



A PROJECT PROPOSAL

DIGANTAR VIDYALAYA

VISION 2030

Digantar Shiksha Evam Khelkud Samiti,
Opp. JDA Shooting Range, Kho Nagoriyan Road,
Jagatpura, Jaipur-302017, Rajasthan, India

www.digantar.org

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| DIGANTAR – A BRIEF HISTORY (1987 TO TODAY) | 4 |
| Digantar Activities | 5 |
| Schools: Digantar Vidyalaya | 5 |
| The Academic Resource Unit (TARU) | 5 |
| Publications | 6 |
| Digantar’s Philosophy of Education and Pedagogy | 6 |
| Digantar’s Impact Locally | 8 |
| Digantar’s Impact Nationally | 9 |
| DIGANTAR VIDYALAYA VISION 2030 | 10 |
| ACTION POINTS | 11 |
| Phase One (From Dec ’23 to end April ’24) | 11 |
| Phase Two (From June ’24 to March ’25) | 11 |
| Phase Three (From April ’25 to March ’30) | 12 |
| Summary of Financial Requirements | 12 |
| DIGANTAR APPEAL | 13 |
| APPENDIX-1 | |
| Feasibility Study for Vidyalaya Vision 2030 | 14 |
| Key Findings | 15 |
| Key Recommendations | 17 |
| APPENDIX-2 | |
| Digantar Vidyalaya Vision 2030 (Phase II: Action Plan) | 19 |
| APPENDIX-3 | |
| Vidyalaya Vision 2030: Cost Estimates | 20 |
| APPENDIX-4 | |
| Total Costs Transition Period 2024-30 | 21 |

Introduction

Digantar Vidyalaya Vision 2030 presents a positive and exciting vision for a significant change in the future of Digantar's school, in the context of a brief overview of the organisation's history. The document touches on Digantar's philosophy of education, the pedagogy it has created, its services to the wider sphere of education, and the impact it has had locally in Rajasthan and at national level.

The proposal for change to a community structure of funding, Vidyalaya Vision 2030, reflects an innovative response to challenges the organisation is now facing in sustaining itself in present day India. The proposed change is seen as an imperative for the not-for-profit Digantar school – the activity at the heart of Digantar's work – so it can continue functioning into the future as an influential and impactful institution, but transformed in its funding strategy to have become self-sustaining, with financial security. The actual transformation process is planned to mostly take place between now and 2030, gradually, over a period of five years.

Digantar understands quality education as an engagement of minds that nurtures autonomous, sensitive, and reflective young citizens – balanced young people who are confident, capable and motivated to contribute to building an inclusive, secular, and democratic society. Given that many in India cannot afford to pay for a quality education, Digantar through its Vidyalaya Vision 2030 plan seeks to demonstrate an alternative model of school funding so that free education continues to remain available for those who need it.

Reflecting present day changes towards an increasingly consumer- based and profit-driven society – changes that are technological, social and economic – the Digantar organisation through its Vidyalaya (school) Vision plan will effectively explore how a non-government institution, one which depends on others for funds but is not structured to function in the world of profit – an organisation that is committed to apply rigorously its learning and methodologies developed over the past four decades to deliver free quality education to those who cannot afford to pay for it – how such an organisation can continue to run securely and successfully in our present times? Funding security with autonomy is the big question underpinning this proposal. To answer it, the vision plan put forward a step-by-step strategy of change.

Vidyalaya Vision 2030 is proposed in response to the question. While developing its philosophy and pedagogies over forty-five years, Digantar has contributed significantly to the national discourse on education (See Impact Study available on request). The organisation was noted by Ashoka Foundation as a 'changemaker' for the world of education in India. Digantar sees its new proposed strategy as having the potential to become a second significant changemaking initiative. Time alone will tell, but it is pertinent to remind ourselves that the organisation already has an established track record for valuable innovation.

We thus present this vision plan as Digantar's second significant changemaking initiative. We see a great need for such on-the-ground collaborative initiatives in our present-day modern world. We invite all who share our concerns to join us to help make the vision real.

DIGANTAR - A BRIEF HISTORY (1987 TO TODAY)

Digantar Shiksha Evam Khelkud Samiti was registered on 31 March 1987 under the Rajasthan Societies Registration Act, 1958. Some of the key objectives of Digantar Shiksha Evam Khelkud Samiti were recorded as follows:

- a) To establish and run schools for betterment of education through introducing and testing new perspectives and ideas at practical level.
- b) To work for development of educational thought and practices and to encourage activities with such objectives.
- c) To undertake and encourage educational research.
- d) To work for cultural upliftment and social development.

The first Digantar school started in the late 1970s with seven students. After a decade of rigorous work Digantar received time-bound funding from the Government of India to raise the school's strength to 50 students, and then to about 300 students. Over the next few decades, and through its on-the-ground practice of education, reflection, study and interaction with fellow travellers in education, Digantar developed its own philosophy of education and operational values, tools, and objectives, delivered in the local language and suited to local and national realities and context. The institution developed an understanding that quality elementary education initiates children into the process of developing capabilities for a rational understanding of the world and of themselves. Such capabilities provide them with conceptual tools to analyse situations and problems. Children gain confidence and a lifelong love of learning, which then supports them to make their own decisions and lead an enriched and enriching life.



