

Education Board – 2015 Annual Report

Introduction

The Sanatan Fiji Education Board was revived on 17 August 2015 in the light of the essential role it plays in the overall development of Sanatan Fiji. The previous strategic plan was revisited and the vision, mission the statement of values and the work plan were retained with minor additions and deletions. The progress of our Strategic Plan thus far is briefly presented below:

Our Vision – *“Unfolding the Goodness within”*.

Our Mission

To create and sustain an educational environment that promotes the principles and values of ‘Sanatan Dharma’. It expects to provide a firm underpinning for the effective management of Sanatan organizations, encourage the development of Sanatan education programs at the individual, school and the community levels, instill a passion for life-long Sanatan learning and foster emotional well-being and the needs of children, adults and the members of the local, national, regional and global society. In doing so, it expects to make provision for appropriate learning and training resources including suitably qualified ‘gurus’ and pundits as well as commonly-agreed upon booklets for conducting poojas and sanskaars.

Our Values

-The Education Board is to actively promote universal Sanatan moral values which stem from the concept of ‘dharma’ (righteousness) stressing that

- ‘Dharma’ is the divine law that we all must follow for our own spiritual evolution and discourse, It opens the way for God-realization and interaction amongst people. The treasure of dharma is accumulated by plain living and high thinking and resides within us;
- Truth, non-violence, knowledge, sacrifice and dedication are the pillars on which dharma resides.
- The attributes of dharma are patience, courage, forgiveness, self-restraint, purity, control of the senses, thoughtfulness, knowledge, truthfulness and peace.
- Dharma assumes the shape of the moral law that differentiates between good and evil that drives right actions and not wrong doings. The rightness or wrongness promotes or hinders our spiritual convictions and ‘karma’.

Our engagements in 2015

- Education Board – The Education Board now comprises of Dr. Akhila Sharma (Chair), Dr. Ajal Kumar (secretary), Mr. Virendra Lal, Pt. Ramesh Sharma, Mr. Daya Ram, Mr. Jowahir Lal, Dr. Rajesh Maharaj, Pt. Dharmendra Sharma, Pt. Shiv Sharma, Mr. Bal Ram, Mr. B. P. Chaudhry, Mr. Ravinesh Singh, Ms. Swastika Narayan and Ms. Arti Pratap. Six Education Board meeting were held in this period. Sub-Committees – The following sub-committees were appointed to manage specific activities of the Board:
 - Constitution Review Sub-Committee – Consistent with the views of the National Executive of Sanatan Fiji, it was agreed to review the Constitution of Sanatan Fiji.

The review committee includes Dr. Sharma (chair), Dr. Ajal Kumar, Mr. Virendra Lal, Ms. Swastika Narayan and Mr. B. P. Chaudhry. The sub-committee identified the sections of the Constitution that needed to be reviewed. and make appropriate amendments. The Board is still considering the amendments and then these would be presented to the relevant Sanatan authorities.

- Education Human Values and Baal Vikash Sub-Committee - With Mr. Daya Ram as the chair person, Dr. Rajesh Maharaj, Pt. Dharmendra Sharma, Mr. Jowahir Lal, Ravinesh Singh and Mr. Virendra Lal as the members.. The committee is currently reviewing the Classes1-8 curriculum on EHV and would prepare a curriculum for Sanatan Fiji EHV and Baal-Vikash education program.
- Interfaith Search Fiji sub-committee - Pt. Ramesh Sharma (Chair), Dr. Rajesh Maharaj and Mr. Daya Ram are the members of this sub-committee. The Board noted with appreciation the appointment of Pt. Ramesh Sharma and Dr. Rajesh Maharaj as the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson respectively of the Interfaith Search Fiji and wishes them well in their new positions. The Committee reports to the Board on its activities.
- Brahman Purohit sub-committee - The Board was of view that the conduct of Sanatan sanskaars and related poojas were to be standarised. In this regard, a meeting of the National Brahman Purohit Sabha was called and the concern was raised. It was agreed to prepare standard pooja booklets that all pundits to use while conducting various poojas. Dr. Ajal Kumar, Virendra Lal and Rd. Sharma are working in this area under the leadership of Dr. Ajal Kumar. The progress is being reported to the Board.
- Sanatan Fiji Website sub-committee - Ms. Swastika Narayan is the Webmaster and the members of the sub-committee includes Ms. Swastika Narayan (Chair), Dr. A. Sharma, Mr. Virendra Lal, Arti Pratap, Pt. Ramesh Sharma and Mr. Daya Ram.
- Teaching of Hindi in Fiji Schools - The Board agreed that there is a need for more qualified Hindi teachers in our schools. It was pointed out that most teachers did not take Hindi classes seriously. This issue was raised with the MOE. The Board raised the issue of Fiji Hindi and/or contemporary Hindi and expressed its discontent in the manner it had been included in the national examination papers. It was agreed that conversational Hindi is to be taught in Fiji schools as language to non-speakers of Hindi. Similarly, conversational ‘*i-taukei*’ language is to non-speakers of that language. Sanatan Fiji with Hindu/cultural organizations expressed their concerns to the Minister of Education. Mr. Virendra Lal represented Sanatan Fiji and led the discussion. The Minister agreed and the matter was resolved.

Conclusion

The Education Board plans to establish sub-committees in all the branches of Sanatan Fiji to promote the educational activities of the Board to the wider community. The Board looks forward to the continued support of all the members and organizations of Shree Sanatan Dharm Pratinidhi Sabha Fiji.

Dr. Akhila Nand Sharma
Chairperson