



STRONGER THAN EVER

Happy Teachers' Day



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HAPPY TEACHERS' DAY

Dear Teachers,

Educators inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instill a love for learning. As mentors, educators shape the character and future of not just individuals, but of the entire nation. With the evolving educational ecosystem, they have reinvented, reimagined and redesigned the teaching-learning experience successfully.

Macmillan Education salutes their passion, dedication and efforts to transform the lives of young learners every day. It is because of their enthusiasm and spirit of sharing that we are in a position to release this compilation.

**Best wishes from
Macmillan Education India**



*'The true teachers are those who help us
think for ourselves.'*

-Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

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01

Adapting to New Technologies



The first global crisis of this century has led to a complete disruption of the world. Imparting of education has been dramatically impacted during this period. How do we view, review and reshape ourselves in an uncertain post-pandemic world?

The learning that we need will be completely different from the education that we currently receive. New challenges and opportunities have emerged for educators, parents and students to look at learning in a technological, social and emotional context. We will need to update technology so that we can implement effective policies by ensuring that funds are invested in education technologies.

Amidst so much uncertainty, what is the future path we must traverse? What will our students need to know, believe and do to add value to such a rapidly changing world? Will our schools summon professional courage to shift their practices to enable the personal growth of the next generation?

The same technologies that created the Internet and the information revolution will have the power to transform education. What we now see on the horizon is Education 3.0 – a new phase in which educators will develop and implement a

transformative template for the coming years. Education 3.0 will build on Education 2.0 reforms, but add the power of cutting-edge communications, the latest pedagogical tools and collaborative technologies to equip learners for work and life. This will adequately prepare students for the future. We must give them the digital tools required to find, select, structure and evaluate the information that already permeates the life of this century.

The greatest poverty generally occurs in nations where education is not given primacy in budgetary allocation. An effective strategy for a country like ours makes it imperative to invest in 21st century pedagogies, with educational content delivered via economic wireless communications infrastructure and Web 2.0 technologies.

It will be necessary to physically equip teachers and students with better tools in the Classrooms. Increasing access to laptops and other gadgets, installing interactive whiteboards and providing fast and reliable internet access.

Technology has been playing a role in education for some time; most schools have not taken full advantage of the benefits offered by intelligent, multimedia-capable networks and collaborative technologies. To overcome significant barriers and transform

learning and meet the future, broadband access must be extended to those areas where it is currently unavailable or unaffordable.

At one level, technology connects people, but it has limitations as far as teaching and learning are concerned. This crisis has made us reflect on the inequality not only in bandwidth, and devices, which are very important but also in the fact that the parents do not have the time or ability to support their children in this venture.

Only a fraction of students across the world has moved to online learning, exposing the deep inequity in the system and opening a digital abyss. As a result of the pandemic, the economic crisis will bring about job losses across groups. The already vulnerable will be most affected. Today in India, over 90 per cent of students do not have devices that allow them to access online learning holistically. This divide will worsen, and the children from marginalized communities will be left out.

Central and state governments must create apps like Microsoft teams/zoom/google platforms, to which teachers and students should have free access, which will help in dealing with financial constraints.

Learning everywhere is evolving. With globalization, a dilution of boundaries is taking place and learning systems call for partnerships and alliances, a move from a self-centered existence to co-existence, from confrontation to interaction, from alienation to collaboration.



**Dr Ameeta
Mulla Wattal**

Chairperson and Executive Director
Education, Innovations and Training,
DLF Foundation Schools and
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India

02

Unlocking New Possibilities of Teaching-Learning Experience



World, at large, has changed during the pandemic and so has the world of education. Although the change was thrust upon us; but nevertheless, it has been

a welcome change for us as educators! The 'New Normal' has not only become a fashionable buzzword; but, it will remain a cliché till we comprehend the application of 'New Normal' within the field of education. So, let me draw a brief analogy between 'BC' (it's 'Before COVID-19' and not 'Before Christ'!) and the present day when we are back into the classrooms.

Earlier, there was regimented teacher-student interaction in a classroom; restricted 'out-of-the-box' methodology of teaching; and repetitive mode of learning for students. This was the accepted 'norm'. COVID-19 has opened innovative ways to teach, which moves away in diverging directions leading to novel ideas associated with creativity. 'Norm' of yesterday has evolved into '(New) Normal' of today. How?

First, the teachers have learnt to utilise technology to create immersive teaching by way of student-centric presentations; utilising internet to show video films on a smart-board with a click of fingers to answer any question; or create riveting role-playing among students for a given topic.

Second, 'out-of-the-box' approach to teaching has led to 'out-of-the-classroom' coaching. With flexibility to use a Tablet or a mobile phone; coverage of syllabus is not limited to the four walls of a classroom. By using individual headphones it can now be done while taking the students for a walk within the school premises; sitting in the school canteen or even on field trips. The teachers are reimagining and recalibrating to adapt to technology and address grey areas of monotonous and mundane lectures.

Third, the schools have had to shoulder the responsibility to not only provide necessary equipment for teachers; but to ensure that teachers have soft skills, such as collaboration, cooperation and complex problem-solving, which are critical to blend virtual teaching with classroom teaching.

It is thus not moving 'back' to classroom teaching; but moving 'ahead' with amalgamated learning.

Ms. Shuchi Sinha

Principal,
Billabong High International
School, Mumbai, Maharashtra

03

Spreading their Wings



The pandemic that wreaked havoc on the lives of people worldwide coerced us into finding new teaching-learning strategies. At the onset of the pandemic, parents and

the teaching fraternity were clueless about how the teaching process would continue. However, soon enough, school leaders and teachers took on the responsibility of reigniting the young minds to mitigate the education loss caused by school closures by adopting virtual platforms/technology aids to address the learning gaps.

