Autonomy in Schools by Manishpaull

Article published on January 19th 2012 | Education

St Josephâ€™s High School very recently conducted its 100th year. The month was marked with festive gaiety and a fund raising rock concert for the building of an Administrative Block in the campus. This raised a lot of eyebrows till the principal finally announced the news of the year at the end of here impressive annual report. St Josephâ€™s had been granted autonomy by the Ministry of Education.

The style of autonomy though normative was more marketable which allowed the school in indulging in conducting fund raising concerts for specific causes. After 99 years of its grand existence, the school had now earned itself the authority and power to conduct its own exams, issue its own certificates, conduct its own courses and assign its own academic calendar. In short the premier quality of instruction at St. Josephâ€™s had carved a niche for itself in the field of education. After the wonderful program, a number of parents surrounded the principal to congratulate her.

Since a few parents werenâ€™t very well informed on the subject, the principal decided to take a small session on the meaning of autonomy for the benefit of some parents. The forthcoming Saturday was declared as the Parent Teacher Meeting day. Curious parents reached before time and filled up the first few benches in the auditorium.

The principal began with a small power point presentation: The main objective behind having an autonomous system would mean a top-down transfer of competency to the level of the individual school. In such a case, it meant that the schoolâ€™s acidic and administrative performance had been so good over the past 99 years consistently that they could now handle a number of things on their own.

Instead of the Ministry of education stepping in, boards or committees consisting of teachers, headmasters, community members, and parents would now be delegated to make decisions about the syllabus, school budgets, the choice of textbooks, standards for student. It is expected that the greater autonomy a school receives will lead to greater accountability of schools to their local communities and better educational and social results. The slide show taught the parents about:

â€¢ Financial autonomy This is a highly coveted right to independently manage and be accountable to the parents while framing the school budget.

â€¢ Market autonomy The school holds the right to raise funds for a.

â€¢ Schoolâ€™s future growth plans.

â€¢ Product autonomy An autonomous school could independently state its aims and.

â€¢ objectives in terms of its future growth plans.

â€¢ Autonomy of staff selection The school has the freedom to recruit promote and terminate its employees at whatever level without turning to any higher authority.

â€¢ Organizational autonomy The management of the school has the autonomy to frame the policies and rules of the rules of the school.

â€¢ Normative autonomy The school has the right to frame independent school syllabi, school profiles or curricula.

â€¢ Autonomy of methodology Here, the Institute had the right to freely select teaching materials according to the lessons taught or even make their own teaching aids if required about teaching methods.

This autonomy, however, is always a relative one for schools because the fear that a complete independence of schools might endanger uniform quality standards was a comment put forth by Avenarius, an eminent educationist in the year 2000. Since autonomy for schools requires a lot of commitment and Team work, especially of teachers to make it work, maintaining it was a difficult task.

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/education-articles/autonomy-in-schools.htm - Article Side

Manishpaull - About Author:
Writer is a team member of OnlineSchoolAdmissions.com â€“ a portal that provides free of cost consultancy to parents and schools for fast and easy online school admission process. Parents can locate a little flower high school or a ansar english school of their choice selected from the directory of schools listed on the site and applies to them. They can also search for a summer fields school as per their choice and fill up the school application forms online.

Article Keywords:
little flower high school, ansar english school, summer fields school

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