Text Book Assessments, Art Integrated Assessments, Interdisciplinary and Flexible assessments to name a few. These innovative strategies have enabled the teachers to map the comprehensive detailing of each and every child in a flexible environment. Important National and International days are celebrated through virtual assemblies to foster emotional well being at this need of the hour. Online Parental surveys are conducted to seek feedback from parents from time to time. These ongoing conversations help in developing healthy relationships and opt for a feasible, inclusive, and empowering protocol for engagement with students. Making this lockdown period constructive by undertaking different activities with the best possible use of technology is a challenge. However, a digitally smart school leader with kindness and empathy at heart can marshal the entire school community to make this transition smooth and purposeful. School leaders have an unmissable opportunity to unleash the collective talent of teachers, students, parents to find a magic formula for helping each child post-pandemic. **DL**

INNOVATIONS CAN BRING NEW DIMENSIONS TO EDUCATION SECTOR

Creative videos, Voice messages, colourful pictures, interesting presentations etc became the daily chore of our teachers. Students' response was also very overwhelming, says **Shalini Tewary**, Principal, Raj Kumar Academy, Lucknow in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

A sudden lockdown announcement at first perturbed us but as a school head, often sudden announcements have made us accustomed. As report cards were prepared, teachers had all feedback from their students. Parents were communicated through Whatsapp groups made by our teachers in a record period of 2 days.

Book lists were too posted on these groups. Now came, the Herculean task, from where the Parents or Teachers, who too were locked up, access the Coursebooks. Fortunately renowned publications like Macmillan, Ratna Sugar, Edutree, Oswal etc came up with their online publication of the Course books. Then began a phase which no one had ever thought of. Creative videos, Voice messages, colourful pictures, interesting presentations etc became the daily chore of our teachers. Students' response was also very overwhelming. Parents who were not a part of Digital World too tried hard to become a part.

The entire Raj Kumar academy was digitalised. Surprised were we when defaulters of last session inquired for fee deposition. So the result was even fee collection started online. Our school majorly caters to average families. So this was a little surprise for us.

All creative heads started thumping. Dance teacher Ms. Bhatia came up with her dance videos and online teaching of dance, Music maestro Mr. Ayush started giving online classes for piano, guitar and Youtube too. French and Performing arts teacher Ms Pooja entertained all by her short films with meaningful messages, Mr. Sushanto another versatile teacher shared all innovative ideas for betterment of these classes.

Who says age is a bar, our senior teacher Mr. Pandey took up the challenge of bringing all senior teachers and students in this world of digitalisation. Our PET Mr Vinod took up online Yoga classes. All week the teachers worked much beyond their school hours. Working hours became just double or more than the time they were giving in schools.

Sundays too were preoccupied for them but we all gave relaxation to the students. In came Dance, Music and Yoga with Raj Kumar academy Story StoreHouse for Pre Primary and Primary students and Raj Kumar Academy's Lexicon for Junior students. Where stories were moral based, Lexicon was a Vocabulary and



Shalini Tewary
Principal
Raj Kumar Academy, Lucknow

Pronunciation building exercise. Both were taken up by me.

Connecting with my students sitting at home was a very fulfilling experience for me. Mobiles meaningfully became our true friends. Admissions are happening online. Queries of parents are entertained through WhatsApp. Calls are a whole day routine. My PA Mr. Jeetendra's house has become a call center. My phone number is in reach of all parents. I have termed my staff as RKA Heroes. My Parents are Energetic and students Enthusiastic. To sum it up with lockdown how busy we are, how 50 days have gone, we know not. Hats off to my teachers and kudos to my students with their parents. **DL**

SUCCESS STORY OF MIT-VGS (CBSE) LONI -PUNE DURING LOCKDOWN

Even parents had online practice sessions with teachers to understand the issues faced and make them comfortable with this different methodology before starting online classes for the students in April says **Dr Sandeep Khanna** in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

MIT-VGS (Vishwashanti Gurukul School)Loni, PUNE is a co-educational, day school, situated in picturesque 125 acre historic Rajbaug Campus at Loni-Kalbhor-PUNE .Affiliated with CBSE, the school has been continuously rated amongst top schools in Maharashtra/Pune under the guidance of our Hon. President **Dr. Vishwanath Karad** and mentorship of **Prof. Swati Chate Karad**, Executive Director, MIT Group Of Institutions, PUNE.

The outbreak of Corona virus has forced every one, our students, teachers and parents to stay at home. Educational institutions are closed, but that does not mean a break from learning. We at **MAER's MIT Vishwashanti Gurukul Schools** have been doing our best to keep the students busy and meaningfully engaged by conducting online sessions and various learning activities that can be done at home during this quarantine.

All teachers were given Online practice sessions by the Principal and experts. Even parents had Online Practice sessions with teachers to understand the issues faced and make them comfortable with this different methodology before starting Online classes for the students in April.

Teachers of all MIT VGS group of schools, spread in 7 different cities of Maharashtra , have been encouraging their children to study at home in this crucial time and voluntarily reaching out to them via What's-App groups, sharing e-newspapers, e-books, online assignments, Handouts, Fun games, puzzles and conducting many more learning activities to keep them engaged in the teaching-learning process.

Teachers have been using Zoom and other applications like Google Meets along with school's ERP modules, where they can conduct online meetings with parents and online classes for the students. Also, they have been sharing educational videos, slides, white board, different props, Animations, demonstrating online experiments and other resources that are available at home, so that children use this lockdown period gainfully.

Our schools celebrated '**Earth Day**' on 22nd April in an innovative and unique way , when the students were asked to be a part of the noble cause by sowing a seed or planting a sapling at home and nurture the same to the fullest. They also took an oath



Dr. Sandeep Khanna

Principal, MIT-VGS (Vishwashanti Gurukul School)-CBSE, Loni, PUNE

(Having experience of over 28 years, Dr Khanna was formerly associated with famous "Welham Boys School" and "The DOON SCHOOL, Dehradun" for almost 21 years. He is recipient of Dr.S.Radhakrishnan Award ,Best Principal Award by SOF, Avantika-Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam Award and National BOLT Award by AIR-INDIA to name a few)

to save the Mother Nature on this auspicious day.

Also, School has organized an 'Online Inter-School Dance, Music and Art competition' - "**INSPIRE' 2020**" for Pre- primary / primary kids where they have been participating enthusiastically from different schools of Pune by sharing their creative work, pictures, videos etc. All students will receive an E Certificate as a token of appreciation for their efforts during this period. **DL**

LEAP YEARS PRESCHOOL SUCCESS STORY DURING LOCKDOWN

Early education plays a critical role in shaping a child's learning abilities and adult personality and any disruption during this phase is not desirable says, **Pooja Dugar**, Founder & Director, Leap Years Preschool in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

Pooja Dugar
Founder & Director
Leap Years
Preschool



The Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown hit us just when we, like all schools, were preparing to start the new academic year. This uncertainty could have jeopardised the learning process and that was a serious concern. Early education plays a critical role in shaping a child's learning abilities and adult personality and any disruption during this phase is not desirable. Three basic factors motivated us to innovate.

Firstly: The children at Leap Years Preschool are aged between 1.5 to 5 years. During normal school functioning the curriculum is structured to help direct and indirect learning through experience-based lessons and self-exploration. With long gaps, the child's learning experiences would remain disconnected.

Secondly: Parents of older children face tough competition when they start applying for admission in the big schools. Their parents worried that the child would lose out because of this unexpected break in the learning and preparation.

Thirdly: We believe that the company of their teachers and friends plays an essential part in the nurturing and development of children.

We took a bold and unprecedented step and started our new academic year as scheduled through virtual classes. To sustain and enable continuity, we created a 'Blended learning approach' where the teachers guided the virtual classes, also guiding parents with a structured home-schooling curriculum.

Developing and implementing this unique 'Blended Learning approach' required a lot of hard work and inspired efforts by the teachers and staff.

- Training programs for teachers and parents to develop familiarity and comfort with virtual learning
- Developing online session content for teachers

- Modifying lesson plans for parents to home-school their children.
- Make sure that resources and aids to homeschool the children are available at home
- Ensure technology used was user friendly
- Work with open lesson plans which allows the teachers to collaborate

We had a bit of advantage as well. We use a parent interaction app at Leap Years for teachers to share daily activities and lessons with the parents every morning. The new content was uploaded on this app while online classes ensure we stay connected.

