



# 2017 Report for Key Investors



## Notes from Leadership

### **Gouri Sadhwani, Executive Director of the Akanksha Fund**

We are pleased to share with you our Report for Key Investors. This report provides an in-depth look at how your support is impacting education in India.

2017 was an exciting year for us. Thanks to donors like you, the Akanksha Fund raised over \$1.7 million to support the Akanksha Foundation. Akanksha continues to advance its new theory of change, which expands our impact beyond the children in our network of schools and elevates our involvement in education policy reform at the national level.

Akanksha's programs are growing, and our students are flourishing. This year, Akanksha launched a new and comprehensive Alumni program, which aims to support and prepare students for success after graduation. Our 10th graders excelled on their board examinations with 40% of students passing with distinction, the highest possible grade.

As you read this report, we hope that you can see and feel the impact your support has had on the students and communities we serve. From all of us at the Akanksha Fund, thank you for making our work possible!

### **Saurabh Taneja, CEO of the Akanksha Foundation**

Over the past year, we have seen what it means to come together as an organization and a community. Our teams continue to meet regularly to discuss their vision for Akanksha. We are striving to build a shared understanding of our mission and next steps across all our schools and central teams.

Developing our Akanksha 3.0 model has led to a new Theory of Change. We aim to increase our impact by reaching children who are not in Akanksha's direct care and using our schools to create proof points for developing high performing schools. We believe this starts with answering a key question: what does success look like for all our children over the next 10 years? With this question in mind, we have crafted a Student Vision this is aligned with 21st century skills.

Five of our schools are currently getting ready for their SSC exam. Our students are also showcasing their sports and innovation skills by winning competitions and joining international clubs. This is truly what holistic development looks like.

As we move forward, we continue to raise the bar for ourselves as an organization. For the next few months we will focus on finalizing our Theory of Change and getting the organization ready for a new direction.

## 2017 Impact and Results



### Student Success

**Children who are engaged in the classroom, attend school more often.** Akanksha schools have an average student attendance rate of 91% and an average student retention rate of 97%.



### Community Engagement

**Parental involvement makes all the difference.**

On average, 75% of Akanksha parents attend central school management committee (SMC), which works closely with Akanksha staff to address common challenges across the network of schools.