The teachers and school leaders found themselves in front of mobile cameras while interacting with their students and delivering the concepts of the curriculum.

Thus learning became a new normal for online 21st-century learners.

Technology has been perceived as a threat by professionals in many fields and the teacher community is one of them. The pandemic allowed for the debunking of this myth as it came to the aid of teachers in continuing the teaching-learning process. It became a 'tool' used by the teachers contrary to the assumption that it would perhaps, replace teachers one day. Teachers now are working with skill and diligence to enhance young minds by using modern technology.

We, at Fort City School, successfully conducted all the co-curricular and extracurricular activities virtually. Virtual tools have emerged as a boon to expand education globally.

The challenges of the past two years have exacerbated an ever-present struggle faced by educators. It's hard not to mention the time required to forge strong bonds with students in person. Remote learning has allowed teachers to spread their wings.

"Teachers have the power to point students in a direction that can change their life trajectory—by caring, by keeping high expectations, and by making learning personalized and contextual for students," says McGrath.

Moving forward, school leaders should consider playing an active role in helping the staff develop the skills which help build such a relationship – identifying non-verbal cues from students, helping students feel validated and heard, or building rapport with students and families by asking about their lives outside of school.

Ms. Girija R Bandaru

Principal
Fort City School, Vizianagaram,
Andhra Pradesh

04

Sailing Through the High Tide



Hope, tenacity, resilience are attributes that characterise a human being. The pandemic has reaffirmed that if we gather courage and are determined to move ahead

no matter what, we are sure to pave the way forward.

It doesn't shine or snow all year round. No matter how dark the clouds, the sun always shines on the other side. The menacing clouds of the pandemic are behind us, schools have opened and much to every one's relief, are bursting with life and energy once again.

Educators cannot be rigid, puffed up with pride and arrogance, fastidiously holding on to their own views. The pandemic has reiterated the need for educators to be humanistic in their approach like never before. Indeed, teachers have boldly gone ahead and totally reinvented themselves. Be it learning to use technology or social media platforms, teachers have learnt to use their ingenuity to make their virtual classes as interesting and warm as classroom teaching. In fact, many a times, students came to their teachers' rescue and helped them tide over teething troubles, enabling them to strengthen their bonds.

One can lament over the ill effects of technology, yet we cannot deny that under

the prevailing circumstances teachers bent themselves over backwards to ensure students didn't suffer, often while undergoing anguish and personal loss themselves. Schools conducted summer camps and competitions online for students which meant teachers worked round the clock. Their perseverance and hard work have been much appreciated by parents, several of them having commented that most teachers have been more patient and tolerant than they have been of their own children when they played truant.

Confined to their homes, being constantly checked or berated by family, children felt nobody believed in them or loved them. In torment, many students turned to their teachers for moral support which they gladly extended.

Schools reopened almost after two years. In the interim, though children had grown older, for them to accept that they were two classes senior was an uphill task. That they had to sit in a classroom, be disciplined and interact with their teachers and classmates face-to-face was not easy. A child who had not attended kindergarten offline, suddenly walked into class one! Teachers once again had to dip into their endless resources of patience and empathy. The lost, scared, panic-stricken children have been unconditionally embraced by their wonderful teachers.

Why do we love books or movies with happy endings? Because we have journeyed along with the protagonists through their trials and tribulations. Seeing them emerge victorious fills us with a sense of well-being. As has been famously remarked that we are all actors playing our parts on the stage of life. Will we remember the pandemic as a dark time governed by a virus or as a period of powerful human spirit?

Life is about scaling one mountain after another, undeterred and undefeated. And I believe this is precisely what most teachers and students have done.

Ms. Sharmila Nandi

Principal,
Dr Virendra Swarup Education
Centre, Kanpur,
Uttar Pradesh

05

Grit and Poise



Multi-tasking and teaching go hand in hand. Yet, COVID-19 brought in unprecedented tasks and concerns which were faced by the teaching community undauntingly. 191 countries had shut

down all their primary and secondary schools as of mid-April 2019, affecting almost 1.6 billion children. A regenerative school ecosystem was much needed to deal with this catastrophe.

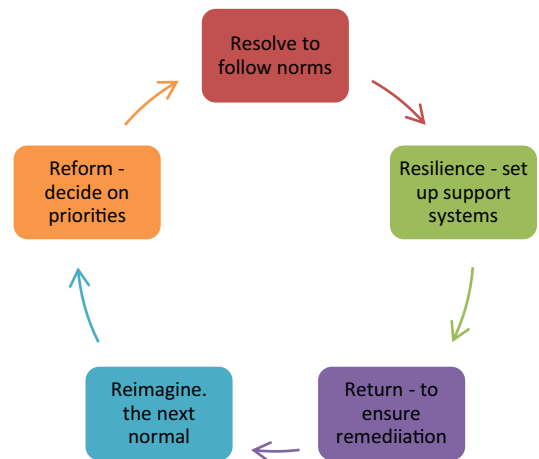
A scenario during lockdown: Ratna's school sends worksheets, videos and online material daily for learning. Using one smartphone among the family members, the parents try to help her cope with her studies. Ratna's father has just lost his job. Her mother is a housewife. They are more worried about their future than COVID-19. In such a situation, the child is bound to feel insecure and helpless. In addition, every day, the children are exposed to the news of how many have been affected, how many have died and so on.