Digantar Activities

While running the Vidyalayas (schools), Digantar organisation has developed two complementary streams of action: The Academic Resource Unit (TARU) and Digantar Publications. Digantar activities are now organised under three broad categories.

1. Schools: Digantar Vidyalayas

The strength of Digantar Vidyalayas is presently:

- a) One Primary School at Ratwali with 47 students and 2 teachers
- b) A School at Bhavgarh Bandhya with 135 students and 10 teachers.

A total of 182 students are studying at these two sites with 12 teachers.



2. The Academic Resource Unit (TARU)

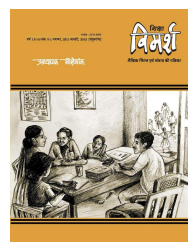
- a) TARU is Digantar's capacity building and research unit which has helped about a dozen different organisations in training teachers and functionaries, helping conceptualise their schools, develop materials, and conduct research.

In the current financial year 2024-25, TARU is organizing four residential courses: Child Development and Learning, Critical Understanding of NCFSE-23 for Implementation, NCFSE-23 - Nature & Pedagogy of Language & Mathematics, and Nature & Pedagogy of Science.



3. Publications

- a) Shiksha Vimarsh: A bi-monthly Magazine in Hindi. Over the years the magazine has become a resource for many organisations, including some universities, who run their educational courses in Hindi. Presently, we are forced to suspend its publication till additional resources are secured.



- b) Digantar Teaching/Learning Materials: In addition to Shiksha Vimarsh, Digantar publishes its teaching/learning materials for primary education. Many organisations use the materials to avail of their logical development and pedagogical insights.

Digantar's Philosophy of Education and Pedagogy

Throughout history, educational endeavour has been guided generally by the current most acceptable and universal perception of what it is to be a human being and by what makes a desirable society. Recognising this, Digantar organisation sees humans as having the potential to be self-governing on account of their inherent potential to be rational and benevolent, and to exercise strength of will in the choices they make. This view of humanity leads logically to a democratic society guided by the principles of freedom and equality, thus providing the basis of ideals of human dignity, justice and fraternity. The Digantar Vidyalyayas' endeavour is to support and realise this vision of human life through their educational practices in the context of the organisation's perception of the child – a perception that has evolved both from Digantar's vision on the one hand and is true to child psychology on the other.



It is in this framework that Digantar has derived its set of pedagogical principles. Important principles are listed below:

- ***Learning with Conceptual Understanding:*** One of the major problems in Indian education is rote-learning without understanding, which blocks further mental development by sheer weight of inert ideas on the mind. Digantar wants children to develop cognitive commitment to truth with clear understanding.
- ***Freedom of Pace of Learning:*** One very important impediment to learning with understanding is forced pace of learning, which demands learning of specified material strictly within given time with the same speed as other children. Practice shows us however that each individual child learns with a different pace and therefore, allowing children to progress at their own pace becomes a necessity.
- ***Ungraded School Organisation:*** Freedom of pace of learning is not compatible with a grade-wise divided school with annual examinations as the basis of promotion to the next grade. Digantar teaches in ungraded learning groups where children may be at different levels in their studies.
- ***Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation:*** One may dispense with particular form of assessment in education but not assessment as a principle. Learning in ungraded groups with self-initiative and at self-pace demands a more comprehensive, rigorous and continuous scheme of assessment. This kind of system necessarily requires Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE).
- ***Starting from where the Child is:*** A requirement of learning with understanding is to safeguard cognitive connection and start from what the child already knows. Sensitivity to the child's language, values, and community traditions, becomes necessary but equally education demands critical examination of what one accepts as moral and true. This leads to a pedagogy of sensitive dialogue.
- ***Guided Self-Learning:*** To become independent in thought and action one needs experiences during one's education that foster self-confidence and the intellectual capabilities to make sense of the world. Digantar emphasises tools, techniques and appropriate materials for guided self-learning.



Digantar's Impact Locally – What Students Say

Julekha (Working as a Government School Teacher)



If you want to understand what democracy and secularism actually mean, you need to spend some time in Digantar. Digantar has been nothing less than a blessing for our community where its influence is not limited to an individual or a family but, extends to the whole society. Thank you Digantar, for making my childhood beautiful!

Baby Naaj (Completed Masters)

A lot of times the community members raised objections to girls going to school but, Digantar never let that stop us from getting our education. Digantar teachers always went to the community and spoke to the parents, convinced them. Even the way the teachers spoke was different and convincing. Digantar gave us the strength to raise our voice against injustice. Now I can and I do raise my voice against any injustice that I see happening with me or my family members.



Naseem (Working as a Government School Teacher)



I studied in Digantar till 12th standard. In an area where girl child education was unheard of, Digantar made sure girls have an access to quality education. Today, I am working as teacher and have a government job.

Tabu (Pursuing Graduation)

Digantar is like a dream school where children are not only taught how to read and write but, are also encouraged to be good, responsible human beings. Instead of associating children with religions, Digantar helps the children in understanding humanity.



