

## Soon, parents' corner in all UP govt primary schools

*MULTI-PURPOSE: The counter will be used to disseminate information on welfare schemes and create awareness on social causes*



The initiative stems from a successful experiment at a government primary school in Gonda

Soon, there will be a parents' corner/ counter in all government primary schools in the state. "The idea is to inform parents and community members about various government welfare schemes, so that they could benefit from them and improve their living standards," said an official. Parents would also be able to inquire about their child's progress at these centres, he said.

The initiative stems from a successful experiment undertaken at a government primary school in Gonda district.

To connect better with community members, the primary school in Dhaurahra area of Gonda set up a parents' corner/ counter on its premises. "The response was overwhelming. Parents and community people immediately connected with the school, inquiring about different welfare schemes," said principal Ravi Pratap Singh.

Now, a state government order, dated December 6, has directed officials to implement the initiative in all government primary schools in UP.

Director basic education, Sarvendra Vikram Bahadur Singh, said on Monday, "It was an innovative idea of a visionary teacher in a Gonda school -- a wonderful move to connect with the community! It also helped increase the participation of community members in the school's activities. We now want to replicate the initiative in other schools, so that more people can benefit from it."

"The parents' corner will disseminate information on emergency services such as Dial 100, 1090 (for women in distress), fire and ambulance services, as well as road safety and traffic rules," he said.

The initiative will also look at improving women's literacy in every district, as envisaged in the Centre's 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' (BBBP) campaign. "It will educate masses about free and compulsory education for all children under the Right to Education (RTE) Act. For people who are uncomfortable in filling up bank cash deposit forms, the schools will keep deposit forms of different banks and help community people in filling them up," said director basic education.

He said the counter would also educate community members about the health department's new welfare schemes such as Ayushman Bharat and other programmes, including free cataract operations, vaccinations, and facilities available for pregnant women.

Explaining how the school managed to make a strong impact with its parents' corner, Ravi Pratap Singh said, "We informed the locals about the government's Ujjwala scheme and many of them benefited from it. We followed it up with information on the CM's helpline for Swachh Bharat Mission, which enabled people to register their complaints. Likewise, we kept passing useful information to them from time to time."

Gram pradhan Rajani added, "As agriculture is the only occupation of villagers, the school's teachers took out time to educate farmers about the latest technologies that would improve their yield and lower costs. Teachers also educated villagers about the ill-effects of liquor and tobacco consumption on their health. How to preserve the environment for a better tomorrow was another subject on which the teachers created awareness."

Apart from pioneering the idea of the parents' corner, Ravi Pratap Singh also introduced digital methods of imparting lessons at his school. He said that when he joined the school in August 2013, only 138 students were enrolled there. "The biggest challenge was to make education interesting for them. I started using my mobile phone and tablet to teach them rhymes, and realised that their interest levels went up substantially," he said.