The fear of the future and helplessness are two major factors that the teachers had to deal with. Teachers would speak to the students and parents over the phone and explain the classroom transaction process. There was an achievement lag – a summer learning loss, particularly in Math and Language skills.

Some of the teachers were at home without a textbook or reference material. A few of them did not even have computers at home to produce content for online classes. To top it all, they had to learn a new technique of delivering

lessons online. Teachers rose to the occasion and toiled without a vacation. They worked hard to meet the needs of all the students empathetically. Counsellors worked in tandem with the teachers. With the start of schools, the teachers initiated Assisted Learning programmes to help those lagging behind.

Students are back in the classroom as schools have reopened. The COVID pandemic will end but the world will not be the same. A few things will change permanently. A regenerative school would look into the following factors:



Teachers have emerged stronger, more tech-savvy, confident and empowered.

Dr. Pramila Kudva

Educational Innovator,
Mumbai, Maharashtra

06

Explore, Experiment and Excel



A teacher is a lifelong student. This statement, though it may sound like a paradox, was felt more strongly than ever by the teacher community when the pandemic came knocking on our doors in March 2020.

All of a sudden, we awakened to a new reality with uncertainty looming large in every corner. What was an unexplored territory till then for most of us had turned into a scary actuality! The age-old 'chalk and talk' methodology and interactive classroom sessions had to be replaced by technology-driven methods to teach students at a time when social distancing and lockdowns became the new norms of our lives.

Even the most tech-savvy amongst us was filled with a sense of foreboding! Well, there was no other way than to stand up to the situation and show the world what a teacher could accomplish if a situation demanded it! Yes, we faced our fears and made the best use of the resources available. Zoom meetings, PowerPoint Presentations, Kahoot, Google Forms and other terms became a part of our newly adopted vocabulary. We learnt from every source and the initial anxiety was gradually replaced by a quiet confidence. We connected with the students from the comforts of our homes. Competitions and activities had to be designed appropriately.

The parent community became an active part of the students' learning process. The inbox of the Heads of the institution was inundated with notes of appreciation and gratitude from the parents. It was relieving and overwhelming at the same time to know that our earnest effort to make the most of the situation had borne fruit!

Yet, we yearned to get back to our conventional classrooms. The warmth of connecting with our students in real was missing in the virtual mode. So, it was with a sense of joy and relief that we welcomed the news of getting back to school for real, after almost two years of uncertainty!

Yes, we are back at school, *stronger than ever*, with a better perspective of life and better equipped to adopt the best methodologies to make the teaching-learning process more meaningful and impactful.

However, one thing remains unchanged... A teacher continues to remain a student! Explore, Experiment and Excel is the mantra for success!

Ms. Jayanthi

Teacher

Sri Kumaran Children's Home,
Bengaluru, Karnataka

07

Reinventing Education Post Pandemic-Time for a Blue-Sky Vision



The pandemic upended almost all aspects of teaching-learning all at once. It tested the basic idea of instructions, especially teachers used to only classroom teaching

with poor use and access to technology. This gave us an opportunity to re-imagine all aspects of schooling from attendance, accessibility, learner control, testing, role of technology and human connectedness. As parents struggled to work with their children along with their careers, it brought to public recognition the yeoman services rendered by the teacher as a caretaker and the invaluable role of students' physical and mental wellness.

The post-pandemic era has thrown up a lot of uncomfortable questions about learning gaps, mental wellness, inequity and lack of quality. Schools need to be humanized with close contact with students' parents and the neighbourhood. The pandemic has taught us that we need closer reciprocal relationships. We cannot limit learning with prescribed curricula and pigeonhole students with standardized tests, usually testing information learnt through rote rather than knowledge and application, and hold them back based on scores in these tests and exams. This can cause extreme damage, resulting in loss of confidence and dropout.

Education, post-pandemic, must reflect the role of students in their own learning — What they learn-How they learn-When they learn. It's seen that students have rarely been considered active and intentional partners in designing their own learning, educational reforms or assessments. I was once asked by my student why schools have timetables with different subjects for 40 minutes each, leaving them confused and disconnected. Why could the school not devote a whole day to learning and practical hands-on activities in science, mathematics, language and literature, environment, and social studies and one whole day to the student of autonomous exploratory learning of the student's favorite subject? A very apt question even today as all school principals struggle with timetables.

Education in the true sense cannot be limited to in-school seat-time or homework time but be multi-access, 24/7 personalized quality education with close connectedness among educators. It needs to dismantle inequities with more public schools with quality education, supportive educators and technology.

Re-envision teacher education and provision of adequate professional support and training. Support socio-emotional wellness of students along with academic remediation to bridge learning gaps.

24/7 open resource and e-learning tools should be build within pedagogical space of schools, rather than platforms controlled by private EdTech companies. Work on global solidarity and collaboration.

Value teacher as a knowledgeable professional and community leader.



Dr. Manjula Raman

CEO, Academics and Innovation,
Royale Concorde International Group
of Schools and Lead Pedagogist,
Bengaluru, Karnataka

08

The Future – A Triad of Collaboration



One is not born a great teacher but becomes one through thoughtful, scholarly teaching. Good teaching always links information with the daily existence of the student and teachers. The challenge

of effective teaching, as measured by student learning, is to find connections that foster motivation, knowledge building, thinking, and integration of old and new information, and bridge the real and academic worlds of both students and teachers.

