

Corporation schools to be rebranded as 'Chennai schools'

For now, 28 institutes to get Wi-Fi, smart classrooms, face-recognition technology

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Image for representational purpose only. (Photo | Debadatta Mallick, EPS)

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CHENNAI: As part of the plan to rebrand city corporation schools, the civic body, along with Chennai Smart City Limited (CSCL), is set to transform 28 schools on 18 campuses in the city under the first phase. Besides redesigning the name boards and entrances to ensure the institutes are identified as 'Chennai schools' instead of 'Corporation schools', the project will focus on technological and pedagogical improvements.

“We have students and teachers with the capacity to match the best private schools. All we need is a facelift and proper branding so parents and students feel satisfied that they are in safe hands,” said an official of the Education department.

The schools will have smart classrooms for Classes 1 to 12 with digital instruction boards that will serve as a repository carrying links and videos to several topics from reliable sources across the State. “The city corporation has been trying to rebrand corporation schools as ‘Chennai schools’, but they continue to be identified as corporation schools. So now, the entrances and name boards of these 28 schools will be changed. Teachers at all 281 schools will undergo a training course,” said a Smart City official. “Capacity-building will be done for teachers after assessing their needs. The focus will be on improving English and teaching maths using innovative methods,” the official added. Sports infrastructure will also be improved.

The project will include features such as face-recognition-based attendance and Wi-Fi-enabled campuses. It will also focus on pre-primary education, for which the corporation will establish a Montessori education system by training kindergarten teachers and equipping classrooms with teaching and learning aids. The plan was initially made for 45 schools but some have been left out of the first phase since they needed major infrastructure changes, which may not be able to be covered under the ₹95.25 crore funding that has been sanctioned. Of the ₹95.25 crore, 40 per cent is contributed by the Centre, 40 per cent by the State, and 20 per cent by CSCL. To fund the remaining schools, the civic body is looking for partnerships with private organisations to establish facilities such as smart classrooms, new toilets, and sports arenas, and also to adopt schools.