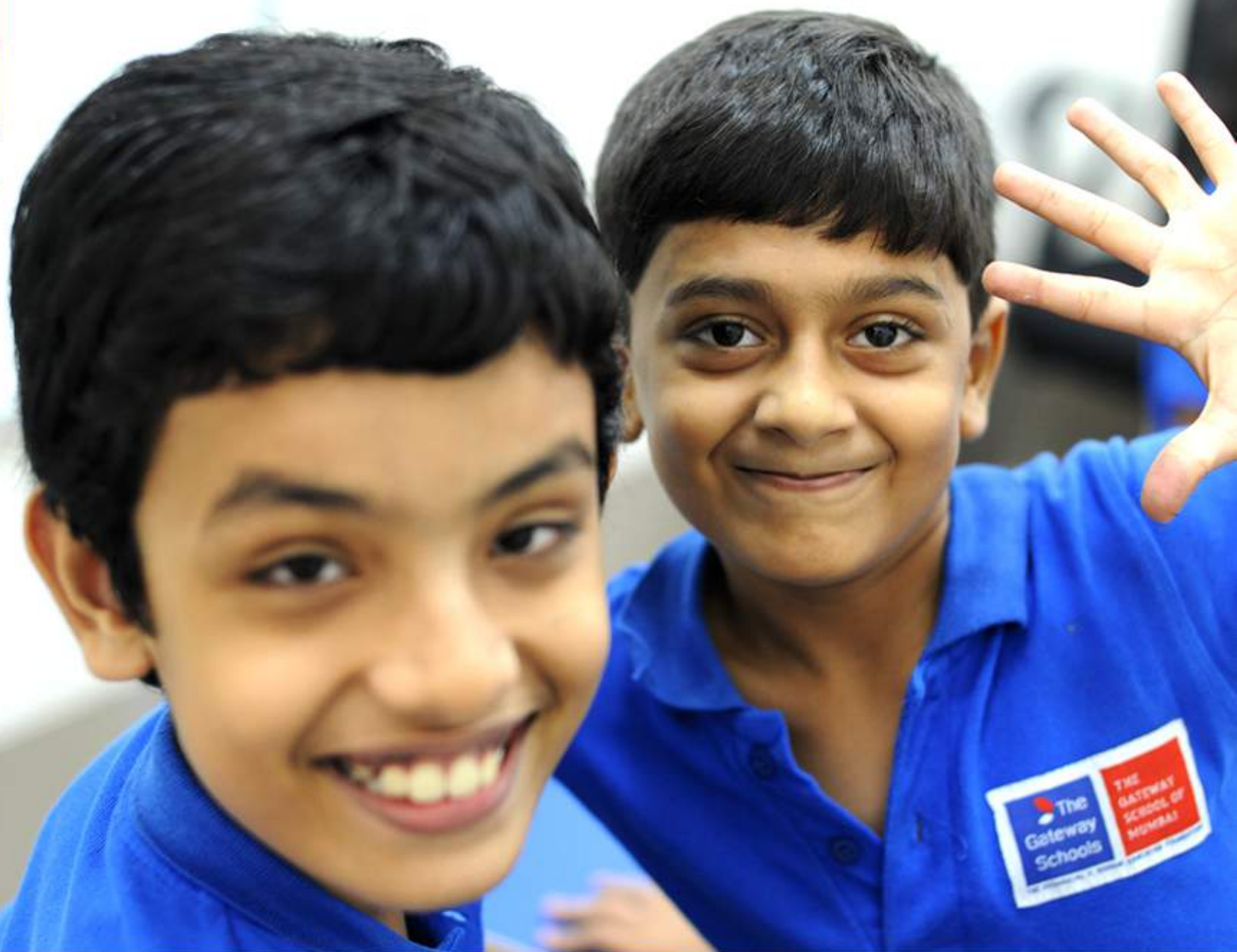




THE KESHAVLAL V. BODANI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13



The Gateway School of Mumbai
Sion Trombay Road, Next to Deonar Bus Depot, Govandi (E), Mumbai 400 088 TEL: 22 25563613, 22 65223331.
www.gateway.schoolmumbai.org

Dear Gateway Family,

As we bring this truly momentous and historic first year of operations at Gateway-Mumbai to an end, we would like to thank each one of you that has contributed in your own unique way towards the realization of Indira Bodani's audacious and inspiring vision of establishing a quality educational institution pioneering the use of groundbreaking practices in the field of Special Education Needs for benefit of the underserved population of children with disabilities in Mumbai – and in the future, India!