While there is a general feeling that learners should be given the freedom of choice to be able to access any information over the internet and social media, it is also important to keep in mind the potential risks involved and their consequences. Most importantly, freedom comes with responsibility. Schools need to allow the use of technology to those who can take responsibility to avoid any damage to students and protect the reputation of the institution.

To be able to offer freedom to students in accessing information, schools may allow one or two computers directly connected to the internet, and strictly monitor and track the usage of these computers. All other computers and devices should be connected behind the firewall. This will restrict access while also keeping the information safe.

Teachers have worked out creative and innovative ways of teaching during the pandemic. These stretch beyond the streamed monotonous lectures and include live demonstrations, experiments, and workshops.

Social media, apps and games have proven convenient places for teachers to share

insights into their classroom practice, while students can quickly exchange their learning.

These informal uses of digital media have played an important role in boosting students, teachers and parents with a bit of human contact, and additional motivation to connect and learn.

The horizon of technology is ever-expanding and hence the suggestion to schools is to become aware of information security and personal safety so that technology could be implemented to provide learning benefits to students while at the same time minimizing the risks.

The path to future success is built on a triad of collaboration and support between teachers, students, and parents in an online learning platform.

Encourage students in peer-peer relationships and make the learning environment safe. Equitable access to academics by highlighting their strengths and focusing on increasing independence might enhance the growth mindset, which is fostered and modeled daily by thoughtful teachers.

The pandemic has opened parents' eyes to the role that teachers play selflessly in investing in their present so that they may have amazing futures.

**Ms. Vamsheepriya
Amar**

Principal,
MVJ International School,
Bengaluru, Karnataka

09

Braving the Odds

“It is only in our darkest hours that we may discover the true strength of the brilliant light within ourselves that can never, ever, be dimmed”

—*Doe Zantamata*



Since March 2020, life is completely different, different from what we had seen, experienced and visualised in the past. Since childhood, we have studied ‘Man is a social

animal’, hence the importance of society, camaraderie, proximity, and togetherness were given prominence and acceptance. That notion has been completely belied by the advent of the Coronavirus which now urges us to be distant, cautious and aloof.

I had read somewhere, “Life is about accepting challenges along the way, choosing to keep moving forward, and savouring the journey”. These were mere words some time back; today, they are a reality.

Our school, Zebur School for Children always looks for opportunities to impart holistic education; everything came to a grinding halt in the fateful month of March 2020. All schools were indefinitely shut, and no one knew when students would be back on the premises, echoing the words of T S Eliot, ‘the school crouched, humped in silence’.

The first challenge was the continuation of teaching-learning. Remote learning was unheard of in schools, but teachers took up the challenge. They toiled hard to embrace a new form of teaching...online classes! They learnt the technology in record time and started conducting virtual classes via Zoom, a tech tool. During classes, they were observed not only by the students but also by the parents and the grandparents, too!

Learning new technology, teaching and monitoring the students to see if they were misusing the internet, were essentials of online teaching. Initial hiccups and teething problems were managed with patience, training, and determination - hats off to our teachers! They managed students, home, and family, single-handedly notwithstanding the emotional turmoil that each one was facing, without any help.

Educators soon realised that remote learning was becoming monotonous, and it had to be substantiated with interactivities to keep the students engaged in a meaningful way. Once academics was streamlined they deliberated on the kind of cocurricular activities that could be conducted remotely. We started with non-academic classes like Yoga, dance, physical education, music and life skills. We then conducted online competitions, and it was heartening to see the overwhelming response of our students.

The first competition was declamation wherein the students sent their videos to our English teachers which were reviewed, edited and then uploaded on social media. This motivated our students and they started looking forward to other activities. During the same time, our secondary school teachers came up with the idea of starting 'Zebar News Channel' bi-weekly. Students became news correspondents and shared general news, sports news, and school news via social media. It was a wonderful example of experiential learning, something that the NEP also talks of in a big way.

Out of this entire stressful period, one thing that emerged was the unflagging spirit and unflinching teamwork exhibited by teachers. The spirit of unity came to the fore, and the teachers made the impossible, possible, to emerge stronger than ever.

Gradually and eventually when the cases ebbed, schools started reopening in a phased manner. Teachers became counsellors and catered to the emotional vacuum, needs and mental well-being of the students before embarking full-fledged into academics. There were major learning gaps, a lack of writing practice and a lack of routine. Teachers faced them head on!

One priceless thing that the pandemic has taught us is - technology can never replace teachers, as educators have proved that "when the going gets tough, the tough get going".

**Ms. Sharmistha
Sinha**

Principal,
Zebar School for Children,
Ahmedabad, Gujarat

10

Addressing the Learning Gaps



The year 2020 started as a normal year for educational institutions. Nobody expected a single column of news about a disease found in China, to engulf the entire

world and bring human activity to a halt. The following two years pushed human life against the wall, tested the resilience of mankind and exposed our society and values. Among the various sectors, education was one of the most affected and it had to transform itself drastically almost overnight. Digital transformation is never easy, and it was effected in this traditional domain of education with the initiative of lacs of teachers and some impetus from education stakeholders. Being a school equipped with technological tools, we could easily adapt ourselves to online teachers, though teachers had to put in efforts 24X7 to live up to the requirement of the testing times, keeping aside personal difficulties and losses.

And now, two years through it, we can confidently say that the education sector has come out as a winner and educators who upskilled themselves and supported others are true winners. This school closure, brought online learning into the main arena and as we analyse its benefits and shortcomings, we also realise the vital role

of the teacher-student bond in education. A bond which has emerged stronger than ever once both are back in the physical classroom.

