

# Government Schools: Towards Excellence

*Cases of Government Schools with Unique and Innovative Practices*



CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL STUDIES

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## **Government Schools: Towards Excellence**

Cases of Government Schools with Unique and Innovative Practices

This publication is as an outcome of a Research Study by CESS. With a view to showcase the intrinsic aspects contributing to the success of government schools in terms of performance and outcomes, this study was carried out. A best, unique and effective practice which has led the school towards achievement is captured. The study is qualitative in nature and calls for a case study approach as it is exploratory in nature. Also the study requires real time assessment in the real life context.

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# Preface

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This is a visit to a Government high school located 20 kilometers from Bengaluru, Karnataka. As we enter the school we see hundreds of cycles parked in a line. The school has a huge campus with a large quadrangle, there were around hundred and odd students sitting on the floor and writing exams. There were five teachers moving in between as the children write their preparatory exams. A very serious atmosphere prevails. The students are writing the exams with all earnest, preparedness and seriousness. There are display boards motivating students. There is a notice on the notice board encouraging students avail counselling and career guidance services.

The headmaster restricts our entry as examinations are on. Our perception about a government school takes a complete U turn. We get an opportunity to interact with teachers. Teachers use ICT optimally to teach the concepts. To anyone's surprise, teachers have their respective 'you tube' channels through which they record and disseminate their classes. The classes are made very interesting with experiments and models. Even mathematics is taught very differently with concepts and models. Teachers are a part of the subject forums and work towards their continuous improvement. Students residing 20 kilometres away from the school have also joined the school. Annually the school comes out with a magazine and also a CD. Local channels advertise the school and showcase the best attributes of the school. There are professional dramatists coming to school to train the children for the annual day!

When we speak of a Government school, the general perception is that the school suffers from lack of infrastructure, shortage of teachers and unsatisfactory quality of education. India has over 1.4 million schools and has more than 230 million enrolments. The vast majorities of school going children are enrolled in government schools. Oflate, the trend in the recent past is that the enrolment in the government schools has been decreasing. Private schools are cashing on the school enrolments and this has gradually led to decrease in enrolments and close down of many government schools. While there are divided perceptions about the government schools and private schools, these perceptions need to be empirically captured. With this objective, CESS attempted a study to explore the existing best and innovative practices among the better performing government schools in India. Government schools with a pre- defined performance based criteria were selected to be part of the study. A total of seven schools from two of the southern states of India were selected for the present study. Case studies were developed for each of the schools. Here is an attempt to present to you the cases of some of the best schools in Karnataka and Kerala.

**Dr. Manasa Nagabhushanam**

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# Executive Summary

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When someone talks of a government school the perception is, a small school located in rural area built with brick and mortar with poor infrastructure in no way comparable to private schools. But the gloomy picture presented is not as real as it is perceived. Despite a relatively older infrastructure facility in some schools, many of these schools are outstanding and the spirit with which the school functions is commendable. These schools serve the rural and underprivileged children of the society and work with an untiring spirit to build bigger dreams for the children.

In India 65% of the school children attend government schools, but in the recent years Government Schools' enrolment has dropped from 12.6 crores in 2010-11 to 11.3 crores in 2015-16 (DISE data) and the enrolments to private schools has increased from 4.43 crores to 6.18 crores during this period. However, the preference between private and public schools vary from state to state.

For instance, in 2016, in Kerala, the proportion of children (aged 11-14) enrolled in government schools increased from 40.6% in 2014 to 49.9%. In Gujarat, it increased, from 79.2% in 2014 to 86%(ASER, 2016).

The possible reasons for decreasing enrolment in Government schools is attributed to the belief among parents that private schools offer better value for money and better teaching than government schools (Gandhi, 2017). However, these reasons are stated by private schools to sometimes protect their interests and in some cases it is true.

In the current context there is a differential perception of people towards private and Government schools. Students and parents choose schools based on their perception of the image of the school. There is no research which proves private schools as better than Government schools. Government schools have always caught peoples' attention for its poor infrastructure and poor performance of students, but there are a large number of government schools which are proving remarkably in results, enrolments and outcomes.

When we visit Government schools we understand that there are a large number of schools which have good infrastructure, highly qualified teachers using the best of pedagogy with the best learning outcomes. Also per child spend in Government schools is very high compared to that of private schools. Government schools create an access for education in places where

private enterprises do not consider it as a prospective proposition. These schools are bound socially and legally to cater to the families coming from marginalized backgrounds.

### **Government Schools and Branding**

The differentiators of the school such as enrolments, results, ranks obtained, awards won by the school, infrastructure, teaching, location of the school, culture, environment etc play a vital role in creating the image of the school. Branding is nothing but the image of the school created in the minds of the public about the school. Branding of schools involve quality, its positioning in relation to other schools, its communication internally and externally and the long term perspective of the school. Branding is not just about promotion of a school. It begins with the differentiators leading to the image of the school.

Despite their efforts to offer the best possible schooling services, peoples' perception towards the government schools is not positive. Overall Government schools are treated as one whole and branded under one umbrella of 'below average'. Any small incident or a problem in one school affects the perception about all government schools. Whereas in case of a private school, it is branded as an independent and individual school and branding is an easy effort. But when we view Government schools independently there are several schools which are far beyond expectations. They have been doing things uniquely and are guided by such intrinsic factors which may be really tough to replicate.

Branding of Government schools will certainly add to the feel good factor, enhance the morale of the teachers and students, help parents in choosing a Government School and as an end result contributes to better quality education in Government Schools.

### **The Present Study**

With a view to showcase the intrinsic aspects contributing to the success of government schools in terms of performance and outcomes, this study was carried out. A best, unique and effective practice which has led the school towards achievement is captured. The study is qualitative in nature and calls for a case study approach as it is exploratory in nature. Also the study requires real time assessment in the real life context.

The following objectives are addressed in the study:

1. To explore the differentiators of Government schools in terms of teaching, student performance both curricular and co-curricular and other intrinsic aspects of the school which acts as differentiators

2. To identify the driving factors of such schools which makes them successful
3. To find the branding efforts of the school which has contributed to the image of the school
4. To put into a framework the efforts to build a model of branding of Government schools

### **Sampling design**

The unit of analysis for this study is a Government school which is located in India. And those schools which fulfill the following Criteria have been selected:

1. State/National award for excellence/School achievement awards etc (Government or any private bodies) any of them received by a school for three consecutive years
2. Schools with better learning outcomes, excellence in results and student performance
3. Schools which have represented in state level, nationally and internationally in sports, arts or any other field
4. Schools which are unique in pedagogy specialized in specific skills, involved in community work or any attribute which distinguishes the school from others.

