

Thursday, 21 November 2019 at 20:00

In the Teachers' Canteen (Van Houtte building)
Av. du Vert Chasseur 46
B – 1180 Brussels

MINUTES APEEE Board Meeting 21/11/2019

ATTENDEES:

Voting Board Members: Georg BECKER (DE Prim), Marek BOBIS (member elected by GA), Irene BONVISSUTO (IT Sec), Brian GRAY (APEEE Treasurer, DK Sec), Arnaud FREMIOT (FR Prim), Marc GUITART (ES Sec), Karin HUNDEBOLL (APEEE VP Pedagogy, DK Prim), Eduardo LANZA SAIZ (Mat), Alejandro MARTINEZ TUREGANO (ES Prim), Kathryn MATHE (APEEE President, EN Sec), Pere MOLES PALLEJA (member elected by GA), Gundars OSTROVSKIS (member elected by GA), Valentina PAPA (EN Prim)

Represented by Proxy: Monika BEHRENDT (PL Sec, proxy Kathryn MATHE - EN Sec), Andre DE WOOT (FR Sec, proxy Kathleen BOULANGER - FR Sec deputy), Henning EHRENSTEIN (member elected by GA, proxy Gundars OSTROVSKIS - member elected by GA)

Deputy Board Member (non-voting): Julien REICHSTADT (FR Prim), Emese SAVOIA-KELETI (HU Sec), Krisztina SZABO (HU Prim)

Other participants: Magali BARRAL (CE FR Prim), Silke BREHM (CE DE Sec Deputy), Sara DAGOSTINI (CE IT Prim), Selena GRAY (APEEE Secretariat), Patryk MALESA (Observer), Veronica ORTIZ (Observer), Dietrich ROMETSCH (CE DE Sec), Thomas SPOORMANS (Observer), Monika VELIKONJA (CE SWALS Sec, CE SWALS Prim Deputy)

Presenters: Arantzazu GOLDEROS (Gifted Children's Network), Margarita SAVOVA (Gifted Children's Network), Fabio PIROTTA (Francis Pirota Creative Arts Prize)

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Agenda is adopted after the following updates: Point 7 (Projects proposed for funding by the Awards Panel) will not be covered because the written report could not be ready in time – it will be circulated for the next meeting. The President will present orally Point 18 as there is no written report. The meeting will commence with Point 5 (Proposal to set up a Gifted Students Network) so that Arantzazu GOLDEROS and Margarita SAVOVA can present before the Meeting.

2. Approval of draft minutes of the Board meeting on 17 October and action points reviewed

To be approved by Written Procedure in order to give more time to submit comments. Monika VELIKONJA makes some minor corrections to the paragraph on skype lessons under AOB. The President takes the Board through the Action Points in the draft Minutes:

Alternative for online Sale of Sweatshirts: there is still a problem with the developer to set up online sale module and the President appeals for help from members of the Board;

DPO contract undergoing last finetuning and to be signed next week;

New CA/GA date confirmed for 12 December (8pm), to take place after the APEEE Services GA (6pm). Members of both GAs can share a drink together between the 2 meetings;

Interparents have already been formally informed of the 2 new delegates who will make the team of 4 to represent Uccle/Berkendael in Frankfurt for IP meeting 28/11.

Survey on the pilot replacing 'bilingual L2 language groups': it is now understood that the December evaluation by the School does not concern reevaluating the approach as such but is an internal reevaluation (remixing students and adjusting what is being taught). It was therefore decided to postpone the Survey until Spring so that it can be in line with the school's Evaluation Process on the approach. In this way the Survey can feed into their evaluation process. Karin HUNDEBOLL adds that clarification about foreseen timing of evaluation and how it will be designed will also be sought during the CE Meeting 3/12 and fed back to the Board; the letter from APEEE to the language coordinators was approved by Written Procedure and sent but no reply as yet. Marek BOBIS informs the Board that Enrichment classes for French and German in P3 - P5 are already about to start at Berkendael.

The drafting of guidelines Internal Rules of Procedure is postponed for the new board in January as it was too much at the same time as changes within APEEE Services. Pere MOLES PALLEJA notes that there will be a new law in 2020 that will affect our statutes.