Jaya (Working as a Government School Teacher)



I studied in a government school for a month and stopped going there because the teachers there used to beat us up. When Digantar opened its school near our village, I got enrolled there. Whatever I am today, is because of Digantar. After Digantar, I studied in a number of schools and universities but, I have not experienced the love and affection that I have for Digantar and my teachers anywhere else. In Digantar we did not study for marks. But for our holistic development and understanding.

Seema (Chief Judicial Magistrate)

The facilities and the quality of education that the private schools are offering now, Digantar has been offering since the past 30 years and that too absolutely free of cost. I learned to look beyond religion and social status in Digantar. I still remember and miss Reena Didi's story telling sessions.



Digantar's Impact Nationally – What Experts Say

For Digantar's impact in the wider field of education, we include here a quote from Prof. Krishna Kumar, retired Director NCERT, the apex body that leads curricular and textbook reform efforts as well as advises the government on policy and teacher education. Prof K. Kumar is one of the most esteemed educationalists in the country.

"Digantar has contributed at various levels in the curricular discussions. This participation can be seen at the level of the development of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 in which curricular needs have been expressed.

It has participated at the level of focus group discussions and continued in the process of developing syllabi and the end result as textbooks. Whatever is included in textbooks has some reason behind it which can be visibly inferred while looking into them. Every activity and illustration has a reason behind its being there.

So, I believe in our country, Digantar's contribution to the tradition of curriculum development is important. This contribution is not only reflected through the people who work at Digantar or who have worked at Digantar, but through the people who are spiritually influenced by the ideas of Digantar.

As an organization Digantar has had a major impact on developing the educational discourse in India which has been initiated through the process of national curriculum discussions. This discourse is first of all to understand the context in which education has to work. The government institutions' discourse about the large number of rural children and children of urban laborers does not have depth in itself. It usually is a discourse of charity. Contrary to that, Digantar has developed a discourse which has brought education into the constitutional paradigm. The kind of discussions that emerged from Digantar's pedagogy gave an educational expression to the constitutional values that have been adopted by our country. When those ideas are reflected in NCF 2005 Digantar's contribution is reflected. Digantar is one such organization which has made such a contribution to the process of the National Curriculum Framework development."

Additionally, we include a quotation from an esteemed educationist from the voluntary sector:

"The contribution of Digantar is to have established the importance of purposes on the centre stage. Any of the documents before the NCF-2005 do not talk about the aims of education. It is nowhere articulated in the NCF-2000. It is established, that you need to study the philosophy of education, which Digantar has brought to center stage. This kind of discourse demands a certain amount of rigour and there are very few organizations which actually have that kind of rigor. I think Digantar is one of them. It is also important that it has contributed not only to recognize the philosophy of education as an important subject in the educational discourse but at the same time, it has contributed in making philosophy more accessible."

DIGANTAR VIDYALAYA VISION 2030

Through Vidyalaya Vision 2030 and continuing to provide quality education for all, Digantar proposes to demonstrate that in a democratic society, the people themselves can actively engage positively and fruitfully with some of the burning challenges of India:

- The continuing significant disparities that exist between the haves and have nots;
- The disillusionment of many parents with present-day outcomes and priorities in education;
- The disillusionment of youth with school life arising from education being mostly rote-learning without understanding and the difficulties and distress faced when students try to secure jobs and earn their livelihood with dignity, satisfaction and security;
- The increasingly visible negative impact on young people and society of current priorities of schooling to ensure only high marks in exams, leading to disaffection, frequent use of drugs, and increasing incidents of suicide when marks do not meet expectations;
- The rapid expansion of urban settlements and the friction that arises from increasingly close and rapid juxtaposition of many disparate urban and rural communities, languages, and sub-cultures.



Through providing an education that strengthens the capability, confidence and resilience of each child – strengthens her and his inherent nature to be curious, rational, well informed on the world we all share, and self-reliant – Digantar believes that such quality education enables us to solve problems, work, earn, meet life’s many challenges positively, and contribute to building a better society. It is with this conviction that Digantar, through its Vision 2030, proposes to involve the “haves” in supporting the “have nots” so that society better integrates itself and the parents – the people of India as one body irrespective of social or economic status – engage directly with both the processes of education and strengthening India’s democracy.

Digantar’s contribution to date to improving the quality of education in India has been reflected across the country, whether it is with different state governments or with the NCERT and other central government educational agencies. Bringing the philosophy of education to centre-stage in educational discourse in both Hindi and English, and establishing the practical connections between theory and practice, and disseminating these more widely through its TARU activities, has significantly contributed to the educational discourse of the nation. Members of both the executive and general bodies note with thanks all who have contributed to Digantar’s impact to date. Now, in its fifth decade, the organisation is committed to continue serving the weaker sections of society.

To this end, Digantar proposes Vision 2030 as a strategic transition phase of transformative action between 2024 and 2030 to secure Digantar's school work into the future, specifically with reference to ensuring steady funds for the school.