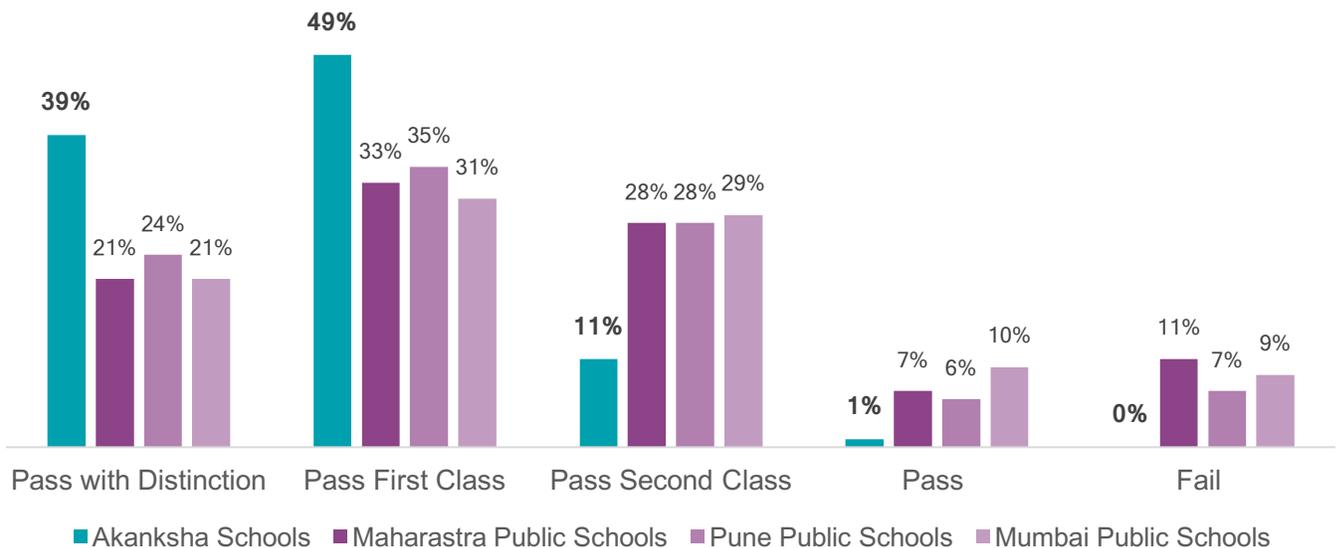
### School Leadership

**Engaged teachers are better teachers.**

Teacher attendance and retention is a key feature of the Akanksha model. Akanksha schools have an average teacher attendance rate of 93% and an average teacher retention rate of 75%.

## SSC Exams

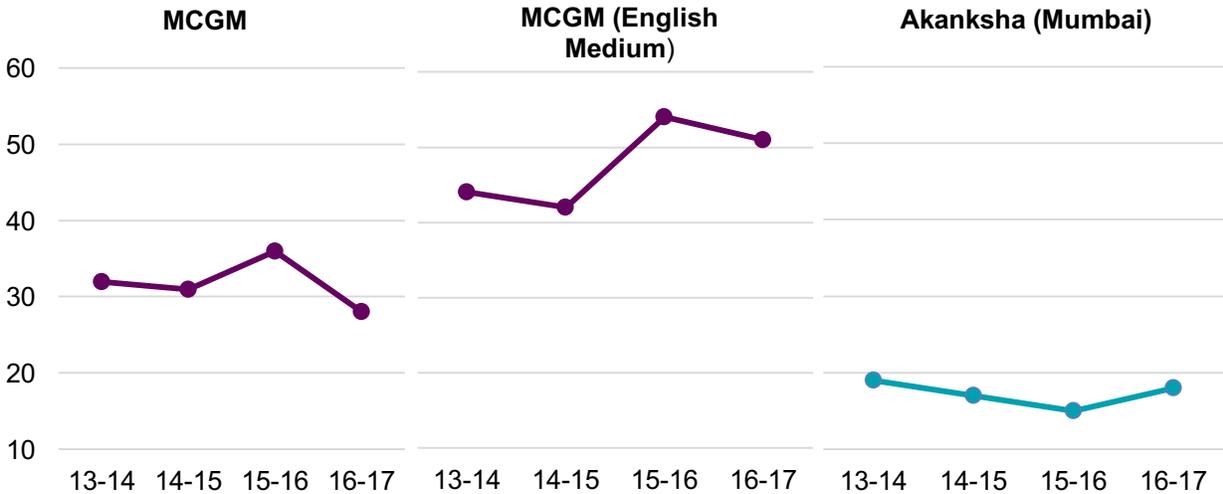
At the end of the 2017 school year, three of Akanksha's schools took the 10<sup>th</sup> grade board examinations, or SSC. Below their scores are compared to the average SSC scores across Mumbai, Pune, and the state of Maharashtra. Overall, all three Akanksha schools outperformed their government counterparts with **88% of students receiving distinction or first-class grades.**



