



APEEE ACTIVITY REPORT

2021-2022

Parents' Association
of the European School of Brussels 1
www.uccleparents.org



INDEX

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT	4
A WORD FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT OF BERKENDAEL.....	5
THE EDUCATION COUNCILS	8
Uccle Primary Education Council.....	8
Uccle Secondary Education Council	9
Berkendael Education Council	10
SAFETY AND HYGIENE COMMITTEE	12
SAC AND EEBI ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD	13
CENTRAL ENROLMENT AUTHORITY AND THE 2021-2022 ENROLMENT POLICY.....	16
STEERING COMMITTEE BRUSSELS AND THE FUTURE OF THE BRUSSELS SCHOOLS.....	19
INTERPARENTS AND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS.....	21
WORKING GROUPS.....	24
Pedagogical Working Group (PedGroup)	24
Well-Being Working Group	26
Community Building Working Group	28
Legal Working Group	30
Communication Working Group	32
PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN 2021-2022	35
EURÊKA	39
USED BOOKS SALE	40
REPORT OF THE TREASURER.....	42
Execution of the budget for the year 2021/22 (as of 31/08/2022)	42
Budget proposed for 2022/23	42



About Us



A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear EEBI Parents,

In this report, we will explore together the main activities carried out by the APEEE during the academic year 2021-2022, identifying challenges as well as accomplishments.

During this period, our volunteers have managed to bring forward important advocacy activities, representing parents both at system and school level: from the monitoring of the COVID-19 measures taken by the school through spring 2022, including to ensure distance learning for children in quarantine, to long-standing issues at system level such as

overcrowding and the reflection on the future of the Brussels schools or the respect of the 180 days of schooling, to more school-related issues, such as the school access policy, including the closing of the entrance on Vert Chasseur and the opening of the Opstal Gate or the activities and projects carried out by our APEEE working groups. We will also see the progress made by our Educational Council teams to work for an ambitious pedagogical programme for EEBI and for a multi-annual pedagogical programme to ensure a quality education for our children.

I am very proud and thankful for all the efforts made by the members of the APEEE, the APEEE delegates to the CEs, the EURÊKA team, and coordinators and members of working groups as well as delegates to the Safety and Hygiene Committee, Central Enrolment Authority, Steering Committee Brussels and INTERPARENTS. I also would like to thank the members of the APEEE Bureau for leading the work in their respective areas and the Board members for their support and constructive cooperation. It has been a very busy period for our association, and I am highly grateful for the commitment you have shown during the whole year.

I started my mandate as President of the APEEE in the middle of the academic year, in December 2021, and without the support and cooperation of the former team, in particular former President Kathryn MÁTHÉ, we would not have been able to ensure the kind of continuity we actually achieved and to be as effective as we were. Therefore, I would like to pay a special thanks to her. It has been a pleasure to take on so much of her knowledge and experience. I also would like to thank the APEEE Secretariat. Your invaluable assistance makes it possible for us to function as an association!

One of the challenges for the next academic year will be to build again the spirit of “school community” at EEBI. After years of COVID-19 both the school management and parents have lost a bit the sense of organising “fun” activities in school with parents’ participation. It has become difficult for parents to access the school, and from our side it has become difficult to find volunteers to carry out our projects and other activities in the school. I hope that with COVID behind us, we will be able to reinstate inclusive on-site activities, like class parties, bake-sales or pedagogical soirees, that used to be normal and successful, without having to renegotiate with the school each time.

We will start a reflection in December 2022, in order to explore possibilities to attract parents back to campus in the next academic year. One first step could be the organisation of a School Fête.

We will continue to work on behalf of parents in all the areas described in this report and on any additional issue that might arise in the future that would be of parents’ concern.

Kind regards,

Valentina PAPA, APEEE President



A WORD FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT OF BERKENDAEL



Dear Parents,

2021-2022 has been another challenging school year for our community. The most important event of this year has been the confirmation by the Belgian government that the Berkendael site will remain a permanent part of the European School system. This means that we can finally fully integrate our site into the Brussels European School No. 1. This is a very positive development, since the hitherto temporary nature of the Berkendael site has served as an obstacle for long-term planning and its proper development. As of May 2022, we can finally take measures

to fully align the practice at our site with that of Uccle. In my capacity as the Chairman of the Berkendael Working Group, which represents all sections at the Berkendael site, I can reassure you that we pay equal attention to both current issues and the more long-term strategic direction of our site.