Through Vidyalaya Vision 2030, step by considered step, year-by-year, over a period of five years, with consistent review and evaluation, Digantar commits

- To transform its Bhavgarh schools into a self-funding school covering all the stages of school education by 2030.
- Through a special and innovative model of a Parent Teacher Association (PTA), to educate 50% of the poorer students without charge through the engagement of 50% fee paying parents (and their friends and associates, maybe), demonstrating the possibility that parents and private individuals in the local society can contribute significantly to enabling such a school to be self-supporting while participating actively and fruitfully in the management of the school.
- To make the school compliant with the certification requirement of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), a national body. Presently Digantar is recognized by the Board of Secondary Education, Rajasthan.
- To continue to promote learning methods that demonstrate the difference that quality education makes towards nurturing a better world through development of capable citizens from all backgrounds, income groups, and walks of life.

DIGANTAR VIDYALALYA VISION 2030 - Action Points

Phase One (From Dec '23 to end April '24) (Completed)

The project "Digantar Vidyalaya Vision 2030" was envisaged in November 2023, the Feasibility Study is already completed. It indicates that the envisaged transformation is possible, though with significant improvement in the school and will require a strong interactive information dissemination campaign. Executive Summary of the Feasibility Study is given as **Appendix 1**.

Phase Two (From June '24 to March '25)

Phase two involves reviewing Digantar's pedagogy and materials, improving existing infrastructure and facilities, and building additional infrastructure as required by CBSE norms. This phase also includes significant work on retraining teachers, appointing new personnel to meet academic and administrative needs, and launching a campaign to communicate the new model to prospective parents.

Work has already begun with the appointment of three new teachers and the planning of a pedagogical process for the upper primary stage (classes 6 to 8). A week-long residential

training workshop for the teachers has been organized, and a detailed plan for organizing self-learning groups, along with the necessary materials, has been prepared.

Detailed plans have been prepared for this phase, and work has commenced on some aspects. The current action plan is provided in **Appendix 2**. Details can be shared and discussed immediately with individuals or organizations interested in supporting the project.

Phase Three (From April '25 to March '30)

The implementation period spans from the first intake of new children for the academic year starting in April 2025 until the complete transformation of the entire school to its new operational model by March 2030.

Detailed plans have been prepared for Phase Three and can be immediately shared and discussed with individuals or organizations interested in supporting the project.

Summary of Financial Requirements

Detailed financial requirements are estimated. Here we are giving only summary tables of two plans.

Plan A: the logical implications of the transformation. This requires a substantial amount of funding urgently.

| | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 | 2029-30 | 2030-31 | 2031-32 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Grand Total of funds required | 185.83 | 238.26 | 254.97 | 281.23 | 741.78 | 317.37 | 338.76 | 356.35 |
| Funds Realisable through Fee* | - | 124.80 | 127.46 | 162.00 | 195.47 | 235.08 | 279.83 | 332.54 |
| Available or promised for 2024-25 | 35.48 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Through Digantar Sources | 17.00 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Possible Income* | 52.48 | 124.80 | 127.46 | 162.00 | 195.47 | 235.08 | 279.83 | 332.54 |
| Requirements for Vision 2030 | 133.35 | 113.46 | 127.51 | 119.23 | 546.31 | 82.29 | 58.93 | 23.81 |
| Total Project Cost from 2024-25 to 2030-31 (in lacs) | | | | | | | | 2,714.54 |
| Estimated Funds realisable through Fee and other sources (in lacs) | | | | | | | | 1,509.65 |
| Additional Funds Required from Year 2024-25 to 2030-31 Rupees (in lacs) | | | | | | | | 1,204.89 |

Note: We may not be able to attract 100 fee-paying students in the first year, that is 2025-26 session. In that case the funding requirements will increase substantially. However, we are confident that we shall be able to get admissions in the required numbers from second (2026-27) or third (2027-28) year.

Some more details can be seen in **Appendix 3**.

Plan B: in case funds in adequate measure are not available in time, the minimum requirements to start the process and then keep trying to acquire adequate funding.

| | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 | 2029-30 | 2030-31 |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Grand Total of Transition Expenses | 15,922,016 | 14,573,475 | 15,662,293 | 16,781,858 | 17,962,825 | 19,092,823 | 20,244,877 |
| Funds Realisable through Fee | - | 7,860,000 | 7,675,000 | 9,775,600 | 13,001,536 | 16,298,202 | 20,046,349 |
| Current Funding (2024-25) | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 |
| Other Digantar Sources | 2,000,000 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Realisable Funds | 5,050,000 | 10,910,000 | 10,725,000 | 12,825,600 | 16,051,536 | 19,348,202 | 23,096,349 |
| Additional Requirement | 10,872,016 | 3,663,475 | 4,937,293 | 3,956,258 | 1,911,289 | (255,379) | (2,851,472) |
| Total Transition Funds Needed | | | | | | | 80,902,467 |
| Possible from Existing Partners | | | | | | | 55,562,136 |
| Total funds required from Indian Financial year 2024-25 to 2028-29 | | | | | | | 25,340,331 |

Some more details can be seen in **Appendix 4**.

