Our 5 year journey

ANNUAL REPORT
2019-2020
Who are we?
A. The Crisis
B. Our Solution
C. Our Students

What did we set out to do?
Student and Staff Vision

How have we fared?
A. Make it to and through college
B. Lead a healthy and balanced lifestyle
C. Articulate their passion, ability and career choices
D. Own India’s development
E. Build a healthy and high performing team

What did it take?
A. Our Partners
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What have we learned?
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A. Scale
B. Depth
1A. Who are we: The Crisis

None of the 54 English medium government schools in Pune go beyond Grade 7. With students not being able to afford private schools, this leads to a huge drop out, and gives the poorest students of the city virtually no chance at attending college or building a career.

“Nowadays, taking admission in Grade 8 in most schools is extremely difficult. The fees of many schools is very high. As a lot of people from our community are migrants, the decision becomes much tougher and we are not able to afford it. As parents, educating our child is extremely important for us, but with schools being out of reach, it becomes a challenge for us.”

Bandana Rai,
Mother of Upasna Rai, Grade 9
iTeach Schools was born to wage war on this problem. We are on a mission to create a community of free, transformational schools for the most-under resourced children in Pune. Our schools function in a PPP (Public Private Partnership) model, much like the charter schools in other parts of the world. When a student in our feeder government schools finishes Grade 7, he/she enrol for Grades 8 - 10 with us, with no selection bias.

Since 2015, we have expanded to 9 schools and are serving 1600 students and 1000 alumni, with a team of 170 full-time staff members.
1C. Who are we: Our Students

We serve Pune city’s most under resourced children. 61% of these children come from homes with one earning member. The average salary per month ranges from INR 5000-15000 and the average family size is 4 members. Most parents are skilled or unskilled contractual workers which means employment, and hence salaries, are inconsistent and not the most dependable. Further, all our students stay in Pune’s slums and access to other development means is highly restricted.
2. What did we set out to do?

Creating a community of transformational schools, which fundamentally empower the most under-resourced children to create a destiny of their choice.

### Student Vision

Every student who graduates from iTech will be able to:

- Make it to and through college
- Lead a healthy and balanced lifestyle
- Articulate their passion, ability and career choices
- Own India’s development

### Staff Vision

To achieve this, we will build:

The best team in the Indian Ed reform space, one which is healthy and high performing, and embodies our organizational values of courage, excellence and growth.
3. How have we fared?

Our story through the lens of student and staff vision
Our students come to us in Grade 8 typically 3-4 years behind i.e. being able to barely read Grade 3 text-books. Our first priority is to create an experience for them where they rapidly bridge this achievement gap. We do this by focusing on rigor, relevance and relationships in every single lesson.

Meet Smita Didi - a Grade 8 English literacy teacher, and find out how she approaches this in her classes.

"In my class, we always try to balance building English proficiency with deepening our understanding of values, and adding in as much exposure to the world as possible. Right away in Grade 8, we pick up authentic texts like I Am Malala, and over the course of the unit, explore how we can identify with and learn from her life's journey.

We discuss everything from the current reality of India's broken education system to the gender inequality my students face every day. We express our emotions through letters to our future selves, gratitude notes to our cheerleaders, and even an appeal to Malala herself! While doing all this, I saw the class's average reading levels grow by nearly 3 years within 1 year!"

As a teacher, my biggest role is to create a safe space in every class, where students can raise their voice, empathize with each other and problem solve!
3A. Every iTeach graduate will make it to and through college

We’ve done really well on the Grade 10 results each year - with 2020 results being our strongest ever.

98.2% students passed Grade 10 in the first attempt (cumulative of 4 batches)

99% of our students have paid for college via scholarship or savings (sustainable and student owned)

92% of our students are still in the education system - despite intense pressure to drop out (such as marriages, rigor of college, job pressure, addictions, etc)

How did our students do in Grade 10?

2019-20 SSC Grade 10 Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinction &gt;75%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Class 60-75%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Class 45-60%</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pass 35-45%</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fail 0-35%</td>
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iTeach Schools: Green, PMC Schools: Orange

2017-20 SSC Grade 10 Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Distinction &gt;75%</th>
<th>1st Class 60-75%</th>
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Admission into Top 5 Junior Colleges of Pune

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<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Total in 2017</th>
<th>Total in 2018</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fergusson College</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Symbiosis College</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>Apte College</td>
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3B. Every iTeach graduate will lead a healthy and balanced lifestyle

The second part of our student vision ensures that every graduate can design and lead a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

While their high income peers have parents who will provide for everything from books to musical instruments, and from sports classes to career advice, our students don't have access to any of these. It hence is firmly a part of the iTeach Schools model to ensure students get all the opportunities in the world to explore and experience holistic development!