This document aims to assess the performance of The Gateway School of Mumbai, during its first academic term 1st June 2012 to 31st May 2013, based on some qualitative and quantitative performance indicators identified. In this analysis, the school's progress is being measured against the extent to which successful steps were taken to fulfill its founding mission and vision. In order to maximize the validity and reliability of the conclusions shared in the following pages, anonymous reviews and evaluations provided by the school's clients/parents and employees - both - have been included and cited wherever possible and relevant.

This document comprises of the following sections:

I. School Mission – The indicators identified as determinants of the school's progress towards fulfilling its mission are:

1. Authentic Parent-School Partnership (see page 2)
2. Building a Competent and Synergistic Team (see page 4)
3. Designing a Conducive Learning Environment (see page 6)
4. Quality of Educational and Therapeutic Services (see page 8)
5. Student Contribution to Society (see page 8)

II. School Vision – The indicators identified for assessing the school's success with fulfilling its long-term vision are:

1. Attaining Financial Self-Sufficiency (see page 10)
2. Extending Reach and Benefit (see page 14)

III. Conclusion – The document concludes with a brief analysis of the strengths, concerns, and near-future opportunities and plans of the school (see page 15). As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, suggestions or comments you might have.

Sincerely,



Siamack Zahedi
Head of School,
The Gateway School of Mumbai



SCHOOL MISSION

“To help students with learning disabilities develop the skills, knowledge, understandings and attitudes necessary for them to lead fulfilling and productive lives – as successful individuals and active contributors to society.”

I. Authentic Parent - School Partnership

Research has shown that one of the clearest and most valuable contributors to a child’s developmental progress is parental involvement. In order to facilitate a sincere and productive partnership with parents, so that they can play an active and effective role in their child’s educational program, the school has successfully created and maintained certain spaces for interaction between the two:

IEP meetings Each student’s Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) was designed jointly by the parents and the school, at the outset of the academic year. The entire multidisciplinary team working with each child was present for in-depth consultation at this 2-hour meeting.

Parent-Teacher Conferences (PTC) These meetings took place three times during the year, at the end of each quarter, to revisit, assess and edit the previously made IEPs and discuss the student’s performance in academics and arts classes as well.

Curriculum Night This was an evening organized at the start of the academic year, where parents were provided with the opportunity to literally experience the different classes and programs that their children would be engaged in during the coming months at school. Teachers and therapists set up mini sessions and made presentations to provide parents with an outline of the year’s curriculum, while also engaging them in sampling some activities first-hand.

Parent Support Group meetings This is a space where, on a monthly basis, parents came together to share their challenges, concerns and successes in raising a child with disabilities, with the aim of providing emotional and also technical support to one another.

Parent Workshops These meetings, conducted once in every 2 - 3 months, were aimed at sharing tools, approaches, strategies and best-practices related to special education and therapies, with the parents. Workshops were conducted by the school’s senior staff and by visiting trainers/experts from overseas.



In addition to the abovementioned spaces, collaboration and information-sharing between the school and parents was assisted by ongoing communications such as bi-weekly classroom updates, monthly Head of School Notes, 'incident reports' from the school nurse, phone calls, and even brief meetings between parents and teachers/therapists on a daily basis.

PARENTS' VIEW

According to data collected from an anonymous parent review:

100% of parents said that the process of jointly discussing and creating IEPs for their child was effective.

97% of parents said that the format of PTCs at Gateway-Mumbai were effective

100% of the attending parents said that the Parent Support Group meetings conducted were helpful for them

100% of parents said that the Parent Workshops conducted were informative and empowering

2. Building a Competent and Synergistic Team

Gateway-Mumbai's faculty consists of a multidisciplinary team of special educators, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, psychologists, medical practitioners, artists (dance/music/visual-arts), physical educators, administrators, and support staff.