### **Methodology**

The data has been collected using Depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions. A checklist is prepared to check if the school under study fulfills all the basic criteria. Interview schedule was used to get insights into the schools from the Head Teachers. Discussion guides have been used to gather insights from teachers, students, Parents and SDMC members respectively.

### **Following are the unique attributes emerged from individual school analysis:**

1. **Teaching -Learning:** Engaging and devising different teaching and learning activities in the school has been one of the core competence of these schools. At the heart of these schools is the spirit of committed teachers. This is the primary factor driving towards performance has been the key factor.
2. **Leadership Driven:** A school is driven by an individual a headmaster/a teacher/a local leader who takes the initiative to bring in changes. Head Teachers have been very instrumental for successfully leading the school. They tend to introduce various reforms to ensure the quality education in the school,

3. **Participative:** A successful school follows a participative approach and we observe the role of all stakeholders in making school better. This participative style enables the school to discuss and take reforms for the holistic development of the school. Involvement of teachers, local political leaders, representatives of Community members, parents and children have been found very crucial towards a particular school being successful.
4. **Multiple interventions:** Multiple levels of interventions are allowed in such schools and the school is very open to bring new features to the forefront. This participatory style has enabled the schools to function flexibly with the sole purpose of improving its quality and to benefit the students from all possible ways. Multiple interventions from various groups and individuals were evident during the field visits.
5. **Discipline:** Successful schools are systematic, highly disciplined and imbibe discipline as part of their schooling culture. The schools have focused more on the process of teaching and emphasised discipline as their major factor.
6. **Documentation:** These schools follow detailed documentation and base their actions on the documentation. These schools maintain detailed documentation of information regarding the following aspects year wise enrolment details, details of teaching and non teaching staff, pass percentage of students (at SSLC), details of resources, individual teachers and children's profile, individual child's performance checklist etc..
7. **Resource Mobilization:** Successful schools do not consider resource as a constraint they constantly find ways of mobilizing resources. The schools which were part of the study have been successful in their efforts to mobilise necessary resources through active engagement of the multiple stakeholder's interventions and support.  
**Ownership:** Successful schools have exhibited high sense of ownership. The ownership was expressed by various stakeholders like the head masters, teachers, community members, parents and local leaders as well.
8. **Context- Specific:** These schools have a complete understanding of the context of the school. Every school has to meet the diverse needs of its learners who tend to come from varied socio-cultural –economic background. Since majority of the students in the government school comprise from the lower socio-economic strata of the society, government schools in general have to be considerate to these students. All these

efforts tend to be deeply rooted with respect to the context of the school and at the same time contextual factors that influence the learners are also taken into consideration.

**Branding:** Schools used both implicit and explicit branding efforts. Though there are no explicit branding efforts in all successful schools, but there were efforts to reach to the targeted population which had assisted them to create an image in the minds of public.

The schools studied for the case study development were those schools who were considered to be the best on various criteria. They are schools which have excelled and have gained some kind of recognition for the work and commitment shown towards achieving success. More than 70% of the schools in the country are Government schools. They are functioning in such areas and habitations which are unreachable by many of the private sector schools. There are lakhs of teachers who are working at the grassroots and trying to bring a small change in the school to making any kind of impact on the education system and the society. This collection of case studies is only a sneak peak of what Government Schools are capable of. From CESS we hope that this marks a beginning of showcasing success stories of such Government Schools.

# Case 1:

## Teaching through Practices: Emphasis on Agriculture at Sakkaregollahalli School

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The Government High School, Sakkaregollahalli(GHSS)established in the year 1988 is located in the village named Sakkaregollahalli, which is about 18 kilometers interior from the Doddaballapur town. The school is located outside the community area and surrounded by agricultural lands. The School has been regarded the best performing government school at the Hobli level.

The school has a newly constructed hostel building in the campus, which can provide accommodation for upto 50-70 children. Currently there are around 15-20 children who stay in the hostel and around 50 children utilize other facilities that are provided in the hostel (facilities like breakfast, lunch and dinner). The hostel kitchen follows a meal schedule which is planned appropriately inorder to address the nutritional needs of the children. The hostel has around 20 rooms with good ventilation and other facilities. This is the only government school that has been granted a hostel at the Hobli level.

The school has a beautiful garden yard with around nearly 500 trees in its campus, for which the school has also beenrecognized and awarded 'the State award' for greener campus. The tree saplings are planted and maintained by the children themselves. In addition, the children also grow vegetables in the kitchen garden, these vegetables are used in the cooking and served in the mid-day meals. The school also has a pit for collecting the waste from the garden and convert them into compost manure. (A small instance how self-sustenance can be part introduced in the school)

### **School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC): The integral part of the school is planning process**

The SDMC members are usually the parents who send their children to the same school and they form the integral part of the entire school's planning process.

Mr. Rajanna and Mr. A.V. Murthy were more than happy to provide us with relevant information pertaining to the school. Initially the research team interacted with Mr. Rajanna and asked some questions related to the overall functioning of the School. Rajanna became the SDMC member of the school, six months ago and he opined that any decision pertaining

to the development and functioning of the school will be discussed among the SDMC members group and an appropriate decision will be taken based on the consensus among the members.

Rajanna emphasis on raising the *academic performance* of the students. He says it has been its unique stand out feature when compared to other government schools in the district. He further added that, it is indeed this feature of the school that has *attracted many enrolments from the district level feeder government schools* and there are some instances of enrolments form the nearby private schools as well. Since a major chunk of enrolments for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade come from other feeder schools, it affects the overall academic performance of the school because children hailing from these feeder schools can hardly read and write properly. These types of enrolments enforce the teachers in the GHSS to work even harder to raise the academic performance of the children coming from the feeder schools. To meet this end and maintain the quality, teachers take extended classes to these children after the regular schooling hours; usually these classes are conducted from 4 PM to 5:30 PM everyday for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades. In addition, in order to improve the academic performance of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade children, teachers open the school at 8:00 AM to conduct morning classes and also conduct extended/ extra classes from 6:00 PM -8:00 PM (especially during the months of January and February).

Rajanna says that SDMC members and teachers work together in order to sensitize the parents about being responsible and monitoring their child's academic behaviour; teachers and SDMC members engage in frequent follow-ups, home visits and telephone follow-ups etc.. Individual children follow-ups of the tenth graders are done regularly during the month before the annual board exams. SDMC members closely work with the school staff and support them in their initiatives. And more importantly, *SDMC members act ascommunication point* between the school and the local MLA and MLCs; they often contact them for getting the needed fund and other facilities towards the development of the school.