Meet Divesh and Rohit - both from iTeach ADH Batch of 2018 who have capitalised on the holistic activities presented in their school to not only create a healthy lifestyle for themselves but also continued to pursue the game - as professional coaches.

Divesh says, “An important step to remain healthy is to plan. Starting at iTeach, I used to plan my weeks well. I also used to set some small goals which kept me motivated during the learning process.”

Rohit follows his set routines to ensure his well being. “I ensure that I exercise daily, even being at home nowadays in absence of football practice. I eat by a fixed time and sleep off at the allotted hour.”

“A healthy and balanced lifestyle is about managing my daily life. All we need is a good diet, good communication with our family and friends to ensure our feelings find space too.”

Divesh Shewale,
iTeach ADH alumnus,
Football Coach at Just for Kicks

“I am able to manage my emotions on the field as managing small children can be challenging and I have to ensure that I do not get angry at any point.”

Rohit Rawat,
iTeach ADH alumnus,
Coach at Invictus Football Academy
3B. Every iTeach graduate will lead a healthy and balanced lifestyle

Through our 5 years, we have evolved our school design to include varied holistic development opportunities in the week. 40% of a student’s time in a week is solely devoted to learning experiences outside of academics!

We have partnered with multiple organisations, who are the best in their fields, to run these programs at excellence and do it sustainably.
3C. Every iTeach graduate will articulate their passion, ability and career choices

Our vision for every student at iTeach Schools - to be able to articulate their passions, abilities and career choices - is something we hold very dear to us. We strongly believe that being from an impoverished background shouldn’t deprive students of the destiny of their choice.

Meet Deepak Kamble from iTeach BJR and students of iTeach SGM as they pave a destiny of their choice and become a role model for their friends and community.

**Deepak Kamble makes it to Future School of Performing Arts, Mumbai**

Deepak came to Pune 15 years ago, an under-confident child as the language and people were new to him. In his school he met Anagha Didi, who motivated him to participate in dance and musicals, and it changed his life thoroughly. With one such dance musical Maya, Deepak inculcated values of collaboration, courage, compassion and wisdom. This experience led Deepak to realize his passion - dance. While unable to afford private dance classes, Deepak practiced constantly at home using YouTube. At school, Tanvi Didi’s guidance helped him to participate in various competitions across the city. He continued his dance journey through a group called Umang in Junior College. He also taught dance in iTeach RSM.

Deepak’s commitment and his teachers’ unswerving belief led him to apply to and get selected for Future School of Performing Arts (FSPA)! In future, Deepak wants to start his own dance academy in Pune!

Watch Deepak light the stage on fire!
In June 2018, four Grade 10 students Abhishek Patil, Avinash Naik, Afsaar Maniyar and Shailaja Gautam from iTeach SGM started Project iQ, to ensure 150 students at their school could identify and explore their extracurricular interests. Abhishek says, “The four of us have had access to several leadership development programs and we wanted to ensure that everyone else also had similar experiences. Moreover, students who are the primary stakeholders of the education system should have a voice in decision making for students.”

The organising team later explored the idea as a viable business plan and went on to win prizes at several platforms in Mumbai and Pune in 2019.

During the pandemic, the team ran virtual hobby clubs like TED Talks, poetry for 80 student alumni across iTeach Schools. The team is currently considering different plans to build depth and expand impact of the project.
3C. Every iTeach graduate will articulate their passion, ability and career choices

Our 10 member Student Alumni Wing is building a student alumni network of support to ensures that each one of our 1000 alums make it through college all the way to employment.

A. One-on-One Mentoring
Fortnightly one on one check-in with a dedicated SAW Team Advisor.

Impact:
- Post Grade 10 - 100% alumni individually mentored by SAW Advisors
- Post Grade 12 - 30% alumni signed up for professional career counselling

B. Exposure to Diverse Career Options
Course and Career Awareness Workshops

Impact:
- 70% parents and alumni attended these workshops

C. Practical Work Experience
Life-skill building opportunities including professional internships and part-time jobs.

Impact:
- Students have nearly 5 opportunities a day posted - such as Virtual Summer Camps, Online Teaching Assistant, Soft Skills Training, Foreign Language Courses, etc.
3D. Every iTeach graduate will own India’s development

At iTeach Schools, while academic excellence is given high priority - we believe that drawing connections and making inferences relevant to India’s context is paramount to become a well-informed responsible Indian citizen. Our Curriculum team orients and equips students with the abilities to navigate their career, life and relationships, find their true potential and own the country’s development - through their everyday actions.