The Berkendael Working Group has remained fully engaged throughout the school year, monitoring the situation and taking action whenever required. We have continued our practice of bimonthly meetings with the management of the Berkendael site to discuss current issues and agree on the most appropriate action. Among other things, we managed to agree with the management that the school should do its utmost in aligning the pedagogical programme across the two sites. In particular, the initial school trip schedule at the Berkendael site was substantially reduced compared to the Uccle site. It was ultimately increased at our request and this year the trip schedules across the two sites should already be fully aligned. Another issue that we have paid particular attention to concerns the swimming lessons. Despite the fact that the pedagogical programme includes swimming lessons for all Primary classes, last year the swimming lessons were not ensured for our P1, P4 and P5 levels. We have had numerous exchanges with the school management on this and have so far managed to achieve that our P1 classes will be allocated time slots at the Uccle swimming pool. However, the swimming lessons for P4 and P5 levels are still outstanding and it must be absolutely ensured that the full pedagogical programme is applied as of the next school year at the latest.

During the school year, we raised many other issues with the school on the back of comments received from Class Representatives and parents, notably in relation to teaching (quality), school infrastructure, canteen, supervision during breaks, etc. We also selected among projects submitted by parents or teachers, a number of projects that we co-funded with APEEE funds (see separate report below).

Looking forward, the challenges of the Berkendael site are not over. The decision of the Belgian government on the permanent status of our site came together with a decision on the 5th Brussels European School, which will become available as of 2028. In this context, intense discussions have been ongoing since May 2022 on the future structure of the Brussels European Schools. This may have repercussions on the number and nature of language sections at our site in the future. It is expected that the Board of Governors of the European Schools will make a final decision on this by the end of 2022. Following this decision, a transition period could follow that may imply changes that would affect our site. As usual, any such changes would require us to be fully involved and accompany the school management in its task of implementing the decisions of the Board of Governors.

As you can see, the Berkendael Working Group has been busy representing and fighting for the best interests of our children, and we will continue doing so. At the same time, I would like to emphasise



that we are all volunteers that have a full-time day job. This is why we need as much support from the parents as possible, to render our common efforts more productive. The APEEE has many other working groups apart from the Berkendael Working Group where parent contribution is welcome and highly appreciated. These include the Pedagogical Working Group, Community Building Working Group and the Legal Working Group. As you can see, there are plenty of opportunities for you to become engaged for the benefit of our school community. A huge thank you to all parent representatives who are taking some of their scarce spare time to contribute to this community, whether as Class Representative or as member of the APEEE groups!

Yours,

Gundars OSTROVSKIS, APEEE Vice President for Berkendael



The APEEEE and the School



THE EDUCATION COUNCILS

There are three Education Councils (CEs) at EEBI, two in Uccle (one in Primary and one in Secondary) and one in Berkendael, and each meets approximately four times each year. The task of the Education Councils is to find the best conditions for effective teaching, promote positive and stimulating human relations, and affirm the European character of the school.

The Education Councils are whole-school bodies, composed of the following stakeholders: directors, teacher representatives from each section and the Staff Committee, parent representatives from each section and the APEEE, representatives of staff and coordinators, and in Secondary, student representatives from each section and the Student Committee.

In 2021-2022, the APEEE's representatives to the CEs were:

- Uccle Primary CE: Vice President of Administration & Uccle Primary Talia BOATI and Board member Marc GUITART;
- Uccle Secondary CE: Vice President of Pedagogy & Uccle Secondary Monika VELIKONJA and APEEE Secretary Kathryn MÁTHÉ;
- Berkendael Primary CE: APEEE Bureau member Alex WILSON.

The main objective of the APEEE in the Education Councils (CE) has been to make the CE meetings a real forum for consultation, strategic thinking and shared vision with the teachers, students and school management on a range of educational topics, as defined by the General Rules of the European Schools.

The following APEEE delegates were appointed or served on Working Groups constituted by the Uccle Primary and Secondary CEs:

- Secondary Prevention of Addictions Working Group – Krisztina SZABÓ
- Secondary Green Working Group – Piotr RAPACZ, Kevin O'CONNOR
- Secondary Science Festival Working Group – Aleksandra KEDRA, Kathryn MÁTHÉ
- Secondary Mobile Phone Policy Working Group – Caroline CAMBAS, Talia BOATI
- Secondary Homework Policy and Distant Learning Working Group – Kathryn MÁTHÉ, Monika VELIKONJA (deputy)
- Secondary Projects and Trips Working Group – Monika VELIKONJA, Ioana SANDU
- Primary Classes Transplantées Working Group – István VÁNYOLÓS

Multi-cycle groups:

- Communication Policy Working Group – Thomas SPOORMANS, Simon DERRY
- CE Rules of Procedure Working Group – Monika VELIKONJA, Alex WILSON
- Child Protection Working Group – Sara DAGOSTINI, Pere MOLES PALLEJA

Uccle Primary Education Council

The main topics raised by parents at the Uccle Primary Education Council were:

- **COVID Preventive Measures:** installation of CO2 meters; ventilation of classes; use of masks; regular updates on decisional tree and rules established by COCOM.



