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À : OETTINGER Guenther <Guenther.OETTINGER@ec.europa.eu>

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Objet : European Schools' temporary site - Parents' position - Request for a meeting - Postponement of the MoU's signature

Dear Commissioner Oettinger,

Our Parents Associations thank you wholeheartedly for your serious engagement in the progress and well-being of all European Schools. This message seeks to request your understanding on the severe difficulties parents are facing with regard to the lack of timely, comprehensive information about the feasibility study for a new temporary site for upper Secondary students.

In the recent Board of Governors meeting in December 2018, the Commission representatives can reassure you on the opposition expressed by the General Secretariat of European Schools against the open information and timely contribution of parents in this project **prior to any decision being taken**. This opposition was even more striking, as the European Commission and several delegations have expressed their full support for parents' consultation in this project! We believe that any categorical refusal to this dialogue does not help any party while undermining good faith and mutual trust. Moreover, a significant number of Board representatives from Member States expressed serious concerns about the project, in line with those raised by parents, and requested to be informed of all facts in a timely manner. The Secretary-General reassured the meeting that the current status was only about information sharing with the Board of Governors, not at this stage requesting approval, as no final decision had been taken yet by the Belgian Government.

You are well aware of our serious concerns, especially as regards the environmental, security-related, educational (such as lack of sufficient numbers of teachers, long commuting of teachers and students, needs for additional educational staff) and many other logistical obstacles (e.g. lack of appropriate and sufficient internal courtyards and of a sports/gym hall, non-suitability of external space for students of that age, serious transport difficulties in daily commuting, removal of students from their well-functioning School environment in critical years of their studies) that make the proposed building/site in Avenue des Arts, 30 / Rue du Commerce 96 and the overall proposal entirely inappropriate for schooling, especially of upper Secondary students. It is reminded that the building was not initially designed to meet the needs of a school, while its construction and location raise supplementary safety and mobility issues during rush hours and especially at such times of severe political turbulence worldwide.

We hope that we will be given soon the opportunity for an exchange of views with you in order to discuss the best possible strategy to overcome the current stalemate and address the best possible ways of working for the ongoing feasibility study, which causes a lot of unrest and dissatisfaction for parents, students and teachers.

We ask that the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Belgian authorities be postponed until the parties concerned agree on the framework of an open and constructive dialogue for the benefit of all and until the Board of Governors has had the opportunity to consider all parameters before committing to any final decision.

Yours sincerely,

Kathe MATHE, EEB1 President
Francesca TUDINI, EEB2 President
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Kristin DIJKSTRA, EEB4 President