Bicycles are provided for the school children under the provisions made by the government.He also added that the school provides good nutritious food, milk every day and good quality medicines (as and when it's needed).

### **Head madam, the main driving force:**

Another parent feels very proud to talk about the school amongst the community people. According to him, the Head Madam of the school is the main driving factor for the development of the school and her efforts are the main reason for the school's current status. Head madam along with the assistance of the SDMC members has provided financial support to some of the poor students.

The opinion is that the teachers in the school are very flexible, highly responsive and do good team work; they tend to have a good and healthy competition among themselves to perform better and work for towards the overall performance of the school. He further added that the school is having the same set of teachers who have been serving the same school over the past few years and these teachers come from faraway places everyday. The consistency in the team has been very beneficial in uplifting the performance of the school.

One of the special feature of the school is that it has an excellent art teacher who is a motivated teacher and teaches creative things to the children. Students from few schools at the district level have enrolled in to this school, since it has a good teaching faculty. The teacher has been awarded several state awards in recognition of his artistic ability.

Over all, parents of children feel that the school has been collectively functioning better. The positive points of the school are its **academic performance, disciplined children, emphasis on cleanliness, yoga and art classes, good and nutritious food etc.** Nonetheless, there are certain shortcomings and needs that the school is facing. The school is still lacking basic facilities like inadequate and inconsistent power supply, scarcity of drinking water etc. Many expect that the state government has to do grass-root level intervention to develop government schools. Presently too many number of training, meetings and workshops for the teachers has been affecting the quality time spent by the teachers on teaching, this has been affecting the academic performance of the children. The consequences of these trainings and meetings may negatively affect the school which are having limited staff, he added.

Stakeholders of the school express that English medium has to be introduced to further uplift the face value of the school and attract more enrolments.

However, there is a great sense of community feeling of belongingness towards the School, the people and parents are always very supportive to assist in the development activities of the school.

The Pride of Parents:

SDMC member A. V. Murthy takes pride in sending his children to this school. According to him even though the Taluk has many government schools, this school sets apart since it has been able to produce 100% academic performance. The school is well known for its practices in teaching, discipline, other activities and academic output. The teachers in this school spend more time in teaching children (even after the regular school timings); teachers are very passionate about their job and constantly work towards upbringing the performance of the students. This work commitment and approach has been the unique feature of this school, and this factor places the school above the other private and government schools in the district.

The school has produced many lecturers, engineers, ophthalmologists etc. The school places more emphasis on discipline and academic learning, and hence many prefer the school over the Private schools.

Many children from nearby feeder schools get enrolled to this school, these children cannot even recognize letters or numbers. Teachers of this school **make additional efforts to bridge the learning gap** and help in uplifting the performance of these children. This aspect has been the **major strength** of the school.

#### **SDMC's meetings:**

SDMC meetings are conducted once in every month. The meetings usually involve the head madam, teachers, SDMC members and the parents (MLA/MLC, Panchayat members at times). There are currently 9 members in the SDMC. Since children of all these 9 members are currently studying in the same school, it enforces the members to actively think and address the shortcomings that are faced by the school, especially from the parental perspective.

Some of the issues that are discussed during the meetings are related to the overall development of the school, needs in terms of infrastructural facilities, the school currently is facing issues related to continuous power supply and drinking water facilities etc. SDMC members become crucial players to voice the needs to the local government bodies (MLC and MLAs) and these members along with the Head master are gradually working towards the uplifting the school (in a step wise manner).

#### **In the words of Ms. Dakshayani (KES) Head Mistress of the School....**

When she was appointed as head mistress for this school in the year 1999, the school was in complete crisis and it was a locked-out school, due to the controversies between teachers and

headmasters. In the initial years the school lacked a proper road and alongside had a number of shortcomings (shortage of teacher staff, infrastructure facilities etc).

The school had teaching staff for Maths, Hindi, Kannada and Physical education subjects; and there were no teachers for social studies and science.

Initially, managing the administrative work-load and meeting the teaching needs was highly challenging for her. For instance, the village did not have bus facility and reaching the school was tough task everyday. However gradually with the Head madam's initiative she could win the confidence of locals, parents and teachers. When she sought support, people reciprocated. The planning effort and the support from the teachers and SDMC members, enabled the school to take some shape. The school had 0% academic pass percentage in the year 1999, then it gained the pass percentage of 12% in the year 2000, 19% of academic pass out in the year 2001, the school achieved a pass percentage of 40%, in the year 2002 and achieved a pass percentage of 44% in the year 2004.

### **2005 the turning point:**

By the start of academic year 2004-2005 the school had met its need of subject teachers /teaching staff, now every subject had an individual teacher. With appropriate planning, team support and spirited teachers the school achieved 100% academic pass in the year 2005. The school became the first school in the district level to obtain 100% results at the SSLC level.

The Head madam opined that it was possible because of the various initiatives and strategies implemented by the teachers. The team work and continuous follow-up made by the teachers made it possible to track and improve individual student performance, and gradually obtained 100% results at the SSLC exam in the year 2005.

The teachers tend to adopt a *Target Oriented Initiatives* in the school, suppose in a given year if the school aspires to represent itself in the state level science exhibition or some sports event- the teachers are involved in planning and start training children from the month of June itself. June, July August are the months in which extensive training for sports is given, so that the school can make some name at the Taluk level. The Physical education teacher provides guidance and training after the regular classes and at the same time other teachers also assist during these training hours.

With respect to sports, in the year 2006-2007, the school's kho-kho team won third place in the state level sports competition. Children are encouraged to participate in the Prathiba Karanji competition every year in various events and have won several prizes (drawing and

singing) at Taluk and state level. Science exhibitions –state level prize, English as a hurdle for national level competition.explaining in English was not possible

The HM also expressed her dismay about the enrolment of the children gradually decreasing. Since there are around 35 children in a class; the school cannot apply for English medium. Initially when she joined the school the strength in a given grade was nearly 250, however over the years the strength of children is decreasing. RTE has acted as a major filter due to which the children are going to other schools and the government schools are left with lesser number of children and the children who are above average are joining the private or other aided schools through these RTE window.Since government schools are providing to all children, schools have to work very hard in order to keepup the performance of children who come from diverse background and different learning abilities.