- **Distance Learning Strategy and Pedagogical Continuity:** revision of distance learning strategy (scenarios 2 and 4) to facilitate pedagogical continuity for pupils in quarantine; baseline quality standards for distance learning; requirement for live streaming and hybrid lessons in a systematic way; sharing of best practices and lessons learned; replacement of absent teachers.
- **Special Educational Needs:** serving gifted students; dedicated special education teachers and external language therapists; learning support meetings with relevant parents and teachers.
- **Classes Transplantées:** organisation and reporting on annual class trips; ensuring standing steering group work continued successfully.
- **Disciplinary Measures and KiVa:** collaboration with the school to frame disciplinary measures; code of conduct and promoting good behaviour; set up of a calm room; increased information to parents on KiVa; extension of KiVa to the first cycle of Secondary (possibly discontinued in 2022-2023).
- **International Emotional Crisis Protocol:** COVID led to an increase of anxiety and difficulty to contain emotions in children. Internal document for teachers and assistants to cope with children's emotional crises; meetings with teachers and assistants; 3 different referents responsible for Gutenberg, Erasme and Fabiola.
- **European Hours and Robotics:** development of European Hours; in cooperation with the school, a robotics module proposed for all P3 pupils.
- **L2:** enrichment; level attained in P5 and possible overlaps with S1 level;
- **End-of-Year Schedule and Programme:** follow up on end-of-year calendar, arrangements and class councils; request for special end-of-year well-being programmes and School Fête.
- **Joint Resolution of all EEBI Education Councils on the Situation of Locally Recruited Teachers:** development of resolution to the system-level bodies signalling the disruptive and negative effects on the school community and in particular for students and teachers in the way that the current cost-sharing agreement is implemented and calling for its revision. The joint Resolution was adopted and sent to Board of Governors.
- Concerns related to the **Opstal Gate**
- **Miscellaneous:** choir; pedagogical library; swimming pool; Writing Fest; Cyber Héros; APEEE NewsFlash.

Uccle Secondary Education Council

The main topics raised by parents at the Uccle Secondary Education Council were:

- **Homework Policy:** baseline standards to guide assignment of homework, awaiting guidelines from the system level Assessment Working Group .
- **Communication of Pupils' Progress and Parent-Teachers' Meetings:** use of SMS and TEAMS by teachers for work programmes, assignment management, and recording marks; suggested online scheduling tool ensuring that all parents have opportunity to meet with teachers during Autumn meetings; more time (additional day) for Autumn meetings and return to the previous class meetings format (class teacher accompanied by other teachers).
- **Assessment in S4-S6 and Baccalaureate:** 2022 Baccalaureate; B tests in S4-S6; access for students to marked B tests and pre-Baccalaureate papers; mock BAC oral and missed lessons due to B-test scheduling.



- **Career Orientation, the Choice of Math4 and Math6 and Impact on Results:** significant and persistent differences among language sections in mathematics choices and results.
- **Cancelled Lessons:** tracking and communicating short- and long-term teacher absences and providing replacements; curtailed end-of-year calendar / programme.
- **L2 Classes:** implementation of enrichment programme; linguistic competence of teachers; level of teaching; rotation of teachers; Cambridge Language Exams and extending the offer for language certification to other languages.
- **Learning Material:** lack of textbooks in some sections/subjects; school policy and selection of support material for classes.
- **Projects, Trips and Project Weeks:** creation of a programme for school trips, excursions and projects; work experience in S5; parent analysis of the potential for learning outside the classroom and the continuity of past successful trips and projects; increase of in-situ projects.
- **Proposal for TEAMS/SMS Guidance and Digital Learning:** policy on the use of common tools (TEAMS/SMS); baseline quality standards for distance learning; transition from distance to digital learning; implementation of BYOD policy; GeoGebra uncertainties; and adoption of Mobile Phone Policy.
- **Free Periods, Free spaces and Offer of Activities:** increase in available spaces and activities; timetable organisation limiting free periods in a row; reintroduction of short Fridays for S1-S3.
- **Joint Resolution of all EEBI Education Councils on the Situation of Locally Recruited Teachers:** resolution to the system-level bodies signalling the disruptive and negative effects on the school community and in particular for students and teachers in the way that the current cost-sharing agreement is implemented and calling for its revision was adopted and sent to Board of Governors.
- **CE Working Groups:** set up, mandates, calendar and working methods of the different CE working groups.

