

MINUTES of the APEEE Board Meeting Thursday, 15 October 2020

as an online Video Conference for titular Board Members

ATTENDEES:

Voting Board Members: Nils BEHRNDT (VP Administration, DE Sec), Noemie BEIGBEDER (Berkendael FR), Marek BOBIS (Berkendael SK), Sara DAGOSTINI (IT Prim), Henning EHRENSTEIN (VP Berkendael, DE), Brian GRAY (Treasurer, member elected by GA), Marc GUITART (VP Pedagogy, ES Sec), Anne Marie HAMMER (member elected by GA), Karin HUNDEBØLL (DA Sec), Christina KARAKOSTA (Berkendael EL), Patryk MALESA (PL Prim), Kathryn MÁTHÉ (President, EN Sec), Pere MOLES PALLEJA (Bureau, member elected by GA), Valentina PAPA (Secretary, EN Prim), Julien REICHSTADT (Dep Sec Information, FR Prim), Emese SAVOIA-KELETI (HU Sec), Thomas SPOORMANS (FR Sec), Diana SENCZYSZYN (PL Sec), Ivan TORRE (IT Sec), Istvan VANYOLOS (HU Prim), Monika VELIKONJA (SWALS).

Deputy Board Members (non-voting): Dominique BESSER (FR Secondary), Maria Victoria DE YTURRIAGA SALDANHA (ES Sec), Bartosz HACKBART (Berkendael FR), Tibor SCHARF (DE Sec), Alba MARINO ENRIQUEZ (Berkendael ES).

Other Participants: Andrew LYSTER (CE EN Prim), Veronika ORTIZ (CE FR Sec), Santiago CALVO RAMOS (invited parent guest/presenter - COVID), Christoph KLOCKENBRING (invited parent guest/presenter - Green Group), Malene SCHATHOLM (observer – future Board Member for DK Prim), Imke LÜBBEKE (invited guest/presenter - Green Group), Dietrich ROMETSCH (CE DE Sec), Ivo SCHMIDT (invited guest/presenter - Green Group).

Board members can find all supporting documents in the shared folder in One Drive (2020-10-15 APEEE Board Meeting)

1. Technical check

Participants join successfully.

2. Adoption of the agenda

- Thomas SPOORMANS suggests to address point 14 ("Review of COVID measures") earlier. The President suggests to rather maintain the current order of points.
- The President removes Point 12 ("Proposed APEEE statement on the roll out of the new marking system and status of national equivalence tables") because the Statement is not ready yet.
- AOB Point added by the Italian Section: Letter to Director Goggins on handling of COVID-19.

3. Approval of draft minutes of the Board meeting on 15 September June; action points reviewed

- Christina KARAKOSTA and Maria Victoria DE YTURRIAGA SALDANHA ask that their name be added to the list of participants.

- Pere MOLES PALLEJA points out that people having given a Proxy for the meeting should be listed separately and not as part of the Attendees. To be taken into account for the future.
- Thomas SPOORMANS asks that reasons for abstaining on the Green Card be included in Point 7. He will send the wording by e-mail.
- The Board approves the Minutes with the inclusion of these changes.

Review of Action Points:

Action 3: Board members are asked to check in their sections if any University offers were affected by the moderation of Baccalaureate results. No particular feedback received by the APEEE on this. On a related note, most of the appeals cases related to the 2020 Bacc moderation have now been resolved, though not favourably.

Action 4: Election packages will be circulated. Action completed.

Action 5: Upload APEEE Statement on Drug and Addiction Programme to the website and use as source of positions in meetings and formal bodies. Action completed.

Action 6: Sara DAGOSTINI, Coordinator of the Well-Being Working Group, is delegated to work on behalf of APEEE with the Comité des Élèves and the psychologist to coordinate Mental Health Survey. She will contact them. Action completed.

Action 9: Kathryn MATHE and Nils BEHRNDT to write letter to the parents on COVID-19 and the school, emphasising "culture of prevention". Letter was not written due to the changing situation and based on recent feedback from Director. To be discussed during the Board meeting.

Action 10: APEEE to draft survey for vulnerable families. Was put on hold for the time being. To be discussed during the Board meeting.

Action 11: APEEE to send letter to the direction about secondary booklists. Action completed. The letter was drafted by Thomas SPOORMANS and sent by the APEEE on 17 September.