Some challenges still remain – supporting students in the transition from the virtual world to the physical classrooms. For that, first of all, we need to make the classrooms a safe and happy place for the students, where they can shed their fear, anxiety and the loneliness of two years. And then, address the learning gaps that have developed over the last two years. Effective use of tech-assisted learning, giving teachers more freedom to move out of the rigid curriculum to first fill the learning gaps, focusing on activity-based learning techniques etc., are gradually taking us towards the goal.

**Ms. Dhanya
Ramachandran**

Principal (NS),
Udgam School for Children,
Ahmedabad, Gujarat

11

The New Playground



One of the questions that lie at the crux of all activities we do as educators, whether it is planning curriculum, or shifting or not shifting to online classrooms, is

'what is required for education to happen?' More often than not, we forget the answer to this question, and we distract ourselves with building infrastructure, introducing new technology, or changing how we conduct exams.

To remind myself and the people around me of what education is, I use the thought experiment devised by the renowned theatre artist, Peter Brooke, called Empty Space. In a nutshell, Brooke asks, 'what can we take away from theatre, and still have theatre?'

I ask, what can we take away from education, and still have education? Well, we can take away the buildings we have, the tables, chairs and blackboards and we can still have education. Similarly, we can take away the books, the laboratories, or even the syllabus as a whole, and still have education. What we cannot take away is a teacher and a student. As long as there is a teacher and a student present, education can exist.

By that definition, education exists in the space between a teacher and a student. As long as that connection between the two exists, we can have education.

With COVID, when the schools shifted online, I was asked by countless people whether it was a good move or a bad one. The only way to know that - the only way to know if we can still achieve desired learning outcomes, is to measure the impact virtual teaching has had on this connection between teachers and students.

As long as this connection has engagement, empathy and a shared meaningful goal, we can rest assured that education will not be affected. That should be the purpose of schools, colleges and any form of educational institution - to ensure that students and teachers engage with each other, empathise with each other and work collaboratively towards meaningful goals. The same can be extended to teachers in a school, and a connection between them as colleagues.

When we focus on this connection, we realise that the elements of this connection are intangible and internal - therefore, stressing the importance of the mindset of both the teacher and the student. From

that viewpoint, it becomes crucial to work towards ensuring a healthy environment for better mental health of our students and teachers, which I believe was greatly impacted during the pandemic.

Regardless of the pandemic, the mental health of our students and teachers is a vital metric in predicting the effectiveness of our teaching-learning. Keeping in mind, that education is essentially a relationship between a teacher and a student, and the education system a group of such relationships, reminds us to keep our

teachers' mental and emotional state at the fore, when we plan any change to provide better education and a better future to our students.



Mr. Rajesh Awasthi

Principal,
Choithram School, Indore,
Madhya Pradesh

12

Posturing Positivity



As educators, if we take a closer look at our experience of the last two years, it has been paradoxical. On the one hand, we became more productively engaged while learning to master new

teaching tools and techniques; on the other hand, the raging pandemic and its social contact restrictions led to soaring rates of loneliness, burnout and hopelessness.

During the pandemic, the social media went overboard with the buzzword "Positive vibes ONLY". Cultivating a positive mindset in troubled times is undoubtedly encouraging but, beyond a point it offers us no options and dictates that there is only one way to feel! Sometimes the expectation, or rather the presumption, to appear positive irrespective of the overwhelming challenges puts pressure on us to appear happy and cheerful, when we are not. When we succumb to the pressure, it alienates us from our real feelings and delays catharsis, resulting in distress in the long run. The expectation of making yourself better and smarter during the pandemic; and that you are failing, if you are not picking up a hobby or learning new things, is toxic positivity.

Thus, it is not always a healthy construct to undervalue negative emotional experiences and put to the fore positive ones. Behind the happy mask, we tend to hide our grief, and our hopelessness under the pretense of 'All is well'. A deeper understanding and acceptance of the so-called negative emotions brings them to the surface, exposing them to light – and rendering them powerless to infect us from within. Real

positivity allows us to acknowledge our pain, while we continue to count our blessings. We gather the strength and confidence that it is all right to feel low on some days and that there is no rush to get out of the present moment.

During the pandemic our teachers battled overwork and multi-tasking like all other professionals. And yet had to appear strong and cheerful for their students. They extended themselves to support students who were braving loss and loneliness. This positivity was essential to hand hold young children, but it took a toll on teachers who themselves needed support. Today as students and teachers are both back together in school, their bond has emerged stronger than ever, as they are able to freely share experiences and mutually heal.

Joy and sorrows are equally significant in the intricate web of life. It is not self-defeating to be optimistic and yet feel sad; we need hope and time for our feelings to settle and hearts to heal.

Well-being is a balanced state of mind and as Ruskin Bond perceives discerningly, 'Happiness is as exclusive as a butterfly, and you must never pursue it. If you stay very still, it may come and settle on your hand. But only briefly. Savour those moments, for they will not come your way very often.'

**Ms. Reshma
Bhattacharya**

Principal,
Indus Valley World School, Kolkata,
West Bengal

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“The Old Order Changeth Yielding Place to New...”



These words from Lord Tennyson’s poem ‘*Morte d’Arthur*’ aptly epitomise the current state of affairs in schools. Moving back to physical classes from the virtual ones, has come

as a welcome relief to both students and teachers, with a few exceptions. However, this new reality has brought with it a fair share of hurdles that need to be overcome.