A typical Social Studies class at iTeach Schools

**Objective of Lesson**

Students will be able to analyse data on women’s rights in India, and infer its causes and long term effects.

**Why are we learning this?**

We propose the following problem to students.

Read and debrief data from global reports by Thomson Reuters on the position of women in human trafficking, sexual abuse and availability of basic amenities in India, to propose solutions to the problem statement: “The world's second most populous nation is ranked as the most dangerous on three areas - the risk of sexual violence and harassment against women, the danger women face from cultural, tribal and traditional practices, and the country where women are most in danger of human trafficking including forced labour, sex slavery and domestic servitude.”

**How will we learn this?**

Students will
(a) Compare the status of women before and after Independence
(b) Study contributions of social reformers and women reform movements
(c) Compare ancient and currents movements such as Shaheen Bagh protests
(d) Evaluate current status in different sectors like government and corporate workforce

**How can you apply this?**

The teacher will share stories of iTeach alumni who are actively changing the face of gender inequality in their lives! For instance, iTeach SGM Girls Football Team which stood up against the entire community to continue playing the game. Or Tejaswini Kadam from iTeach BJR who resisted her parents’ pressure to continue to study and encouraged other girls in Lean In Circles with SAW to chase their dreams unabashedly.
Alumni Step Up During COVID-19

During the pandemic, 10 alumni from iTeach ADH & SVT stepped in to identify families in their area who did not have access to support of any kind. In three weeks, the team called and identified 304 families from Hadapsar and Aundh region and their major needs. The team then ran an awareness campaign to help the families identify and avail benefits provided by the government - like steps to follow if the ration card is deactivated or opening a Jan Dhan Account.

Students Oppose Prejudices Against Women

iTeach SVT teachers used the Boys Locker Room Chat incident to sensitise Grade 10 students on rape culture. Students evaluated case studies and reflected on self and peer language and actions. Inspired, a student Aliya Khan initiated an online campaign to promote solidarity against the threat of misogyny. She urged all her classmates to change display pictures to a simple yet powerful image which quoted: ‘I want every girl to know that her voice can change the world - by Malala Yousafzai’, for which she received overwhelming support.
3E. Healthy and high performing team

The best team in the Indian Ed reform space, one which is healthy and high performing, and embodies our organizational values of courage, excellence and growth.

What does this mean to us?

- **Courage**
  
  “When founding the Student Alumni Wing in 2017, very few alumni were willing to engage. Over three years, we have constantly refined the program, added innovations across the board and delivered per alumni needs - and today we have 92% students still in the higher education system, three times the national average!”
  
  Tanvi Metre, Manager Student Alumni Wing

- **Excellence**
  
  “Every single student deserves an excellent teacher, every single day! At iTeach, we provide 2.5 hours per week of one-on-one coaching for each teacher - nearly 10x of the industry standard!”
  
  Rashmi Pahade, Manager Human Resources

- **Growth**
  
  “Growth is integral to my identity. I always wanted to lead a school and I got the platform and support to sketch my career trajectory here. I joined iTeach as a School Counselor. In about three years, I got the opportunity to found the sixth iTeach School.”
  
  Nishi Gogate, School Leader, iTeach KRJ

**In COVID times**

“We are leaving no stone unturned to get 100% students back to school, and not lose them to child labour or any other social evil. The team has worked at lightning speed - to get virtual classes started, to secure funds for food relief and for devices. We will keep our promises to our students and alumni, because education simply cannot wait.”

Sweta Sarkar, Co-Founder and School Leader - iTeach SGM

Watch what a teacher’s life at iTeach is like here
3E. Healthy and High Performing team

How have we done?

At iTeach Schools we always say - First Who Then What. Our Organisation strives to create a place where staff members can become the best versions of themselves. Find out what makes iTeach Schools a ‘Great Place to Work At’!

The world’s leading employee engagement survey - Gallup Q12 Survey (which includes 1-5 rating scale responses on statements like ‘In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress’ or ‘My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person’) is conducted every term, and helps us ascertain the culture needs of each team and design support programs and policies aligned to these needs.

“Team culture is made up of myriad small things. The Gallup survey tells us what are these small things that we need to continue and things we need to get better at. The data is also a straight feedback to me as a manager and I use it to support my team basis their needs.”