Berkendael Education Council

2021-2022 was an academic year characterised by a return to normal schooling, after serious disruptions over the previous two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to extended periods of school closure and online learning for children of all ages. While the return to in-person schooling was welcomed by the overwhelming majority of teachers and parents, it also involved a closer scrutiny of how the school had been delivering education, and highlighted the need for catching up with lost learning and fostering new opportunities for engagement.

Four Educational Council (CE) online meetings were held over the course of the 2021-2022 academic year, with a full contingent of APEEE representatives present on all occasions. Many of the concerns raised by parents were linked in some way to the **growing size of Berkendael**, which is now approaching its full capacity of 1000 students. This has limited access to gym, art and music facilities more than in the past. It has also led to problems typically associated with overcrowding, such as the difficulty of playground supervision, and certain instances of truancy, bullying and misbehaviour. For various reasons, the school was not able to organise **class trips and swimming lessons** for every level of the Primary school, to the great disappointment of parents expressed in the CE meetings. APEEE welcomed the appointment of a new Assistant Deputy Director, in recognition of the limited administrative capacity at Berkendael available to cope with a rapidly increased number of students.



On a different note, concerns were raised at various points about the level of **L2 teaching** and the extent to which this was harmonised with the educational programme in Uccle. Parents expressed concern about the recent pattern of seconding L2 teachers from Member States where this is not the native language. This has led to the abrupt replacement of native speaking, often highly experienced, locally recruited teachers. With this issue foremost in mind, the whole CE endorsed the APEEE-led resolution looking at ways to improve the conditions of locally recruited teachers within the European Schools system.



SAFETY AND HYGIENE COMMITTEE

The Safety and Hygiene Committee met two times in the 2021-2022 school year: 15 February 2022 and 31 May 2022. The meetings have been held as combined meetings for Uccle and Berkendael. Meetings were attended by Santiago A. CALVO RAMOS (Uccle) and Marek DVORSKY (Berkendael). This school year, the **COVID pandemic** has been the predominant focus in meetings of the Safety and Hygiene Committee. The APEEE's overall priorities in this context have been to push for the best possible safety of the students (including e.g., ventilation, appropriate use of masks, hand-washing, social distancing, testing facilities on site, etc.), pedagogical continuity (which was also discussed in other forums) and the physical presence of the students on site. On several of these issues (such as the wearing of masks in certain age groups) there is no consensus amongst parents, and we reflected this in our interventions.

Beyond COVID, the Safety and Hygiene Committee also discussed a number of other topics. We called upon the school to continue work on the **Child Protection Policy**, which is long overdue. Further to a **fire inspection** by the Belgian Fire Brigade, the school looked into the capacity and the necessary measures to ensure protection against fire outbreaks. The APEEE also pushed for **better access of parents to the school site**, which however due to the pandemic did not materialise. Each of the meetings also looked at **infrastructure works** (such as new fences, bike parking, safety of traffic around the school) and the **well-being of the staff**. Specific attention was also given to **security protocols** related to close proximity of two prisons to the Berkendael site and enhanced supervision of kids in the Berkendael courtyards.

At the meeting on 24 June, the school management launched a discussion on the **organisation and role of the Safety and Hygiene Committee** itself: the school wishes to restrict parental involvement to three parent representatives (1 Uccle, 1 Berkendael and 1 APEEE Services) and expects Safety and Hygiene Committee meetings to be rather for information and communication than for consultation and decision making. From the APEEE side, we will continue pushing for separate meetings for both sites; for proper representation of the APEEE, which has a separate role from that of the APEEE Services; and for the committee to live up to its role as a decision-making body. We will have to organise ourselves a bit differently going forward, but the overall experience last year was positive.



SAC AND EEBI ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

In accordance with the European Schools Convention and General Rules, the highest governing body of the school is the EEBI Administrative Board. There are two school Administrative Board meetings each year (generally in September and January). These are chaired by the Secretariat General of the European Schools and attended by different stakeholders: the direction, teachers, administrative staff, and parents and also students for some points. The European Commission and Eurocontrol also attend. The September meeting focuses on pedagogical issues, including the evolving population and class structure, Baccalaureate results, staffing and pedagogical planning/risk management, while the January meeting is primarily administrative and budgetary. School Advisory Councils (SACs) are internal to the school community and are held to prepare for the Administrative Boards or to treat a particular whole-school issue.

In 2021-2022, the Administrative Board meetings were on 23 September and 3 February; official SACs were held on 27 January and 25 November. The APEEE Presidents Kathryn MÁTHÉ/Valentina PAPA and Vice Presidents of Administration Nils BEHRNDT/Talia BOATI attended the Administrative Board on behalf of the APEEE this year, while SACs were attended by members of the Bureau.