Teaching methodologies have to be reoriented, to gradually cajole the students out of their comfort zones. More engagement has to be built into teaching to hold the attention of the students, without losing sight of the desired outcomes. The archaic teacher-centric methods of teaching have to be done away with, as also the content-focused methodology. There is a much overdue transformation in the traditional role of teachers’ to facilitators adopting participative methods.

Teaching/learning is expected to be experiential and learners encouraged to probe and question existing norms/beliefs/theories. In a class of differently abled/inclined children, facilitators are expected to deliver differentiated teaching - instruction

tailored to students’ individual needs and abilities.

In this new stronger than ever avatar, teachers have to be learner-centric to mould attitudes, build skills and enhance knowledge of the learners to ensure that they become well informed and resilient individuals who appreciate diversity without compromising individuality and make this world a better place to live in.

Teachers who adapt to this new reality, will be better placed to satiate the enquiring minds of this new breed of learners and be accepted as Moses leading them through troubled waters.

**Mr. Devendra
Kumar**

Principal,
Pawar Public School, Pune,
Maharashtra

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Metamorphosis



The pandemic took all of us by surprise in the first quarter of 2020. The situation was unexpected and no one was prepared to face the challenges.

The educational scenario was probably the most affected. Online teaching was something unheard of in the school system in many places. Google Meet, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Webex, etc., were never part of the vocabulary of teachers of most schools.

However, the educators metamorphosed into a community of tech-savvy teachers in a very short span of time. Yes, it was indeed a metamorphosis! The educators for the first time realised that only the fittest in the field can survive. 'Shape up' or 'ship out' was the only option available to them. Most of us have 'shaped up'. The others had no option but to 'ship out'.

The pandemic strengthened the teachers personally and professionally in several ways. Despite the overwhelming consequences of the pandemic, the crisis provided teachers with an extraordinary time for learning — learning new technology, new styles and innovative methodologies. It indisputably made teachers more creative, as evidently only teachers who could make their online interactions interesting were able to sustain the attention of the students.

The pandemic also allowed the teachers to enhance their time management skills.

They learnt how to allot time for teaching, preparation and household chores etc.

Before the advent of the pandemic, the teachers were the unquestionable monarchs within the four walls of their classrooms, with hardly any objective feedback being given to them. Online teaching expanded the frontiers of their classrooms to unimaginable extents. There were interested and sometimes judgemental people observing their performance. This has had both positive and negative impacts. The positive effect is that it made the teachers more conscious, answerable, and accountable about their own classroom performance. On the other hand, observation put them under the lens with untrained and ill-informed observers having a comment on everything – teaching, engagement and assessment.

Thus, by experiencing the unfamiliar and challenging terrain of virtual teaching, teachers received an opportunity to travel beyond their past experiences and view their practices with a new perspective.

This experience gave them opportunities to see the impact of new approaches, thus making the them Stronger Than Ever.

Mr. K Unnikrishnan

Principal of Benchmark
International School, Manjeri, Kerala
Recipient of the President's
National Award to Teachers

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Learning Never Stops

Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving

– Albert Einstein



Learning is a never-ending journey. The pandemic, with its challenges, was an extraordinary time for learning. It stressed on the need to embrace, integrate and adapt to technology for smooth flow of education while transforming the role of teachers.

Zig Ziglar has rightly said, "If you are not willing to learn nobody can help you, if you are determined to learn, no one can stop you."

The global crisis enabled the change in the pedagogical method of learning and initiated the need to learn how to teach online. It was indeed a challenge to the entire teaching community as they had to focus on learning how to teach online while making use of new online tools and techniques to stay connected with the students.

With remote teaching, a teacher needed to be more active, creative and innovative to keep the students tuned to the teaching-learning process. This indeed was a herculean task as many students faced problems in coping with remote learning. Yet, teachers tried to learn all possible

methods available to help students and guide them to focus on their academics.

With the lesson from the pandemic, it is evident that all educators must continuously learn, unlearn, and relearn to improve their instructional craft.

Educators must not let go of the opportunity to learn and grow. They must look out for short-duration courses, online certified webinars to keep themselves updated, hone their skills and focus on blended teaching practices. As teachers, we need to keep abreast of new research findings and advancements in teaching processes. Our learning journey should never end. Learning is a gradual and continuous process and we need to be open-minded and optimistic to be able to learn.

Life will keep teaching us new things and a real hero is one who will embrace the challenges and turn it into an opportunity to learn and grow while emerging stronger than ever.

**Ms. Kanchana Valli
Prabhala**

Vice-Principal,
Jubilee Hills Public School,
Hyderabad

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The Invaluable Role of Teachers in a Student's Well-being



The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in at least one positive thing: a much greater appreciation for the importance of public schools. As parents struggled to work with

their children at home due to school closures, public recognition of the essential care-taking role schools play in society has skyrocketed. As young people tried to learn from home, parents' gratitude for teachers, their skills, and their invaluable role in a student's well-being, rose. As communities struggled to take care of their vulnerable children and youth, decision-makers devised new mechanisms for delivering essential services like food, education and health care.

Teachers are probably the most underrated yet the most powerful professionals in the whole world. Their work has a long term impact on not just the lives of the children they teach, but on society as a whole. They have the power to shape generations, impact minds and make the world a better place.

When schools moved online last year, teachers made superhuman efforts to help all students stay engaged in learning. They identified and filled gaps, found ways to connect with everyone in their classes, worked together to address challenges, and

developed strategies to transform education for a new era.

Educators know that immersive experiences deepen learning, and they're always seeking different ways to keep students actively engaged.