Undoubtedly, brick and mortar classrooms have distinct advantages. However, our ability to leverage virtual education provided advantages and enabled us to ensure that learning was uninterrupted during this unpredictable time. It has helped families structure their day and in a routine. The children get to e-meet their school friends, interact with their teachers, enjoy virtual circle time learning new facts, singing rhymes, and listening to stories. All this helps them to stay connected and continue learning. Once the school reopens, our children won't be burdened with unending homework and curriculum. They will be able to move forward seamlessly without the separation anxiety that tends to create problems during such disruptions.

Feedback from parents are that our 'Blended Learning Approach' for homeschooling has helped them bond better with their kids and they are reliving their childhood through this. We are delighted. Though we realise this maybe the starting of the new normal and we are committed to keep innovating and nurture the children with love **DL**

THE SUCCESS STORY OF ADITYA BIRLA EDUCATION TRUST SCHOOLS DURING LOCKDOWN

In our quest to make life normal for all our students, we made sure that we followed the school routines as much as possible says **Surabhi Goel**, CEO, Schools, Aditya Birla Education Trust in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

Lockdown...

This word has changed the world in a short span of time. This holds true for the education world too. Well, as a school we always have a 'Plan B'; ready for any contingency that we may face. However, this unprecedented situation threw us all in the wide sea of uncertainties, yet, the Aditya Birla family, both at the K12 international school, Aditya Birla World Academy and The Aditya Birla Integrated School, a school for children who learn differently have displayed exemplary commitment to their students! Our members of the staff simply outdid themselves and worked beyond the call of duty.

This has been a time for many firsts as this pandemic situation nudged us to venture into unexplored arenas and realise our own strengths. In our quest to make life normal for all our students, we made sure that we followed the school routines as much as possible. We started online lessons from the very first day of the lockdown. Here, I want to share about the several silent workers at both our schools.

1. The Events Team - We can proudly claim to be the first school to have had an online Graduation Ceremony so that the students do not miss out on anything. Despite being online, it was a heart-warming experience and the students will cherish this memory for a lifetime.

2. The teachers working with children with special needs - It has been exceptionally challenging. The therapist shared home program/modules with the parents. The teachers formulated academic portion in a quiz format and e-certificates were awarded to the students. The teachers also conducted a zoom session with the younger students to know how they are feeling. It was wonderful to know that our students were helping their parents in cooking, engaged in painting. Our school for special needs successfully conducted, for the first time, final exams online for both junior and senior school.

3. Counselling Cell - It has been a pillar of strength. A COVID Well-being Journal was shared by the School Counsellors with all students and parents which included games, activities, and mental health tips to keep that positive energy going.

Counselling services were opened out not just to the students and parents but also to the entire staff by creating virtual spaces where they were just a call away for students, parents and staff.

4. Outreach - The marketing team put up an array of Instagram activities like favourite movies to binge-watch, activities/books that make me happy, etc. engaging the entire school staff to create various videos to spread social messages like 'Stay Home, Stay safe.' The Student Council also organised a 'Game Day' for the student body.



Surabhi Goel
CEO, Schools, Aditya Birla Education Trust

Different games like Kahoot, Bingo, Quiz and Antakshari were played to keep the spirit alive.

5. Training - The Management is continuously providing the teachers with professional development sessions to equip themselves with online teaching and learning platforms. We have scheduled weekly Professional Development sessions where our Technology Coordinator and Integrator provides much-needed E-Learning support to the teachers by upgrading and refreshing their knowledge of various Educational Tools.

Different de-stressing activities have also been planned for staff to engage and stay connected informally like sessions of dance, cookery, flower making, etc.

There may be days when we get overwhelmed with this new normal. However, in these trying times, something magical happens and we know that it is all worth the effort! Our students have shared a video expressing love for their teachers and how much they miss them. Not just that, the Class Representatives shared a video of gratitude for the teachers. One of our school parents had conducted an online birthday party for their child and the children were asked to sing a song. All the children sang the school song which speaks highly about the bonding the children have with the school!

It is the time to connect, time to reflect and a time to savour. The connect that we have forged amongst us will remain intact in the future too. Well, I can say that we are still at sea... but, with our safety nets on. **DL**

INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION DURING LOCKDOWN

Renewed focus on remote classroom technologies and software upgrades, a surge in refresher trainings and Teacher orientation, and preparation for online classes helped in making a smooth transition says **Seema Handa**, MD, Group of EKLAVYA SCHOOLS in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

These are trying times with the whole world coming to a near standstill due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Nations have unanimously come together to acknowledge the role played by the frontline warriors – doctors, nurses, paramedics, policemen, sanitary workers, NGOs, and food and essential service providers – who have sacrificed their own safety and comfort for the larger good of humanity;

who have exposed themselves to risk so that we are all safe at home. But there is another set of unsung heroes who have been working tirelessly behind the scenes to safeguard the vulnerable and most precious members of our community, our children. These Teachers are working equally hard, by stepping out of their comfort zone and embracing technology, so that their students are positively engaged and taken care of. Small children do not appreciate the reality of the current pandemic and are ill-equipped to deal with the present lockdown and its implications.

These Teachers, too, are warriors in their own rights. They are safeguarding the entire future of our generations; ensuring that each concern is resolved, no matter how small, and the children emerge from this lockdown, stronger physically, mentally, emotionally and psychologically.

Best Innovative Measures

After the sudden curfew imposed in Punjab on 23 March, classes resumed online with hardly a gap at Eklavya and syllabus proceeded as per planning. This was only possible due to the young, enthusiastic and energetic Educators of Eklavya who are accustomed to 'change' and new challenges as part of daily routine. Technology has always been at the forefront of the teaching pedagogy at Eklavya and the move from physical classes to digital classes was seamless.

From early days of March we sensed the approaching changes and started preparing for them in advance. Renewed focus on remote classroom technologies and software upgrades, a surge in refresher trainings and Teacher orientation, and preparation for online classes helped in making a smooth transition. We moved quickly to establish communication and teaching online; through Skype to Google Classrooms, Google Meet, Grade Book to Whatsapp etc.



Seema Handa
MD, Group of EKLAVYA SCHOOLS

Challenge of Virtual Classes

Each disruption brings with it painful change, new learnings and ultimately growth and progress. At Eklavya the move to online classes was quick and smooth, but it was also a journey of delving deep into the digital world. Some educators were more comfortable with technology than others. Others were better equipped with devices and wi-fi connections than some. Strong cooperation, an open mindset, sharing of knowledge, and expertise carried along everybody on the journey.

The internet is a bottomless pit of vast resources and e-content.



Quickly we segregated the useful platforms, apps, educational content and resources required for effective online delivery. Sustained

communication with students and parents ensured course correction wherever required. Whether it was slower speed of curriculum delivery, or lesser homework, or more revision of concepts; teachers were quick to respond not only to classroom needs but also individual requirements. Independent parental surveys and feedback kept us all engaged and involved in the teaching learning process.

The challenge of virtual classes lies in its remoteness and social disconnect. Curriculum and syllabus are only one part of Education, what is equally important is the human interaction and life skills absorbed during time in class and in the sports grounds. Understanding these limitations Eklavya responded with a structured module on Value and Skill based education, graded as per the age

class of the students. A Home Period was created at the beginning and end of the online classes where each day some value / life skill is highlighted and discussed and Teachers and students dwell and share experiences related to the value. Student involvement in age appropriate household chores is encouraged as an essential life skill and active support to parent and family.

In addition, we brought online our robust Mentorship program by involving parents and students with a Mentor who extended interaction beyond academics, and focussed on personal challenges and support required by individual students.

Awareness Programs for Parents and Students

Eklavya believes in strong and regular communication across all stakeholders. Educators are available to resolve all issues, big or small, of parents and students. They keep in touch with parents and caregivers through telecalling, email and whatsapp. Frequent posts on our social media platforms and city notice boards keep us connected to our parents and also the larger local community.

We invite parents to be as involved as they desire in the daily e-classes and in the scheduled activities of the students. Yet it is our endeavour to make the students independent and self-reliant.

Online 'Home Visits' and family interactions encourage the

whole extended family to be familiar with the educator and actively participate in the academic journey of the student. Planned online

Parent Teacher meetings keep the dialogue open as the teacher discusses the monthly progress – academic, social, emotional, psychological and spiritual.

Greater involvement of parents due to online and home based education has led to more stress and time pressure for the parents. Realising this Eklavya started conducting online monthly surveys to

understand the efficacy of the online classes and to adjust and realign the methodology keeping in mind the limitations and needs of the students and the parents. This helped to upscale the efficiency of the Teachers substantially and also improved the Learning outcomes of the students. The first online assessment was a challenge and yet a validation of our pedagogy. It was a learning curve for the educators of Eklavya.