- Atharva Gadgil, School Leader - iTeach BJR

The Training and Development Wing brings rigor and excellence to our coaching practices. The core focus is to develop teachers in the best possible way and improve their outcomes.
It takes a village to raise a child. No one knows it better than us. We do not have words to express our gratitude to the government, funding and program partners who are collectively working to level the playing field in Pune.
4B. What did it take

We’re very grateful for the supporters who have had our back since Day 1!

We asked them three questions:

a) What made you decide that you wanted to support iTeach in 2015?

b) What has been your favorite part of working with iTeach?

c) What is your wish for iTeach for 2025? Where would you like to see it go?

Here is what they had to say!

Mr. Dipak Mali - Education Officer, Secondary & Technical Education Department, Pune Municipal Corporation

iTeach organisation and their management work very well for the benefit of the students. The educational quality of the institute is very good and the teachers and other staff are well trained. By the year 2025, the organization should work with 25 PMC Schools to improve the educational quality of students.

V.S. Anand, Managing Director, Chemetall India Private Limited

a) What made you decide that you wanted to support iTeach in 2015?

We have identified education as one of the key pillars that is a bedrock to build a strong and prosperous India. Specifically with iTeach, since it bridges a significant gap in our current education system.

b) What has been your favorite part of working with iTeach?

Seeing and experiencing the impact iTeach has had on the students during my occasional interactions with the staff and students. The confidence and passion to learn is contagious.

c) What is your wish for iTeach for 2025? Where would you like to see it go?

I wish that in 2025, iTeach will be able to absorb all students from the Pune Municipal Corporation who would like to continue an English medium education.
Ritu Nathani, 
Director, 
Cybage Software

a) What made you decide that you wanted to support iTeach in 2015?

There were three parts. Firstly, the problem identified and the solution proposed was very convincing! The need was stark and clear, and the fact that you were building a PPP model instead of a completely parallel system seemed scalable, impactful and effective. Apart from this, you guys came with strong references, and after meeting the team I was sure about your conviction and sincerity.

b) What has been your favorite part of working with iTeach?

The sheer passion, enthusiasm and zest shown by all the teachers and support staff! This trickles down to the students clearly!

c) What is your wish for iTeach for 2025? Where would you like to see it go?

I would like iTeach to grow much faster! If we are to solve the entire problem for the city, we need to go from 8 to 80 as soon as possible. We’re doing a great job right now. But in certain pockets, we need to reach everyone.

Rati Forbes, 
Director, 
Forbes Marshall Pvt. Ltd.

a) What made you decide that you wanted to support iTeach in 2015?

It seems hard to believe Soumya and I met five years ago. At our first meeting, I was struck by his passion, energy and most of all, his vision for iTeach, which could potentially bridge the gap of inequity, which so many children face when entering secondary school. At Forbes Marshall, we have always believed in supporting innovative pilots, especially in the education space - iTeach is one such pilot we have never regretted supporting.

b) What has been your favorite part of working with iTeach?

iTeach has stayed true to its vision and big goals - and consequently has had a massive impact on adolescents across our city; in more ways than one. The exam results, year on year, speak for themselves; but the positive impact is even more palpable when one interacts with an iTeach student or the many iTeach alumni or graduates, from the system.

c) What is your wish for iTeach for 2025? Where would you like to see it go?

My hope is that the iTeach movement spreads not only across our city but across the nation; we sorely need the quality inputs iTeach Schools provides to reach the majority of adolescents in our country, helping change their lives.
5A. What have we learned?

As I reflect on the last five years, here are my five big learnings.
- Soumya Jain,
  CEO - iTeach Schools

1. Make every lesson count!

Career readiness, socio-emotional growth and learning, gender equality, fundamentals of IT, coding, leadership skills, conflict resolution – there are dozens of excellent programs that secondary school students would both love to engage in and that would be valuable for them. However, there simply isn’t enough time to make a slot for everything, even on a weekly basis. The only way to deliver an education including all of these is to integrate them into our curriculum, and into every single lesson. That’s what would make the whole more than the sum of its parts! Classrooms cannot be purely for academics, and the “real world skill building” need not happen after school through extra programs – we’ve learned that every teacher needs to integrate rigor, relevance and relationships in the classroom!