Actually, it's teachers who have proven that learning can happen anywhere, and teachers who led the acceleration of innovation in education, supported by technology. Teachers have made an incredible difference in students' lives by keeping them going throughout all the change and uncertainty. Connecting with them, and inspiring them to be creative, confident, and optimistic whether they're learning in a physical classroom, at home, or somewhere else.

There are a vast majority of parents who appreciate the valuable services rendered by the teachers. Here are some of the examples of the appreciation teachers have received from parents:

"Our children are safeguarded from all of life's negative influences, because teachers like you shower their love in tons and not just ounces."

“Technology will keep evolving but nothing can replace the power of a teacher’s inspirational words.”

“As the years fly by, technology will change, society will change and education will change but one thing that will remain constant is the value of a good teacher.”

“Great teachers are not the ones who have fancy degrees and qualifications. They are the ones who have a big heart and a desire to make the world a better place one kid at a time.”

Fr. Biju Augustin

St Claret English Medium School,
Chimur, Chandrapur, Maharashtra

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Importance of Socialization and Emotional Bonding



As the adage goes, 'Truth is stranger than fiction', the adversities of the pandemic were difficult to fathom and more difficult to believe!

Those two years of isolation robbed children of joyful moments with their friends, social skills and peer learning in school. The schools wore a deserted look which was so threatening to school leaders like us. Believe me, our daily questions were, "When will the children come back to school? When will they get to play with their friends? When will the playgrounds chirp with their chattering?" At last, the Almighty answered our prayers and now teachers and students are back in school.

A key insight from the lockdown experience, has been the prime significance of socialisation in our lives. Today the parent-teacher-student bonding has evolved much stronger and firmer. As a triad all three benefit from each other and lead to what we desire from the experience of schooling. Parents appreciated the teachers for their zealous efforts throughout the pandemic. Online teaching was new to them but both coped amazingly. Innovative techniques in different online teaching platforms were learnt and classes held using various virtual tools Even parent-teacher meetings were carried out

through these online platforms. Parents stood by the school management and agreed to the suggestions.

Every adversity teaches us important life skills. Students have learnt how to make their beds, iron their clothes and even prepare tea or snacks. They helped their parents complete household chores. Therefore, the parent-child bonding strengthened too. Family bonding has revived and long-lost relationships have been restored.

I feel this pandemic has turned out to be a boon to mankind as we realise the paramount importance of socialization and emotional bonding! Man is a social animal and the Social Contract Theory of Rousseau has proved to be 'Stronger than Ever'.

Ms. Ipsita Banerjee

Principal,
Delhi World Public School,
Barasat, Kolkata, West Bengal

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Never Say Never



Re-opening of schools after the incidence of the pandemic, has been an enormous relief for all who are serving the cause of education. Nevertheless, the struggles faced to

ensure continuous and uninterrupted flow of knowledge between students and teachers will go down in history as an epic saga of the victory of dedication over unprecedented challenges. The community of teachers known for their familiarity with chalk-and-talk, had to make a major crossover to connect-and-call. Navigating unfamiliar shores of data, network, online, Zoom and Google Meet they managed to reach not only the minds but also the hearts of the locked-down students.

To illustrate my point I would like to talk about one of our senior most teachers – Mrs Procedia Naskar. A jolly and good-natured lady, Mrs Naskar is a feisty Goan married into a Bengali family and is the Nursery Class Teacher of our school. For the past 32 years, she has travelled daily from her home at CIT Road in Kolkata to Shyamnagar which is in the suburbs of the city. She would leave home at 5:30 am daily, travelling by train, bus and rickshaw, to arrive in time to

welcome her little wards at 7:15 a.m. Loved by all her students, she has even taught her students' children; this was her life... this was her clockwork. When the pandemic struck, she found herself stuck at home with her faithful pushbutton phone which was hardly a device sufficient to support the internet, leave alone manage online classes! Yet, she displayed true love for her vocation and her children by learning to teach all over again! Her journey began with her first online purchase: a smartphone, followed by taking tutorials from her colleagues and finally appearing onscreen to say a big online "hello" to her beloved students.

Mrs Naskar is just one of the thousands of teachers who have bravely answered their call of duty and have gone through this painstaking transition. As a member of the teaching fraternity, I am proud of all of them and wish to offer my deepest gratitude for their 'never say never' lesson that we all need to learn.

**Rev. Rodney
Borneo**

Principal
St Augustine's Day School,
Shyamnagar, West Bengal

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Stronger Together



I personally feel teaching is the best-chosen profession, which helps in creating many young leaders. All the teachers have worked stronger than ever during the

pandemic. They had to undertake the responsibility of filling the existing learning gaps.

My sincere and heartfelt gratitude to all the teachers for making learning possible even in the tough and unprecedented times. Just as family members overcome difficult issues and situations by working together, the teachers have done the same successfully.

I would like to appreciate all my DPIS family members for overcoming the difficulties in teaching posed by the pandemic. They worked long hours patiently and painstakingly learnt the use of new technologies which came to the aid of teaching. They were able to bring out the hidden talents of children while taking recourse to virtual platforms for teaching. Parents, who are our extended DPIS Family members, have cooperated and done their

best in becoming partners in the learning process of children.

DPIS Team has become stronger than ever during the pandemic and we expect and hope the same for all other school teams. Happy Teachers' Day.