Regarding First Aid Alejandro MARTINEZ TUREGANO informs the Board that a letter was sent to the Director suggesting that the School include first aid training in the Pedagogical Day; this received positive response. They also asked about Belgian legislation applying to European Schools. There is also a proposal to hold first aid training for the school bus drivers. A paper will be produced for a future Board meeting;

The Proposed letter regarding Project Week listed as a discussion point during the last meeting is now listed as a decision point on the agenda;

Lastly it is proudly noted that the intervention for presentation at the CEA agreed by the four Brussels APEEEs was presented orally at the Enrolment Board and sent in writing shortly thereafter. The statement highlighted the serious situation of overcrowding and potential liability. It will be attached in annex to the guidelines that go to the Board of Governors.

Action: Find solution for online sale of sweatshirts - sign DPO – CE to feedback on Survey for Spring – Internal Rules noted for new Board - Minutes 17/10 updated as per corrections submitted

Points for decision

3. Proposed Letter to the Secondary Director on New Project Week regime

The President takes the Board through the proposed letter (Document 3 circulated with the Agenda) regarding the planned changes in the Project Week regime – specifically the shift from 2.5 to 1.5 weeks. Although the 'all-in-all-out' policy is generally supported as it cuts down absences, the concern is that as part of this rationalization process, some valuable trips and projects could be lost. APEEE are asking 1) the

proactive support of the school management for teachers who want to undertake projects, and 2) a proposal in writing from the school describing the new regime including the impact it will have on existing projects and trips. There is anecdotal evidence that some trips are already being affected. There is also no transparent criteria or concrete proposal by school management on how this will be implemented.

Karin HUNDEBOLL presented the opinion of the Secondary DK Section who think the letter is premature at this stage. The preference is to wait until after the CE meeting 3/12, as the school management will present a list of school trips for this year and will be asked for their selection criteria. The letter is a bit out of synch with discussions that have taken place in the CE over the last year, with a consensus amongst stakeholders that projects have added value; they fear the letter makes it seem as if we are in need of persuading management of this fact. There is consensus that the organisation of project weeks in previous school years has not been ideal especially as it led to lost teaching hours; they prefer to support management in its implementation. All trips which can be organised should be, but all students have to be offered something different and normal classes cancelled. With regards to the suggestion to move trips to the last week of the school year, the Director cannot authorise this as teachers need to be present for the end of year council. The DK Section are not in favour of the letter.

However, other members feel that there was already a consensus during the meeting last month for the letter to be sent and reflects the general concern that the school is making policy changes in several areas without clear methods of implementation (with evidence of already cancelled projects without discussion). The President repeats the necessity for transparency on the new concept as well as the impact on previous projects. Everyone supports the all-in-all-out approach, but we need to make sure we are not going to lose something during this process.

The Board votes in favor of sending the letter to the school immediately (14 votes For, 2 Against, 0 abstentions) asking for a document describing the planned new organisation of project weeks (including timing and structure) and an analysis of the impact on projects from previous school years. The school will be requested to provide this information for circulation prior to the CE Meeting of 3/12 to enable consultation and feedback from parents beforehand. The President notes that as a rule nothing should be put into practice before decisions are formally taken and the management are in fact required to give documents to stakeholder before taking official decisions. As a Parent Association we expect to see a plan and to be able to give feedback before it is implemented.

It is advised to put the quotes currently in italics as an annex in order to shorten the letter and to reference CE Meeting 'as promised', asking to add the analysis and fleshed out proposal to the previous requests of parents in the 12/9 secondary CE Meeting.

Action: correct and send Letter to the Secondary Director on New Project Week regime
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4. Proposal to appoint Neva Aleš Verdir as representative on School's Addiction Prevention Group/Drug Policy Task Force

Appointment is voted for unanimously (16 votes For, 0 Against, 0 Abstain). Neva ALES VERDIR is also the Slovenian Deputy and is already an Interparents Delegate; she will be the Legal WG's representative on the Drug Policy Task Force (Kriszta SZABO is the Bien Etre WG's Representative) and the Addiction Prevention Group.

Points for discussion and decision

5. Proposal to set up a Gifted Students Network

Arantzazu GOLDEROS presents the proposal to the Board, requesting to set up a Network for Parents of Gifted Students under the aegis of APEEE (Doc 5 circulated to the Board with the Agenda). This Network emerges from the urgent necessity of parents concerned to address specific needs within the EEB1 Uccle-Berkendael community, as these are not met by the school with any concrete policy (despite the Policy on the Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools including Gifted Children). As a first step they propose to approach parents with the idea to launch a survey and to explore best practices at other European Schools.