We initiated a slew of online Workshops and Surveys to upgrade the technology awareness of the students and parents, and to overcome the new challenges thrown up due to extended use of devices and concerns about cyber security. The objective was a better grasp of the features of various platforms, apps and softwares. In addition, health and daily exercise, and safety and sanitation were emphasised by adding a small module on safe practices and Yoga exercises for greater focus.

Inspiration and Motivation

Eklavya has used unique methodologies to keep students engaged from a 'Household Chores Survey' to 'Home Task Fitness Champ'. These initiatives have helped to direct attention towards co-curricular and cross curricular areas. Similarly Art Integration and CBE initiatives and Learning Outcome projects of CBSE have further strengthened the knowledge delivery process.

To sustain the motivation of both students and parents we at Eklavya conducted online individual Parent Teacher meetings. These helped to bring a human touch to the detached and remote environment of online classes, and keep the students and parents engaged and motivated. **DL**

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF HYDERABAD AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING IN COVID TIMES

The clear message was to keep it simple, especially as we began to ensure everyone was learning, says **Dr Oli Tooher-Hancock**, Head of School, International School of Hyderabad in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

Our Story?

On Saturday March 14, International School of Hyderabad (ISH), held a mini closure-tournament for our Varsity Boys' Cricket and Varsity Girls' Volleyball Teams. All were disappointed as the girls were supposed to be traveling to Mahindra International School in Pune and ISH was to host the Cricket with the British School, Delhi, Mahindra IS and Stonehill, Bangalore, all part of a well-established activities league known as ISACI. We ended the morning of sports with the students, faculty and parents in a small gathering as we enjoyed Burger and Fries. The last thing I said was - See you all on Monday. At 4.00 pm that afternoon, we got the news that schools had to close down.

We sprang into action with a highly supportive Board and UK and US Consulate help as well as guidance from our trustee, ICRISAT (an international crop research institute, a not-for-profit organization under the umbrella of the UN and in whose grounds we are nestled). The Board agreed to teachers having two full days to prepare for online, Continuous Learning.

Our New Normal

We were fortunate in that we already had two learning platforms established: Google Classroom and Seesaw for our younger learners, the challenge was certainly Zoom, but teachers quickly became adept and all our teachers rose to the occasion and on Wednesday, March 18 Continuous Learning began at ISH with a mixture of Synchronous and Asynchronous, depending on age and subject etc; and using zoom as a communication tool.

The clear message was to keep it simple, especially as we began to ensure everyone was learning. In secondary we realised after three weeks, that too much mirroring of a regular school day was simply exhausting, so we reviewed the structure and redesigned daily blocks, to optimise ongoing energy and engaging levels. We ensured 'Office Hours' were built-in, enabling students to meet with their teachers individually or in small groups. We very quickly went to Zoom Pro which offered additional teaching and learning features and increased security.

As time went on, teachers became more sophisticated with Zoom..

Our Actions

- Regular surveys and checks to students and teachers asking input into the schedule and Learning Day.
- Thrice weekly communication from the Head of School to the Community



Dr Oli Tooher-Hancock
Head of School, International School of Hyderabad

- Regular Board meetings and Board Communication to the Community
- Mindfulness exercises and an emphasis on staying fit and healthy
- Provided forums for students faculty and parents to ask questions and provide feedback.
- Changed the nature of assessments to what we believe to be more authentic and meaningful.
- Support for faculty acknowledging their work and efforts.
- Modified Calendar. Gave up April break and had five, four day weeks in May to sustain energy and pacing to the end of the school year.
- Virtual events - IB Art Exhibition, Three-Way Conferences, IB and IGCSE Orientations and Grade 12 final assembly etc.

As our school year finishes on June 12

Our Tagline is 'Leading our own Learning' and has certainly come through loud and clear in every aspect of learning at ISH. GooooooooooooVipers!

Our Future

Of course, we are not sure what learning and schooling will look like exactly come August. But one thing is for sure, it will look different. We are excited by the change in approach and attitude to What is worth learning... and Why? The time is here and we embrace the change. **DL**

NAVEEN CHANDRA, ASST COLLECTOR CALLS TO IMPLEMENT DIGITAL EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS

The Coronavirus epidemic has created an unprecedented halt in the education sector. With the closure of educational institutions, the uses of digital learning platforms have surged. Digital learning in India is going to be the key face of future education. It is surprising to see how smart technologies are changing the overall educational framework in the country. The penetration of digital education into the rural market is evolving fast. Affordable high-speed internet and direct-to-device technologies are empowering rural students to study courses online and improve their skills and knowledge. The state of education in India is dismal, especially in rural areas. The sector is currently battling with grave challenges such as outdated teaching methods, shortage of teachers, inadequate student-teacher ratio, and insufficient teaching resources. In an exclusive interview with Sanghamitra Mohanty and Pankaj Samantray, Naveen Chandra, Asst. Collector & Asst. Magistrate, Malda, West Bengal presented his views on digital implementation in the education sector.

Naveen Chandra said "In Malda, child marriage is a major issue. We have started a project named "MaGiC- Malda Girls go Coding". The bigger challenge was from society, we had to convince the girls and parents for the coding classes. This project is running in every government school. The project will provide livelihood opportunities, skill development and empowerment to girls."

He also said a group of 30 girls consists of 8th and 12th standard, having zero experience of coding embarked on the exciting journey to learn the basics of computer programming.

He also said "Google will provide training to 42 computer teachers and will certify them. They would teach students of classes 4th to 8th, all of whom would also be certified. Most of the govt schools in West Bengal have computer teachers and labs for students and I had to only provide an internet connection to schools."

There is a huge digitalization in rural areas with the emergence of ed-tech platforms and the usage of smartphones. The computer classes are planned during break times so that students don't have to stay back after school hours. As there are many self-help women groups in the district, we have to create small self-help groups for coding and apps. Most of the govt schools in West Bengal have computer teachers and labs for students. The administration had to only provide an internet connection to schools, with a minimal expenditure of Rs 1500 for the project, he added.

He also said the govt schools have all the facilities for students and the project will change the image of govt schools across the country. He hailed the teachers and said they played an important role in this project. The facilities in govt schools are growing rapidly



Naveen Chandra
Asst. Collector & Asst. Magistrate, Malda, West Bengal

and with these trajectories, things will do well for students.

Naveen hailed many corporate houses for providing computers and projectors in schools to develop digitization in rural areas.

Over other implementations, he said there is a model to provide drinking water to every household, ensure education, solar lights and provide every possible govt support to the people. All the development carried in the district is done under the existing schemes.

He also said there are lots of aspirants for govt jobs but without any resources nearby they have to depend on bigger cities. To provide proper education, we have started a coaching center in the district and nearby students. The UPSC cleared officers will teach which can be helpful for aspirants.

He busted the myth over bureaucratic fraternity being pressurized by politicians. He said politicians always want new ideas so that development can be done in their constitution. There is no political pressure on IAS officers. The political fraternity always helps us and very supportive.

He also lamented the way govt officials' images are drawn with the general public. He said every govt official always tries to help the public. In the future, people will get their certificates at the doorstep. The govt will be at your doorstep as it is not feasible to address thousands of people.

Lastly, he said plan for the best but ready for the worst in life. **DL**

E-LEARNING NEED OF THE HOUR

To increase their exposure & boost their skill development, we conduct weekly Contests on social media platforms where children all across our 650+ branches participate says, **Amol Arora**, Vice Chairman and MD, Shemrock and Shemford Group of Schools, New Delhi in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

While the whole nation was in turmoil, trying to come to terms with the lockdown to contain the outbreak of Coronavirus, there was a burning question that was bothering us & millions of parents across the nation- How will the education, learning and development of children continue to persist in this hour of crisis? But we were certain about one thing that we must keep the wheels of our education system running.

SHEMROCK & SHEMFORD Group of Schools was started with a view to providing a stress-free & joyful learning experience to kids. So, how could we let the education of our students hamper now? That's how we came up with an idea to take everything online. The technology was always a part of our curriculum, but for the first time ever, we resorted completely to E-learning.

From classes and curriculum to the admission process and training, we digitalised everything. We made our digital platform & all other processes, easy & hassle-free to operate so that not only parents & students but also our school branches find it convenient & user-oriented. But we didn't want to limit ourselves to basic e-learning; we wanted to establish the same education culture that we had been following at our schools for all these years. So, we decided to go the extra mile!

We planned the schedules of children meticulously to unleash their creativity, nurture their family bonds, restore their healthy routines & make learning a fun experience. Today, we upload subjective lesson plans, family-time activities, concept-based activities, daily schedules, worksheets, multiple exercises & documents every week for different grades. On important days & festivals, we plan special activities for our students.