Action 13: Nils BEHRNDT to complete table of parents' comments on COVID-19 before meetings. Action completed. Table was compiled and sent to Jonathan GUYOT on 17 September. No formal reply from the School, though touched on in bilateral meeting with director on 21 September.

Action 15: Feedback on New Marking Scale and Equivalence Table is being collected by section reps. President to support these representatives on method of collecting this information from member states and reporting + get permission to upload reports already sent by DE and DK reps. No follow up.

Action 17: Monika VELIKONJA to send a mail on Commission HR Strategy to members to circulate amongst sections, and to be key contact person for queries. Action completed.

Oral Points for Information

4. Secretariat Update: Class Elections, Minutes, Projects, Eurêka and Teacher Appreciation

- Class Reps Elections: ongoing. Contacts are being compiled. Lack of coordination from the School's side (especially Primary Uccle) has caused considerable extra workload to Secretariat.

- Meeting Minutes: President informs that French translation of CA Minutes will be done with automatic tools to save translation budget but asks if any parents from the French Section volunteer to proof-read the machine-translated texts. Noémie BEIGBEDER suggests to look for volunteers in the Berkendael FR Section. Thomas SPOORMANS volunteers to proof-read from time to time.
- Projects: APEEE to clear up status of projects (some never went ahead due to COVID implications).
- EURÊKA: EURÊKA managed to reopen on Thursday 15 October and hopes to be able to continue doing so in the coming weeks. Volunteers are needed to ensure the continuity of service.
- Teachers' Day: The President reports on actions undertaken by the Secretariat to acknowledge Teachers on Monday 5 October. Feedback from the Teachers was positive.

ACTION: Noémie BEIGBEDER, Thomas SPOORMANS and Julien REICHSTADT to issue a call for proof-readers within their Section in view of creating a pool of names that the APEEE can contact.

5. Berkendael Update

Henning EHRENSTEIN reports about bumpy start in the new year due to change in Berkendael School Management. The APEEE has meetings with the Management every two weeks to discuss ongoing issues. Traffic in front of the school and other infrastructural lacuna are some of them. But things are gradually being sorted out.

6. Update on APEEE Rules of Procedure: inclusion of lessons learnt during class elections and addressing concerns about representation of levels to enable parents to represent cross-section issues

When working on L2 issues or other cross-section issues, Monika VELIKONJA noticed a lack of cross-Section representation. S7 cross-section representatives were put in touch with each other in 2019-2020 and it will happen again this year, but this form of level representation should be formalised in the APEEE's Rules of Procedure (RoP). The Legal Working Group should take this proposal into account – as well as legal questions which have arisen during Class Elections – when reviewing the RoP.

ACTION: Legal Working Group to pick up on Rules of Procedure.

7. Report on Admin Board and Preparatory Meetings

Nils BEHRNDT presents Supporting Document. Main points raised by parents included:

- Call to Reinstate Bilingual L2 Classes
- Renewed Request to Develop an EEBI Child Protection Policy and Supporting Structures
- Safeguarding Pedagogical Continuity during COVID: ensuring educational provision to all members of our community
- Proposal for Level/Sub-Cycle-Specific Distance Learning Strategy and Enhanced Quality Assurance Mechanisms
- New Marking System and National Equivalence Tables
- Overcrowding in the Brussels Schools and Proposal for Populating the Evere Site
- Working methods: governance and consultation hindered by lack of procedures and documentation

On the Distance Learning Policy, the President reports that the School is aware that it's urgent and strongly demanded, but they don't have time to propose one for the moment as they are running on a day-by-day basis. On the School's approach to communication with the APEEE, the President points out that in Ixelles and Woluwé the School management has actually increased the number of meetings with the APEEE in times of COVID-19; the approach in Uccle is not comparable.

8. Reports on Primary and Secondary CE Meetings

Marc GUITART reports on meetings with the Primary and Secondary CEs.