2. Make schools a ‘Great Place to Work’ first!

We took the ‘Great Place to Work’ assessment in our fifth year. The comprehensive assessment taught us to look at iTeach from many different lenses – how does it welcome new people, how does the leadership communicate, how do the staff members develop, how do teams celebrate success, what is the performance management system… about sixteen such excellent questions to reflect upon. The terrible reality is that most schools in our country will score fairly low on these parameters. Forget the more evolved ones – most schools for low income students ignore industry staples, such as paid maternity leave or health insurance. We need to take the organizational design of our schools seriously, and unless they become a place where teachers love to work and are taken care of, it is unrealistic and unfair to expect dramatically different student learning outcomes.
It is not particularly difficult to put together a lofty and inspirational mission statement, and a visually stunning deck to go with it. Shaheen (CEO, TFI) told me seven years ago in a casual conversation – visions are a dime a dozen, executing them with excellence is where the real game lies. In a sector where, frankly, most accountability is measured internally by the leadership team, rather than by the market, it is all too easy to be complacent with some progress on the input and output goals (participation, engagement, feedback surveys and so on). We have learned that if we are to truly empower our students to pull their families out of poverty, we have to focus on the end outcomes and the hard, door-opening results that impact our students’ careers. Our milestones so far have been Grade X results, junior college admissions and degree college admissions – we are keenly waiting for our first batch to graduate from college, and support them as they get into the workforce.

Every time we’ve started a new school, within the first six months, the School Leader has called on me for “a chat” (a word that now terrifies me, given the paradox of its implied casualness versus the deep and major issues that usually need to be discussed during the chats). These chats usually revolve around the simple question, “I’m screwing up so much, and wouldn’t a more experienced person do this much better than me?” I’ve come to believe that it takes years to build oneself into a strong educator – and in the meanwhile one does deliver a somewhat less than excellent education to one’s students. However, that is the only way forward in a sector where talent is so rare, because most graduates in our country would never dream of entering it. Dare and start, acknowledge that maybe you are average right now, but that if you work hard you will get better! Just like your students! We are all in this together.

3. First who, then what!

We have found that our best innovations and most durable solutions have come from a “who could do this the best” approach, rather than “design the program and then staff for it’. This creates an incredible group of intrapreneurs, who are ready to take on new challenges and seize opportunities as the world evolves and have a wonderful ability to “figure it out”. In a similar spirit, one thing I am incredibly proud of (and relieved about) is that our Leadership Team has committed to working with each other all the way until 2025. All of us have made this promise, and are now working on co-creating the organizational strategy for the next five years – the commitment is to each other (the ‘who’) and not so much to a particular program or service (the ‘what’).

4. Ideas are cheap, implementing them with excellence is the acid test!

It is not particularly difficult to put together a lofty and inspirational mission statement, and a visually stunning deck to go with it. Shaheen (CEO, TFI) told me seven years ago in a casual conversation – visions are a dime a dozen, executing them with excellence is where the real game lies. In a sector where, frankly, most accountability is measured internally by the leadership team, rather than by the market, it is all too easy to be complacent with some progress on the input and output goals (participation, engagement, feedback surveys and so on). We have learned that if we are to truly empower our students to pull their...
6B. What lies ahead?

Scale
In our sixth year we have expanded rapidly. We have engaged in two new municipal corporations (Pimpri Chinchwad and Delhi) and enrolled 400 alumni with the Student Alumni Wing. Presenting 3 new schools - iTeach SRK, iTeach PDU and iTeach DVS.

“iTeach SRK, a new school amidst the pandemic, proudly started with great gusto and a sense of camaraderie. However, the hustle-bustle, laughter, chit chat in the classrooms and the staff room have transitioned to online platforms in the form of claps, thumbs up, and other emoticons.”

Amey Sharangpani, 
School Leader - iTeach SRK

“Over time, I have come to despise the phrase “at least” while talking about our students. “At least their parents are sending them to school.”, “At least they are continuing their education.” Our students deserve way more than at least. They deserve to feel challenged and taught with rigour and care. They deserve great educators and an excellent education.

iTeach PDU was started to create a destiny of choice for our students.”

Antra Karmakar, 
School Leader, iTeach PDU

“Keeping the vision of a level playing field the same, but in a new PPP model, iTeach DVS has started transforming a Govt Aided school in Delhi. We have started with Grades 6 and 7 in July 2020, and eventually will work with all the grades till 12th. Situated in the heart of Delhi University, serving the poorest students from the area, the current reality today is that students don’t even know which colleges they are surrounded by. Over the next five years, we will send our students to these sought after colleges!”

Ankit Chawla 
School Leader, iTeach DVS
6B. What lies ahead?

Depth

Continuing to live our values of courage, excellence and growth, our team will relentlessly focus on building the best possible experience for our students and alumni. One major foray in 2020-21 will be in blended learning! Keep in touch to know more!