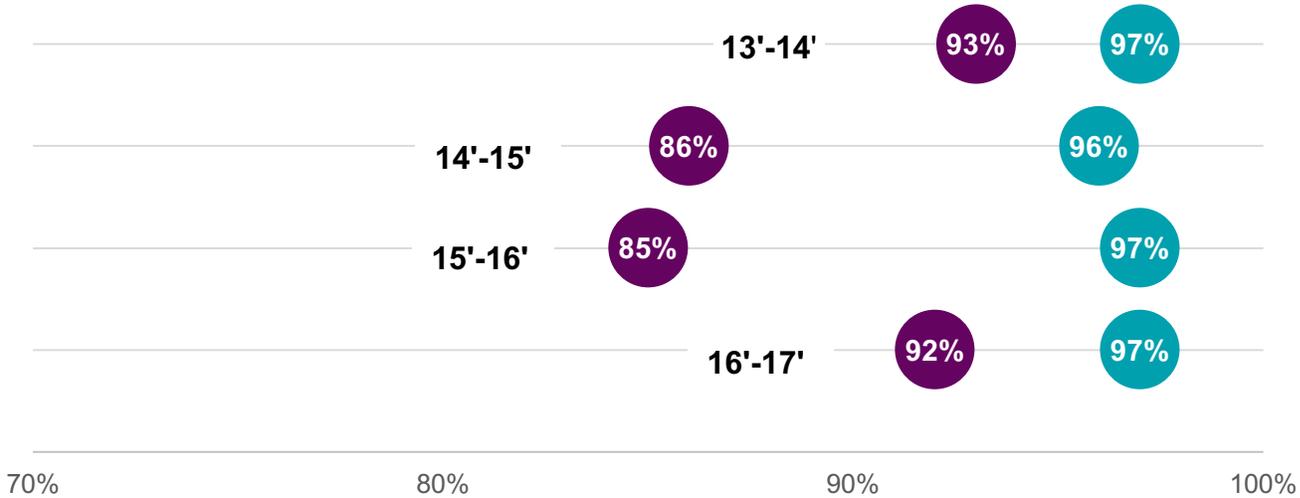
# Comparing Akanksha's Impact

To better assess Akanksha's model, the Akanksha Foundation regularly compares their outcomes to those of the municipal school system. We examined the Mumbai Corporation of Municipal Schools' (MCGM) learning results<sup>1</sup> to comparable measures collected by Akanksha. Below are the Pupil Teacher Ratios and Student Retention Rates from 2013-2017 for Akanksha and MCGM schools.

**On average, Akanksha's schools have 17 students per teacher, compared to 40 students per teacher in Municipal schools.**



**Akanksha (Mumbai) Schools continuously retain more students compared to the Municipal School System.**



<sup>1</sup> The Mumbai Municipal school data was provided by the [State of Education \(Mumbai 2017\)](#) report from the Praja Foundation. The Praja Foundation is an Indian organization committed to increasing government transparency.

## Akanksha 3.0: A New Theory of Change

Ten months ago, the Akanksha Foundation began an intensive process of rethinking their vision and theory of change. They conducted town hall meetings with students and the communities, collected primary research, and incorporated feedback from a wide array of staff and stakeholders. This process produced Akanksha 3.0, a new theory of change that will guide the organization's direction for the next ten years.

Akanksha 3.0 has three primary components, **Prove**, **Multiply**, and **Advocate**:

- 1) Prove:** Central to Akanksha's mission is the operation of high-performing schools within the public-school system. By providing children with a high-quality education, Akanksha can change mindsets about what is possible for low-resource children. Akanksha is therefore committed to expanding their network to 35 schools by 2022 and establishing these schools as hubs for innovation.
- 2) Multiply:** Akanksha believes in an open approach to education reform. By sharing the systems, strategies, and best practices they have developed with other education practitioners, they aim to turn Akanksha's schools into multipliers of change.
- 3) Advocate:** Akanksha is currently working to identify gaps in education policies and research. Next, Akanksha will collaborate with other education change-makers to conduct research and advocate for broad policy change.

## Alumni Program

The Akanksha Foundation is on track to implement a new Alumni Support and Engagement Strategy. Central to this initiative is the Foundation's vision to create an ecosystem of support for all Akanksha alumni so that they can fulfill their life goals.

To accomplish this vision, the Foundation is formulating a three-year strategy in five key domains:

- 1. College and Career Awareness:** Akanksha will launch a School to College program for 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders in the 2018 school year and aims to create alumni hubs [six will be operating by April], mentorship programs, and college counseling for alumni.
- 2. Life Skills:** Akanksha plans to establish life skills programming for 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders and implement alumni peer groups and 1:1 counseling to help students develop the life skills necessary for success.
- 3. Parental Engagement:** Key to student success is parent engagement; Akanksha envisions offering individual and group counseling and financial planning assistance to parents.
- 4. Financial Support:** Akanksha proposed expanding its existing scholarship program by providing funds to high-need and high-achieving students and by connecting students to external financial aid.
- 5. Employment Opportunities:** Akanksha plans to offer career services by connecting alumni to internships, jobs, and providing supplementary vocational courses for at-risk alumni.

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