

CBWG (Community Building Working Group)

The EEB1 APEEE Community Building Working Group was founded in 2015 as an organ of the APEEE that examines and enables initiatives to increase the sense of community, mutual respect and school “ownership” among students, school staff and parents. Beyond the wish to add value and values to the school environment, it was also considered that disinterest and negative views of school, peers and colleagues may be at the root of some risky behaviors exhibited by students (including for example vandalism, harassment, addictions).

The APEEE’s CBWG enables initiatives by all members of the school community to make the school a better place to live, learn and work together, whether by mobilizing APEEE financing, organizing or promoting activities, or raising awareness about values including, but not limited to, solidarity, sustainability, respect, team spirit, belonging.

To this end the CBWG may accept or initiate meetings with members of the extended school community (including but not limited to student representatives and activists; school teachers and other staff members and decision makers; staff members auxiliary to the school such as security and APEEE services; parents; private and public members of the community surrounding the school; vendors or other providers of goods and services linked to CBWG activities).

In 2021, **seven areas** fall under the scope of CBWG activities:

1. Solidarity and charitable actions
2. Green school and sustainability
3. Free time / free spaces (FT/FS) and related school logistics and infrastructure
4. School events and parties (including but not limited to the Fete de l’Ecole)
5. School image campaigns (sweatshirts, NewsFlash, etc.)
6. Outreach:
 - Welcome initiatives for new students and their families
 - Teacher appreciation
 - Student Committee liaison
7. Community-member driven projects involving a community building objective (e.g. Student Values Workshops – with Bien Etre group; Francis Pirotta Creative Arts Prize; Climate Neutral European School; ES School Events – EUROSPORT, MunUccle, etc.)

Method:

In 2021, rather than meeting regularly as a coordinating group, the CBWG will function as an enabler for members of the APEEE Board and the broader school community. The group provides a space/context where they can initiate or pitch in and realise activities around the 7 focal areas.

Most communication takes place via email, though meetings can in principle also be organised. Members may represent the CBWG and APEEE in meetings and communications in the relevant area of activity.

The group should report back to the Board at least twice a year and consult when a major campaign, initiative or event is planned.

Members:

- Samantha CHAITKIN – CdE liaison, Sweatshirts, FT/FS, ES School Events, general

- Simon DERRY – NewsFlash
- Brian GRAY – CdE liaison, Sweatshirts, FT/FS
- Patryk MALESA – Fete
- Roberto MARIGO – Community-member driven projects
- Kathryn MATHE – CdE Liaison, Outreach, FT/FS, general
- Cristina MORTE – Values Workshops (with Bien Etre WG)
- Dietrich ROMETSCH – Green School
- Eszter RUMBOLD-MOLNAR – NewsFlash
- Malene SCHAT-EPPERS – Outreach, FT/FS
- Kriszta SZABO – Fete, FT/FS
- Dragos TRUSCA – Francis Pirotta Prize
- Honorary members: Fabio PIROTTA, Kristina SMITE – Francis Pirotta Prize

Activities 2020:

In 2020, unfortunately, the COVID pandemic made Community Building activities tougher than usual. As we rebuild our patterns and lives around the limitations imposed by the pandemic, one way or another and through the efforts of everyone in the school community, we will also rebuild the social fabric around our school.

- **Funding Support:** Community Building continued to play a central role in defining and implementing the APEEE's funding mechanism for projects in the school community, alongside the CdE, the school administration, and the Bien-Être and Pedagogical working groups and Safety&Hygiene members. More interesting, high quality projects are proposed in each round.
- **Outreach:**
 - **Welcome:** To start the year off, new-family materials and a welcome committee were present at the orientation day—albeit in a reduced format and with precautionary measures due to COVID restrictions—to help new school families transition more smoothly into life at EEBI.
 - **Teacher Appreciation:** Adapting our successful initiative with the school for the second year under COVID conditions, the CBWG organised coffee and croissants for the teacher's room with a teacher appreciation message in all the languages of the school.
 - **CdE:** A strong relationship has been established over the years with the annual presidents and vice-presidents of the Students' Committee: the patterns of exchange and trust have been fertile ground for concrete collaboration. Examples of this in 2020 include financial assistance in the form of a loan to front the CdE's annual hoodies sale and promotion of the sale itself.
- **Free Time & Free Spaces:** Overcrowding at our school makes it especially important to offer better options to students who are not in class, so they can make the most of their time at school and stay out of trouble. At no time was this more important than during COVID when social distancing practices required closure of free-time spaces (cafs, etudes, libraries, sports grounds) and reduction of student numbers. Finding solutions with the school has proved a constant challenge in 2020.

- **Green School:** Initiated as a community effort in the Secondary CE, the Green Group has grown into a centre of energy for parent participation and collaboration with school and students. This could be seen through the Green Round Table, held in December 2019, which led to the eventual installation of solar panels. The Group is a place where parents can launch discussions about: Green Buses and Bike-to-School; recycling and renewable energy; and climate change – see the details in the October 2020 Green Edition of the APEEE NewsFlash.
- **And more...**One initiative was to bring EEBI community to the streets by singing the European Anthem in the streets on Europe Day. And COVID rules couldn't stop the bees from swarming, so on 20 May we helped celebrate the third annual World Bee Day. Finally, we have been happy to work with the Well-Being Working Group on the Values Series of teen talks hosted on campus for all secondary sections and levels—though these efforts are on hold for the time being.

Current/upcoming activities:

- **Free Time /Free Space (FT/FS):** Working with the Student Committee (CdE) and the management on improving indoor and outdoor campus spaces where students can spend their free time positively; working to create an eco-friendly and healthy environment for pupils. In particular we will examine the proposal to resurface the basketball courts near the DaVinci and will represent parents on the Vending Machine working group in the Secondary CE.
- **Green School Initiatives:** Funding, promoting and supporting initiatives that have an environmental orientation and teach kids about sustainable living.
- **Francis Pirotta Creative Arts Prize:** Working with the family of Francis Pirotta and the Primary Teaching Team to continue to honour young Francis, who sadly passed away in May 2018, with an annual primary class-project art competition and award. The 2021 Prize will honour the memory of Francis' teacher Rachel Napthine, who the community lost this spring.
- **Values Project:** Continuing to work with the APEEE Bien Etre WG to host talks for teens across the secondary on relevant topics for today's youth.
- **Outreach:** Welcome activities in the first days of September to better orient new families and greet returning families; teacher appreciation activities.
- **Primary Sweatshirt Sales:** An online ordering system for primary school sweatshirts is still planned.
- **School Events Publicity:** Collaborating with the APEEE Communication Team to publicise activities undertaken by the school in the APEEE Newsflash.
- **Support for Projects/Initiatives:** Contributing to APEEE Project Funding Calls by vetting proposed projects and serving on the award panel; helping oversee key community building project implementation.
- **Fete:** Coordinating parent contributions to the Fete (e.g. Food, Sport and other activities) through the Fete Committee when the next event is announced.