Dr. Purnima

Principal
Delhi Public International School
(DPIS), Visakhapatnam

20 Value Systems and their Impact on our Everyday Lives



In response to the COVID-19 school closings, teachers all over, the world were required to shift gears immediately to respond to students' needs with synchronous

and asynchronous virtual instruction. Teachers literally responded overnight to teach in new mode. They filmed themselves conducting experiments, hosted Zoom show-and-tell with Kindergarteners, and prepared materials for students with variable Internet access. There is no question that teachers of all grade levels, content areas and in all sectors of education (i.e., public or private) are capable of incredible things. They have truly risen to this occasion.

The new year, 2022, which has come with new dreams and hopes seems like a 'bridge of silver wings' after the unforgiving nightmare of COVID 19. The past two academic years were indeed challenging times for students, teachers and parents. The pandemic has taught us that we cannot take anything for granted. It has also highlighted the need to cultivate an attitude of continual learning and improvement.

During these difficult times the virtual world has helped us immensely not only

to continue with the education process but also to keep us connected with each other. While I appreciate the tremendous efforts which our teachers and students have put in to adapt to the hitherto alien concept of online teaching and learning, all of us are also painfully aware of the learning gaps that have been created during this time. Clearly, there's work to be done.

We must implement new strategies and put in a tremendous amount of hard work and commitment to mitigate the learning decline during the last two years. The pandemic has also caused our children to be addicted to the internet and gadgets which may be detrimental to their mental health. It may be worthwhile to reassess how much time is being spent online and what is coming at the expense of that. Parents need to play a crucial role in encouraging their children to focus on their studies, work hard and limit their online activities.

We, human beings, are intrinsically social beings and the joys of being able to physically see, interact with each other again is indescribable. Undoubtedly caution is the buzzword as things return to near normalcy and we begin this academic session with 100% attendance. The pandemic had robbed our children of opportunities of learning beyond the classroom through participation in social

events in school thereby impacting their social skills development. Keeping this in mind, the school has lined up a plethora of activities for our students this year which will help in developing their talents, discovering various abilities and affecting their personalities and future life.

I would like to use this platform to stress on the importance of value systems and their impact on our everyday lives. We are living in an age of excesses, and abundance where we crave instant and uncurtailed gratification. We need to create a healthy balance and learn to appreciate the more important aspects of life. Our students need to learn the qualities of kindness, gratitude, patience, resilience and appreciation which are keys to allowing our school to function as a happy place.

As our school mission states, we want our students to achieve academic

excellence and at the same time develop valuable life skills and become more independent, resilient and confident individuals who can deal confidently with any uncertainties or challenges that may confront them in the future. I am grateful to the parents for their unflinching faith in us and the teachers for the dedication and perseverance with which they have realized the goals of our mission. And, of course, the pride of place belongs to our ever enthusiastic, receptive and brilliant students. Let's accept all the changes and challenges coming our way with a smile on our face and faith in our hearts.

Ms. Sridevi

Principal
NER School Of Excellence,
Ranastalam, Srikakulam,
Andhra Pradesh

Ms. Shalini Yadav
DPS, Firozabad



Ms. Sidra Mirza
DPS, Firozabad



Ms. Savita Rawat
DPS, Firozabad



Mr. Akash Dhangar
DPS, Firozabad



Ms. Prachi Gupta
DPS, Firozabad



Ms. Julie Jaison
Jeevas CMI Public School Aluva,
Ernakulam - Kerala



Ms. Geetalaxmi Sathanathan
Principal, Rani Public school, Kozhikode



Ms. Liji Arun
Chavara Darsan CMI Public School,
Koonammavu, Ernakulam, Kerala

Ms. Teena Tom
High Range Public School, Oonnukal



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Alathur

Modern Vidya Niketan
Aravali Hills, Faridabad



Ms. Bincy Praveen
St. Pauls central School,
Alathur



Ms. Meghna Sinha
Little World School Tilwara, Jabalpur



Seven Hills Inter College,
Etawah



Ms. Riya Anish





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MGM Model School
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Ms. Omana Sivas



Ms. Sujata Laishetti
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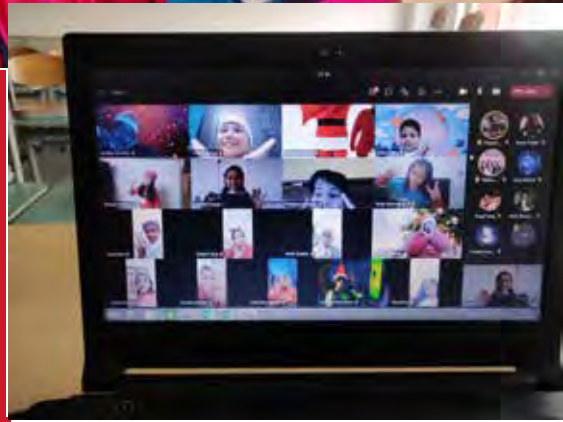
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Ms. Manpreet Bains



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Mr. Shoeb Masroor
Union Public School Sasni, Hathras,
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Ms. Monika Srivastava



Ms. Neha Kujur



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B.J.E.M School
Bhubaneswar, Odisha



Gyanodaya International School
Kanawati, Madhya Pradesh



**Akshara School
Shimoga, Karnataka**



**Carmel International School, Punnapra,
Kerala**



The birth date of the second President of India, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, September 5th, is celebrated as Teachers' Day in India. Dr. Radhakrishnan was a philosopher, scholar, teacher, and statesman. His dedicated work towards education makes his birthday an important day for the teaching fraternity. We remember the great work of this exemplary person on this day and express our gratitude to teachers who are nation builders.

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