As a part of ShemTips, Mrs. Meenal Arora (Director) shares interesting tips and activities for children, throughout the week, to keep them constructively engaged and active. It's a big hit among students & parents!

We believe that a successful organisation runs on a strong foundation! And that's why from the very first day, we rendered full technical & academic support to all our franchisees. Mr. Amol Arora (Managing Director) has been conducting regular masterclasses and webinars for franchisees to acclimatise them to the new mode of learning. We have been providing weekly



Amol Arora

Vice Chairman and MD, Shemrock and Shemford Group of Schools, New Delhi

training to them in different areas & resolving any query they have, through video conferencing.

That's not all! Regular webinars for parents are also conducted to address their fears and doubts related to technology.

They make virtual classes interactive, fun & motivating for children through their engrossing styles & methods of teaching. Plus the exciting activities & content we have designed, complement well their painstaking efforts.

SHEMROCK & SHEMFORD Group of Schools has always tried to come up with innovative ideas to give children joyful learning experience. It is our visionary planning, persistence & collaborative team effort that has earned us the trust and respect of millions of parents. Initially, when we turned to virtual learning amid lockdown, we faced some teething problems as the whole nexus of more than 650 branches is connected with us. Our branches were new to this kind of teaching, they were a little hesitant but we were determined to carry the torch. And that proved to be a worthwhile endeavour for us! **DL**

THE SUCCESS STORY OF B D SOMANI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL DURING LOCKDOWN

The demand to focus on the needs of students, the capacity to engage students in their own learning, resilience, care and good planning all are constants says, **Dr Geoffrey Fisher**, Head of School, BD Somani International School, Mumbai in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Dr Geoffrey Fisher
Head of School, BD Somani International School, Mumbai

In education, something changes but others remain constant. In our move to online learning, many things have changed but a few have not. The demand to focus on the needs of students, the capacity to engage students in their own learning, resilience, care and good planning all are constants. In our transition, we were and continue to be guided by these key requirements.

Our successes come from the quality of our teaching staff, our student-focused approach to learning and from our willingness to evolve as circumstances demand. We were ready with 'what if' scenarios two weeks before we went on Spring Break in March. Our Secondary School teachers were asked to put plans in place in case of an extended lockdown. They were trained on

the Google Suite of tools to optimise their online classrooms. We also transitioned early to Kognity, a web-based application that supports preparation for both the IB and IGCSE curriculum. In Primary School, our teachers have conducted classes at different times with the whole class in attendance and sometimes with smaller groups. Many teachers also conduct one-on-one sessions with some students. Our teaching approach has evolved into a combination of the whole class and smaller groups at different times for optimum efficiency. In addition, all our specialist teachers – Hindi, French, art, theatre, music, Capoeira, IT, PE – conduct online lessons and activities in various formats.

Our school teachers have helped our students with their continued development throughout this period. Apart from live sessions, teachers have also given students a range of assignments, in curriculum and relating to the current circumstances. Students stay connected with teachers while also developing their skills of research and inquiry in a relatable context. Our learning approach has been to broaden our students' learning, not just in curricular terms but also life skills. In Primary school, because students don't have to worry about taking exams, they've been able to adapt better to a learning environment going deeper and wider into every topic. The submission of assignments has been flexible to accommodate complex household schedules. Our Secondary school students too are doing a fantastic job under the circumstances. We continue to maintain regular attendance and assessments and our students continue to impress us with their engagement, even under these trying circumstances. Our Student Council has also come together with ideas to continue to build a community with activities such as 'B.D. Bingo'.

All through the lockdown, our leadership team and Board has been meeting twice weekly to discuss any concerns as they arise, and this has resulted in a near-seamless transition to Distance Learning. At B.D. Somani, we believe teaching and learning are taking place all of the time and a school is not defined by only by the classroom walls. We believe this period of virtual education will help our teachers become more creative in evolving the future of education. **DL**

EUROKIDS GROUP:

PEER LEARNING THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY

Early-learning helps children to socialize and develop critical life skills that impact their future growth says EuroKids International's Co-Founder and CEO, **Prajodh Rajan** in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

Education sector is badly affected due to the Corona crisis, how are pre-schools affected?

As COVID-19 pandemic spread across the globe, most countries announced a temporary closure of schools. This impacted more than 91 per cent of students worldwide – around 1.6 billion children and young people, according to UNICEF. While the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been felt across sectors, one of the most vital areas that was impacted was early childhood education. Early learning helps children to socialize and develop critical life skills that impact their future growth. Given the background, pre-schools, particularly, have explored multiple innovative ways to stay engaged with their students virtually and continue with their learning. At EuroKids, we have ensured that we go beyond the curriculum to keep our students engaged through multiple activities. It is important to note that content for a pre-schooler has to be carefully designed keeping in mind the needs and the attention span of a young child. EuroKids has the distinct advantage of being a pioneer in the category and over 18 years of experience in engaging with children is one of our biggest strengths and as such this deep understanding of young children is reflected in all our new initiatives.

The Education sector has taken up digital platforms for students, have preschools adopted the ed-tech platforms?

Ed-tech has disrupted the whole education sector for quite some time now. But, in the wake of Coronavirus, the disruption is greater than before. This pandemic has taught everybody that if they have to survive, they have to adapt to the new normal. Pre-schools, too, are following the league. For example, at EuroKids, our curriculum team is sharing structured activities that parents can use to have a daily dose of engagement with the child at home. Each activity is designed to help parents drive the learning of new skills and ensure retention in the child. One of the main advantages of these modules is that it also assists parents in



Prajodh Rajan
CoFounder & CEO, EuroKids



out new modules for content delivery, designed to bridge barriers in technology and comply with the new social distancing norms.

Peer-to-peer learning is necessary for toddlers; will online education can provide effective learning?

In a traditional classroom setting, peer learning is a lot more forthright considering there is face-to-face interaction. Children mimic other children and adults. However, when it comes to online classes, the same cannot be said. So, it becomes more than important to foster peer learning in online classes, and we are working toward creating such modules so the children do not miss out on this important aspect of classroom learning.

Peer learning is an effective way to make learning interesting and teach students to develop an array of useful skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, delegation and the ability to share. Here, educators need to take additional effort to make the kids feel part of a community, while keeping them motivated and engaged.

As parents are worried about the safety of their children, how EuroKids is gearing up for it?

Parents are aware of the importance of social distancing even in a post-Covid-19 era. At EuroKids, we are already in the process of laying out plans that will include tailoring our pre-school operations, logistics of transportation, extra-curricular activities, etc. and should be able to develop a process framework that will be beneficial to all our stakeholders – students, teachers, and

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While scientific research on the psychological impact of a lockdown on children is still underway, the need to re-open our schools to lessen the disruption in learning for young children is widely established

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administrative staff at every school. We are closely following advisories on post COVID school opening scenarios in India and internationally to look at possibilities on how we can improve our safety benchmarks once we are ready to reopen our pre-schools going forward.

When do you think schools will reopen and will it affect the admission this year?

While scientific research on the psychological impact of a lockdown on children is still underway, the need to reopen our schools to lessen the disruption in learning for young children is widely established. Pre-schools offer a great opportunity for children to achieve milestones in their overall development, build social skills and learn valuable life lessons such as how to share, take turns, and inculcating values.

It is therefore critical that children go back to school, however, only when they're completely safe. Slowly opening schools in a controlled way will be of low risk to children's health and less risk to teachers. Schools can follow the guidelines issued by the health authorities and increase adoption of measures such as a strict hand hygiene routine for students, no entry of parents into school buildings, outdoor classes and a physical distance of at least one meter between two desks. We expect the government to make the decision as to the right time to re-open schools. We are also cognizant of any concerns that parents may have about sending their children back to school. We will only be able to comment few months later on the business impact of Covid-19. We're closely monitoring the situation and expect to see the results of our combined efforts towards continued learning soon. **DL**

MENTAL WELLBEING IS IMPORTANT FOR KIDS

The curriculum activities at our end are planned in such a way that some are student-led, some teacher-led and some are led by the Parents says **Preeti Kwatra**, Founder Director, Petals Group of Schools in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

COVID-19 pandemic has trembled the world, and everything has come to a screeching halt. Usually, preschool feels alive with children, singing out loud their morning circle time songs, has become ominously quiet. This pandemic has shut down preschool for an uncertain period.

After the school closure announcement in March, lockdown has worsened the situation in so many ways. Children are considered as most vulnerable to get the infection in this COVID 19 period. On the other hand, many preschools are running on the rental place, and most preschool owners manage their day to day operations through the student fees.

