

Meeting Minutes for Asha Chennai on 28th, Apr 2024

Minutes of the Meeting held on Sunday 28th April 2024

Following were present

1. Bhaskar
2. Kalyan
3. Kasturi
4. Komalavalli
5. Paripoornam
6. Rajaraman
7. Shiva
8. Sriram
9. Sujatha
10. Sundaram
11. Usha Bhaskar

0. Ratification of the minutes of the meeting held on 24/03/24

Minutes of the meeting held on 24/3/24 were ratified unanimously

1. Staff Changes and Loans

1.1 Changes

Nothing to report

1.2 Loans

Grant of loans to two teachers and a staff member in the Sangamam project were approved for purchasing vehicles. In cases where there were some outstanding dues, the actual disbursement will be limited to topping up the loan to bring the outstanding to Rs 50,000 only.

2. Asha Chennai Financial Overview

Rajaraman presented the overall picture of Asha Chennai Financials to give an idea of the expected funds from Asha US and what our WCR might look like next year. Here are the broad numbers:

Balance at all locations : About 6 Crores.

Funding in 2023-24: About 6.2 Crores.

Existing projects budgets with 20% inflation and actuals where available – About 6 Crores.

2023-24 has been a good year primarily because of the big allocation from Asha Central Funds. Asha Chennai will need to do more to raise similar funding to keep our projects going at the same level.

3.0 Parameters of Payrise during 24-25 of all categories of staff.

It was decided to work on the same formula for teaching staff as last year, that is Rs 1000 annual increment plus a performance based increment up to 8 percent of basic salary. It was also decided that the aggregate performance based increase should not exceed 4 percent. Note that the base salary given to new teachers will also go up by the same Rs 1000 per month.

Regarding other supporting staff, office staff, field coordinators, system engineers, Software personnel etc detailed discussions were held and increases were decided upon in each case. Notification, regarding pay rise, as decided during the meeting, will be issued separately.

4. Projectwise Plans for Expansion , Contraction and Winding up.

The status of schools ProjectWise, in terms of providing regular teachers, taking up Karadipath training, and CS training was reviewed.

Given the scope of our fund-raising and the balance, we are planning to keep control over the growth of various projects. Here are some broad plan we all agreed upon.

Regular Teachers Maintain at same level or reduce at all projects.

Computer Teachers / Overall Schools Sangamam, Pearl and Thulasi to maintain at same level.

Cauvery, Poorna Vidhya and Mirzapur may expand a bit. Couple of teachers each.

KaradiPath Continue expanding at all projects. It may also be newly launched at Poorna Vidhya this year.

The main expansion is going to be in the various ACE variants and RTCs. RTCs will be limited by our ability to hire teachers. Funding for that will be coming largely from Pravartak. As for ACE, we will be launching ACE v2 with another 50 schools. Other variants of ACE will be launched with appropriate permissions and funding from the government.

5. Projectwise Delineation of Amazon funded items and the rest . Norms of expenditure for items like Annual day, Stationery material, School Uniform, Excursion , Teachers' Uniform and Teachers' excursion.

Lie the budgets for 2023-24, the following things are covered in Amazon budget: Students excursion. The following things are covered in the project budget: Blackboard painting, mats, sports material, KaradiPath related costs. The following things will be covered for the students/schools in both budgets as required: meeting expenses, assessment costs, stationery materials, teachers' excursion and uniform, etc. We agreed to stick to the same norm for the common items as used in the Amazon proposal.

6. Budget Proposal Manigal

Usha Bhaskar presented the Budget Proposal for Manigal and it was suggested that purchase of 2 laptops could be added. It was suggested line items against which no expenditure was incurred during 23-24 could be rationalised. Usha Bhaskar stated that revised budget proposal will be submitted for approval in the next meeting.

7. Project Proposal for Right Start 2024

Rajaraman stated that it was expected nearly 150 teachers could join. Also teachers from Olcott Memorial and Gandhi School Puducherry were expected to participate. He therefore sought approval for Rs 8,20,000 as against Rs 5,00,000 last year. Of this Rs 250,000 will be covered by Amazon for its share of these training costs. It was duly approved

8. Demo and update on some IT work done recently Reporting Mechanisms for ACE and Explore

The meeting placed on record its appreciation of the work done by Gomathy and her team on developing and implementing software to streamline and automate internal processes like preparing routine reports both for internal use and for the external agencies like Amazon . It is noteworthy that now we have a more robust system of accounting for our assets like PCs, Laptops and other devices by introducing unique Asset ID and QR code for the same.

9. Updates from CS Assessment , written assessment grading/processing and Asha Impressions held on 16 th Inst.

Rajaram explained the progress made in preparing and administering a standardised format of Assessment in learning outcome in CS courses which are conducted in schools up to class 8. The Assessment is aligned to the curriculum Asha has published. Assessment consists of both pen and paper test and also hands-on test on laptops and PCs. Since the number of laptops is not adequate we have selected a list of certificate schools where this will be conducted formally with the idea that all the schools we eventually move to this list of certificate schools.. CS Assessments were also administered to RTC students and it is heartening to note they did well.

Grading of the written assessments for all Schools except for schools from Rajatalab was complete and processing was also done. Getting answer papers from Rajatalab was delayed. Grading is almost over.

Rajaraman gave an account of Asha Impressions held on 16th instant hosted by Amazon in its World Trade Centre at Perungudi. Most of the schools we support in TN participated, 752 presentations were made and 218 programming projects were showcased. All in all it was a resounding success.

10.0 Updates and decisions related to Rajatalab and Mirzapur.

Sujatha apprised the team about the proposal that has been submitted for the Rajatalab project to Austin chapter. This has been submitted for a total of Rs 26.8 Lakhs to support the existing set of teachers and schools plus 2 more teachers. As per Austin chapter's policy we are expecting only funding to cover 75% of the requirement.

For now the monitoring and leading of the content/curriculum effort of the project will continue to be managed by the steward Sujatha and we will not be engaging anyone else for the same.

Sujatha is taking stock of the progress of the project on various fronts like CS assessments, project submissions etc. The major progress this year has been in the conduct of the oral and written assessments in all the schools right up to the Eighth standard.