

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## Searching for Meaning

- Higher education should mean in some way- the issue of acquiring depth as a person. And if a college education does not provide that then I think a society is in trouble.  
---**Jeremiah Conway, Professor in Philosophy**



M.R.Ravi with wife Sangeeta, a Professor at IIT, and son Pratyush

- I have told myself that to feel frustrated is no solution. We have to sensitize these kids about the reality of this country, and see how many actually get inspired. If in a class of hundred, one gets inspired, that's good.  
---**M. R. Ravi, Professor of Mechanical Engineering**

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi Means to an End



There's been an increasing- what I would call a disrespect for education in this culture. We have turned education like everything else into a commodity. Its for sale.

---Leonard Shedletsky,  
Professor of Communications



Very small percentage of these kids actually take to engineering as a profession. They go where the money is.

---M. R. Ravi, Professor of  
Mechanical Engineering

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## Interest, Aspirations or Money



Hitch your star to the thing that would give you the most happiness. That would fill you on a mental, emotional and spiritual level- as opposed to deciding how can I assure myself of the best living in the biggest house and deciding about how to suit yourself to something in that profession.

---Donald Hankinson, Doctor and Educator in Maine

If I could get a package that rewards my core job, I would go abroad to do it. But if I get a core job in my discipline that I like but it's not paid well, I won't take it.

---IIT Delhi Engineering Students



# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## India's Software Wave: Move 'em all into IT

SO MUCH PRESSURE has been there in hiring people from our engineering colleges into IT, that in the process, I think, probably, probably, we don't have very good civil engineers, and this nation is now booming in construction!

I'm not really sure if we have the right technicians and civil engineers available who are up to speed on the latest techniques. I'm sure it's all there, but we have created a definition these last couple of years, where we have moved all of them into IT.

Civil engineering in college, does a banking job after all. It's a Good thing-Bad thing!

---P.Rajendran, COO, NIIT

Worldwide Mass Software Education Institute based in Delhi

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## The Disappearing Sciences

India has a dearth of scientists. We have acquired hardly any new blood in the last decade and we are critically short of scientists. But, students don't stay in science today. It doesn't pay.

---Vikram Kumar

Director, National Physical  
Laboratory of India



Science students do not immediately get jobs. Lesser and lesser number of students are coming for science and I feel bad about it. Caliber of the students is very high. But they feel bad that they have come for the Pure Sciences because of dearth of good paying jobs.

---Dr. Sindhu, Professor of  
Chemistry, Delhi University

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## Something that works for all



People profiled as low learners early on in their life, decide that that's what they are. There's no Tracking here. No 'good' students and the 'rest.'  
'Outward Bound Expeditionary Learning' Works for everyone.

---**Mike McCarthy:**  
**Principal, King Middle School**

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## The Challenge of Language and Immigration



Ken Kunin with son  
Principal, Deering High School

Here at the high school, we have 220 students whose primary home language is not English. We have kids reading at 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level, who are expected to be mainstreamed. So some online learning will be the direction we will be going in the next couple of years. Maybe, if a student is proficient in Arabic, why not take an online math class in Arabic?

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## The Challenge of Special Ed



It's been quite a struggle calling parents and getting them to understand what it is, because to the parents' mind, a learning center or a special class is a place where the children are mad! A few years ago, I put my foot down. "I told them if your child has to stay with me, let me do what is in the interest of your child, whether you understand it or not. Trust that I would know better, I would understand better, I would care for your child's academic progress more than you know or care!"

---Jennifer Tytler, J.D. Tytler School Principal



Dyslexia, ADD, ADHD have become a known problem now, but the new problem that people have just woken up to now is Autism and the Asperger's syndrome. But as it is, Indian parents are not open- I still face a lot of problems especially with the fathers- they don't think they are responsible for anything that goes wrong with their child. Majority of parents do not want to accept that there is something wrong with their child. They don't understand that it's not a disease but a disorder. They are in complete denial.

---Meera Sarin, J.D. Tytler School Councilor



# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## Schooling

A school's reason for existence must be to transform and broaden the mind. It should provide a place where people realize that they have the power to change themselves and to make a difference in the wider world.

---Elizabeth Szakowski:  
Director, Youth Alternatives



My target which I had set when I was in standard Six, is to be an IAS. I am fascinated by it. Maybe because, you can take decisions for the good of the country as a whole.

---Pratiksha, School Head Girl

Each and every moment over here has actually taught us a very great thing. I admire all my friends and all my teachers- Some people scold you, some support you- everything contributes in us to becoming a very great human being.

---Ankit and Ankita: School Head Boy and Assistant Head Girl

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## Caring for Special Needs Children

Perhaps ours was the first school that started with the special needs children. It's not just parents who're not aware, even teachers are not, and on an all India basis, perhaps it's only two percent of the teachers who are aware.

---Jennifer Tytler: Principal,  
J.D.Tytler High School

Problem I faced was the teachers. The principal was not trained. He thought I was talking all nonsense. So I had to move him to a school where the principal was sympathetic, in the sense she knew what dyslexia was. Even now 80% of the teachers don't know it.

---Kanchan, Mother of a  
Dyslexic child

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## The importance of Counseling

I graduated in Special Education. Taught a wide range of kids who had been severely abused- emotionally or physically or sexually as well as kids who have developmental challenges. I won't say every story was a success story like you or I might define success- but there was something that kids took from that experience.

Even if kids end up with mis-steps these positive experiences always remain with them.