Qualification The team held 14 international degrees/diplomas including a Ph.D. and Master's Degrees from the most prestigious and highest ranked Universities in the US, Australia, and the UK (including Columbia University, University of Texas, University of Southern California, etc.)

Experience The faculty had diverse, international and local experience ranging from 1 – 25 years.

Capacity Building The school's overarching goal is to build local capacity, and hence below are some of the professional development opportunities that had been provided during the year:

- ▶ Two visits were made by the Gateway - NYC founding members/mentors to Mumbai for the purpose of teacher training
- ▶ A team of three Gateway-Mumbai teachers visited Gateway-NYC for onsite training
- ▶ Approximately 5 weeks of scheduled, in-house, professional development had been conducted by senior members of the Gateway-Mumbai team during summer vacations
- ▶ Regularly scheduled Skype conferences with Gateway NYC mentors, and other independent therapists, took place during the year
- ▶ A rich teacher resource library had been provided to members of the Gateway-Mumbai team, containing over 200 international book titles
- ▶ Organized spaces for reflection and collaboration between team members:
 - **Child Study:** This meeting took place twice in the year, and involved the entire multidisciplinary team of teachers and therapists coming together and reflecting on the progress and pressing needs of a specific child presented as a case study for joint problem-solving
 - **Whole-school meetings:** This meeting took place approximately once a month and was a platform for team members to reflect on and share classroom practices – the successes and concerns, and take whole-school decisions consultatively

Promotions Capacity had successfully been built in several team members, including 10 of whom were promoted to lead teaching positions or department head positions in the subsequent year.

Low Staff Turnover and Resignations The school experienced only two early terminations/resignations, on mutual agreement. Some of the factors that might have contributed to such a successfully low annual turnover were:

- ▶ Investment in rich professional development opportunities for the staff, as described in the previous section. In 2012-13, the school spent approximately Rs. 10 lakh (USD\$17,000) on Teacher Training and Professional Development.
- ▶ Multiple-year contracts - The school contracts with almost all its teaching and therapy team members for durations of 2-3 years, instead of shorter annual agreements.
- ▶ Democratic governance – The school believes that its democratic governance increases the sense of ownership in each employee, thereby increasing productivity and job satisfaction, and thus reducing turnover.

STAFF VIEW

According to data collected from an anonymous staff review, when asked the questions, “To What Extent...”

“Has the school leadership included all the team members/staff sufficiently in decision making processes where relevant?”

- A score of 83% was received.

“Has working at Gateway been fulfilling for you” - A score of 92% was received.

PARENTS VIEW

Parents were asked to comment on the competence of Gateway’s team (anonymous reviews):

100% of them said that their child’s teacher and therapists are highly dedicated and committed towards their duties.

97% of parents felt that the Gateway team of teachers, therapists and support staff is competent enough to support their child’s development in an optimal manner.

100% of parents said that the leaders of the school (Founders, Head of School, Directors) definitely have the capacity to lead the school in achieving its Mission and Vision.

3. Designing a Conducive Learning Environment

At Gateway, it is believed that the environment is the third teacher. Hence, a great deal of thought has been invested into the design of the campus.

- **Space :**
 - ▶ Total area made usable for the students: 7360 sq. Ft.
 - ▶ Average classroom area per student made available: 70 sq. ft. This is well above the prestigious Central Board of Secondary Education's (CBSE) recommended minimum of 11 sq. ft. per child at the secondary level.
- **Safety and Security :** No security breaches or student accidents of any kind had been experienced at school, thanks to:
 - ▶ 19 CCTVs that were placed within the school building to monitor the campus.
 - ▶ Adult supervision on each floor – Support staff members had been placed on each floor, and teachers were assigned with break-time duties to ensure that the students were monitored at all times.



• **Functionality of design :**

- ▶ Sound reduction windows were used to minimize student distraction due to noise from the main road.
- ▶ Throughout the school, different types of spaces had been created – each lending itself to a unique learning environment and opportunity, including large spaces for whole-school activities, small spaces to reduce environmental stimulation, open spaces for movement, enclosed spaces to provide concrete borders and structure needed by the students, and other spaces with specialized equipment.
- ▶ Use of Technology – Every room was equipped with a TV and computer. Middle and Upper School students were provided with one laptop each, and one iPad was being circulated among the senior students.