- Primary CE: Deputy Director Simona CAJHEN asked parents to trust the School in these difficult times. Teachers are being trained for a potential return to distance learning. External trips are cancelled. In case of quarantine, children in Primary cannot join the class via distance learning but teachers will liaise with them individually. A protocol is in preparation. Teaching material for L2 English? is being reviewed and replaced with something more interactive and conducive to distance learning. With regards to Microsoft TEAMS, it is recommended but not mandatory.
- Secondary CE: Director Brian GOGGINS and Deputy Director Susanne KÜNSTER presented statistics on absent teachers. Assistants have been recruited to cover replacements. Mr GOGGINS recommended that students bring a device to school for distance teaching, when teachers must teach in situ kids from home. With regard to quarantined students, teachers must communicate the work done to pupils at home at least once a week. Streaming of lessons to quarantined students is possible but not required. The IT equipment (e.g. cameras) ordered by the school was only partly delivered. But the full order is expected any day. These will mainly be used for distance teaching or distance/hybrid learning scenarios. Again, Microsoft TEAMS is recommended to teachers but not mandatory. The APEEE proposed two working groups, one on Distance Learning and one on Projects&Trips, but the School did not want to discuss these proposals. Noémie BEIGBEDER will suggest a working group on Distance Learning in Berkendael at the first Berkendael Education Council.

Points for discussion and decision

9. Proposed APEEE Autumn Call for Project Proposals

The President presents the Funding Call due to be published on 16 October. The Board approves the proposed APEEE Autumn Call with 20 votes in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions.

ACTION: The APEEE will publish the Autumn Call for Project Funding on 16 October 2020
--

10. Request for funding of a Court Action in Germany against the method for converting European School BAC marks into German marks starting with BAC 2021

Tibor SCHARF explains the rationale of the Court Action against the foreseen German law which converts European School BAC marks into German marks. Deadline is 1 December 2020. At least 20,000 EUR are needed to cover court expenses and costs in case the case is lost. Most of the funding is provided by parents' contributions. Other European Schools have contributed to the initiative (Woluwé: 1000 EUR; Laeken: 1500 EUR; Ixelles: 1000 EUR). Tibor stresses that the Action would benefit beyond the German section: it would benefit all pupils aiming to study in German Universities and would also create a precedent for other national cases. Board Members agree that the German Action should be taken as a precedent; and agree to consider similar cases on a case by case basis. It is proposed to allocate 1000 EUR. The Board votes to support funding 1000 EUR for the Court Action in Germany (21 votes in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

Points raised:

- Members support solidarity but believe we should limit allocation to 1000 EUR in light of the fact that this kind of initiative could potentially escalate to all Member States.
- Some members point to the general value of this case as all sections have an interest that the European Baccalaureate is accepted without discriminating against the ES students.
- It is noted that similar actions have already taken place, citing the precedent of a Spanish Uccle parent who took the school to court in Spain, lost the case and had to pay all the legal fees.
- There is a proposal to fund future actions in proportion with the number of pupils. Several members raise concerns suggesting that the proportionality should rather be in relation to the cost of the Action or other factors.
- There is a general consensus that future proposals should be judged on a case by case basis, assessing the pupils affected and chance of success among other things.

- Anne Marie HAMMER questions whether indeed the German action could create an effective precedent for other Member States.

ACTION: The APEEE will contribute 1000 EUR to the German Court Action.

11. Proposed APEEE statement on the roll out of the new marking system and status of national equivalence tables

Point not taken.

Points for discussion

12. Proposal for Temporary Site in Evere, including Measures for EEBI/Berkendael, for 20 October Board of Governors

The Secretary General has foreseen that all pupils who will enrol in the new Evere site will automatically continue their Secondary education in Woluwé (to which Evere will be attached). The same will apply to new Berkendael pupils: they will attend Secondary in Uccle (to which Berkendael is attached) if their Section is represented there (EN, FR, ES, DE, IT). However, the same provision is not foreseen for pupils currently enrolled in Berkendael: their right to access Secondary in Uccle is not guaranteed by the current version of the document. This is in spite of the fact that Marcheggiano had committed to guaranteeing that right in previous meetings. But that statement, though minuted, was left out of the final document presented to the Board of Governors. Current Berkendael pupils should have the right to go to Uccle, but also keep a right to transfer in S1 if they choose. The latter will also help control the population at Uccle.

ACTION: Henning EHRENSTEIN will work of a revised version of the proposal, including the new guarantee for current Berkendael pupils before the Board of Governors meeting of 20 October.

13. INTERPARENTS and Joint Teaching Committee Update

The President refers to the related supporting document.