To do this, the School had to come up with a plan to respond to the transformation of preschool students:

1. Train the Trainer Programme- At the beginning of the lockdown with the help of Tech team of our preschool; we have planned and conducted training sessions for the Teachers to access the online classes for the students. The online classes engage developmentally appropriate, including physical development, as well as we, pay attention to mental well-being activities of the children.

2. Use of Technology and Special Programmes- Preschool children are too young to handle laptops or tablets or Parents mobile phones to be available for the online session. The curriculum activities at our end are planned in such a way that some are student-led, some teacher-led and some are led by Parents. Both Parents and Teachers are working together to develop life skills in the childlike rolling towels, helping in-home chaos, storytelling, flameless cooking, Theme based storytelling, and yoga.

3. Engagement with the students- The School has taken the initiative to engage the students with some fun activities like birthdays celebration of the students, sharing the experiences of online classes of the students on social media platforms; Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp Google doc, etc. The students created some corona journal to spread awareness about the COVID-19 in their own way.

4. Webinars session for Parents- Parents have become comfortable and adapted the situation, knowing the fact that they are not alone in this fight. The School has also conducted some webinars at National and International to engage the Parents for their mental peace. All the webinars are on different themes like Parenting, Emotional Intelligence, Rhymes and stories, puppetry, mental well-being during the lockdown, and how to engage children in difficult times along with Storytelling session by Simi Srivastava, Folk dances by folk fitness, Nutrition by the founder of fitter fly Dr Arbinder,



Preeti Kwatra
Founder Director, Petals Group of Schools

Cooking session by Chef Nishant Choubey.

5. Online Summer Programme- At Petals, we are all set to roll out our first Virtual Summer Extravaganza which has been curated keeping the engagements in this current scenario in mind. The planned curriculum for the summer camp emphasis more on interpersonal skills- considering how virtual introductions and code of conduct with etiquettes have to be, critical thinking, curiosity building, scientific skills etc are the activations planned for the summer camp for the age group of 2- 4years.

At last, virtual learning is going to reset the concept of education entirely, based on preparing for exams only. Now the Schools have adopted the new culture and programs in enabling personalized lesson charts which makes learning more interactive, fun and engaging. Schools have started focusing on co-curricular activities precisely. It makes the students more self-motivated to finish their work and stick to their routines. Undoubtedly, there is a discipline in children's work without any peer distraction. **DL**

ONLINE LEARNING IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN LOCKDOWN

Teachers, parents and students were trained to use the online teaching portal to its maximum potential says **Pratima Sinha**, CEO, DSR Educational Society, (Birla Open Minds International School) Kollur, Hyderabad in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

Sea Turtle ... WISDOM Travel at your own pace, stay calm under pressure, trust the flow, be comfortable in your own shell KEEP MOVING FORWARD

During these challenging times, amidst the worldwide pandemic of COVID 19, we didn't sit back but immediately swung to action. The first thought was focused on our students and their future, second on the staff members, to give them the right platform to enhance the teaching process and third with our parents to continue sharing the bond of trust.

Planning commenced for continuous education based on the situation, the need and the requirement. The curriculum was relooked into and tweaked for supporting online teaching. Simultaneously online portals were ascertained and cleared for being user friendly, offering good features and following cybersecurity norms. Teachers, parents and students were trained to use the online teaching portal to its maximum potential. The most exciting and exhilarating bit of the whole plan was ... everybody was working from home !! We came together but stayed apart physically.

The whole school community was on their Mobiles, iPads, Laptops, Desktop, Tabs and so on working round the clock to create and welcome E-learning process, which became the buzz word within no time.

Online teaching and learning have been a success in the school right from Kindergarten to Senior Secondary. One and a half months of regular teaching through presentations, videos, flashcards / teaching aids, augmented activities, worksheets and fun sheets has been smooth. Live Online Classes are being conducted not only in Scholastic subjects but also in Co-Scholastic subjects like yoga, music, dance and sports. Regular storytelling, mykesho and life skill sessions are part of the teaching. Teamwork and commitment has been at its peak. Right now recapitulation classes are going on as the students will be facing a diagnostic test in the first week of June. This would help the teachers understand whether learning has taken place in the right context or not.

A recent interaction with highly appreciative parents gave us the motivation and confidence that we are moving in the right direction. Our students are being supported and guided in the best possible



Pratima Sinha
CEO, DSR Educational Society, (Birla Open Minds International School) Kollur, Hyderabad

way.

All our Heads have been utilizing their time by keeping themselves abreast with new educational pedagogies and new trends by attending webinars. Connecting with each other, sharing best practices, guiding each other and generally getting to know each other better. Which was totally lacking during the normal time as we are all rushing against time.

For me personally it has been a jigsaw puzzle time and a roller coaster ride but I feel fresh and renewed as if I have ventured into the unknown territories but found and paved the right path.

Although COVID 19 was sudden, surged fast, affected all and created chaos. We were able to face the challenge and moved ahead with confidence, to create a success story for years to remember. The School stands tall and proud. Many worthwhile lessons have been learnt during these times.

Difficult Roads Lead to Beautiful Destinations. **DL**

BEST INNOVATIVE MEASURES TAKEN BY MBRS DURING THIS LOCKDOWN

The programme in order to train the teachers and bring the students on board was started as a pilot programme which covered general topics based on 21st-century skills-creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, life-skills says, **Dr. N. K. Dutta**, Founder & Principal, Miles Bronson Residential School, Guwahati in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

The news of the outbreak of the Novel Corona Virus in China and the dreadful nature of the epidemic was taking the centre stage of media during the later month of January of this year 2020. There was always a concern that this epidemic would spread far and wide and despite all precautions, on 30th January, 2020 the first case of COVID-19 was detected in India. The government in order to fight against the rapid spread of the deadly virus and to protect the citizens on 24th March, 2020 declared Lockdown 1.0.

In Miles Bronson Residential School (MBRS) we informed parents who were quite cooperative completed the Annual Exam smoothly and without any interruption of the Academic Calendar the school Academic Session was completed on the scheduled date of 21st March, 2020. All Parents and Guardians came to pick-up their children on 21st March, 2020 itself after the examination and all students left for home safe and sound.

With news coming of the rapid spread of COVID-19, the school took all preventive measures. The Founder and Principal, Dr. N. K. Dutta along with the Pastoral & Resident Medical Staff took preventive measures including personally handing over the face mask and advising to start for proper sanitization and hand wash.

Dr. Dutta had an intuition that the epidemic COVID-19 would stay for a long time and he made lots of studies and research to plan for online classes and meanwhile World Health Organization WHO had declared on 11th February, 2020 it COVID-19 as Pandemic which would stay for a long duration. So, Dr. N.K. Dutta planned well ahead to design a programme with teachers to start online programme for the students. Thereafter on 1st April, 2020, in fact MBRS is one of the first schools in this country to start online teaching and started the Pilot Programme from the 1st April, 2020 itself.

The programme in order to train the teachers and bring the students on board was started as a pilot programme which covered general topics based on 21st-century skills-creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, life-skills covering both basic and social skills like leadership skills, language skills, etc.

The success of the preliminary online pilot project gave impetus to start the curriculum-based E-classes from 20th April, 2020. Now this programme is conducted from 9:00 AM to 12:15 PM on every Working Day. On Monday we have started a very innovative E-Assembly where the whole school participates. Besides Web Conferences / Webinars, Revered Founder & Principal, Dr. N. K. Dutta



Dr. N. K. Dutta
Founder & Principal, Miles Bronson Residential School,
Guwahati

brought some unique and effective tools and resources online learning like FlippLearn, Khan Academy, Links from Khan Academy and many more. Besides praying and singing, we celebrate important and significant days by organizing online competitions like Essay Writing; Creative Writing; Art competition; Painting competition; Design and Craft, etc., on the basis of 17 Sustainable Goals from United Nations Education and Social Council (UNESCO). In addition to curriculum-based E-classes the generic classes for Wellbeing, Reading, Hobbies, Helping in Household Chores is conducted in continuum.

In the process, we are always continuing with regular Feedback from Students, Parents and Teachers and try to ramp up more and more features so that E-classes programme at MBRS is comprehensive promoting personalized learning thereby setting a benchmark of providing quality online classes to the Bronsonians. The recent initiative is to clearly monitor students' attendance, progress and timely compliances of homework and assignments. This is followed by Class Tests / Weekly Tests so that they are able to make a Formative Assessment of what has been taught and learnt or not.