PARENTS VIEW

When asked about the learning environment of the school in the parent review (anonymous questionnaire) the results were as follows:

100% of parents said they consider the campus to be a safe and secure place for their child

100% of parents expressed that the school campus has an aesthetic feel that promotes joy and positivity

100% of parents felt like the school campus is spacious enough for the number of children its hosts

4. Quality of Educational and Therapeutic Services

• **Academics:**

- ▶ Cambridge University (IGCSE) affiliation: the school has successfully affiliated with Cambridge University Examinations Boards (IGCSE) – the world's largest provider of international education programs and qualifications for 5-19 year olds. Gateway-Mumbai is the first special needs school in India to have achieved affiliation with an international board of education that is as prestigious as Cambridge University.

• **Nutrition and Health Program Planning:**

- ▶ Dr. Kelly Dorfman – veteran nutritionist and bestselling author in the US – has been providing her consultative services to the school in order to assist us with designing the students' snack/lunch plans. She has also been working with families individually via private telephone consultations.

- **Student:Teacher ratio** at the end of the 2012-13 year has been approximately 3:1 in the classroom, with a total of 31 students and 22 teachers and therapists on board.

• **Platforms to Showcase Learning:**

- ▶ Facilitated by the visual-arts teacher, students prepared original artworks (over a working period of 3 months) which were then displayed and sold at the Annual Gateway Art Show held at SaffronArt (the leading Indian auction house for art).
A total of 45 pieces were created by all 31 students, and 40 of these artworks were sold at the exhibition making it a great success

PARENTS VIEW

When asked about the quality of services provided (anonymous questionnaire) the results were as follows:

97% of parents said they were satisfied with the quality of educational/academic services provided.

97% of parents said they were satisfied with the quality of therapy services provided.

5. Student Contribution to Society

Sale proceeds from the 40 original artworks created and displayed by our students at the Gateway Annual Art Show raised a total of close to Rs. 4 lakhs. All the profits were handed over to 'World For All Animal Care and Adoptions' – a non-profit animal welfare organization that was chosen by the school's senior students.

SCHOOL VISION

“To introduce and spread international best-practices in the field of special education and rehabilitation therapies in Mumbai - providing greater access and quality in these services to children with disabilities in the city.”



1. Attaining Financial Self-Sufficiency

Operational Incomes:

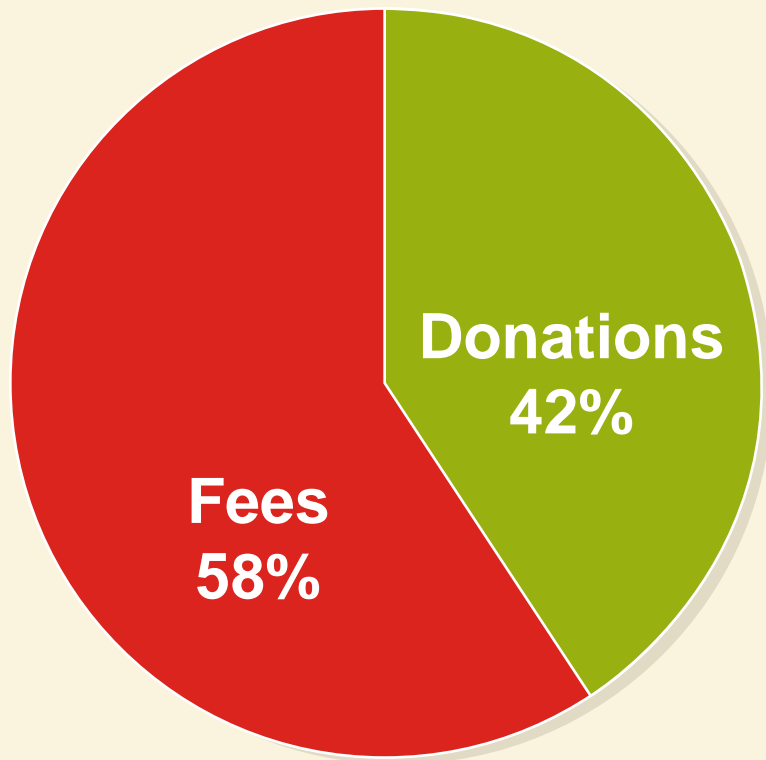
Student enrolment:

At the end of the 2012-13 School Term, student enrolment totalled 31 students.