The Board votes unanimously (16 votes For, 0 Against, 0 Abstain).

The focus of the network is gifted children with a clinical diagnosis. The highlights of the discussion include the diagnosis and profiles of gifted children as well as the need for support structures at school. The network therefore has two main objectives: 1) to collaborate with the school administration to create an effective educational support strategy for gifted students, and 2) to create a network of support for pupils and parents, which can allow them to identify common problems, share information, propose activities or workshops.

6. CdE (Student Committee) proposal to reintroduce S4-S5 off-campus cards (document 6. Circulated with the Agenda)

The Board discusses the proposal from the Student Committee to give parents the choice to expand off-campus privileges for S4-S7 children, whereby they can leave the school during free hours / cancelled lessons and come back to school for later periods. After the attacks of 2016, the possibility to choose these was curtailed and S4-S5 students were kept on campus during the bulk of the day and limits were also placed on the S6-S7 offsite possibilities.

The CdE is now asking to reintroduce these additional choices for the families of S4-S5 students (green card) and for the families of S6-S7 students (pink card).

The proposal is generally supported by Board members. General acknowledgement is that the school does not have enough spaces for silent study, non-silent group work or socializing with friends due to the structural overpopulation. It is also noted that these cards would only be added to the possible choice of options from which families could choose. On the other hand, some have suggested that there is peer pressure on students and families to choose looser options. There are also negative past experiences (e.g. complaints from local shops and cultivating bad habits like smoking). Some representatives are hesitant and need time to formulate a section position. The Section Reps will therefore be given time to gather feedback, and a final APEEE position will be established at end of week of 25/11 by written procedure. The proposal is expected to be formally presented and discussed at the Secondary CE on 3/12. The school management seems open to the students' proposal if the parents agree.

Action: Clarify card colors with CdE – circulate information to Section Representatives to consult class representatives – send proposal for Written Procedure 3 working days before CE 3/12)

7. Projects proposed for funding by the Awards Panel (doc to come)

Although this Agenda point will not be covered, the President (in light of next Agenda point covering Budget) presents two issues that came up with regards to project funding that are relevant: 1) the Drug Program, as 3000 Euro is requested each year for a coherent program that covers all sections and all levels, it is deemed not appropriate to continue to fund this very comprehensive program through project

money; it is proposed that the APEEE strategically support it by putting it into the budget (3000 Euro per year which would make it more permanent and structural); 2) the other request was for an Assistant for the Orchestra; while the orchestra was supported in general, it was deemed problematic to pay a salary from project funding; however it is also problematic to support the Orchestra within the budget as it blurs boundaries between the Services and APEEE.

Projects proposed for funding by the Awards Panel to be circulated before next meeting

8. 2018-2019 Draft Financial Report and 2019-2020 Proposed Budget

Before the Treasurer presents the Draft APEEE Financial Report 2018-2019 and proposed APEEE budget 2019-2020 (documents 8.1., 8.2 circulated with the Agenda), he highlights that APEEE continues to suffer from poor service by its bankers. The transfer of the records by the bank (necessary to prepare the annual accounts) was delayed by two weeks due to the bank's IT problems, resolved in time through the determination of the APEEE Secretariat. Because of this delay, the draft accounts for 2018/19 were only sent by the accountant at 13.00 on the day of the CA, and a first review by the Treasurer showed that corrections were necessary.

In broad terms, the absence of Esther PROFICZ (due to extended sick leave) throughout the year led to a reduction in the cost of salaries, in addition some activities were not launched, therefore 2018/19 showed a substantial surplus. The recruitment of staff to replace Esther in the last quarter of 2019, together with the increase in hours for Guendalina COMINOTTI, meant that staff costs increased towards the end of 2019.

The excess of income over expenditure in 2018/19, together with the substantial accumulated reserves, means that we can, if necessary, budget for a deficit in 2019/20 in order to keep the Secretariat afloat and to finance some projects and recurrent activities. What needs to be decided is what figure to put in the budget for staff, to give room for the Bureau to recruit people for the heavy workload and absence of Esther. Funds held on behalf of other bodies needs to be corrected (CdE, Fete). The Treasurer mentions there was a project in the pipeline for LBGTQ. Gundars OSTROVSKIS requests to check the budgeted amount for APEEE fees for this year, which should have increased as per the rise in numbers (250 more) at Berkendael.