Digantar Appeal

Having focussed for four decades on developing its educational philosophy and the tools to apply, share and disseminate it widely, Digantar's General Body and Executive Committee members invite your support and engagement to help make this exciting and most positive Vision 2030 real.

We believe passionately that the social and educational possibilities of the Digantar Vidyalaya Vision 2030, and the depth, breadth, and application of the Digantar pedagogical model of education already in place, can significantly fulfil parents' hopes and expectations for their children and help create a better life for all.

To this end, through the Vidyalaya Vision 2030, it is our hope that at the right time and subject to securing the needed funds, we will be in a position to invite parents to join hands with us through a new model of PTA through which they can support their own child plus another child who otherwise would not have access to a quality education. What a sad loss of potential the lack of quality education means to a child! What a waste of precious human potential, looking to a nation as a whole.

Vidyalaya Vision 2030 works to reverse this potential loss through strategic action. It builds on Digantar's experience of many years in developing solutions to on-the-ground problems relating to education. For all concerned as to which way our world is heading, we invite you to join us in this small yet potentially significant action plan.

NOTES

- It is anticipated that the school will be largely self-sufficient and self-sustaining in funds by 2030.
- By 2030 it is also anticipated the transformation will have arrived roughly at a 50:50 ratio in fee-paying and free students. Due to uneven numbers of students already with us at different levels, however, the ratio of free-students to fee paying is unlikely to stabilise at 50-50 until the academic session 2040-41.



Appendix 1

Feasibility Study for Vidyalaya Vision 2030

Executive Summary

Throughout a span exceeding four decades, Digantar Vidyalaya has established itself as an institution that has significantly contributed to school and education reforms in India. The institution's focus on alternative schooling, curricular enhancements, development of teaching aids, capacity building of educators and education practitioners, and contributions to national-level policies and curricular documents underscore its noteworthy accomplishments. Through both in-depth and extensive work in the domain of education, Digantar Vidyalaya has developed a set of schools providing quality alternative education at zero cost to disadvantaged population groups. These groups have benefited from such education, making meaningful trajectories in their lives thereafter. For Digantar Vidyalaya, the quality of education encompasses all key dimensions of education: aims of education (with the idea of education as a public good being paramount), the role of the school as an institution, curriculum, pedagogy, teacher capacity, and assessments.

The current Feasibility Study arises from a need to re-examine a new school model for Digantar Vidyalaya, where, over the past decade, external funding sources have diminished substantially, affecting the aforementioned quality of education that Digantar Vidyalaya seeks to uphold. The proposed model aims to create a community school where economically diverse groups unite to foster a financially sustainable, inclusive educational environment. This intent represents a direct social support experiment intended to scale a successful pedagogical model and has the potential to engender similar models of inclusive education for underprivileged children across the country. The key question behind the Feasibility Study, therefore, was: **“Whether transforming the existing school (Digantar Vidyalaya) into a self-financing school with 50% fee-paying and 50% free students is possible?”**

The Feasibility Study used multiple approaches to gather comprehensive insights. First, a survey was conducted with 171 parent respondents within a three-kilometre radius around Jagatpura, Jaipur, to understand patterns in perceptions, preferences, attitudes, opinions, and dispositions of parents regarding their children's schooling. Second, semi-structured interviews were held with 25 parent respondents to follow up on patterns emerging from the quantitative survey. Third, a focus group discussion (FGD) with 16 parents was conducted to explore questions that had not generated detailed responses in the interviews. Fourth, five case studies of purposively selected alternative schools were undertaken to gain a deeper understanding of issues such as funding, financial stability, administration, provision of infrastructure and facilities, teacher recruitment and training, and parent and community relationships. Fifth, secondary data regarding fee structure, teacher strength, infrastructure, and facilities from 23 aspirational schools in

Jaipur were collected by visiting these schools and from their websites. Finally, a financial plan for school sustainability was developed based on the projection of expenses and fees, while retaining the quality that Digantar Vidyalaya aims to offer. Key findings of the Feasibility Study are presented below:

Key Findings

1. Endorsement of Inclusion

- A majority of the parents (70.8%) believed that it is important for their children to study with peers from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.
- Regarding the proposal for a 50% non-fee-paying student arrangement, parents unanimously affirmed education as a fundamental right for all children and expressed their willingness to support such initiatives. According to them, this model of fee and non-fee-paying parents could foster a diverse and inclusive environment conducive to social integration and equality. Parents prioritizing these principles perceived such an approach as enriching for all students' learning experience.
- Parents expect equal treatment from teachers and administration, along with equitable distribution of resources and facilities for all students irrespective of their socio-economic background.

2. Medium of Instruction

- 97.1% of the respondents were seen to have admitted at least one of their wards to an English medium school.
- 24.1% of parents expressed moderate to strong dissatisfaction with the current English medium schools and indicated a probable willingness to send their children to a different English medium school that offers better quality education.
- Despite a strong preference for the English medium, there is also a recognition among parents of the importance of retaining proficiency in their mother tongue. Four out of five parents expressed that children learn better and grasp concepts more effectively when taught in their native language or the language prevalent in their immediate environment. Essentially, parents priorities English for its perceived benefits for social and economic mobility, while also acknowledging the significance of maintaining a connection with their culture, which they associate with their mother tongue.