Fees:

During the academic year 2012-13, the school charged highly subsidized fees from its students in an attempt to meet about half of the actual cost per child. The gap between the cost and income was then funded by donors.

% of cost per child, covered from fees



Need-based Scholarships: Till date, no family has been denied enrolment due to their inability to meet the school's suggested tuition fees. Enrolment evaluations are conducted without any knowledge of the applicant's financial background. If it is assessed that the child's needs can be met by the school, and if the parents make an application for a need-based scholarship, then a due-diligence protocol is initiated to verify the financial condition of the family in order to confirm the authenticity of the application. Once confirmed, the school then seeks donors that are willing to fund the education of such under-privileged students. During the 2012-13 term, the school offered need-based scholarships to 5 students, the costs of which are being borne by 9 private donors placed across India even today.

PARENTS VIEW

According to data collected in a recent parent review (anonymous questionnaires):

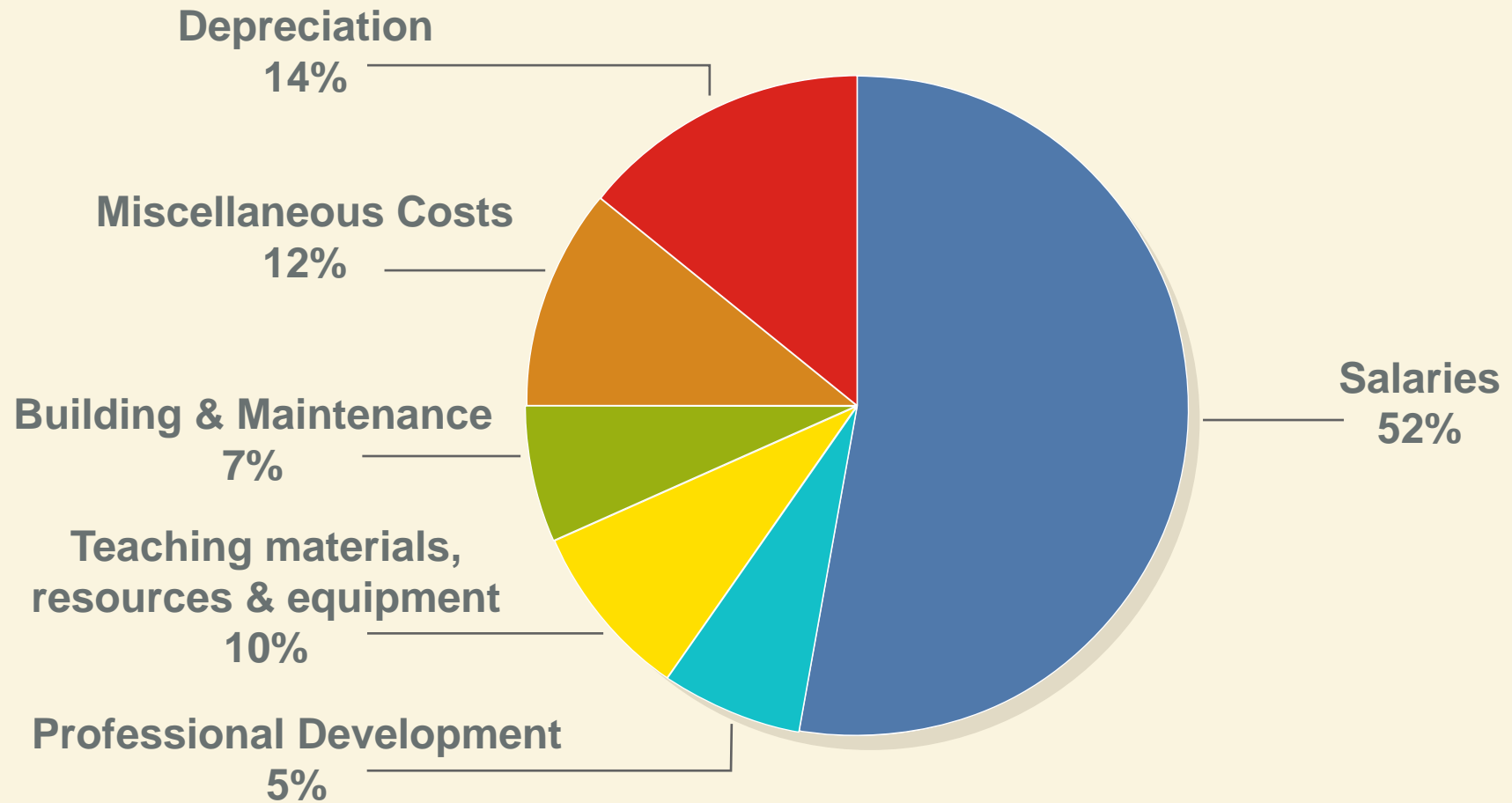
100% of parents said that the fees charged are fair keeping in mind the infrastructure, academic and therapeutic services, teaching materials & resources and the competency of the team