It is generally agreed to finance such annual activities as 'Stop à la Drogue' (3000 Euro) through a dedicated budget line and there is an inconclusive discussion about whether APEEE Bxl1 or Services should finance the salary of an Assistant to train Musicians of the Orchestra. Other expenditure to be budgeted is general projects (15000 Euro), legal fees to include a contribution of 2000 € for the legal costs of opposition to the Arts/Loi building and the DPO. Once corrected and approved by the Treasurer, the revised documents will be circulated to CA members in the week of 25 November, and any queries can be addressed directly to the Treasurer. Subject to this process, they will presented to the AGM in the Annual Report for approval, together with the 2019/20 budget.

Action: Accountant to correct draft Financial Report and Budget, Treasurer to approve and APEEE to circulate. Comments to be fed back directly to the Treasurer within good time before the AGM.

Points for discussion

9. General Assembly Preparation

The President requests that Board members write to her with any input for issues to be raised at the General Assembly scheduled for 12/12, insisting on a more issue-driven GA. She will use the Presentation given earlier this year to the Class Representatives as the basis of the Presentation to the GA (covering issues of New Marking System, future of Brussels Schools, Languages). Monika VELIKONJA already raises the issue of Governance, consultation with parents and school's decision-making procedures.

Action: Circulate Presentation given to Class Representatives Elections 4/10

10. APEEE Xmas Party: Tuesday, 17 December

The President confirms that the Xmas Party will take place after the final Board Meeting of the Year. Board members discuss ideas (music from the different countries, input for the Guest List). Board members are requested to send ideas to the Secretariat. Pere MOLES PALLEJA suggests adding the Berkendael pioneers to the guest list. Some Board members mention conflicting parties, but the President reminds them how hard it is to fix the calendar and that the date will be kept otherwise these plans keep being put off (like the BBQ).

Action: Put together guest list, send out invitation and organize Xmas Party

11. INTERPARENTS Update

Pere MOLES PALLEJA informs the Board that the Interparent representatives will attend a meeting next week in Frankfurt, to prepare the Board of Governors meeting, but they have not received any Agenda from the Central Office. As he has prepared a document which covers the main issues (Document 11 circulated with the Agenda), he only presents one issue (raised by the European School of Mol) where apparently the Confucius Institute have offered to fund the Mol Boarding facilities. This has raised concern about why the Chinese have a sudden interest, on the other hand Mol needs financial support (due to reduced number of students). However, the Confucius Institute is also funding some Chinese Language projects in some of the schools (Ixelles, Laeken). This requires a closer look into the relationships the Confucius Institute is building with the European Schools.

The President adds that the Inclusion Group will work on a new Child Protection Policy for the whole system level and on common templates for policies (child protection, Bullying, Drugs, Complaints Procedure) as this could be more efficient than the schools coming up with policies separately.

12. Fête 2020: vision statement

Alejandro MARTINEZ TUREGANO reports (document 12 circulated with the Agenda) on the vision and organization of a Fête in 2020. A Fête Committee has been set up with the school management, teachers, students and parents participating, and the school agrees to oversee communication. The idea is to hold it yearly (previous tradition every 2 years) but on a smaller scale and from the parents' side to organize with the help of Coordinators from each Section.

Views amongst Board members diverge on whether to have the Fête during the week, when the teachers and students could be more involved in the organization, or on a Saturday, so as not to lose one or more school teaching days and when more parents can attend and help with stands. After discussing the different Saturdays in May, it seems the most feasible would be 9/5/2020 (Schuman day). Pere MOLES PALLEJA suggests 26/4 as possible alternative to May. The coordinator agrees to firm up plans with the Fête Committee and to fix the date and theme at their 12/12 Fête Committee Meeting.

Action: Set Fête date and theme at 12/12 Fête Committee Meeting

Points for Information

13. Updates to APEEE Services Statutes

The Board is informed that APEEE Services have adopted new Statutes which have already been published in the *Moniteur Belge*. At the request of some members, Pere MOLES PALLEJA explains these changes to the Board in concrete terms.

The main change is that all class representatives will now be voting members of the General Assembly of the APEEE Services and can run to be members of the Board of APEEE Services. This will ensure democratic representation.

Also 3 minor changes : technical change to voting (3 proxies instead of 1 per member as previously), technical modification (previously if the President was not present the eldest member would replace, now the Board has the possibility to appoint a Vice President) and a last modification (previously members had a limitation of 4 years; this can now be derogated by the Board if voted unanimously, e.g. to extend the mandate of the current Treasurer).