3. Awareness of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA)

- The majority of parents were found to be unaware of the existence of any representative body akin to a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) within the schools they accessed. Furthermore, it was identified that none of the parents interviewed were members of any such body.
- Parents expressed apprehensions about the functioning of a PTA in an environment of diversity and highlighted the importance of enabling processes to ensure their effective contribution to school-related activities.

4. Parental Choice: Factors Behind School Selection

- The main factors that parents shared as influencing their school choice were ‘infrastructure and facilities’, ‘distance from the school’, and ‘continuity of schooling across levels’. Additionally, parents also gave importance to results in board examinations and school fees in their school-choice decisions.
- Key factors that parents considered relevant for school selection and quality were ‘teacher-student relationship’, ‘academic performance’, and ‘holistic development of their child’.

5. Key School-Level Components: Parental Opinions and Decisions

- Parental expectations about school teachers considered the following three equally important – teacher-student relationship, teacher’s qualification, and teacher’s behaviour with parents.
- In terms of curriculum, parents were found to be unaware of the larger policy and curricular goals at the national level. However, they appreciated the division of the curriculum into stages focusing on capabilities appropriate to the child's age. There was a consensus among parents that foundational subjects, including Mathematics, Science, Hindi, and English were essential, and a strong base in these subjects was crucial for their children’s future. Moreover, parents shared the opinion that children should be allowed to pursue their co-curricular interests alongside mandatory school subjects.
- Parents in Jaipur were seen to regard CBSE as the most preferred affiliation board, with approximately 74.9% of surveyed parents admitting their children to CBSE-affiliated schools. This preference was probably because all of these schools offered English medium instruction. However, it was also found that parents generally are indifferent towards a particular board but opted for CBSE because it is the most available option nearby. In short, the board is not the decisive criterion for the selection of the school or determining quality education for them.
- Around 85% of the parents expressed a preference for having school uniforms though the reasons given were quite diverse.

6. Prevailing School Fees

- In the survey, it was found that 38% of parents were paying annual fees below Rs. 50,000, while another 34% were paying in the range of Rs. 50,000 to 80,000. This means that a large majority of parents (72%) paid annual fees of Rs. 80,000 or below.

Based on the above findings, and other sources of data for the study, a set of Recommendations have emerged for Digantar Vidyalaya to implement towards restructuring the current institutional provisions and making Digantar Vidyalaya financially sustainable without diluting its vision of ‘quality’ education. These Recommendations are listed below:

Key Recommendations

1. Digantar Vidyalaya should explore a 50% free studentship and 50% paid studentship enrolment in its school. This should be through a process of dialogue with parents on the following two factors: (a) understanding of ‘quality’ of education as envisioned by Digantar Vidyalaya that is different from the mainstream school system at multiple levels; (b) generation of awareness about ‘inclusion’ and its benefits for population groups with different capabilities to pay and access ‘quality’ education.
2. It is recommended that the children of the teachers and staff at the school receive a 25% discount on their fees. The fee structure for all levels, from Nursery to 10th grade, should reflect the curriculum and resources required. Based on the fee structures of the schools visited, the recommended fee range is between Rs. 80,000 and 2,00,000.
3. It should adopt a strategy of English as a medium of instruction that gives due recognition to the aspirational demand of parents from both economically disadvantaged and privileged sections of the society it intends to cater to (in a 50:50 ratio). At the same time, it should adopt a curricular approach that is multilingual. Both the curriculum and preparedness of teachers should be aligned to this strategy, where children will be expected to develop multilingual abilities in their early years. In these years, there should be a balance between English and the mother tongue in curricular content across subjects, and a gradual transition to English in terms of subject-teaching as the children transition to classes beyond 2 and 3.
4. *The* Vidyalaya should prioritise educating parents about the distinct roles of PTAs and PTMs, as many parents are unaware of PTAs and often confuse them with PTMs. This can be achieved through the next preparatory phase, which includes an information campaign where the purpose and benefits of PTAs are clearly communicated to and discussed with the parents. To form a robust PTA, Digantar Vidyalaya should include parents willing to invest time, regardless of their children's enrolment status, alongside current parents. This approach is expected to facilitate the inclusion of diverse experiences and perspectives.
5. The study recommends a review of the existing infrastructure and facilities at Digantar Vidyalaya, taking into account CBSE norms, and aligning the same to address existing gaps.
6. *The school* should establish specific criteria for teacher appointments and invest significantly in their professional development on all the desired aspects, a practice often neglected in many private schools. This neglect has been identified by parents as a source of dissatisfaction with contemporary mainstream schools. The teachers should also be recruited keeping in mind the language policy recommended (See Point 3).

