

## **Initiative 42**

### **Leading Infrastructural Development of the School Building during the Pandemic**

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#### **The School Context**

GHS is located in Dimapur urban block of Dimapur district of Nagaland. It is managed by the Department of Education. It is located in Urban area. The school is Co-educational.

#### **Challenges faced due to School Closure**

At the start of the year 2021, many more students passed their Class IX exams than in previous years due to the online examination format necessitated by the COVID-19 situation. This presented the problem of lack of classroom space for those students as they moved up to Class X since previously there had been only one classroom allocated for Class X students. This gave rise to an urgent need for a new classroom for the new Class X section. So, it was decided to approach the Lengrijan Village Council and ask for their permission to build a new classroom as well as for their assistance in the construction of the same. As a result, we utilized the school fund from the collection of admission fees along with Rs 30,000/- a donation from the Lengrijan Village Council to construct the classroom building between the end of January, 2021, and the beginning of February, 2021.

#### **Innovative Leadership Practices for mitigating learning gaps**

Additionally, there was a need to build a connecting roofed-walkway between the two existing school buildings on the campus. During rainy season, teachers and students were subjected to the rain when walking between the two school buildings. To solve the problem, it was decided to build a roofed- walkway, and the same was constructed in February, 2021. This will provide much needed shelter from the wet weather for everyone in the school. This improvement to the school facility was much praised by both teachers and students alike as it provided a simple solution to a problem that was affecting the smooth running of classes, as well as safeguarding students' and teachers' health during the rainy season.

The classroom allocated for Class IX previously had an occupancy capacity of 70 to 80 students where more than 100 students were being squeezed in due to a lack of

availability of space and classrooms. Adjacent to that classroom was a small utility closet where old benches and tables were being stored. Seeing the need for a much bigger space for the Class IX students, it was decided to remove the old benches and chairs from the closet space and demolish the wall adjoining the classroom and the closet to join the two rooms and make a unified, bigger space for the Class IX students to comfortably sit and learn. This was also done during the Covid-19 lockdown period.

The school had an entire room allocated for the library which was not being optimally utilised due to the very few books that had been collected so far. Thus, it was decided to properly arrange all the available books onto a shelf and keep them in the office where students could still access them when needed. However, the room previously allocated as the library room was then converted to a room where the Automobile vocational subject can be taught as there was previously no room available for teaching that subject.

Similarly, the room previously allocated as a computer room was also not being optimally utilised as the school only had one computer and one photocopy machine. Thus, it was decided to move the machines to one corner of the room and utilise the majority remainder of the room for a space to conduct the Retail vocational subject as there was no room before where that subject could be taught.

Thus, the challenges that the school faces with the lack of classrooms have been successfully overcome, for the time being, making space and a decent learning environment for the students.



To encourage continued learning among the students even during the lockdown period, the school ensured that students were able to participate in learning and community activities (while maintaining proper safety measures such as social distancing, wearing of masks and use of hand sanitizers).

The School organised an awareness session for the students on water harvesting, personal hygiene and safety. Students were called to the school class-wise for few days and taught the importance of washing their hands, using hand sanitizer, and appropriate use of face masks. The teachers showed the students how they should wash their hands and for how long, how to properly apply hand sanitizer, and how to properly wear their



masks. Students were called to school in small batches and taught the importance of physical fitness for their health. The sports teacher showed them a few exercise routines they can do to keep themselves fit and healthy. The school conducted a phase-wise essay writing competition on the topic “A future without plastic waste” in which students were encouraged to use their learning from their social science and science class and apply it to real-world applications and how they could affect change in the world around them with their own capacity in their own lives.

### **Way Forward**

We aim at working on establishing better linkages with the community and create a database of all children in our school so that we can be better prepared if in case the need arises. We expect a better coordination among teachers and students during online interactions.