

Power of Alumni in KPS Rayarakoppalu

By SSK Research Team

Introduction

Alums are an asset for any institution. Leveraging alumni support can open many opportunities for the institution. Government school in Rayarkoppalu was established in 1944. The school is located in Rayarakoppalu village of Aluru taluk in Hassan District. The school is amidst a lush green environment with natural scenery and greenery around. Initially started as a primary school, this government school now provides facility of classes to students from nursery to 12th grade. The school had enrolled more than 600 students for 2019-20. The results of the students in SSLC exam, which is also considered an important benchmark, has been 100% for the last two years.

The increase in enrollment and the achievement of 100% in SSLC can be attributed to mainly to the staff, Senior students Association, and parents who joined for the betterment and development of the school. The KPS notification of this school has also helped for stronger ties with alumni and administration.



Challenges

KPS Rayarkoppalu has seen tremendous increase in enrolment in the recent years. However, this was not case until 2016. The student enrolment was low due to private competitors. The school infrastructure was not good enough to provide the quality education. One of other factors which influenced decreasing enrolment rate was the low SSLC and PUC result in 2015. The gainers of this decreasing enrolment trend were the private schools in the 500-meter surrounding area. This was an alarming information for the school, and the staff realized the situation and actively planned to strengthen the school in all the aspects. K C Bhyrappa, the principal of the school, Mr Mahadeva- Vice principal of the school along with

the teacher Mr Devaraj penned down the school action plan. This was the beginning of the planning for alumni meeting and leveraging the contributions of alumni's.

Bringing Together

Being the oldest school in the area, KPS Rayarkoppalu has been the school where majority people from the village studied. Some had moved out of the village and some had settled there. Needless to say that the number of alumni's was high in number. In Mr Devaraj's words "In order to ensure community participation and ownership of the school, we did not restrict alumni's participation only to SDMC membership. We started measures like giving priority during admission for alumnis' children and many more. We tried to show that there is a sense of importance given. The next natural step for us was to start an alumni association".

The initial meeting planned by the school authorities, parents and old students was attended by only 15 participants. This meeting laid the founding stone for the association. The association President and Vice President were selected in this meeting. In this meet, it was agreed to organize next meeting on 15th August, and was called *Kudala Samagama*. The members prepared the invitation cards and created massive awareness in the surrounding villages about the alumni meet. The invitation was given to each household and efforts were made to spread the importance of every participant or member in the meeting. The result of this awareness drive was the participation of more than 150 member in the meeting and new movement was started to bring them in the association with the help of technology.

Alumni Network

With the advent of social media, alumni relationship has taken a different flavor altogether. KPS Rayarakoppalu has also started to harness the power of alumni through various



networking platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp. School management created school pages in social networking sites called KPS RAYARKOPPALU. Now, 5000+ alumni are associated, and all are contributing to the school. The alumni association is headed by President Mr. M B Rajanna and Vice President Mr Chandrashekar. An accountant is also designated within the group. Meetings are fixed on first Monday of every month to discuss and plan for the activities. The minutes are documented for further action. The association works as a group and they are approached by the staff when they face any problem. Donors receipt book is also maintained to ensure transparency.

KPS as an opportunity

Rayarkoppalu Government School was renamed as Karnataka Public School in 2017-2018. The KPS provides education under one roof from pre-primary to pre-university with the aim of achieving improved learning competencies. The necessary support to academic and administrative aspects are given utmost importance. The KPS notification increased motivation levels of the alumni and school staff. With the support of everyone, the school has developed a School Master Plan for KPS to get support from the department and donors.

Pre-Primary

Rayarkoppalu Government School planned to provide pre- primary education (LKG and UKG) facilities at their premises in 2016-17 (before the notification of KPS). The alumni association actively took up the challenges like setting up of the class, teachers etc. School staff and alumni members had an exposure visit to the *Bannavara* school to educate themselves on how to open and run the preprimary section. At present the LKG and UKG sections are running with 30 students for both classes. The school, with the help of the association, provides all the required materials to the children such as toys, learning material, breakfast, (banana, egg, milk) and MDM.

Academic

The gaps in learning outcomes had resulted in the huge drop in pass percentage of SSLC and PUC. Teaching resources were not utilized optimally. With the support from the association, school recruited the guest teachers on honorarium basis. Association played a crucial role in getting all the materials to the school, along with branding name of the KPS - to uniforms with Blazers, school bags, white shoes and ID Cards.

Teachers have taken an initiative to conduct extra classes to SSLC students, with activity and need based approaches, so that students will not lose the interest and overburdened. Teachers are given an opportunity to explore their interest of subject to read and experiment. Alumni association has supported in setting up 7 smart classes with all the essential required materials. The staff and association efforts are clearly visible in the current results of the school.

Academic Year	Total No. of students	Total No. of students passed	Pass %
2015-16	41	37	90.24%
2016-17	22	21	95.5%
2017-18	18	18	100%
2018-19	26	26	100%

The school is also conducting spoken English class to all the students to fulfill the present demand of education sector. Around 150 students are attending the class.



Administrative

To support administration work, all kind of support and advises are given by the Alumni Association. To update and complete the administrative tasks of the school within time frame school has recruited 4 non-teaching staff as office assistants – they mainly work in distribution of materials, admission process of students and so on.

During admission, children of the alumni's are given first preference. It is done so to make alumni association stronger, and to mobilize the resources. Now, since KPS Rayarkoppalu is attracting demand for the admissions, school has made selection criteria for the pre-primary admissions as well. With the help of association support, the school authorities also distributed school blazer to children.



Transportation

One of the main pain point is the transportation facility to come to school from the remote and interior places of the village. To resolve this, the alumni association and staff came together with a solution to provide transportation facility for the pick-up and drop for the needy student. The vehicles are the personal vehicles of the parents, who also happen to be the alumnis. The transportation cost is borne by parents, all the safety and security measures during pick and drops is taken care by the vehicle owner.



Celebrations

All the national festivals and celebration of annual day is well planned to bring more alumni's to the association. This is the platform to show case the student activities and to make the students feel proud.

Other activities

Alumni association is supporting sports activities, in cleaning the surrounding of the school and many more. The association has levelled the playground for sports activities. They have also contributed in making school environment healthy.



Maintenance

A school with good strength needs maintenance of infrastructure, materials and other things to sustain the capacity of the school. Alumni's have taken major responsibility for maintenance.

Conclusion

KPS Rayarkoppalu has realized how a strong and positive relationship with their alumni's can benefit them socially, academically and professionally. Likewise, even the alumni community has realized that it's not just a mere nostalgia that they associate with their school, but it's much beyond that. Alumni network has a real-life benefit for current students. Alumni's also donate their valuable time to offer career support to current students. This enhances the students' experience and gives them the competitive edge in today's. The alumni network of a school is one of the biggest sources and opportunity to the students.