7. Digantar Vidyalaya should initiate the process of affiliation with the CBSE Board. For the Vidyalaya, the norms of the CBSE Board would not clash with its idea of multilingual education for young children, and a gradual transition to English would anyway be planned to ensure that children can write their board examinations in English in class 10.
8. It should consider implementing a simple and comfortable uniform for its students, along with a specific dress code. This should aim to create a sense of distinct identity in line with the school's ideology, benefitting the school and its stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and students.
9. Digantar Vidyalaya should launch a comprehensive Information Campaign. The campaign should have two phases. The first phase should focus on raising awareness and showcasing Digantar's unique approach to education. This could involve interactive workshops with parents and summer/winter learning experiences for children. The second phase should delve deeper, addressing common misconceptions about education and emphasizing Digantar's core values. Engaging communication methods like videos, stories, and social media would be key. Additionally, positive experiences from current and former students can be leveraged through word-of-mouth promotion. Finally, dedicating a staff member to manage the website and social media will ensure consistent engagement with the community.

Digantar Vidyalaya Vision 2030

Phase II: Action Plan

| SN | | Description | Start Date |
|----|--|---|------------|
| 1 | Appointment of Personnel | | |
| | i) | Principal | 2024-08-15 |
| | ii) | 1. Assistant to Principal 2. Public Relations, Communication and Media Coordinator | 2024-08-15 |
| | iii) | Special Educator/Psychologist | 2025-01-01 |
| | iv) | Admission Counsellor | 2024-08-01 |
| | v) | Pre-Primary Helper (10th Pass) (2) | 2025-01-01 |
| | vi) | Pre-Primary Teacher (Graduate, Diploma in Pre-Primary Edu.) (3) | 2025-01-01 |
| | vii) | Upper Primary & Secondary Teachers (Post Graduate, B.Ed.) (3) | 2024-07-01 |
| | viii) | Music Teacher (Vocal) (PRT) | 2025-01-01 |
| | ix) | Art & Craft Teacher (PRT) | 2025-01-01 |
| | x) | Dance Teacher (PRT) | 2025-01-01 |
| | xi) | Information Technology Teacher | 2025-01-01 |
| | xii) | Office Staff (have 1, need 1) | 2024-08-01 |
| | xiii) | Nurse | 2025-01-01 |
| | xiv) | Accounts Officer | 2024-08-01 |
| | xv) | Store Incharge | 2024-10-01 |
| | xvi) | Class IV Staff /peon/Office Staff (2) | 2025-09-15 |
| | xvii) | Security (have 2, will need 2) | 2025-02-01 |
| 2 | Capacity Building of Existing Academic Personnel | | |
| | i) | Understanding the whole Vision 2030 plan (especially Coordinator) | 2024-08-01 |
| | ii) | English Language Proficiency (all) | 2024-08-01 |
| | iii) | Reading and analysing CBSE Curriculum and Textbook (primary) (all) | 2024-08-01 |
| | iv) | Reading and analysing CBSE Curriculum and Textbook (UP) (UP teachers) | 2024-10-01 |
| | v) | Reading and analysing all Digantar Material and modifications if needed (all) | 2024-08-01 |
| | vi) | Developing additional curricular material for primary section (all) | 2024-08-01 |
| | vii) | Primary pedagogy refreshar training (Primary Teachers) | 2025-01-01 |
| | viii) | Upper Primary Pedagogy refreshar training (UP Teachers) | 2025-01-01 |
| 3 | Capacity Building of Administrative Personnel | | |
| | i) | Develop administrative structure and orient all staff (Principal) | |
| | ii) | Principal and PR Media Coordintaor | |
| | iii) | Admission Counsellor | |
| | iv) | Office Staff (have 1, need 1) | |
| | v) | Class IV and security staff | |
| 4 | Repair and refurbishing existing buildings | | |
| 5 | Additional Facilities and Equipments | | |
| 6 | Creating and Completing Curricular Material and Pedagogical plan for Pre-Primary | | |
| 7 | Completing Curricular Material and pedagogical plan for Primary | | |
| 8 | Starting work on Curricular Material and pedagogical plan for Upper Primary | | |
| 9 | Preparing Plan for Information Campaign | | |
| 10 | Begin Information Campaign | | |
| 11 | Plan for admission related procedures and literature | | |
| 12 | Begin admission | | |
| 13 | Plan for Parent Teacher Association | | |