The points raised by the APEEE in EEBI Administrative Boards and regular SAC meetings included:

- **COVID Measures:** We asked for a layered preventative approach, implementing best practices from Belgian authorities and from other European Schools. These include a ventilation plan for workspaces and rapid testing of pupils with the voluntary agreement of the families.
- **Pedagogical Continuity during COVID:** Parents asked the management to ensure continuous teaching for all pupils in the school, whether on site or at home. This included pupils of all levels in quarantine/self-isolation as well as whole classes, levels and cycles at home in distance learning or on rotation. It was also important to monitor the quality of any teaching from home. We asked the school to require the systematic use of TEAMS modules in all classes as part of a coherent programme to allow all pupils to follow each course as well as to support synchronous and asynchronous streaming of classes. We stressed the importance of regular personal contact with teachers in any scenario.
- **Distance Learning Programme:** We were pleased that the Uccle and Berkendael Primary direction eventually put in place guidelines for distance teaching, also consulting parents in the process. We raised the problem of teacher absences and the lack of monitoring/quality assurance during online teaching and urged the school to put in place quality assurance mechanisms. Finally, we requested clear guidance on the use of devices in Secondary classes and on EEBI's BYOD approach.
- **Child Protection Policy:** We followed the development of the Pupils' Well-Being Policy Framework of the European Schools and the recommendations of the Child Protection Policy Working Group (ref. 2021-12-D-31-en-4) that was adopted at the Board of Governors in April 2022. We have also supported calls from the student committee to better address student mental health issues. We urged the school to create or update its own policies on child protection, bullying, good behaviour, substance abuse, health, safety and security, mental health etc. and also assure that key support structures and curricular elements are put in place. We called on the central office to guide the school in this process. We welcome the installation of calm rooms in Primary. We contributed to the adoption of the Smart Phone



Policy and we stressed the importance of its implementation. It is imperative that the school management informs well all stakeholders, and in particular teachers and students, to support and encourage them to fulfil their roles. More than this, the management and the whole community should work together to instil this new approach.

- **New Secondary Marking System and National Equivalence Tables:** The APEEE focused more intently on updates to national equivalence tables; these are the tables/formulae created by all member states to translate the European Baccalaureate into the national scale in order to ensure that EB students are treated fairly in university admissions. We continued to express concerns over the problematic German and Danish equivalence tables, and we also noted that the new tables of several other member states seemed to degrade the value of the BAC and therefore disadvantage our students. We applauded Commissioner Hahn's efforts with the German government and urged the Commission and OSGES to continue to address the problem.
- **Lost Teaching Hours, 180 Days of School and Effective Use of Teaching Time:** The APEEE reiterated the concern about lost teaching hours, i.e. hours of school not given—whether due to un-replaced teacher absences or cancelled days of school. We asked the school for an analysis and detailed statistics on absences and replacements and for the follow-up of the school Action Plan. The APEEE expressed its disagreement with unilateral decisions that reduce school days or effective use of teaching time and do not correspond to the educational and well-being needs of our pupils and families or comply with the General Rules. We asked for reassurances that the 180 days of school are respected and decisions are taken to ensure an effective use of teaching time (e.g., by using the six training days set aside for staff outside the annual calendar or moving the work experience to the end of the year).
- **Reinstatement of Bilingual L2 Classes:** The APEEE urged the school to reconsider its decision on the organisation of L2, asking that it continue with bilingual classes while offering enrichment to advanced regular foreign language learners. The APEEE noted that the European Schools rules don't exclude bilingual groups—indeed it is required to take students' differing abilities into account—and that it is up to the individual schools to identify bilingual students and devise a way of adapting the class situation to provide a suitable education.
- **Retention of Locally Recruited Teachers:** We reiterated the importance of assuring that LRTs stay in the system. We supported the discussions on the enlargement of the scope of the protected functions. We also asked what is the follow-up on the resolution adopted by the CEs on LRTs and how it will be used in the discussion and were informed that a compromise proposal would be presented at the Board of Governors in April 2022.
- **Overcrowding in the Brussels Schools:** We expressed concerns about the long delays in the construction of a fifth school—now foreseen as late as 2028. Even after the opening of Evere, the Brussels schools are still over capacity, and there are no plans to adapt existing sites to meet the growing needs in Secondary. We asked why no measures to either restrict new enrolments or expand capacity were foreseen, and we urged the schools to undertake real long-term planning.
- **Communication:** The APEEE pledged for several areas of improvement in the communication from the school. Those include: better communication of key measures, more targeted and relevant daily communication, clear indication of complaint and reporting procedures, and better use of the school website. Moreover, we asked that the School Communication Policy is dealt with as a priority.
- **School Trips and Projects:** The APEEE welcomed the establishment of the Primary



Classes Transplantées Steering Group and the Secondary Projects and Trips Working Group. Thanks to the work of the former, Uccle Primary pupils were able to go on a replacement Snow Trip in P4, after the interruption brought on by the COVID crisis. We also called on the school to respect the role of the Education Councils in planning the school trips, in accordance with the European Schools rules. Moreover, we asked the school management to better exploit the end of the school year and BAC oral examination period for the organisation of the project week and to clarify well in advance the timing and obligations of Work Experience.