## **Inside the Classroom**

### **Teaching methods**

The teachers of the school have adopted a **target oriented approach** as its **pedagogical approach**, especially for the students of the tenth grade. The approach placesexcessive emphasis on improving the learning ability and academic performance of the tenth grade children. Individual student follow-up, small peer learning groups, extended classes (classes from morning 8 am, classes after regular schooling hours and also night classes for tenth graders at the time of exams are conducted as well), role plays, skits, home visits and call follow-ups, individual lesson plans, providing solar lamps to children etc are some of the efforts that are introduced as part of the practices followed by the school. These efforts have enabled the school to collectively function well within the frame of the available resources and to produce good academic output over the years.

### **Panchasopana method:**

The school is currently following the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE). CCE involves child centered teaching and the teacher acts as the main facilitator. Children of a given classroom are divided into small groups and are assigned activity based learning. Each classroom will have around 5-6 such groups. Each group will be given a group based activity, the activity will be equally distributed among the group and each child in the group has to contribute towards the group work. This kind of activity will enhance the team work and assists in active thinking amongst the children.

The teacher (here) acts as more of a facilitator, unlike in the frontal learning setup, the role of the teachers is to assist and observe the children engaged in a particular activity. Enacting through skits, explanation/ narration of an activity, role plays etc are the different modes that are used by the teacher to teach certain content of the syllabus. CCE not only departs itself from traditional frontal teaching, but at the same time it gives an opportunity for individual child's participation and expression of his/her ideas, and may result in enhanced conceptual understanding.

The teachers in the school pay individual attention towards each child in a given classroom, follow and track their progress. Teachers tend to use a combination of frontal teaching and activity/child oriented teaching practices. To quote here, one of the teacher opined that the teachers engage children in activities that enable the children to be better at problem solving, inductive and deductive ways of understanding the content. However, a close and continued observation of such practices should be made and only then the effectiveness of it can be ascertained towards the child's progress.

In addition, as part of the regular school every day activity children are supposed to engage in reading newspapers and to recite Shoklas, Vachanas etc at the prayer hall (Every child of a particular class is supposed to engage him/herself in this particular activity).

Teachers play close attention and follow up on individual children to mark their academic and learning progression. There is an adoption system followed by the teachers in the government schools; every year each subject teacher adopts 5-6 children from the tenth grade, complete responsibility of these 5-6 children and upbringing their academic performance lies under the purview of a particular teacher. These groups are divided with a mix of both average and below average learners, in which the average learners are made the lead of the group to engage and assist in the learning process. Vinyasa, a blueprint of exam question paper pattern is provided to the tenth graders; individual time table and follow-up of is done by the teachers with respect to the progress made by the children in each subject area.

The head madam has initiated the Apatha Samalochana initiative that intends to provide Counseling for tenth graders. A trained mental health professional interacts with the children and deals with some of the issues related to academics, mental stability, study habits, issues related to adolescent etc. This intervention is usually planned during the month of August and September of every year.

**ICT in Class rooms:** As part of ICT integration into teaching, the school has few resources like Overhead projectors, laptops etc. Occasionally teachers bring their own laptops and use UBUNTU (app/ software) to show some videos related to curriculum. Currently the school attempts make full use of the OHPs or the Laptops. However they are constrained by inadequate and inconsistent power supply to the school. The head madam and the teaching staff are aspiring to have classrooms with smart technology enabled in the coming years. With this perspective, the school is making efforts with the old boys association (alumni association) to make it a possibility. In addition, at the same time, SDMC members have to negotiate with the Power supply board to provide continuous power supply to the school.

The school has won **several awards in sports and cultural events**. The school has won a state prize (3<sup>rd</sup> position) in Kho-Kho at the state sports meet (2014-15). The school also won district level prize for Kolata (Folk dance) at the Prathiba Karanaji meet. However, participation in sports or cultural events has not been the focus of the school. The school has been awarded the *Environment Friendly School* (2016-17) by the state pollution control board .In addition the school also has a small kitchen garden , the children grow some vegetables in this yard and the vegetables are cooked and served in the mid-day meals. To further add, the school has been recognized by several NGOs and other private organizations for the services it has been providing in the area of school education.

Apart from the above, the Head Madam has been awarded a district award for bringing change in the education field (she was recognized for the efforts she had put in to transform the school which had 0% of academic performance towards a school which produces 100% results). The school has an excellent art teacher, who has been awarded several state awards for his artistic ability.

The School has a team of children under the Seva–Dala wing. The seva-dala team engages in voluntary social services in the community. For instance, they engage in community cleaning and awareness initiatives especially during Republic day, Independence Day and Gandhi Jayanti. These kind of programs show that government schools also work closely with the community and engage in small capacities to bring in some awareness (which will be missing in the case of private schools).

**The Rotary Club** has donated 32 solar lamps to the school. The school uses these lamps during the exam time, where each student from tenth grade is allowed to take a lamp to his/her home and use it. These solar lamps have of great help for the students because it helps

them to engage in their studies despite there are evidences of frequent cuts in the power supply. **Prayukthi** (a NGO) occasionally engages with the school and conducts some developmental activities and in Swacchata Programs(cleanliness) for the school. Another group known as the **Ulkadi Balaga** have donated some books for children in the past.

A special meeting for the parents of the tenth graders is held every year, before one month of 15 days prior to the finalboard exams. The purpose of the meeting is to engage parents in a discussion and sensitize them with essential parenting tips to look after the children, especially during the month of exams.

### **Committed Teachers**

The school is unique by itself, since most of the present teaching staffs of the school are serving the school from longer periods of time and there have been no issues of transfer/change of staff. This factor has enabled the head madam to build a supportive team and commitment team of teachers whose role towards the development of the school has been very critical (as mentioned by the HM). The coordination and team work among the teaching staff and HM was very much evident; it is through their continued engagement and continuousefforts that the school has been able to transform itself as the best school for academic excellence over the years.

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## Case 2:

# “Nadakavu Model” of Public Private Partnership

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The school is located within the city of Kozhikode. The school is a 124 year old government school. Currently the school is ranked amongst the top 5 government schools in the country. The school specifically caters to the educational needs of girl children hailing from the poor families (of the coastal region) and marginalised communities. The main rationale of the school is to empower women through quality education. The school stands as a successful model school for the state. The state government aspires to adopt the same model across 100 government schools of the state in the coming years. The school provides quality education of international standard by providing holistic learning opportunities to the children and empowering them as active citizens of the country. The success of the school can be attributed to the multiple interventions and initiatives taken by the MLA, interested individuals, teachers, parents and community members. Currently, the school has around 2,546 from 5 to 12 grades, and has 120 teaching and non-teaching staff

### **Unique characteristics:**

- The school places excessive emphasis on providing quality education especially for girl children. Girl children from the poor fisherman families, marginalized communities and lower socio-economic are given first and foremost importance at the time of admissions (while children from middle and higher economic strata are given admissions based on the prescribed admission criteria).
- The school has a well-developed physical infrastructure with a well-planned campus area, resourced classrooms, greener garden areas, labs, library, indoor play yard and astro-turf football/hockey stadium, spacious canteen/ dining hall etc. Classrooms are assisted with the latest computer technology and teaching aids; well-resourced science and computer labs- which aim at equipping the children with practical learning (such labs are a rare sight in government schools); the school has an indoor play area and an hockey/football stadium with astro-turf that provides sophisticated facility for children to engage in the sports activity. The school can be referred as one of the highly equipped government schools in the country.

