

Short Article

Importance of School Management Committee in Managing Schools by Wg. Cdr. RK Mandal (Retd.)

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The Government of Indian has mandated constitution of School Management Committee placed below the Trust or a Society as the governing agency for administration and effective management of a school. Importance of School Management Committee in managing schools by Wg Cdr RK Mandal featured in Volume 3, issue 4 (2018) of Journal of Advanced Research in English & Education, highlights this important regulatory aspect of School Management Committee (SMC) in ensuring standards and time-tested management principles adopted to synergise its efforts.

Department of School Education and Literacy under the Ministry of Human Resource & Development (MHRD) Govt of India is the central regulatory authority for issue of policy on school education in the country. It lays down the constitution and framework of a SMC. It is binding on an SMC to be aware of the guidelines for composition and main functions as enumerated in policy issued by the State. Much emphasis has been given vide section 21 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009. This act envisions an SMC as a basic unit of a decentralised model of governance with active involvement of parents in the functioning of a school. SMCs build a critical bridge between the parent's community and the school, playing a pivotal and additional role of providing an oversight in schools to ensure all basic requirements are met as per the laid down guidelines.

The main stakeholders, as per the author, being students, staff, parents, society and the government are duty bound to work on strengthening, supporting and improving the level of community engagement in SMCs. Since schools mould the future of young minds, SMCs are not just limited in providing the basic requirements, but need to evolve and progress on enabling solutions by creating a healthy environment and conditions to bring all stakeholders towards achieving a collaborative and effective school development plan. It is incumbent on all stakeholders to take this responsibility to deliver in the progress of the school as a core and integral member of a SMC.

The author explicitly mentions about functional areas that require synergy in overall management and administration of schools. Instead of ratifying the completion of a project by the board or trustee of a

school, it is but obligatory and binding on the SMC to get involved in the daily progress and monitor on-going tasks and activities in the school on a regular basis. Much of the trust by the SMC is given by the members on an official and portfolio capacity. The members are required to oversee the daily functioning of the school to get involved in the knowhow of things. This is pertinent in all state, society and private run schools.

Quality control and accreditation by quality standards is an essential requirement to keep abreast with industry yardsticks and for necessary affiliation with government regulations. Many such bodies like the Bureau of Indian Standards and National Accreditation Board for Education & Training (NABET) are authorities for accreditation standards on quality school governance.

Another facet of SMC is the prudent handling of legal cases. School management board and trustees must be fair and just in cases of public dealing being proprietor for school administration. Adherence to such legal principles and natural justice is an important aspect to deal with court cases and grievance of staff members and redress their problems.

SMCs focus on holistic development of schools, which not only account to ensure good school infrastructure, but also monitor financial and academic management and academic progress of children. This brings in transparency in the educational system and school administration. SMCs are responsible to decide upon and provide the initial corpus, control funds and annual budget, to decide the fee and pay structure of schools as per laid down parameters, to consider requirement of financial assistance, sanction grants, scrutinize and approve the balance sheet and annual audited statement of accounts and consider any kind of expenditure on infrastructure, buildings or purchase of property etc.

It is imperative to mention that progress and performance of schools, directly correlates to the financial health of a school. Any school which has recorded growth and shown substantial progression over a period of time is bound to have proper and judicious utilisation and maintenance of funds and financial records, invested for long term gains and planned for future development. For this, it is important for any school to have a properly constituted SMC to foresee future growth and development as per laid down rules and regulations.

Good practices for school administration as suggested by the author can be adopted by SMCs to ensure that common yardsticks are maintained across different schools. SMCs must pledge and undertake the noble task of effective administration of schools on a regulated and monthly basis with proper follow up and feedback. They must

monitor the functioning of schools through preparation, recommendation, implementation and monitoring of school development plan, monitoring of allotted grants, quarterly review of budget and performance of other functions as ordered from time to time. "An investment in knowledge pays the best interest", as quoted by Benjamin Franklin is the apt perspective of a SMC which in good cause can mould the future of the nation, with equal drive and fervour to empower itself and deliver to the rising educational aspirations of the young minds.

References

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