Necessity is the Mother of Invention, divulging to this, Revered Founder and Principal states that, "Testing Times invites great sacrifices lead to greater outcomes". **DL**

MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL'S SUCCESS STORY DURING LOCKDOWN

Learning without the constraints of confinement, Manchester redesigned the curriculum right from Kindergarten to Grade 12 says, **Rajesh Vasudevan**, Head of School, Manchester International School, Coimbatore in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Rajesh Vasudevan
Head of School, Manchester International School
Coimbatore

"No Lockdown to Learning" is what we at Manchester International School reinforced to all our stakeholders- be it Covid19 or not. Learning is a process, and this process never stops, as we firmly root our educational beliefs to the philosophy of 'education is not just preparation of life; education is life itself!

However, like many other schools across the globe, Manchester too has its share of success story to weave- the whole experience of teaching and learning moving out of the physical infrastructure and getting closer to the pupil. This Educational Renaissance as we love to call it was predominantly a key to unlock the potential, both of the teachers and the taught. Learning without the constraints of confinement Manchester redesigned the curriculum right from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Running online sessions from Monday to Friday, and Saturday too in some cases, were more of a fun exploring sessions for the Primary Year Program. Story Telling Sessions by the homeroom teachers, Circle time with family and Preparation for the Digital Exhibition- PYP (Proposed for the first week of June) kept our young champions busy. Many parents volunteered to teach certain skills like Impromptu Speaking, Phonetics, Recitation, Rangoli, Cookery, since they were too bored at home and literally our sessions had greatly inspired them to involve in

the journey of active learning.

Google Classroom, Google Meet were the two platforms that the PYP (Primary Year Program) team employed to run their sessions. Teachers were already familiar with Google Classroom. Google Meet was an extended platform to be visible to learning. Students were truly excited to see their friends and teachers during this period one could see them eagerly waiting every day for their sessions to commence.

Middle Years Program pivoted on concept-based learning took the focus of learning to a larger expanse. Students from MYP3 and MYP4, introduced to various social and cultural issues viewed the bigger picture using Design Thinking, came out with Blogs, Posters, Digital Doodles and PowerPoint Presentations to demonstrate their understanding of what they had learned.

The senior students had their entire focus purely on academic experience, with scheduled lessons, assignments, and assessments. These sessions were not just tutorial classes but more of an acceleration, where the teachers introduces the concepts and gets the pupils to co-construct the lessons and make presentations. Flipped Teaching and Blended Learning saw their best employment in these sessions, as senior graders were technologically confident than compared to the other graders. The Sessions conducted in Zoom and Google Meet took the whole learning to a new dimension. Collaborative Learning using the 70-30 model (30% teacher directed and 70% student directed) proved more successful than the actual face-to-face classroom learning.

'Unlock Creativity' is a series of weekend activities that involves the parents and other family members. 'Cook with Dad', 'Art out of Waste' (whole family), 'Paint your Dreams with Mom', 'Sing a Song with Family', 'Music Mania', 'Tap your Feet', were some of the activities that we had conducted to make sure learning can be more fun, when parents also take onus of the teaching and Learning.

Though most of the curriculum demands, Differentiated Instruction as a mandate to reach out to all types of learners, most of the schools do not actually employ it beyond the lesson Plan. Nevertheless, these sessions actually forced the teachers to ensure learning is diverse, student-centric and purposeful an affair. The dynamic nature of the lesson plans were truly visible. Sans fear of exasperation and pressure, Students actively partook in the true culture of learning.

This Lockdown was a blessing in disguise for a few teachers across the globe, who never thought that they would have to depend on technology to this extent. Moving from the comfort zone, keeping the texts books away, this pandemic truly gave the teachers an experience of Educational Renaissance! **DL**

THE PUNJAB PUBLIC SCHOOL'S SUCCESS STORY DURING LOCKDOWN

"In the present scenario, technology has become the new essential and a must-have in an education world. Online classes are the new norm, Zoom is the new boom," says **Dr Jagpreet Singh**, Former Headmaster, The Punjab Public School, Nabha in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**

"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning how to dance in the rain." - Vivian Greene

Who thought we would learn to dance in the rain in the month of March? This is exactly what has happened and continues to sum up our lives. Schools were always meant to prepare children to face hardships, make the best and most of what life gives to us. Should we run away and hibernate? The answer is simply no.

With uncertainty becoming the new certainty, life has completely undergone a 360 degree. And so did we, as schools underwent a complete overhaul, transforming, unlearning and relearning with the changing times and demands of the world.

Barely three months ago, technology was a luxury used by educators to aid the classroom teaching, making lessons interesting to captivate the audience at large. In the present scenario, technology has become the new essential and a must-have in an education world. Online classes are the new norm, Zoom is the new boom. Google hangouts, web meetings are the new hashtags ruling our lives. Were we prepared for this?

Both students and teachers had their inhibitions to start something which was unheard of. Yes, we did face initial hiccups but learnt to overcome them and after almost two months, have begun to eventually sail smooth in the world of what is called "Virtual Learning", adjusting our sails every day.

Orientation programs, webinars by experts have enriched and empowered my staff who stand tall and have become more tech savvy than the younger generation to ensure the online classes are as lively as four-walled classrooms, the connect is maintained between the tutor and taught.

The onset of lockdown happened when most of the schools were about to end with their academic session and begin with a new one. But this didn't stop us from doing the same. We connected with new admissions, got them on school rolls, with Headmaster conducting his usual "Orientation session" with new parents via Zoom. New admissions are as much a part of PPS Nabha as the previous students.

Keeping in mind the bundles of energy in children which are waiting to be tapped, several societies of school such as Round Square in collaboration with schools across the globe have initiated many activities such as Online Art Competition, Online



Dr Jagpreet Singh
Former Headmaster, The Punjab Public School, Nabha

Photography Competition expressing gratitude to COVID Warriors etc.

My staff is regularly attending webinars, online workshops and courses to enrich themselves in the changing world. I am sure this will help them stay abreast of the challenging times. Lot of collaborative learning on the new and virtual form of learning on regular basis is of a great help to make their teaching effective.

We give ample space to students to share their valuable feedback to incorporate constructive changes in the new world of 2020. Parents have become the new teachers and are closely monitoring the performance of their wards. It is something new and challenging for boarding school parents.

The bottom-line is that despite the sudden unforeseen circumstances, we educators have come out shining adding new feather in our caps. Sadly, we contradict our own statement made few months ago; excess of screen time is bad for teens. It generates anxiety, makes them more aggressive etc. Are we mincing our own words ??? Time to ponder educators!!! DL

PROMETHEUS SCHOOL'S SUCCESS STORY DURING LOCKDOWN

"Teachers collaborated online and worked tirelessly to put together a learning plan that balanced synchronous, asynchronous and non-screen time sessions with an objective to create opportunities to arouse curiosity, develop thinking, research skills and inquiry-based learning", says **Mukesh Sharma**, Chairman, Prometheus School, Noida, in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

Children are a precious segment of a country's population as they hold the promise of the future. Schools contribute in building knowledge, skills and attitude making them future-ready. Understandably, educational institutions were the first ones to be shut down as COVID-19 started spreading globally.

In line with the Indian Government's directive, Prometheus school building closed but learning continued in a virtual environment. The school leadership put together a virtual learning plan that accommodates the nuances that every child faces depending on the age group of the learners, differences in setup at home around infrastructure, network, space, learning needs etc.

Prometheus has the advantage of its association with leading technology players in the industry such as QA InfoTech and Perseverance IT solutions that made the transition from physical to virtual classroom relatively easier and faster. This ensured that there was no loss of even a single day of teaching and learning. Teachers collaborated online and worked tirelessly to put together a learning plan that balanced synchronous, asynchronous and non-screen time sessions with an objective to create opportunities to arouse curiosity, develop thinking, research skills and inquiry-based learning. The elements of creativity, fun, interpersonal connect in class were given importance to ensure sessions were interactive, engaging and effective. This was especially important for little learners with attention spans that are short, characteristic of their age. While this plan was a good start, we continued taking in feedback from parents, students and IT staff for ongoing improvements.

Once learning momentum was established through virtual sessions, we directed our focus on core research elements across schools. This included an online survey sent to educators across the globe through IB educator networks, to understand ideal online class sizes and optimal screen time. The results from this study have been encouraging and will soon be published as an online article summarizing our findings. We also continue to connect with parents through regular communication channels – these include mailers, ongoing updates on our social handles and more importantly, the parent's sessions that are much needed at this time of crisis. To name a few:- we hosted a session by theatre artist Garima on productively engaging children during the lockdown, a workshop by Ms. Aneesha Sahni, our PYP Vice Principal on the same topic, and an insightful and animated webinar by Mr. Akshay Aggarwal, our security expert on cyber phishing and what children need to be



Mukesh Sharma
Chairman, Prometheus School, Noida

wary of, so as to stay safe in the digital world. A session on digital accessibility is also planned for the near future.