- **Stakeholder Governance:** Parents continued to argue that our consultative bodies do not have a clear consultative role in the development of the school's policies and programmes—which is still perceived as top-down. These bodies lack clear internal procedures: supporting documents are often delayed or lacking altogether; there is little or no formal voting; and decision-making is vague. Promised actions are not tracked and follow-up can be limited. In this context, we question the effectiveness of these bodies to guide educational strategy, provide needed oversight, track pedagogical outcomes and ensure compliance with system regulations and policies. In addition, we continued to raise concerns about the development, approval and monitoring of the school's Annual and Multi-Annual Pedagogical School Plans, noting that stakeholders are increasingly left outside the process. We urged the school to put in place more standard procedures to ensure that meetings are adequately prepared and run and that key documents well in place on schedule. We welcomed the establishment of the long-awaited Project Week working group in December. Parents supported the launch of other working groups, but asked that the work be structured and prioritised so it might lead to concrete gains. We continued to request more pedagogical data (e.g., second results; teacher absences/replacements).



CENTRAL ENROLMENT AUTHORITY AND THE 2021-2022 ENROLMENT POLICY

The parent delegates of the four Brussels Schools and Berkendael serve in the Central Enrolment Authority (CEA) with other stakeholders, including: the Brussels Schools Directors, the Commission, and a delegation from Belgium. The Secretary General presides. Each group has a single vote with the Secretary General casting the tie-vote. The EEBI APEEE is represented by Kathryn MÁTHÉ (Uccle) and Bartosz HACKBART (Berkendael).

Every Autumn, the CEA sets the Annual Enrolment Guidelines to be approved by the Board of Governors, and then in December elaborates the Annual Enrolment Policy based on the Guidelines approved. The CEA monitors the implementation of the policy through the rest of the year, considering particular cases and making decisions when numbers in particular classes, levels and sections exceed expectations.

In October 2019 the APEEEs of the four Brussels schools wrote a statement to the Central Enrolment Authority raising alarm about continued overcrowding, deploring the Belgian government for its failure to live up to its treaty obligations and asking for the Commission to take over from the Secretary General to handle the negotiations. The statement elicited a strong response from the Board of Governors, who themselves issued a statement to the Belgian Government. In Autumn 2021, the Belgian government opened a temporary Primary campus for 1500 students in Evere on the former NATO site; it was integrated to EEBII. In Spring 2022, the Belgian government committed to opening a full fifth European School for 3000 students in Neder-Over-Heembeek in 2028-2029, and at the same time granted the Berkendael and Evere sites permanently to the European Schools.

The main purpose of the 2022-2023 Enrolment Policy was to continue to populate the EEBII-Evere Primary site by filling the classes already created and thus to relieve the pressure on the existing sites—particularly in the Primary cycles. The Evere campus currently houses Primary classes in FR (to P5); DE and EN (to P2); and IT (to P1). **In 2022-2023 the CEA also balanced this objective with the need to maintain viable class groups on the other Primary sites—minimum class thresholds were thus set.**

In September 2022, the population of the four Brussels Schools (six sites) was 14.543 (about 400 pupils more than the previous year), while the capacity of the four schools, including Berkendael and Evere, was 13.535. Thus, even with the brand-new site, capacity has been superseded by 1008 students with all four main campuses overcharged, particularly in the Secondary. The European Schools have not been able to guarantee category I pupils a place since 2015.

In September the population of Uccle (capacity 3102) was 3336, down from 3390 last year and 3426 the previous year, a high-water mark for recent years. The Secondary cycle continues to grow. The current breakdown is:

- 168 pupils in Nursery in 2 levels / 9 classes (down from 182 pupils in 10 classes last year and 211 pupils in 10 classes the year previous)
- 939 pupils in Primary in 5 levels / 49 classes (down from 1017 pupils in 51 classes last year and 1117 pupils in 53 classes the year previous)
- 2229 pupils in Secondary in 7 levels / 94 classes (up from 2191 pupils in 90 classes last year and 2098 pupils in 90 classes the year previous)

The school has eight sections and SWALS groups; the section structure has remained relatively stable compared with recent years. The FR section still makes up approximately 36% of the population with two or three classes in Primary levels and four or five in Secondary levels (except



S4 with six classes). Other sections average one class per level in both Primary and Secondary with the exception of the PL section with double classes from P5 to S6 and the EN section with intermittent double classes in Secondary. As numbers rise in the Secondary, timetabling has remained a problem, and special classrooms, gyms, canteen space and free-time areas are in short supply.