- The school places more importance on the **Holistic development** of children. The school offers instructions both in English and Malayalam medium. The classrooms have a teacher pupil ratio of 1:60. The school has been providing wider learning opportunities for the children both in **academic** and **co-scholastic areas**. For instance, the school runs a School Ambassador Team which has 52 ambassadors who represent the school in all its activities and initiatives. 2 children from each grade are selected to be part of the school ambassador team. With respect to academics, the school has introduced certain initiatives to uplift the academic involvement and performance of the weaker/below average learners. To meet the need, the school runs remedial classes; night class and residential camps and teachers are involved in occasional home visits.
- In order to empower the students further, the school has introduced Skype interaction with Wycombe Abbey School, London, UK. During this interaction the students interact and exchange topics and ideas that are relevant to each other. This interaction is one of the instances through which students of the school are getting empowered, apart from academic learning.

### **Intervention:**

- The school was transformed by the **PRISM** initiative that was initiated by the region's MLA. PRISM stands for Promoting regional schools to international standards through multiple interventions, which is the initiative of the state government. The Leadership of the local MLA and the PRISM initiative have jointly planned multiple interventions to uplift the quality of this school. **Faizal and Shabana** foundation has made huge investments, for instance Rs. 16 crore was spent only for the infrastructure development of the school. Thus an intervention from outside the school has resulted in GHSS being a model school for the state.
- **School Development Committee (SDC)** plays a crucial role in the functioning of the school. The committee has members who are appointed by the government, the MLA is the chairman of the committee, divisional heads of the school, three students from each section are the members of the SDC. Any decision pertaining to the school are discussed amongst these members. Interestingly, students are involved in the SDC and are empowered to involve in the discussions.

- Apart from SDC, the school also has a **policy making team**. The role of the Policy Making Team is to envision the future of the school and its development. The team meets once in every month. The team consists of one educational expert nominated by the MLA and one person from the Faizal and Shabana Foundation.

**Awards and recognition:**

The school has won several National level awards for Sports, Cultural, Best Green School, and Teachers Awards, to name a few, Best School award (2017); Swaccha Award, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize by MHRD; Best teacher awards

Some of the State Level awards are for Sports, Cultural, Best School, Green School, and Teachers, to name a few, Best school award given by Brain Field Educational Magazine (2017); Harida Vidyalaya award by pollution control board Kerala (1 lakh) (2017); Best Vocational Teacher award by NCERT (2009); Best Teacher award by private agency (20117)

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## Case 3:

# A school driven by Vision Sustained due to Discipline and Commitment, Soladevanahalli, Nelamangala

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Soladevanahalli is a village located 15 Kms from Nelamangala now a part of Bangalore City. A Kannada medium high school is situated in this village. This is the only school serving around 22 surrounding villages. Most children who study in the nearby Higher Primary school join this school for their High school studies. The students coming to this school have a Kannada background.

The school has a large open space in which an open auditorium is built. There are around 7 rooms in all. The school strength is only 110 students distributed across eighth, ninth and tenth standards. The infrastructure is not something attracts people to the school. In fact, four rooms are on a temporary structure which is a cause of concern for many teachers. The class rooms are small sized with desks, benches and black board. There is a computer laboratory with 14 computer systems which are operational. Besides, there are some systems which are under repair.

There are seven teachers and except one teacher all of them have a post graduate degree with an experience of more than 8 years. Teachers are local residents and reside about a maximum of eight kilometres from the school.

The school has won many laurels due its consistency in the results in the board exam. In the previous three years the school has secured 100%, 96% and 98% results. One of the students secured 96% in the board exam which is a very rare instance especially when a child is studying in Kannada medium. The student comes from a background where both parents have no education. The student has also stood first in her college despite shifting from Kannada to English Medium. There were instances of children from other private schools coming and joining this school. The school has outstanding sports teams which have participated in various district level sports events and have won several prizes in competitions. The school has actively taken part in PratibhaKaranji, a cultural event of the Department of school education.

### **Driven by a Collective Vision....**

The school was established by a philanthropic family not educated but who was practicing traditional medicine, this family stood by and fought for the construction of the school when there were no schools in any of the neighboring villages. Children had to travel long distance if they had to pursue their high school education. The entire community members supported and till today they have kept the school very close to their heart and work passionately for its growth. The family right from the inception recognized the children with highest scores and present them with a gold ring, this practice has passed two generations in the family and is in practice till day. Community members have a very strong association with the school and have appointed a computer faculty by paying salary on a monthly basis. The school has a very strong School Development and Management Committee which is in all praise for the faculty for their dedicated work. These members visit the school almost daily and respond to any needs of the school. An environment of mutual trust and respect between the faculty and the community rests which has been the biggest factor pushing school in the upward direction.

### **Discipline and Commitment as Core Values ....**

The distinctiveness of the school emanates from only one fact pronounced evidently by all stakeholders of the school which is the discipline followed in each and every aspect of school management. School timings, plans and schedules, internal performance measures, test and examination schedules, work delegation to students and faculty, Conducting meetings, tracking absenteeism, tracking dropouts, documentation etc. are methodically planned and followed. Some of the data are computerized but not all. The documentation of the minutes of meetings are documented in a very detailed way. Also the visit to houses of absentee children, the leave notes are all documented with detailed notes.

The SDMC meetings minutes are recorded in detail coupled with action plans. Further action taken on each point of the plan of action are written and discussed with details. This kind of a detailing brings a kind of commitment to what is planned and how to implement the plans.

### **Committed to Time and Schedules**

Faculty arrive at the school one hour before the commencement of school. They have time to plan their day before students arrive. On closure faculty leave the premises one hour after the children leave the school. Due to this, there is a meaningful interaction amongst the faculty and the head teacher.