Additionally, the lockdown did not bring any change in our events calendar, only moved it to the online space. We virtually celebrated events and milestones such as completion of first 100 days of operation; we did a virtual joining of pre-term students as well as of new teachers, commemorated teacher's appreciation week – all of these online events and the unconditional support from parents and love from students, continue to give us rejuvenated focus and energy that "learning can truly be re-imagined", regardless of the constraints and limitations that may be beyond our control.

We plan to complete the rest of the school year online and come next academic year, the school premises will open, keeping in mind the government directives. We, at Prometheus, are fortunate to have a sprawling campus and this being our first year of operation, our students will have ample space and scope to exercise social distancing which will be the need in the coming months too. Hope, perseverance and self-discipline will help us tide through any tough terrain – Let us all count our blessings and wish for a safe exit from the hands of COVID-19, not forgetting some invaluable lessons it has taught us along the way. The contributor of the article Mr. Mukesh Sharma is the Chairman and School Director of The Prometheus School, a new upcoming IB school in Noida that aims to provide PYP, MYP and DP education to all its students, as a way of realising their true potential. **DL**

MULTI DIMENSIONAL TEACHING PEDAGOGY NEED OF THE HOUR

Assessment and feedback are an integral part of teaching and learning process and for that, the school will be conducting online assessment through its own online test engine says **Sashi Luther**, Principal, GD Goenka, Kanpur in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Sashi Luther
Principal, GD Goenka, Kanpur

These are unprecedented times. G.D. Goenka is committed towards holistic development of our students. Planning for successfully imparting meaningful education and life skills to our students required a lot of brainstorming and also resources to implement the planning. The virtual classes are being conducted through multiple platforms simultaneously like GD Goenka YouTube channel GD Goenka e connect, WhatsApp groups and zoom sessions. This is done to ensure that no student suffers due to poor network connectivity. The videos made by the teachers to support the virtual classes has created a bank of digital data for future use also. Assessment and feedback are an integral part of teaching and learning process and for that the school will be conducting online assessment through its own online test engine. The results of these assessments will also be shared online. To get authentic feedback the school has been regularly conducting online PTMs and has ensured that the suggestions of the parents are incorporated in our teaching methodology as far as possible. Not only this, but the school has also initiated online classes for the outgoing batch of grade 12 for better performance in their pending exams. And with the month of June round the corner, the school is ready with a virtual summer camp to make the summer vacation fun-filled and rejuvenating for our students. To conclude I would add, "Your limitation is only your imagination", Lockdown or no lockdown, GD Goenka Kanpur will keep striving relentlessly in the best interests of its students and the society at large.

A multilateral collaborative approach involving the educators, facilitators, parents and students is quintessential during a pandemic. This type of school closures have never been witnessed and so it is imperative to rethink and re-invent teaching pedagogy to blend with the present scenario. GD Goenka Kanpur adopted a progressive approach and when the pandemic was in its initial stage in the country, GD Goenka Kanpur was ready with the strategy to provide the facility of online classes to the students. The biggest challenge in implementing the strategy was to think and choose the tools of learning which would provide opportunities for blended learning. For this purpose the school management consented to move ahead with a multidimensional teaching pedagogy and empowered its team of facilitators as well as students with all possible resources for successfully conducting the online classes. The text books were delivered at the doorsteps of around 800 students living in various areas of the city. The students follow a set time table which includes assemblies, activities, academics and even special competitions organised to mark National and International events. To add on, motivational sessions and counselling sessions by icons from different walks of life are organised from time to time for both parents and students to help them overcome the monotony of the lockdown. All these efforts of the school had been highly appreciated by the stakeholders and parents. **DL**

MAYO COLLEGE'S SUCCESS STORY DURING LOCKDOWN CRISIS

Once the academics were taken care of, it was time to focus on the most integral part of a boarder's life: co-curricular activities and pastoral care. says **Sanjay Khati**, Director of Cultural Activities, Mayo College, Ajmer in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

Covid-19 was an unexpected calamity which not only emerged as a life-threatening pandemic but also disrupted the well-planned schedule of many. The only effective way to steer through this crisis was to have an immediate action plan to mitigate the needs of the changing times and to have a business continuity plan to foster better crisis management.

Mayo College, Ajmer anticipated the gravity of this situation too early and therefore, most of the boys were sent back home well-in-time, way before the deadline. Next step was to quickly train the staff on Microsoft Teams and to equip them to handle forthcoming online classes rapidly and efficiently. The existing model of Module-based teaching definitely came handy and we commenced with our online classes as early as 30 March 2020.

This was indeed a new platform and tool of learning for students, teachers, and parents too. We all were working in a dynamic environment with changes and challenges coming our way on a daily basis. Keeping this in mind; Class Teachers were deployed as a focal point of contact for the parents and respective students. This move really helped in gathering timely and accurate feedback from the immediate stakeholders and in-turn helped us to work on the grey areas quickly. Class Teachers created WhatsApp groups and even conducted Online PTMs. Google forms were also sent to each parent to receive candid feedback. One IT Person was deputed for each online class to cater to the IT issues. These steps ensured smooth sailing in terms of online classes.

Another significant step was to assist the new members of the Mayo fraternity who were scheduled to join us in the month of April. It was equally important to apprise them about the ethos, culture, and heritage of this 163 years old organization. Therefore, an online orientation was organized for the new students and their parents. This step really proved fruitful in terms of hand holding the new boys.

Once the academics were taken care of, it was time to focus on the most integral part of a boarder's life: co-curricular activities and pastoral care.

Various online competitions encompassing domains like Photography, Painting, MUN, etc. were planned and organized. Online Tutorial groups were created to encourage informal interaction between the boys and the House tutor and to take care of the EQ of the former during these trying times. Boys were also encouraged to join various webinars.

Post the completion of the online classes, Periodic Assessment was also conducted. Parents, being the major stakeholders, supported the



Sanjay Khati
Director of Cultural Activities, Mayo College, Ajmer

process wholeheartedly and students appeared for the assessments under their supervision. Teachers were guided to frame the question paper in such a way that it tested the deep understanding and high order thinking skills of the examinee rather than focussing on rote learning. A proper plan was also made to deliver one-on-one feedback of the Periodic assessment to each student.

Mayo has already come a long way in terms of bridging the gap between the students and the teachers during these tough times and has planned numerous activities for near future. Fitness sessions, Hobby classes, Club and Society activities will be organized along with remedial classes. Boys will be participating in online Inter-School competitions for PPT and Multimedia, Quiz, Debates etc. Plan to organize Online Debating, Public Speaking and Dramatics workshop is already in place. Most importantly, the faculty is not only participating in various online trainings and webinars but they are encouraged to conduct webinars on their own too. They are using various online platforms like MS Teams, Zoom, Cisco Webex etc. to conduct their sessions on most context-sensitive issues of the present time.

Overall, it has been an enriching and novel experience for everyone associated with this process: Parents, Teachers and Students. The idea of adaptability to changes while keeping a positive thought process has been pretty instrumental in driving the institution and its entities. Mayo is known for taking unprecedented steps and wishes to carry on with this legacy. **DL**



SUCCESS STORY OF CLAY PRESCHOOLS DURING LOCKDOWN

Our strong commitment for our students and the Parents of CLAY Preschools all over the country made this possible says **Shobhan Soi**, Ceo, Clay Preschools, Ludhiana in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

The year 2020 has begun with lots of hopes and aspirations for all of us. It's the time for the completion of an ongoing Academic session and to start planning a new one. Every school was in the same scenario when one sudden announcement by the revered Prime minister of India has put the whole nation in lockdown.

Being a safe school, we at CLAY Preschools have already started taking the precautionary measures for our little students. No group gatherings, No Picnics or Outdoor Activities etc. measures have been taken by the School, timely ensuring the safety of the littlest citizens of our country.

It's said that Learning is an ongoing process and it can never stop. On March 25th, CLAY was ready with its Home-based Learning Curriculum. We have reached our students through technology i.e. Online Learning within few days after the declaration of the Lockdown. Our strong commitment for our students and the Parents of CLAY Preschools all over the country made this possible.

CLAY has its franchised Preschools in various parts of the country. So, we were already working in a structure of providing all kinds of support whether its curriculum, technology or trainings etc. to our franchise partners in a well-knit system. So, our experienced Curriculum and Technical Teams have come together in support of each other to face this new challenge i.e. how to reach our students during lockdown. They have designed a beautiful Home - based Learning structure for the Parents to follow within days.