The population of **Berkendael (capacity 977) now stands at 903, up from 835 last year**. The current breakdown is:

- 173 pupils in Nursery in 2 levels / 10 classes (from 172 pupils in 11 classes last year and 231 pupils in 12 classes the year previous)
- 730 pupils in Primary in 5 levels / 46 classes (up from 663 pupils in 42 classes last year and 652 pupils in 39 classes the year previous)

The campus has three sections and five so-called satellite groups. The school is growing from the bottom, and in 2022 only four groups extend up to P5: FR, DE, LV, SK; three extend up to P4: EL, EN, IT; and one up to P3: ES. 43% of the population is FR, down from 51% last year and 59% the year previous. The FR section has three classes at most Primary levels with four in P5 and two in P2 and Nursery; other sections and groups have a single class per level with the exception of EL, which has two classes in Nursery and P1. LV and SK sections remained small and had vertically grouped classes. Though the capacity of Berkendael is 977 students, this does not take into account the size of class groups and use and capacity of classrooms. There are in fact very few classrooms left and many classrooms can only accommodate small groups. Most classrooms are also used for after-school care, an added complication.

In order to fill the new Evere Primary site, most new non-priority enrolments in the Nursery and Primary in FR, EN, DE and IT (the sections created in Evere) were directed there. Effectively, the enrolment in many classes in Uccle and Berkendael (as well as in most other Brussels campuses) consisted of priority cases and situations of unexpectedly high enrolment. Thus, **the lower Primary cycle is characterised by smaller class groups**.

This year 89 students left Berkendael P5 for S1 on other campuses. Berkendael FR and DE students are treated as “glissement” (i.e. already enrolled) at Uccle Secondary, and students from these classes are thus guaranteed a spot at Uccle; 75 out of 85 (88%) FR and DE students took advantage of this guarantee—up from 65 of 105 (62%) last year. 2 Latvian students and 2 Slovak students also moved as “glissement” to Woluwe and Ixelles respectively, where they were integrated as SWALS in Secondary.

All pupils enrolled in Berkendael through September 2020 also retain the right to apply for transfer to another campus with priority over new enrollees; 10 FR and DE students chose to do so (3 to Woluwe, 6 to Ixelles and 1 to Laeken). For the fifth year, all students received their first choice. 4 younger pupils were also transferred from Berkendael to other schools with their P5 siblings. This year it was not permitted to move siblings from Berkendael to Uccle; this turned out to be problematic (see below). Finally, 6 pupils were transferred (upon their request) from Berkendael to Evere.

Points of Interest:

- On 13 May 2022, the Belgian government agreed to provide a full fifth school for 3000 students in Neder-Over-Heembeek to open in 2028-2029. In the meantime, the Steering Committee Brussels launched discussions to determine how this site would be populated and to discuss worsening overcrowding.
- In May 2022, the Belgian government also granted the Berkendael and Evere sites to EEBI and EEBII in perpetuity.
- In spring 2022, the capacity of the school sites was updated based on the findings of the capacity analyses undertaken by Price Waterhouse Cooper earlier in the year. Two schools



had their official capacity lowered: EEBIII from 2650 to 2551 and EEBII from 2800 to 2462; EEBIV's official capacity was raised from 2850 to 2943; and EEBI's official capacity remained largely the same, going from 3100 to 3102.

- In October 2022, the Directors of the four Brussels schools wrote a communication to the Secretary General expressing alarm about the continued overcrowding.
- By September 2022, 110 Ukrainian pupils had enrolled in the Brussels Schools: 23 at EEBI, 30 at EEBII, 25 at EEBIII and 30 at EEBIV. A majority, 86 of 110, enrolled in the EN section, and the rest in the FR section, with the exception of one in the RO section.
- In August 2022, the Complaints Board ruled (Decision 22/27) that the measure introduced into the 2022-2023 Enrolment Policy, whereby Berkendael P5 students could not take their siblings with them to Uccle when they moved to S1, was not proportionate, was inconsistent with other aspects of the policy and did not adequately support the principle that siblings could be schooled together.
- This was the first year of online enrolment, and the trial of the new system was quite successful.
- There were still some problems with families failing to apply in phase I but the number of cases is decreasing.



STEERING COMMITTEE BRUSSELS AND THE FUTURE OF THE BRUSSELS SCHOOLS

Overcrowding is a serious problem of the European Schools in Brussels. The Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) Studies undertaken in the year 2021 outlined that all four Brussels schools are seriously overcrowded and provided numbers on the “real capacity” of each school. For example, in our school the current total number of pupils at the Uccle site is 3336 pupils, while the real maximum capacity is 3100 pupils and in the Berkendael site the current number is 840, while the real maximum capacity is 977 pupils. The overcrowding at Uccle is particularly worrying in the Secondary cycle, where pupils are struggling to find free labs, sport facilities and even places to be during free time between lessons. Read the [PWC report here](#).