---Ken Kunin, Deering High School Principal and Special Ed Educator

**We need Good Councilors. Our education system is such that they bring the moral down of the children who have any problems- instead of boosting it.**

---Kanchan, Artist, Art educator  
Volunteer Councilor

I started counseling because I felt that the school had been facing lots of problems over the years, but there was no councilor in the school to whom I could refer. Counseling was a very new thing. There were career counselors and social workers, but no Child Councilors.

---Meera Sarin, School Councilor

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi



There used to be more respect for the teachers, but I feel that the whole equation has changed now. Gradually over the years, there has been erosion. It was a deeper bond. But today for the most part, students don't care. There's total indifference!

---Meera Sarin, High School Teacher & School Councilor



We did a student faculty exchange recently- where we trained students as facilitators who came in during staff development time and worked with groups of staff - what it means to be respected- how staff feels respected- how students feel respected- and what are some of the challenges.

---Ken Kunin, Principal, High School

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi



I want it to be the place where children say that the most memorable part of my learning experience was King Middle School. This place is rife for problems- 60% school lunch population (poor), refugees from all over, non-English speaking children- but the team learning and the hands on learning approach involves everyone. It works. When a school is divided into the 'good' students and the 'rest', it becomes a bad place to learn.

---Mike McCarthy, School Principal



I love participating in activities- and every time I didn't win- I used to lose- every time my Principal used to tell me: "Pratiksha! Participating is more important!" Now when I do anything, in any sphere- I say to myself, "Participating is more important!"

- In school life, we have experienced each and every thing- and each and every moment has actually taught us a very great thing- some people scold you, some support you- everything contributes in us a very great human being. All these things together build our character, you know?

---The Three School Heads

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi



A Photo from USM's web site

My parents don't pay for any books- any schooling - Nothing. They check in on me as on an adult. They don't baby me. If I get an A or get an F- its on me. I do what I can. Its nerve racking not to have any support- but its also that much more gratifying to know that you can do it on your own. You learn to lean on yourself. ---Marni, Undergraduate student at USM



Neha at brother's wedding event

Despite the fact that my parents can get very irritating at times, they are very important. Specially because I'm living alone over here, and I miss them a lot. I can't do without them. They form this whole thingy around me- so when I'm alone I know I can call them- I can cry to them. I can whine. Throw all tantrums- and I know that they'll be heeded to.

---Neha, Undergraduate at Medical College in Mumbai

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## The social paradox of Arts



Moira Driscoll

It's a frustration in this country that the Arts are not known. Thankfully, there are lots of studies and scientific analysis of Arts education and what it actually does to kids brain that maybe that would make people listen now.

---Moira Driscoll, Actor



If I hadn't entered Medicine, I would have liked to do Theater, but well, you can't live off it, my parents said. I did it in school and I will do it on the side when I can, when I don't have to take permission from my parents.

---Neha, Medical Graduate

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

## Continuing Education

Students are of all kinds. Some are like me, interested in furthering their knowledge. There are others who had missed the bus, and were not able to educate themselves, so Open University offers them a forum, where they can once again pursue knowledge. Another category needs to upgrade their skills, or their qualification because they need promotion in their respective organizations.

---**Manju Saxena: Distance and Continuing Education through Open University**

- **I am in my 40s now and I love going back to college. I like the mix of all ages. And usually when you go back to college- you are serious about it- you want to study. They should do what they can to help people of my age go back to college.**

---**Annie, A Back to School Mother**



# Gali Schools: Basic Schooling and Mainstreaming Interventions in the Alleyways of Slum Settlements through Kiran Bedi's India Vision/Navjyoti Foundation



Kiran Bedi



A Gali School in Progress

# Gali Schools: Basic Schooling and Mainstreaming Interventions in the Alleyways of Slum Settlements

I came as part of rehabilitation. I am studying through Open School- doing 12th again, because I want to get good numbers. My knowledge will increase. I have 3 children: 8, 6, 4. They also go to school. I want that they do well, become successful.

---A Mother & Preschool Librarian in the Slum Settlement

I want to move forward. It is very important for today's time. I am thinking about CA, because I'm doing commerce right now. Papa does labor in Old Delhi. I want to move a lot forward. Now-a-days for young people there is opportunity, and parents say study with concentration.

---A Student at the computer center.



A makeshift temple to Goddess Durga. In this settlement, children mostly stay at home or work as Rag Pickers.

## Gali Schools: Basic Schooling and Mainstreaming Interventions in the Alleyways of Slum Settlements



I need to stand on my own feet, because when I get married and the man does not turn out okay, then I can stitch and earn some money by tailoring.

---17 year old girl at the Stitching Center

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

The amount of effort my kids are putting in and the amount of effort we put in school and college in India was significantly different. Orders of Magnitude different.

---**Anant Ahluwalia, Father of three in Maine**



If I want to get admission in SRCC, I need to get at least 96%. So I need to exert myself beyond my capacity to get into the top College. So, its not practical to say: Don't exert yourself so much! I need to do that! There will be other colleges, yeah- but I want to go to the best, you know!

---**Pratiksha Sharma, Head Girl**

**From Left: Pratiksha, Ankita, Ankit**

# Education: From Maine to New Delhi

I see a lot of difference in outlook after education. Maybe a Muslim family who is not educated will follow things rigidly without understanding it, while I believe that you should first understand the thing and then follow it. Give the entire information to a person, what are the pros and cons of doing a particular thing and then I accept or reject it, its on me.

---Munazzah, A Social Work Graduate and a minority Muslim Woman

Our generation has now moved forward and our thinking has changed, but parents are still walking with their old opinions- that if a good boy is found then get married.

My Choice is studies- to Be successful in life. First settle my career, and then whatever else- marriage or children. I will not give in.

---Bhavna: A young Hindu undergraduate woman fighting conservative tradition to become independent.