

FUTURE of INDIA Initiative - Delhi Parents First Meet

Minutes of Meeting

Date: Sunday 2nd March, 2008
Time: 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM IST
Venue: Malviya Nagar, New Delhi

Total Invitees: 56
Accepted: 14
No. of participants: 8
Absent: 6

High-level Agenda:

1. Discuss the problems that parents faced and identify the reason behind that
2. Understand the issues with DOE order dated 24.12.2007
3. Proposed solution to the key problems

Agenda Item 1: Discuss the problems that parents faced and identify the behind that

Discussion:

Sanjay: Suggested that problems that most parents are facing are common ones and it is due to the problems with the DOE order, so we can start with the order.

DK Sinha: Agree with Sanjay and as we go through the DOE points/clauses we can highlight the problems that particular point in the order caused

Varun: Definitely a better, improved infrastructure is required so that we have enough seats but this will take time and we can discuss that in subsequent meeting or probably in a bigger forum. We will keep this item open and revisit it later.

Spyder: One of the parents (Mr. Satnam Singh) suggested me some time back that we can work on some solution to improve the infrastructure of government schools so that more and more general people accept government schools as good option for their kids rather neglecting it. We can also brainstorm over it, but definitely all this needs to be supported with strong, well defined point system.

All participants promptly agree to all these points.

Spyder: Ok, so Varun and I already had some discussion on the order and we had identified some key issues in the order, so may be Varun can walk us through the order and the issues.

Agenda Item 2: Understand the issues with DOE order dated 24.12.2007

Discussion:

Varun: I shall skip the points that are proper and only talk about the problem areas, in case anyone has inputs please add.

Note: Number against each point refers to the clause in the DOE order, text in the red is the problem area.

6. i) Every school shall use the Standardized Registration Form as per Form-I, **Schools have made there own changes to it; they have sought additional information and same information in different ways leading to confusion.**

7. The school shall not conduct any interview of, or interaction with the Child/Parent **Has been flouted by almost all the schools in the form of GDs and PI, was done brazenly by the school.**

8. There shall be no overall lottery system to select/short list a child for admission. Limited use of lottery may however be adopted in case there is a tie amongst applicants. **Lottery should ideally be in the presence of Parents whose wards fate is going to be decided through it.**

9. Schedule of dates for admission.

It was mayhem should have been structured properly solution Central Point.

13. If any parent or guardian, after depositing the full fee for admission Of a child, chooses to withdraw the child from the school within one month From the date of the admission, then the school may retain the Registration Charges, Admission Fee and the tuition fee for one month Only, and shall refund all other amounts of fee or other charges. Currently being flouted by schools, where to go whom to seek?

14. (i) Neighborhood

Should have been pre defined clearly, schools have played with it unabashedly.

14. (ii) Background of the Child - Children from all social and economic backgrounds shall be equally considered for admission. The school shall make a conscious effort to admit children with special needs or from vulnerable backgrounds.

Please define vulnerable.

14. (iv) Transfer Case:

Should be applicable to Parents who have moved in to Delhi in the current year only.

14. (vi) Management Quota – School may have a management quota which shall not exceed twenty percent of the total seats available for admission in the class.

Too high make it 10% give 10 % to economically weaker sections.

Schools can also fix additional parameters but are required to stipulate a point system for each criteria/parameter.

Total Playground scenario should not be there.

16. Every school shall make public the approved admission criteria adopted by it, on its website (where available), prospectus and Notice Board.

Should be in time came too late this year the erring schools should be penalized; delayed information is as good as nothing.

17. The school shall not change, alter or modify its approved admission criteria during the admission process in an academic session.

This rule was flouted by most of the schools. Please implement strongly.

18. An Admission Committee under the chairpersonship of the Principal of the school shall be constituted with the following, as members:-

(i) Two representatives from the parent(s) or guardian(s) in the Managing Committee/ PTA;

Parents in committee – Great idea! But who are they? How are they selected? Zero Transparency!

25. A Monitoring Cell shall be constituted in each district under the Chairmanship of the District Deputy Director, who shall look into complaints regarding admission and shall also conduct regular inspections to ensure that the process is hassle free, objective and transparent.

Make it public and provide hotlines/help lines. Cell needs to be more proactive and keep an eye on the happenings in their respective areas. We are wondering why no one from current cells has ever contacted Spyder or any other parents from NAD blog and sought their opinion and understood/discussed the issues. Media is watching buy these cells are sleeping over the issues reported by parents through this medium?

26. Any non-compliance of the above Order shall be viewed seriously and Necessary action shall be taken as per the provisions of the Delhi School Education Act & Rules 1973.

Parents have been active with zero support from DOE/Ministry; they have been sitting with the Government more focused on the upcoming elections rather than address the woes of the Parents.

All participants agree with the analysis and suggested that:

- As we have observed so far, no one is listening to parent's problems and coming forward to help them, so we need a forum for parents and this forum's voice would be all parents voice. This forum will work and speak for parents. All the communication has to go in a formal way and RTI act will be used to track any unaddressed issues. We will come back later to this action item, probably in the next meeting and let's form a forum for Delhi Parents. To start with we shall assume that all participants are first members of this forum and as we expect more parents to join us in the next meeting we will discuss and try to formulate it.
- We should work on the point system that reduces the chances of any error and vulnerability.