Though formally the head teacher plays a leadership role, there is nothing like an authority exercised by the head teacher. She has a very systematic approach and she arrives before the faculty comes to school. She is open to new ideas and manages unassumingly. Faculty, students and parents maintain a personal rapport with her. There is no force nor grievance from either side. The entire school including the parents and community members has one single voice and all of them ensure discipline and keep discipline in the forefront. The present head teacher had joined the school just four years back, but the track record of the school has been consistent all through its existence.

The head teacher along with other teachers makes personal calls to the parents when the child has not come to the school in time. Parents are also aware of the practice and some parents make it a point to call the teachers before they could receive the call. Teachers visit the houses of children who are unable to come to school for more than three days. Parents are as concerned as the teachers regarding their Child's absence. If a student has no means of transport to reach the school, the teachers pick up the children in their own vehicles and bring them to school.

### **Positive Behavior**

The eighth and ninth standard students are given the work of cleaning the school and maintaining the garden. These children come to school early and they sweep and clean all class rooms. They water all the plants in the morning and this they do it very enthusiastically and treat it as an opportunity and a matter of pride. The school has not employed class 4 employees and all the work is delegated amongst faculty and students. The commitment of the students is appreciated in daily prayer meetings. Regarding the maintenance of building, garden and premises all stakeholders share their responsibilities and exhibit a sense of ownership. The principles of positive behavior percolates from the Community to the School Development and Management Committee, to the Head teacher, to the teachers and finally to the students.

### **Creative Teaching Techniques**

The teachers have always thought of various creative ways for teaching the students especially the students in the 10<sup>th</sup> standards. The head teacher in consultation with the other teachers decides on different teaching techniques for students. They have grouped the students into teams and assigned mentors (teachers themselves) for the teams who will be constantly monitoring the student's progress. There were instances where, on National

holidays, after the celebrations, there were extra sessions to make sure the students are not wasting time the rest of the day. During the 10<sup>th</sup> standard board exams, the students are asked to attend school during their examination break days so that the teachers can help them in the last-minute revisions. Every day, during the prayer assembly sessions, there are Q&A sessions related to the subjects, and this is religiously followed with a time table. The slow learners are taken special care in the school and they are paired with the other students to help them cope with learning.

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## Case 4:

# A School par Excellence...GHSS, Karuvarakundu, Kerala

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The Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS), Karuvarakundu is located in the malappuram district of Kerala. Karuvarakundu is a small town with a total area of 64.2 KM<sup>2</sup>, the town is largely covered with tea and rubber plantations; and inhabited by blacksmiths. The GHSS is located amidst the green plantations and is free from the external man made disturbances.

The school was started in the year 1962 with a primary focus of identifying slow learners. Indeed, the school has a well-developed infrastructure that supports and caters the needs of children with special needs (CWSN). Over the years, the school has built its fame for academic excellence. The school is known for its highest enrolments and academic standards; every student in the school either participate in academic and co-academic areas. The school currently caters the academic needs of 3,480 students who are placed in grades ranging from 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>. These students are particularly hailing from other backward classes. The head master of the school stated that about 95% of the students enrolled in the school are from OBCs. Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe's communities.

The school has imbibed the practice of peer group learning.

The school runs a program called as the *Sneha Sparsha*, which aims at providing aid for the deserving. As part of the Sneha Sparsha programme, 10 houses were provided with electricity connections made by the students themselves. These students are given professional training under the school's initiative "*my school is my life*". There are students who have been successful in learning the concepts taught in the school to their houses, and there were three such students who were successful in getting electrical connection to their houses, which lacked prior electric connections.

There are subject clubs and co-curricular clubs for each grade, there are 13 such clubs that contribute towards student's academic performance. These clubs provide opportunities for the students to show case their talents at the state and national level. The *nadampati* (folklore club) and *matlapatu* (visual arts club) had won national level prizes for the school. The school is proud of its student's participation in the national and state level sports events. In

sports, the school's athletic team had won the 3<sup>rd</sup> prize in the national levels sports meet. Additionally in order to encourage more, the school has also initiated summer Programs for football training as well.

Given its emphasis on student's learning and academic excellence, the school has received parallel support from the local community as well. 40 lac rupees was raised as funds for the schools by parents, public, alumni, teachers etc. With the aid of the funds, 46 classrooms with projector screens are constructed. Thus the school, despite being a government school, is also known for having smart classrooms that enable learning in a better manner.

Teaching in the school is completely child centric and creativity is the focus. More emphasis is given on activity-based learning. Teachers of this school attend a 10-12 day training programme during the vacation time, so that the working days are not lost. The state education department of kerala plans this training.

Subject Resource Groups (SRG) are formed at school level, where teachers interact with the experts from state council for education, research and training (SCERT) about the pedagogical practices and content for teaching. The head master of the school supervises all the classrooms and obtains frequent feedback from the students and teachers.

From the last ten years, the school has maintained a pass percentage of 99% at the SSLC board exams. The students are encouraged to participate in other exams (apart from school exams) as well, the students take part in merit-cum exam, USS, NMS exams, these exams provide scholarship for the students.

In the year 2010, the school had started the teacher driven project in order to transform and increase the academic performance of the students especially in the area of mathematics. In order to make it a possibility most of the teachers self-enrolled themselves to the departmental teacher training Programs and started transferring the learning in their classrooms through individualized mentoring for the students.

*Snehatheeram*- an initiative to boost the academic performance of the students has been a successful intervention. Snehatheeram has formed 21 local area clusters, which involves passedout students, ex-teachers of the school and 1 Grama Panchyat member. These clusters engage in providing extended services of the school by conducting *night classes* for students who were academically poor. The result of this effort has shown a gradual increase in the performance of the students and the overall pass percentage of the school has increased over the years.

The Parent-Teacher association (PTA) has been of great support to the school; the PTA has provided support to build school infrastructure and a large library with approx. 10,000 books. The school has created a small library in each of its classrooms; the library contains sponsored books, academic and non-academic books as well. The classroom libraries are maintained and looked after by a student librarian. To encourage the reading habit in students, the school follows a prescribed schedule and a library hour assigned every week in the timetable during which children engage themselves in reading activity. Additionally, to encourage the students in reading and writing, the state government will award a sum of Rs.200 for the best book review through its Prathiba Granthasala initiative. Thus, the teachers in the school encourage the students to actively participate in reviewing the books as well.

The school is also inclusive in its approach; it has 64 differently-abled children. The school has a specialized block and classroom for Children with Special Needs (CWSN). The school has created a park, which provided horticultural therapy as an intervention for these differently-abled children. The park is filled with trees and plants that are rich in medicinal values and differently-abled children are given continuous therapy in this park. A donation of 50,000 is provided by the RMSA to the school in order to develop infrastructure for the CWSN. Thus, the school houses a well-developed facility for CWSN at the district level.