Operational Expenses:

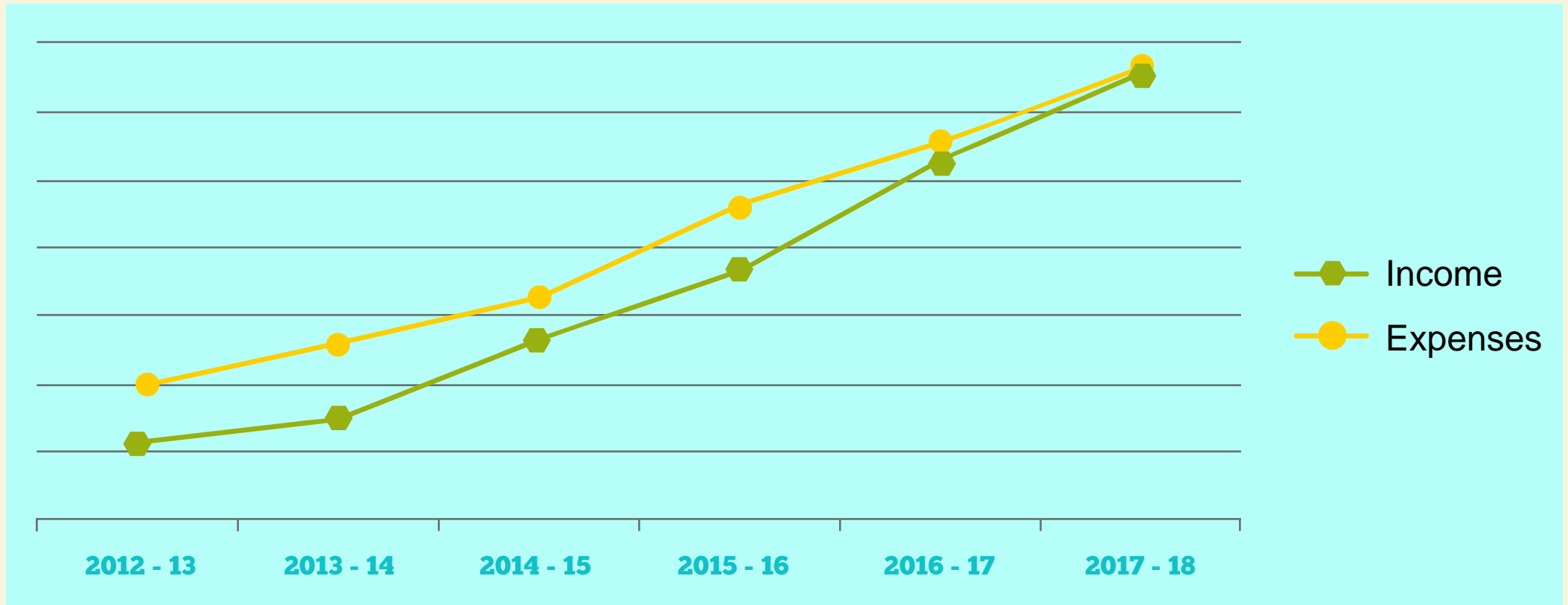
Allocation of Funds:

Break - up of costs (%)



5 - Yr. Break-Even Forecast (1st June 2012 - 31st May 2018):

Below is a graph of the projected gap between incomes and expenses for the next 5 years:



According to our financial projections and current budgets, the school can achieve close to complete operational self-sufficiency by 2017-18, if by that year the school will be functioning at its full capacity of 150 students with a team of 72 teachers and therapists. The relatively small deficit forecasted, along with any capital expenses, will need to be met through fundraising and contributions from donors.

2. Extending Reach and Benefit

Hosting Professional Development workshops:

Marcia Barham, a specialist in the Orff- Schulwerk approach to teaching music, from the American School of Bombay, conducted a workshop on integrating music into the classroom. Gateway-Mumbai hosted the workshop, which was attended by a total of 21 participants from a variety of NGOs, international schools, and local schools.

Welcoming observers:

The school has been visited by more than 50 professionals from 15 educational and child development institutions such as ASB, Oberoi, MDA, Ummeed, Arya Vidya Mandir, Bai Ava Bai, Teach For India fellows from Hyderabad/Chennai/Mumbai, among other institutions, in the previous year.

Sharing the Gateway Approach with Professionals:

The annual Inspired conference, organized by Teach for India, brings together India's most innovative and creative professionals working in the field of education to engage in discussions on the challenges of education equity. The Gateway - Mumbai team was requested to conduct two workshops on the Gateway School Approach at this prestigious conference.

Considering the fact that 2012 - 13 was the school's first year of functioning, all emphasis during this period has been on assimilating the unique approaches and educational practices introduced by Gateway-NYC, and consolidating the administrative components of Gateway - Mumbai's organizational model. Hence, the school has been conservative with the deployment of its limited human resources towards services that extend beyond the immediate circle of its present students. The establishment of more urban and rural Gateway schools, the set-up of a teacher training centre, opening after-school therapy services to children who are not presently enrolled at Gateway, and reaching out and supporting mainstream schools and relevant NGOs, are long term plans that are being actively worked on and will unfold one piece at a time following an organic pace.

CONCLUSION

Strengths and Successes:

- ▶ Qualified and dedicated team
- ▶ Successful ongoing professional development programs and interventions implemented
- ▶ Strong sense of ownership displayed by the team members
- ▶ Conducive work environment established
- ▶ Quality of educational and therapeutic services provided is high
- ▶ Trust, support, and adulation from parents has been earned
- ▶ Timely and uninterrupted flow of funds made available
- ▶ Robust professional relationship maintained with partner school Gateway-New York
- ▶ School's position as an expert in Learning Disabilities has been successfully established in the special needs professional community of Mumbai



Concerns:

- ▶ Lower than expected number of student enrolments thus far, due to two possible reasons:
 - Parents still push for their kids with LD to be placed in mainstream schools because of the cultural stigma attached to learning disabilities and special needs schools
 - Stringent Admissions Criteria: the school has been rather selective while inviting students on board in order to ensure that it takes on only such profiles that it is equipped to cater to optimally. From a total of 312 inquiries for admissions, only 14% of the applicants had been invited for enrollment in 2012 - 13
- ▶ Scarcity of qualified and experienced local special educators and therapists
- ▶ Pending BMC permissions and delayed building construction timelines



We are looking forward to:

An exclusive Kindergarten section measuring 4000 sq. ft. to be added to the back of the current school building

- ▶ Construction of a Sensory Gym, Library and Science Labs
- ▶ Our first IGCSE class will begin its term with four 14 yr. old students from August 2013
- ▶ The school intends on establishing its first Parent Teacher Association in the academic year 2013-14, to further increase the productivity of the parent-school partnership
- ▶ Opening therapeutic services to children not enrolled at Gateway