Agenda Item 3: Proposed solution to the key problems

Discussion: Everybody pitched in with their ideas to formulate the point system given below:

General Rules:

1. Management quota seats:10% of total seats (reduced by 10%, currently it is 20% of total seats which is too high)
2. 10% of total seats (gained from management quota seats) will be reserved for economically weaker section (EWS)
3. DOE will provide schools with a pool of parameters (totaling 120 points) and schools will have pick parameters from the pool to make it total 100 points. Schools cannot define their own parameters.
4. Minority Parameter is mandatory for Minority schools; no other school can use this parameter.
5. No special points will be assigned to EWS cases and EWS has reserved seats and same points system can be used to draw the EWS list.

(Item open for discussion: Shall it be a pool of mandatory and optional parameters where few parameters can be fixed and others can be optional pool and schools can add from optional ones to make it 100 points)

Pool of parameters (draft version- to be discussed in the next Parents Forum meeting):

Total Points: 80 (Open Item: to be added more to the list make it 120, based on response, suggestions from other parents/participants)

1) Neighborhood: It should be defined properly considering the zones system and aerial distance. Neighborhood boundaries are clearly defined on standardized map and cannot be changed.

Maximum Points: 25 points

Aerial Distance Point System:

0 – 5.0 kms from school:	15 points
5.1 – 8.0 kms from school:	10 points
8.1 – 10.0 kms from school:	5 points
>10 kms from school:	0 points

Zone Point System: Delhi should be divided into zones based on map and every zone should be numbered (say Z1 - Z10) and those applying to a school (say from zone Z1) in the zone they live in (i.e. Z1 same as the school's Zone) they would get 10 points

If the school is located outside their zone (i.e. any zone other than Z1 in above case) they would get 0 points

The advantages of using combined system are:

1. Zone definition is required because distribution of schools is not uniform in the city, So if applicant is living in the same zone as the school then they get 10 points for that and if that school is within the range of 5 kms they would get 10 points extra for that or 5 points if it is with in 5-10 kms range.
2. If there is a school that is outside their zone but with in 5 kms from home, they would only get 10 points and 5 points if it is with in 5-10 kms range and no other points.

Probably more, but we need to revisit and discuss this.

2) Single Parent

Maximum Points: 5 points

3) Sibling

Maximum Points: 5 points

4) First Born Child

Type: Mandatory

Maximum Points: 5 points

5) Transfer Case – If one of the parents got transferred to Delhi within the last one year then this would be considered as transfer case. For example, if any parents seeking admissions for 2008-2009 session got transferred to Delhi between 1st Jan-2007-31st Dec 2008 would be considered as transfer case. (**Open for discussion: Should it be Apr-Mar or Jan-Dec?**)

Maximum Points: 5 points

6) Minority case (only applicable for schools listed as Minority Schools)

Maximum Points: 15 points

7) Parents Education: Only one highest degree from both the parents must be considered for calculation. 5 points if the highest degree is a bachelor degree and 10 if it is master's degree. (**Open for discussion: Degrees can be defined clearly?**)

Maximum Points: 10 points

8) Child with Special Needs

Maximum Points: 10 points

9) Handicapped/Disabled parents: 5 points if one of the parents is handicapped and 10 if both the parents are handicapped.

Maximum Points: 10 points

10) Age Criteria: Children that fall in the second half of their age group limit should get extra points as next year they would be competing against younger children if not given admission in the current year. (**Open for discussion: Can this parameter be removed later when we have enough infra to accommodate kids?**)

For Pre-School: Child's age is between 3.0 years to 3.5 years – 0 points

For Pre-School: Child's age is between 3.5 years to 4 years – 10 points

For Pre-Primary: Child's age is between 4.0 years to 4.5 years – 0 points

For Pre- Primary: Child's age is between 4.5 years to 5 years – 10 points

Maximum Points: 10 points

Summary:

We have got a good start here with this meeting and we shall involve more parents next time. We are expecting approx. 50 parents in the next meeting. We will form a Delhi Parents forum and this forum will work with parents, media and ministry to ensure that all the issues are

addresses in proper manner and on time. Will also extend help in improving the education system.

Parameters system has to be there, but it needs to be defined properly so that schools cant play with it (like few schools defined 0-15kms as one neighborhood group, some convent schools assigned 70 points for religion/social group etc.) We shall come up with pool of parameters totaling to 120 points and schools can pick parameters from this pool to make it 100 points.

We shall continue with the helpline as this is the only immediate help available as of now. We need media's help in publishing the APPEAL to submit the withdrawal applications. We are ready to devote time to submit the applications if any parents don't have free time for it.

Please advise on your input and ideas for our struggling organization We are still compiling suggestions so please keep them coming!

Key Action Items:

1. Prepare and Publish the MOMs of first meeting – Responsibility: Spyder
2. Invite the suggestions and views on the MOM from other parents through the blog. – Responsibility: Spyder
3. Plan for next meeting (with in 10-14 days from now) - Responsibility: All participants/parents
4. Discuss and close the pool of parameters in the next meeting based on inputs from other Delhi parents. - Responsibility: All participants/parents.