Government schools in Kerala are encouraged to develop a plan for their respective schools. In this regard, the GHSS School has come up with a documented master plan for the school for the next ten years. The state government has awarded the school with the *Best School Plan award* at the district level and the plan is further taken for consideration.

#### **Amma Library:**

The Amma Library was introduced in the academic year 2018. The main rationale behind it is to imbibe the culture of reading in the homes of the students. Since family is the basic unity of the society, it is seen as a place that provides a convenient environment to further nurture reading habits amongst its children. Thus, mothers of all the children/students are invited to the schools and encouraged to engage in some reading activity. The school opines that this initiative aids in building the relationship between the mothers and the school, currently there is some response but the school is confident that it will gradually increase and enhance the relationship further.

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## Case 5:

# A Success Story of Multiple Interventions: The Eco friendly School at Kadashethalli

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The school is located in the Kaadshethalli village in Tumkur district of Karnataka. According to DSERT Karnataka, this school is considered to be one of the best schools in the State in terms of infrastructure, academic performance and management. It is the co-ed school catering to the needs of the children belonging to socio-economically backward families from the surrounding 28 villages. The school has around 300 students including Anganwadi, LPS, primary and high school. Currently, from 6th to 8th school has both Kannada and English and Anganwadi. It has 6 permanent teachers, 2 are guest teachers and other 2 are on deputation. The two important factors which has contributed for the success of the school is the efficiency of internal management and external agency in terms of adoption by the individual person. Beyond the institutional support the school gets, there is a sheer human spirit working in form of teachers with a goal to impart good quality education to the students. The teachers and management efforts is equal reciprocated by the students in terms of their holistic outcomes.

### **Best practices**

- Every Saturday school celebrates the day as '**Non-book day**' wherein, the children are needed to bring their books and they will engage in various activities in the new built well equipped auditorium.
- The students lagging in their performance are mentored by the higher-class students.
- The government events like Independence-day and Republic day is organized by the students and they also organize the events like Farmers day. The teachers only organize the opening and the union-day of the school.
- To inculcate the **leadership quality and confidence** among students, the yearly elections are conducted, in which the students elect the candidates who will become Chief Minister and Deputy Chief minister along with their cabinet ministers. The responsibilities delegated to students have helped school in maintaining discipline and managing the systems efficiently.

- The school has printed the posters and created the videos about its best practices, this is helping in getting more and more students enrolled.
- The ‘**PoshakaraSabhe**’ conducted thrice a year and “**Samudayadatta Shale**” conducted twice in a year, helps in terms of coordination and cooperation between the parents and the school management. It helps in upraising the parents on students’ academic performance.
- Seminars are conducted on history, politics and other subjects; for the purpose of seminars students are grouped and guided by the teachers and they are encouraged to speak in the seminars. This has helped the students develop interest and have better outcome in their academic performance. This has also removed the stage fear among students.
- Every event of the school is documented both as a material and soft copy.
- The **Nali-Kali activity** is successfully carried out in this school, as they sit in the group learning, through mutual interaction they will interact about their parents, local areas etc.
- Teachers teach students through different methods like drama, storytelling etc.
- There is a community ownership of the school, SDMC members closely cooperate with school authorities. The SDMC members have also assisted the parents from 28 villages to make transportation arrangements for their children to come to school.
- **Guest speakers** from different walks of life are invited to the schools to interact with the children about the Gandhi, Vivekananda, etc. The speakers belong to different professions, for instance farmer, bank managers coming and share their ideas this gives exposure to students about different professions.
- School brings out ‘**Kruti Samputa**’ a progress report of every student and shared with the parents.
- School encourages various cultural activities, it has a trainer to train the students in Drama.
- The entire school is powered by the roof top **Solar Panels** sponsored by the HAL.
- English medium in the school is a main reason for the increasing enrolment.

- Every student is given a **English pocket dictionary** to assist them in gaining English language skill.
- In ‘**Janana Vignana**’ event science videos are shown through projectors.
- Under “**Sneha Kalika Karyakrama**” an effort is made to understand the students academic status, for this they are grouped into 20 students each containing new students and the older ones. In this, students interact with each other’s on the subject and try to get their doubts clarified. The weak students are identified by the group leader and mentored by the teachers.

### **Intervention**

- The intervention of local leader Satish got the school transformed from a two-small building into a large complex with multiple class rooms catering to Aganwadi, LPS, Primary and High school to a well-equipped science and computer labs, auditorium and play ground.
- The personal intervention of Satish who has adopted the school and 4 acres of land he has contributed to school has transformed the school into a model school.
- The adoptee has shown a personal interest in school’s growth, he has appointed the guest teachers through his personal income. He started the new initiatives like non-book day with the cooperation of the teachers.
- The eminent theatre personality and MP from Karnataka B. Jayashree has contributed funds under MPLAD for the school development. A well-equipped and maintained auditorium and class rooms are the contribution made by her.
- HAL has installed the rooftop solar panels, which has made the school energy self-sufficient.
- ‘**Makkalamane Samskritika Adhyana Kendra**’ NGO supports the school activities

### **Recognitions:**

School has won awards in coco, volleyball and in the International Avishakara Event the students have won prize in mathematics.

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# Case 6:

## Inspirational Leadership making the Difference....School at Kalambella, Sira

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The school is managed by the Department of Education of the state. It is located in the rural area. It is located in Sira taluk of Tumkuru district of Karnataka. The school provides co-education and has classes from 1 to 8. The school has a total 18 teachers, out of which 6 are permanent teachers, 6 deputation teachers, and 6 voluntary paid teachers (these voluntary teachers receive their salary from the SDMC and head master). The total enrolment of school is 414. The school has Kannada as it's the medium of instruction.

The school has a well developed building. The school has well ventilated classrooms, it also three separate classrooms which are used for yoga and meditation, library and computer lab. The school has boundary wall with traditional main gate. The source of Drinking Water in the school is through tube well. The school has boys and girls separate toilet facility. The school has a playground and green garden both maintained by the children.