Appendix 3

| Vidyalaya Vision 2030: Cost Estimates (in Rupees Lacs) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| SN | Particulars | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 | 2029-30 | 2030-31 | 2031-32 |
| A | Vidyalaya Budget in Current year | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Personnel Costs | 54.94 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | Operations Costs | 11.76 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total (A) | 66.70 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| B | Vidyalaya Vision 2030 Costs | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Personnel Costs | 45.05 | 190.20 | 203.51 | 226.40 | 241.76 | 255.74 | 273.78 | 287.98 |
| 2 | Operations Costs | 18.75 | 48.06 | 51.45 | 54.83 | 58.22 | 61.62 | 64.98 | 68.38 |
| 3 | Infrastructure Costs | | | | | | | | |
| | Land Cost Lease Fee etc. | 2.00 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Architect Fee | 3.53 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Land Scaping and outdoor facilities | 10.00 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | REPAIR School Building Windows | 2.00 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | REPAIR Varandah (addition) | 14.00 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | REPAIR whitewash | 2.25 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Old Building Refurbishing | 5.00 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Additional Buildings | - | - | - | - | 335.04 | - | - | - |
| | Classroom Furnishing | 14.56 | - | - | - | 83.76 | - | - | - |
| | Computer Lab | - | - | - | - | 20.00 | - | - | - |
| | Library Books | - | - | - | - | 1.00 | - | - | - |
| | Music Equipments | 1.00 | - | - | - | 1.00 | - | - | - |
| | Sports Equipments | 1.00 | - | - | - | 1.00 | - | - | - |
| | Total Infrastructure Cost | 55.34 | - | - | - | 441.80 | - | - | - |
| | Total (B) | 119.14 | 238.26 | 254.97 | 281.23 | 741.78 | 317.37 | 338.76 | 356.35 |
| | Grand Total of Funds Required | 185.83 | 238.26 | 254.97 | 281.23 | 741.78 | 317.37 | 338.76 | 356.35 |
| | Funds Realisable through Fee* | - | 124.80 | 127.46 | 162.00 | 195.47 | 235.08 | 279.83 | 332.54 |
| | Available or promised for 2024-25 | 35.48 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Through Digantar sources | 17.00 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Possible Income* | 52.48 | 124.80 | 127.46 | 162.00 | 195.47 | 235.08 | 279.83 | 332.54 |
| | Requirements for Vision 2030 | 133.35 | 113.46 | 127.51 | 119.23 | 546.31 | 82.29 | 58.93 | 23.81 |
| Total Project Cost from 2024-25 to 2030-31 (in lacs) | | | | | | | | | 2,714.54 |
| Estimated Funds realisable through fee and other sources (in lacs) | | | | | | | | | 1,509.65 |
| Additional Funds Required from Year 2024-25 to 2030-31 Rupees (in lacs) | | | | | | | | | 1,204.89 |
| Note: We may not be able to attract 100 fee-paying students in the first year, that is 2025-26 session. In that case the funding requirements will increase substantially. However, we are confident that we shall be able to get admissions in the required numbers from second (2026-27) or third (2027-28) year. | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix 4

Total Costs Transition Period 2024-30

A) Personnel Costs

| SN | Description | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 | 2029-30 | 2030-31 |
|----|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Salaries | 7,743,080 | 10,393,080 | 11,159,127 | 11,925,174 | 12,691,221 | 13,457,268 | 14,223,315 |
| 2 | Recruitment | 200,000 | 100,000 | 110,000 | 120,000 | 130,000 | 140,000 | 150,000 |
| | Sub-Total Personnel Costs | 7,943,080 | 10,493,080 | 11,269,127 | 12,045,174 | 12,821,221 | 13,597,268 | 14,373,315 |

B) Operations Cost

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 | Academic | 813,100 | 1,904,647 | 2,082,610 | 2,258,020 | 2,476,532 | 2,713,375 | 2,924,274 |
| 2 | Administrative | 1,334,800 | 2,163,748 | 2,309,656 | 2,455,564 | 2,601,472 | 2,747,380 | 2,893,288 |
| | Sub-Total Operations (B) | 2,147,900 | 4,068,395 | 4,392,266 | 4,713,584 | 5,078,004 | 5,460,755 | 5,817,562 |

C) Capital Costs (Equipment, Infra., Development)

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Construction and Land Scaping | 4,723,936 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | Classroom Furniture | 347,100 | 12,000 | 900 | 23,100 | 63,600 | 34,800 | 54,000 |
| 3 | Other Expenditures | 760,000 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Capital Exp. (C) | 5,831,036 | 12,000 | 900 | 23,100 | 63,600 | 34,800 | 54,000 |
| | Grand Total of Transition Expenses | 15,922,016 | 14,573,475 | 15,662,293 | 16,781,858 | 17,962,825 | 19,092,823 | 20,244,877 |
| | Funds Realisable through Fee | - | 7,860,000 | 7,675,000 | 9,775,600 | 13,001,536 | 16,298,202 | 20,046,349 |
| | Current Funding (2024-25) | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 | 3,050,000 |
| | Other Digantar Sources | 2,000,000 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Realisable Funds | 5,050,000 | 10,910,000 | 10,725,000 | 12,825,600 | 16,051,536 | 19,348,202 | 23,096,349 |
| | Additional Requirement | 10,872,016 | 3,663,475 | 4,937,293 | 3,956,258 | 1,911,289 | (255,379) | (2,851,472) |

Total Transition Funds needed **80,902,467**

Possible from existing partners **55,562,136**

Total funds required from Indian Financial year 2024-25 to 2028-29 **25,340,331**

Notes: I am making the following assumptions in this plan

Assumption 1: We need minimum 75 fee paying students in 2025-26. 15 students each in Pre-primary years 1-3 (3yrs-6 yrs age group), and 15 each in classes 1 and

Assumption 2: Fee structure in the range of 65,000 to 75,000 annual in the first years, and 8% increase every year. One time fee 36,800 in the first year.

Assumption 3: We maintain fund raising from current donors at the present rate till 2027-28.