CLAY works on the vision of providing quality education to the little ones in the early years. So, it was very significant for us to design a Curriculum i.e. easy for Parents to follow at home with the use of limited resources during the lockdown. Preschool activities require lots of teaching and colorful aids and tools for making

Learning playful for the preschoolers. Parents are not experienced in conducting this level of stimulating activities with children at home. We have taken into consideration all these aspects while designing the activities for them.

These Home-based Learning Activities are engaging, age-appropriate and development-oriented for the little ones. Parents were given in detail how, why and when of everything they are been told to do with the child at home.

We feel proud to say that within 5 days, we have trained our Staff, Teachers and Franchisees as well on how to stand tall and face the new normal together without compromising on our quality and services. We believe that our employees are our asset and we must invest in their trainings and upliftment programs.

We are ongoingly receiving the testimonials from our Parents. It gives us pure relief to see our students happily engaged Indoors and also to see the Parents being able to play their part with ease in their Child's Learning programs through our Home-based Online Learning platform.

Every situation in our life come with its own share of ups and downs, pros and cons. No doubt, this Lockdown time is challenging for School owners and people, in general, all over the globe in terms of bearing the expenses and making both ends meet. But during this time of crisis, we have also witnessed the power of technology, the power of education and the power of Teacher community. Parents all over the globe are recognizing the hard work, dedication and efforts of Schools. We have never seen before the partnership i.e. happening between School, Teacher and Parents - the trio most productive in the nurturing of the little minds. This we feel is the biggest success story that has been conceived, written, presented and received beautifully during the Lockdown. **DL**

DIGITAL INDIA INITIATIVE AND CHALLENGES IN THE AGE OF A PANDEMIC

It's a great opportunity for students and youth to finally get things of their perennial to-do-list, a chance of getting more efficient, productive and develop new and improve on professional skills says **Dr Ashwini Kumar Sharma**, Pro Chancellor, Vijaybhoomi University, with a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Dr Ashwini Kumar Sharma
Pro Chancellor, Vijaybhoomi University
(Ex Director General, NIELIT, MeitY, Govt of India)

Digital India vision of the Government of India seems to be an instrument in present scenario, where we all are pandemic because of COVID-19.

The education institutes are put to shutdown because of 21 days Lockdown (May further increase depending upon situation) and this is putting lot of pressure on students/youths for their education, admissions to career-making courses, skilling enhancement, employment opportunities etc. The lockdown period is watching that school and educational institutions go into hibernation all around the world at the same time. Given the time on hand, it is a great opportunity for students and youth to finally get things of their perennial to-do-list, a chance of getting more efficient, productive and develop new and improve on professional skills/ knowledge by learning online as well as assessing Online.

The lockdown has accelerated the adoption of digital technology. The business houses, education institutes, educationist, Analytics, computer power, data management methods, Online education solutions etc are forced to work in tandem and improve upon in quality, delivery time etc , so as to handle such situations. The outbreak has presented new roadblocks for the Indian workforce and especially for the daily wage and contractual workers. In these bleak times, it is more important than ever before, to be up-skilled and be prepared to prove yourself again;

as the saying goes " when the going gets tough, the tough gets going"

It is also a fact that technology use for education is resulting into a different concept in education system i.e. from teacher-centric education to student-centric education.

Pedagogy of education in digital education is an important link between course contents, educationist, technology and course taker in a Classroom education is different from technology-based education.

The democratization of technology is now an important issue in the present scene which include internet connectivity, telecom infrastructure, affordability of online system, availability of laptop/desktop, software, education tool, online assessment tools etc. But it is a fact that technology-based education is more transparent and does not make a difference in front vs backbencher or girls vs boys.

The few of the initiatives are SWAYAM i.e. online course for teachers, UG/PG MOOCs for non-technology courses, e-PG Pathshala e-content containing modules on social science, arts, fine arts, natural and mathematical science, CEC-UGC YouTube channel, Vidwan a database of experts who provide information about experts to peers, prospective collaborators, NEAT an initiative by AICTE based on PPP model to enhance the employability skill among students by a collaborative approach with Education Technology Companies, National Digital Library(NDL) where the repository of learning resources with single window facility is available. The more details can be seen on MHRD, AICTE, NCERT websites. Many more noteworthy initiatives have been taken like Spoken Tutorial, Free and Open Source Software for Education (FOSSEE), e-Yantra, Google Class Room etc..

It is a fact that the Government of India as well State Governments through their Various Ministries/Departments have involved / planned for infrastructure also, the second most important pillar of e-Education. This mainly includes the National Knowledge Network (NKN), National Project on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), National Mission on Education Through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT), Akash Tablet PC, National Academic Depository (NAD) etc.

Thus, the basic requirement like Good Education delivery the platform, IT infrastructure, PC/Desktop Top/Mobile for end delivery and assessment tools have been planned and more improvement is going on.

In the present scenario, this article is devoted to COVID Warriors.

Author: Dr Ashwini Kumar Sharma is an Engineering and Postgraduate in Computer Science with more than 35 experience in IT Industry/Education Institutes. He also worked as Director General for NIELIT, Govt of India. Presently, working as Pro Chancellor after working as VC of Vijaybhoomi University, Karjat, near Mumbai. **DL**

TEACHERS ARE SHAPING THE WORLD IN CRISIS

NPS International School has always believed that we can make the optimum use of the technology available to give the best available effective education to the students says **Jitendra Nath Das**, Founder & Chairman, NPS International School, Guwahati in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



Jitendra Nath Das
Founder & Chairman, NPS International School, Guwahati

With the onset of the pandemic crisis and the lockdown the situation, the whole world is going through a major economic crisis and NPS International School stepped into the scene with a sustainable 'Forward-Looking' vision and harnessed and utilized the suite of available technological tools to replicate regular classes and provide continuous effective learning for all our students. Turning a crisis into opportunity is the need of the hour and NPS International School has always believed that we can make the optimum use of the technology available to give the best available effective education to the students.

We started effective learning classes from KG to Class XII and moved a step forward and conducted interactive Virtual PTMs to get feedback and suggestions from parents. And now we have started to evaluate our students through Online Weekly Tests.

We have to understand that to ensure that a child gives full concentration in online classes, he/she has to be a happy child. To make a child happy, co-curricular activities is a must and this is what NPS International School is focusing on.

Some of the extracurricular activities we are doing online for

the students include: Yoga, Aerobics, Zumba, Music and Dance, Physical Training, Quiz Competitions. We are involving parents also to participate in dance competitions with their wards and thus ensuring that there is always a fun element in the learning process. Parents' feedback that we have received for our endeavour has been excellent and this motivates us to do even better. Parents should be equally involved with the child now in an effective online learning process. A strong bonding will develop because of this crisis.

Teachers are playing a very important role during this pandemic. If Doctors and Nurses are healing the world, Teachers are shaping the world.

How we achieved what we did?

Finding effective, sustainable, quality, flexible learning options help schools during such challenging conditions. Our school identified three phases to counter this crisis and this is the way we moved forward:

- **Immediate response or Relief Phase: Continuity of learning and teaching**
- **Interim Capacity Building or Recovery Phase: Moving to effective learning and homeschooling**
- **Sustainable or Integrated Approach Phase: Flexible effective learning and teaching options.**

In phase one, schools audit available resources then make a plan for the next steps. Strategies like creating a timetable that combines asynchronous activities with practical activities like board games and many such games played with siblings and caregivers, and physical activity, and building in one-on-one catch-ups with students will help take the pressure off.

In phase two, schools put in place the structures and resources necessary to transition from face-to-face to online delivery, such as implementing a Learning Management System and training staff in online teaching. In phase three, schools have the organisational structures and teacher capacity to offer online, blended or face-to-face learning with ease, making them resilient in the face of future interruptions to the school schedule.

NPS International School is the only school in the North East to introduce an online teaching platform from LKG to Class XII. Educators are encouraging homeschooling which is going to be the future of education in the coming years. **DL**



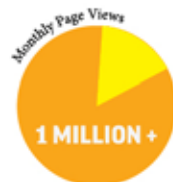
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DISCUSSION POINTS

Conducive Policies & Regulatory Frameworks: Current Scenario & Future Requirements

Technology Penetration: Advancing Education & Employability

Tackling the Innovation in Admission, Enrolment, Assessment & Accreditation

Impact of Technology in HR Practices & Roadmap for Future Strategies

Mental & Social Wellbeing of Students, Teachers & Parents during COVID19 crisis

ESTEEMED PARTICIPANTS

Policy makers

Chairpersons from group of Institutions

Chancellors From Universities

Vice Chancellors From Universities

B Schools – Directors / Principals

Engineering Institutes – Directors / Principals

HR Heads

EdTech Corporates & Start-ups

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