### **Unique Characteristics/Best Practices adopted by the school**

1. Community participation: The SDMC and voluntary parents are very supportive and actively participate in the schools initiatives and programs. For instance, SDMC and the parents have raised funds to build 7 classrooms for the school. The school also has initiated the old student's association. SDMC, voluntary parents and the old students associations collectively work towards the development of the school. The headmaster has forwarded his efforts to formalise and have PTA for the school.
2. The Head master has been the main driver for the development of the school; the head master is equally supported with a good bunch of teachers in the school. The head master also take additional initiatives through which he engages the community members, parents into the day to day activities of the school.
3. Good physical infrastructure regarding classrooms, computer lab, yoga and meditation classroom, library room, one smart classroom in general, playground, green garden, midday meal kitchen, open function hall and toilets. School's infrastructure has been an attractive feature of the school, which has made hundreds of parents to enroll their children to the school.

4. Child centered and activity oriented pedagogy adopted ( Ex : Chattuvatikaya kajane).  
The school provides students' performance progress card issued and follow-up and checkups. No other government school provides marks card/progress card. The headmaster has initiated this move and the children, parents feel a sense of accomplishment and they have developed a positive feeling.
5. One of the distinct and attractive features of the school is that, the school has introduced LKG and UKG English medium, despite being a government school. Introduction of pre-primary classes has indeed resulted in increased enrolments for the school. This idea was initiated by the Head Master and equally supported by his teachers and community members.
6. The school has a total student enrolment of 414 at the primary level. Most of the students come from the socially and economically backward family (OBC/Sc/St).
7. The school has a good Library space which has 3000 books, daily reading books and summary delivery in prayer hall teachers and permanent teachers
8. The school administration along with the parents have made of transport arrangements for the children. Children from around 18-20 villages around kallambella come to the school. Currently there are 3 vans which are assisting the process of transportation and the transport facility is financed and maintained by the parents.
9. The school's HM has been awarded the best teacher award for his vision and efforts that has resulted in the raising the standards of the school.
10. Children are equally encouraged to participate in cultural activities like Veeragaase Kunitha (folk dance), JanapadNruthyaetc.

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# Photo Gallery

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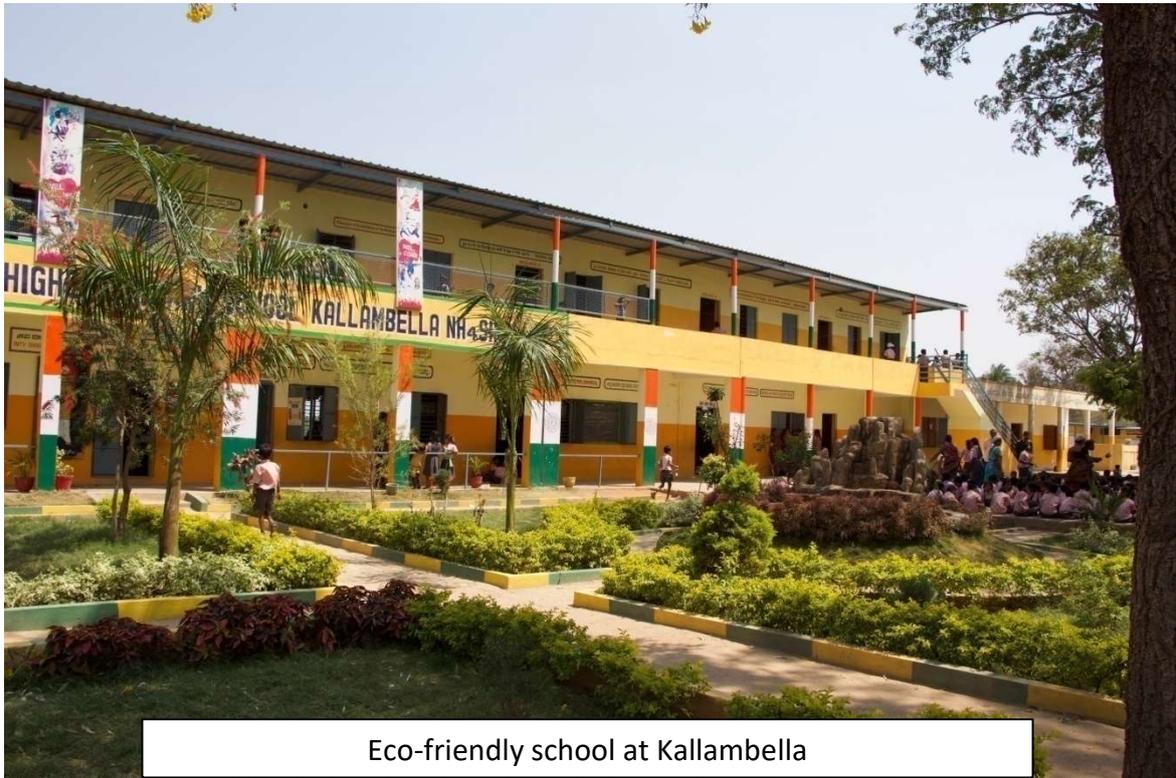




The clean campus view of



The student's clubs in a discussion with CESS Team



Eco-friendly school at Kallambella



Teachers participating in a discussion with our Team

## Centre for Educational and Social Studies

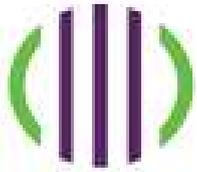
CESS was established in 2006 and is a **Registered Society** that has been working with Indian Education system from inception. CESS engaged in myriad activities in the domain of education for over a decade and positioned itself to meet the current challenges in the society keeping education as a focal point. CESS has actively engaged in various research pursuits and has successfully completed several projects in the area of education, social sciences, culture and Indic studies. CESS is committed to bringing about 'Social Transformation through and with Education' through Research, Policy Advocacy and Capacity Building in the fields of Education, Public Health and Indic Studies.

### Highlights

- Recognized as Research Centre in Management by **Visvesvaraya Technological University** (VTU), Belagavi, Karnataka.
- Entered into **MoU with NAAC** to work in the areas of data analytics, mentoring internal quality assurance cells and capacity building of colleges.
- Entered into **MoU** with Karnataka State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University, Gadag and Tumkur University to jointly conduct Research, Capacity Building of Faculty, Design and evaluation of new courses and to work jointly in many other mutually interested areas.
- Organised **conferences, seminars, capacity building workshops**, lecture series and panel discussions in collaboration with prestigious Institutions like Association of Indian Universities, Karnataka State Higher Education Council, NAAC, Bangalore University and various other Universities.
- Many **Projects** have been executed in collaboration with Azim Premji Foundation, Government of Karnataka, Karnataka Knowledge Commission, R V Educational Consortium, Institute of Public Health and the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Belgium.
- **Indic Studies** being one of the thrust areas, CESS is investigating philosophies of Sri. Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda. Also the Institute is developing and theorizing Indian Economic Model and Indian Management thought.

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