

### Introduction:

Aikiyam School is an Auroville outreach school serving more than 250 children from the neighbouring villages of Kulilapalyam and Bomiarpalayam. The children range in age from three to thirteen or fourteen years and are in classes from crèche to the eighth grade.



Although the school was founded in the late 1980's, the present management has been in place since 2005. Our aim is to prepare children for life in the rapidly changing modern world while keeping close contact with their Tamil village roots. To this end we introduced the Central

Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum in 2007 because of its emphasis upon creative stimulation and recognition of the uniqueness of each child.

When the school started the families were very poor, and could not afford to pay for the education of their children, so the school program, which includes a mid-day meal and 2 nutritious snacks per day, was entirely funded by Auroville, and the donations of well wishers. Today, with India's increasing prosperity, and the better financial circumstances of the families, we are charging parents a modest fee to help cover our costs. (Many of the parents are employed in Auroville as daily wage earners or skilled craftsmen, and a few own a small business.)

### Present Situation:

The cost of running the school has increased regularly year by year. Between 2009 and 2017 the costs have increased by 140%. This increase is mostly due to the high level of inflation in India and the fact that as we get better teachers we need to pay them more. Donations, however, have not increased proportionally. In 2008 donations covered 68% of our expenses, whereas today they cover only 28%. (see table below)

	2008-2009	2016-2017	2008-2009	2016-2017	2008-2009	2016-2017
	₹	₹	€	€	US\$	US\$
<b>INCOME</b>						
Auroville's Contribution	1,742,804	3,285,696	23,237	43,809	27,231	51,339
Donations	1,838,516	1,806,502	24,514	24,087	28,727	28,227
Students' Contribution		632,500	-	8,433	-	9,883
Government Grant	110,500	320,350	1,473	4,271	1,727	5,005
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3,691,820</b>	<b>6,045,048</b>	<b>49,224</b>	<b>80,601</b>	<b>57,685</b>	<b>94,454</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
Salaries, Bonuses, Retirement Fund	1,978,806	4,507,826	26,384	60,104	30,919	70,435
Nutrition	259,880	558,196	3,465	7,443	4,061	8,722
All materials inc. classroom, theatre, crafts	85,474	353,838	1,140	4,718	1,336	5,529
Summer Camp and Travel	40,715	135,155	543	1,802	636	2,112
General expenses, repairs, maintenance, misc	264,086	499,213	3,521	6,656	4,126	7,800
Furniture and Equipment	80,500	378,328	1,073	5,044	1,258	5,911
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,709,461</b>	<b>6,432,556</b>	<b>36,126</b>	<b>85,767</b>	<b>42,335</b>	<b>100,509</b>
<b>Income minus Expenditure</b>	<b>982,359</b>	<b>-387,508</b>	<b>13,098</b>	<b>-5,167</b>	<b>15,349</b>	<b>-6,055</b>

As you can see from the table above, 70% of the cost of running the school is for salaries, bonuses, and staff benefits. We have a staff of around thirty teachers, including the school principal, librarian and resource manager. Additionally we have seven cleaning and cooking staff, one maintenance man, one gardener, two secretaries, and one administrator. Auroville covers the maintenance of those teachers and staff members, who are members of the Auroville community. The rest, which includes fourteen teachers, and most of our non-teaching staff, are covered by donations, and the fees we get from students. Teachers' pay is very low in comparison to what they might earn in a government school, although a little more than what they would earn in many privately run schools. We have not been able to increase their wages as much as we would like, as our expenditure is already exceeding our income.



almost entirely depleting the reserve we had built up over previous years when we received more than we spent.

At the same time we would like to increase the wages of those teachers not covered by Auroville.. We spend a lot of effort training our teachers how to recognize and develop the strengths of each individual pupil, which is something they do not necessarily learn in the regular teachers' course, which is more oriented to rote learning and passing exams. Therefore it can be quite a blow, when a teacher we have been working with for a long time, leaves for a higher paying job in a government school. Yet we cannot blame them. Sometimes they can earn double the salary we offer, or even more.

Any help you can give us to meet these goals would be deeply appreciated. Either regular or single donations would be very welcome.

There are many ways to **donate** to Auroville, depending on whether you donate from inside or outside India and whether or not you require income tax exemption. You may also donate online.

Go to <https://www.auroville.org/contents/2835> and choose the way that is suitable for you. Regardless of your choice please be sure to write to [assg@auroville.org.in](mailto:assg@auroville.org.in) with copy to [unityfund@auroville.org.in](mailto:unityfund@auroville.org.in) explaining that your donation is for Aikiyam School.



### Need and Request:

To function we need to be able to cover our current expenses, as well as to meet new ones. For the past three years our expenses have exceeded our income,