Following ensuing discussion around APEEE and APEEE Services, the President took this opportunity to inform the Board that she would like more Members of the Board to take on the workload rather than just consult and give feedback. Currently only a few Board Members take issues forward, develop positions, run initiatives, and attend meetings on APEEE's behalf. She requests that each member should think about his/her commitment and potential role. She adds that she will include this in the presentation to the GA, that the Board needs people to work and not just raise issues. Otherwise, the few who are active risk feeling overwhelmed and discouraged from continuing.

14. Bien Être Update

Sara Dagostini reports on the Bien Être WG (for which she was appointed Coordinator last year) activities during 2018-2019 (document 14 circulated with the agenda). With regards to EVRAS, she informs that this is already being implemented; that for Cyber education there are already plans. A meeting requested in February to deal with a range of issues has been set with the school for tomorrow.

While presenting the Focus for 2019-2020 and in line with the aim of exploring the topic of *conflict management*, she reports on the overwhelming interest (700 parents) and success of their most recent activity: a presentation on Positive Communication hosted at the Committee of the Regions.

It is agreed that this is a very successful example of parents' initiatives. The President concludes that it's a huge work, that the WG has been hugely successful with a number of solid projects.

The Board briefly discusses the problems surrounding the Mobile Phone Policy and access to internet.

15. Berkendael Update

The toilets now work. They will have an information meeting with Mr GOGGINS and Mr MARCHEGGIANO on 9/12 with parents of P5 only, after the majority expressed interest in enrolling their children at Uccle for Secondary. As the actual policy is one which is adopted yearly, only current P5 families are invited. Berkendael will hold an election for Admin Board next week to decide on which representatives will be put forward at the AGM to join the CA; the President clarifies that Berkendael need to decide by tomorrow if they will leave the three GA elected posts, in time for new applications. It is to be clarified if they will take 5 or 8 posts.

Action: Conclude number of posts open to communicate with Invitation to AGM & Call for Candidates

16. Secretariat Update

Esther PROFICZ is still on sick leave, extended one month at a time and is meanwhile replaced with continued increased working hours for Guendalina COMINOTTI and hiring of Selena GRAY. Esther's next return date is set for 13 December. DPO contract needs to be signed.

17. Letter on CE Issues still pending Secondary Director and Head Advisor

As per document 17 circulated with the Agenda. Members are invited to read it.

18. European Schools Brussels State of Play: Overcrowding, Child Protection, Relations with the Régie des Bâtiments, Sunlight Initiative, MFF, Cooperation with DG-EAC (docs to come)

The President remains available for any questions, but there is no written report for now. She touches briefly on some of the subject matters: she informs the Board that they attended the Group de Suivre today where the Régie de Bâtiments claim they are still looking seriously at temporary structures on NATO site for September 2021. They still have not passed it though Council of Ministers but hope to by the end of the year (for 1500 students in nursery and primary). She also mentions the efforts to get a Memorandum of Understanding to put more pressure on the Régie de Bâtiments; she clarifies the Sunlight initiative which arose in order to fight for more access to data for the parents in the system. This includes requirements for more pedagogical data to be presented at the school Admin Boards, e.g. absences statistics, breakdown of marks, as well as more generalised access to data for pupils and their families.

19. Funded projects debriefing reports: Internet Safety, First Aid, EUROSPOORT, Francis Pirotta (docs 19.1., 19.2., 19.3.a., 19.3.b., 19.4 attached)

Fabio PIROTTA debriefs the Board on the results of the Francis Pirotta Creative Arts Prize, funded last year for the first time and to be funded again this year. He takes the Board through a slideshow of Document 19.4 (circulated with the agenda) covering the first year's experience and winning entries as well as the programme for this year. This project honors his son Francis Pirotta, who died at the age of 5 two short years ago. Mr PIROTTA notes that the project is an overall success and thanks the Board for the ongoing support. The President appeals for participation of 2 Primary parents to be involved (consisting of 2 meetings, jury and ceremony). There is also a suggestion that the exhibition of winning art pieces could be linked to the School Fête.

The President takes the Board very briefly through the rest of the debriefings (documents 19.1, 19.2, 19.3 and 19.3b circulated with agenda.)

20. Written reports from meetings attended by APEEE representatives since the last Board - PedGroup, 3 October 2019 will be circulated for the next meeting.

21. Written procedures since the last Board meeting on 17 October (document 21. circulated with the Agenda)

AOB