14. Review of COVID measures: (40 min; docs provided; docs to come)

Nils BEHRNDT introduces the subject and reminds that a table compiling parents' concerns/suggestions on the handling of the COVID-19 situation was compiled and sent to the School on 17 September; but the School does not see a role for the APEEE in compiling parents' feedback, they want to hear from parents directly. They will not respond individually but provide general responses via the Director's weekly COVID updates. Nils says that following the discussions that will take place within the Board, a letter should be sent from the APEEE to all parents outlining its views on prevention, the role of the School, the role of the APEEE Services and the role of parents themselves. Santiago CALVO RAMOS gives a presentation on "COVID-19 in EEB1: current situation, outlook and possible mitigating measures". A Q&A session follows. Points raised:

- Some members raise concerns about the document entitled "COVID in EEB1: current situation and possible mitigating measures", derived from the presentation, which was published on the APEEE website. It is believed that the introductory section is too strongly worded and should be formally agreed as it is not the view of all parents and it is regretted that the document was not circulated for approval to the Board before being published.
- The President explains that it was circulated at Bureau level before being published.
- It is suggested to remove the document from the site until it is further discussed.
- One member suggests to refrain from taking position for the moment as the School is already doing a lot. Another agrees that the school is doing its best and the APEEE should not be too critical.
- Others insist on the need to play an active role towards the school, ask questions and be constructive. They regret the School's decision to exclude the APEEE from centralising parents' questions/concerns and perceive this as a dismissive attitude of the School's management.

- Some believe that the APEEE should take timely decisions so that it can continue pressing the School on pedagogical continuity. The APEEE risks being too mild and ineffectual.

ACTION: The APEEE will remove document "COVID in EEB1: current situation and possible mitigating measures" from the website, circulate it to the Board for revision and then assess if and in what form it should be sent to the School.

ACTION: The APEEE will draft a letter to parents reminding them of their own responsibilities. It will be circulated to the Board for approval beforehand.

15.Solicitation of points for Safety & Hygiene Committee

Nils BEHRNDT outlines the points to be raised by parents at the forthcoming Safety & Hygiene Committee:

- Code Orange
- Ventilation
- Communication to parents about cases and contact tracing

ACTION: With regards to the handling of COVID-19, the APEEE will continue engaging with the School in a constructive way on prevention, communication and pedagogical issues.

16.Green Parent Group: Better Air Quality at Uccle and Berkendael and call for interest

Green Group coordinator Dietrich ROMETSCH and member Christoph KLOCKENBRING explain the rationale and the context which gave birth to the Green Group: the growing attention to environmental issues, also from the Students' perspective, and the EU Green Deal which aims to make the EU climate-neutral by 2030. One of the successes of the Group is the installation of solar panels at EEB1. A mailing by the Group will inform parents of further green actions and projects being carried out.

Ivo SCHMIDT, member of the Green Group and new President of the APEEE Services' Transport Committee, presents the plans to switch to zero-emissions buses. Two electric buses will be introduced already this year. Kathryn MÁTHÉ reminds that the General Assembly of the APEEE Services is the place where interested parents (class reps) can learn more about green buses.

ACTION: APEEE to send out communication of Green Group to all parents.

AOB

17.Italian Section Letter to School on COVID-19

Ivan TORRE has asked Section Reps to circulate the letter within their Sections to see which of them would wish to co-sign the letter. Concerns are raised about the letter giving the impression that it side-lines the APEEE and that it uses a wrong tone. The President reminds that the School has requested that parents write on COVID-19 individually and not via the APEEE, so the letter is not seen as undermining the APEEE's position. It is in line with the School management's expectations. As for the tone, Ivan TORRE says that it can be adjusted if this can trigger greater support from the Sections. Individual signatures of parents to the letter are not an option.

ACTION: Section Reps who wish to do so shall further circulate the letter within their Sections and give feedback to Ivan TORRE.

18. Open Letter/Petition from Some Parents in Brussels on COVID-19

Thomas SPOORMANS raises concern that the petition which has been circulating on behalf of "many parents" may be perceived as coming from the APEEE. He suggests that the APEEE writes a letter to all parents to clarify that it is not the initiator of this petition. The President, Kathryn MATHE suggests that she wrote to the Board list in advance of the Board meeting explaining that the letter is in no way connected with the APEEE. She thinks that further communication should be left to the initiative of Section Reps and believes the rumour that this is an APEEE initiative has been sufficiently rejected.

ACTION: Section Reps can decide freely whether to forward the petition to their Classes and clarify that it is not an APEEE initiative.

ANNEXES

- Pt.14.PRESENTATION_COVID-19 in EEB1