

- My IntraComm



Blanca Claramunt-Albert and Matthieu Kleinschmager from the European School of Administration

EUSA offers help to European School teachers Colleagues host remote teaching tips webinar

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After a brief respite, we are back in confinement with schools reverting to hybrid and distance teaching. We often talk about how all this affects our kids, but what about the teachers? Colleagues at the European School of Administration (EUSA) thought teachers might also need some support, so they organised a unique webinar for nearly 400 teachers from the European School of Uccle, sharing tips and tricks for making lessons more engaging. Commission en direct spoke to EUSA colleagues Blanca Claramunt-Albert and Matthieu Kleinschmager to learn more.

How did the idea for the webinar come up?

M.K.: Ana Yturriaga Saldanha, the head of EUSA, who has children going to the European School of Uccle (EEB1), reached out to the school's principal to offer EUSA's expertise in virtual learning. She asked me to put together some ideas for creating fun and instructive online classes. It was in early October, when – with the worsening of the COVID-19 situation in Belgium – moving back to distance schooling was again in sight. We were sure we could come up with something meaningful for

teachers, so we agreed with EEB1 to host a one-hour webinar as part of the pedagogical day activities on 2 November.

B.C.: Then the two of us started to gather our ideas for the webinar. The director asked three teachers to get involved in the preparations, who provided invaluable help to us in adapting our ideas and intuitions to the needs of the audience.

How did you set about designing your session?

M.K.: In addition to our experience with online training and learning at EUSA, we already had some material to draw on, as we have already delivered sessions on how to organise better, more engaging online meetings. The teachers we worked with then helped us adapt this to a school environment.



« Les visions extérieures de Blanca et Matthieu nous ont apporté un éclairage nouveau sur les outils d'enseignement à distance et leur utilisation. Ce séminaire a tout à la fois donné des pistes concrètes immédiatement utilisables dans notre pratique quotidienne, mais aussi enclenché une réflexion qui, nous l'espérons, engendra des améliorations à long terme de cette forme d'enseignement dans nos écoles. »

Emmanuel Allaud, one of the teachers who helped make the webinar happen

B.C.: Most of us have kids going to the European Schools, so we knew what was going on in the schools as well as some of the challenges our kids faced with virtual schooling in the spring. I used to be a teacher myself in my previous life, so I had an idea about our audience. The feedback we got from the three teachers we worked with helped us fill in the gaps.

Two colleagues from the European Economic and Social Committee also volunteered to help. Célia Pessaud, who is part of the '[Visual Thinkers](#)' group, drew us some very nice slides, and, in collaboration with Teresa Iurilli, they offered some visual recording of the sessions.

How did it go?

M.K.: It went really smoothly. We hosted two webinars, Blanca did the one in French, and I did another in English, using Microsoft Teams, which is the platform they use for virtual classes. As the objective was to give teachers concrete ideas to make their classes more attractive, interactive and instructive, we designed the webinar in such a way that we walked the walk by actually using what we were suggesting.

For example, in Teams you can put forward different types of questions in different ways: you can use polls ('Forms') to get statistical data, 'Raise your hand' for yes/no questions, and chat for open questions. So we asked them relevant questions to show how that works in practice, and then incorporated their feedback into the rest of the webinar.



"Blanca had us experience first-hand the tricks and tips she was advocating, giving us the chance to explore the different possibilities of the Teams platform we use for remote and hybrid teaching in the European Schools. It was particularly nice to be 200 teachers together, as we are usually on our own when in class. This was the opportunity to exchange about what works and what does not work so well, get a reality check on what we know and what we need to learn."

Anne Joly, a teacher who attended the webinar

B.C.: We also showed them a series of other tools they can use to keep pupils engaged. Students learn differently and they have a shorter attention span, especially in a virtual environment, so you need to vary activities every 10 minutes or so. We placed these tools on a matrix to visually put into perspective the level of engagement you can expect from each and the level of technology involved. For example, teachers can use Kahoot to create quizzes or games if they can devote enough time, or just ask simple questions at the beginning of the class if they cannot.

Have you received any feedback?

M.K.: Yes, very positive. But it was not just the webinar content they found useful, they also rediscovered that they can help each other. Some of them already had a lot of experience both with Teams and online teaching, but they did not have the chance to share. So during the webinar, we made sure to ask questions in the chat, allowing them to interact and share their knowledge. They saw they can try things out among each other, test their ideas between themselves and give each other feedback. This was especially gratifying.

B.C.: I would add that we did this as an act of solidarity. It was a good example of how to help and be positive when it really matters. We must not forget that teachers are doing a great job everywhere in difficult circumstances, they are on the frontline!

[FELLA Luciano](#) 56 mins ago 3

Les profs n'ont pas signé un contrat dans lequel était prévu la mise en oeuvre de l'enseignement à distance. Ils ont appris en quelques jours un nouveau mode d'enseignement. Toutes initiative de ce genre ne pourra que leur être bénéfiques et bénéfique pour nos enfants en retour. Les profs sont formidables et leur capacité à apprendre à faire apprendre mérite toute notre reconnaissance. Merci à eux et bravo pour cette initiative!

[FABIANEK Alice](#) 1 hours ago 1

Great initiative and congratulations! Any chance that the sessions were recorded? I would be keen to watch and learn how to use MS Teams to make the training sessions more engaging.

[FASSNACHT Nele](#) 1 hours ago 4

Great idea and well done, Mathieu and Blanca! Is there a recording or some documentation that I could point the teachers at my kids' school European School to? Any plans to also approach other schools or invite Uccle teachers to train colleagues? Although they have a lot on their plate as it is...

[GORSKA Agata](#) 1 hours ago 3

A great idea! Do you help the teachers in other cities too? In Luxembourg?

[CORREIA Laurent \(REA\)](#) 2 hours ago

Belle initiative. J'espère que ce séminaire sera également proposé aux autres Ecoles Européenne.