In November 2021, the Steering Committee Brussels started discussions on “reflections of the future structure of the Brussels European Schools”. The Steering Committee Brussels (SCB) — formally Groupe de Suivi (GdS) — is organised by the Secretary General as a strategic discussion between the stakeholders in the European Schools in Brussels. It brings together the Directors of the European Schools, teachers’, students’ and parents’ representatives and representatives from the European Commission and the Belgian Government. The Staff Committee and Future Parents also participate. The EEBI APEEE is represented by the APEEE President, Valentina PAPA.

Since December 2020, the Steering Committee has been organised into core and enlarged groups, with the core group meeting 4-6 times each year depending on the issues arising and the enlarged group meeting 2-3 times. Its mandate is: long-term planning; working to find solutions that can ensure that there are adequate and suitable provisions in place to guarantee the various rights of enrolment are upheld and complied with; preparing contingency plans; populating new sites, managing transition periods, phasing out temporary sites; and the distribution of language sections and cycles across the sites in Brussels. It is also a forum where the Régie des Bâtiments presents updates on the state of repair and renovations on each campus.

The discussions on the future structure of the European Schools of Brussels aim at making the Brussels schools more efficient and at reducing the overall overcrowding. The Belgian Council of Ministers has approved the decision to grant a fifth school to the European Schools System by September 2028. It also decided that Berkendael and Evere sites will be considered as permanent sites of the ES system. The new school will have a capacity of about 3000 pupils according to the Secretary General.

On 29 March the Secretary General organised a workshop on the future of the Brussels Schools that gathered stakeholders, including School Directors, teacher representatives, the Presidents of the APEEEs of the four schools as well as students. This session was a brainstorming where stakeholders were asked to participate in working groups to look at possible solutions for a better use of resources and reducing overcrowding. Following this first workshop, the Secretary General organised two Steering Committee Brussels meetings on 31 May (where a first version of the document was discussed) and on 30 June (where a second version of the document was discussed).

This second version of the document presented two options:

- a more ‘traditional’ model (Model A) that foresees the fifth School as a fully-fledged school (with Nursery, Primary and Secondary cycles) in September 2028 and considers different options in order to redistribute language sections among the five schools, phasing in and out sections between sites and schools.
- a second Model (Model B) that foresees a ‘Campus approach’, where the new school would



be only a Secondary campus. This envisions a significant reorganisation of the cycles across the sites that would be available in 2028: Nursery and Primary (N1-P4), Lower Secondary (P5-S3) and Higher Secondary (S4-S7) would be concentrated in two or three sites.

During the first two meetings of the Steering Committee, the APEEE raised concerns on both models (concerns that were discussed during an extraordinary APEEE Board meeting on 30 May and a regular APEEE Board meeting on 23 June), pointing out that both models seem disproportionate considering the impact that they would have on pupils and families, while not clearly achieving the goal of reducing overcrowding. Parents representing linguistic sections from all Brussels schools and even parents coming from different sections have raised their concerns and positions also via letters directly to the Secretary General. Yet, many questions and concerns raised by parents remained unanswered.

During the summer holidays a third version of the document was circulated to the Members of the Steering Committee and discussed in a SCB on 15 September 2022. The Secretary General arrived at a final proposal in October 2022 and submitted at an extraordinary Board of Governors meeting.. This decision is still pending, but the reform could take effect starting from the 2023-2024 academic year.



INTERPARENTS AND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

INTERPARENTS is the federation of the thirteen Parents Associations of the European Schools that represents the parents in the Board of Governors and its subsidiary bodies. Each Parents Association elects a team of delegates to INTERPARENTS. Our team is currently composed of: Monika VELIKONJA, Kathryn MATHÉ and Pere MOLES PALLEJA, the current President of INTERPARENTS. Sven MATZKE serves as delegates on specific issues.

This has been another year when all internal INTERPARENTS meetings have been organised online. This has been a challenge but also an opportunity as it has proved that internal communication at a distance was possible through more frequent meetings combined with an enhanced use of social media. INTERPARENTS met online in October 2021 and in February 2022, in preparation for the Joint Teaching Committee meetings and in November 2021 and April 2022 in preparation for the Board of Governors meetings.

In 2021-2022, priority topics of discussion were:

- Support to students and parents on BAC-related issues, including the moderation of the chemistry and economics paper granted by the Chair of the BAC.
- Discriminatory tables of equivalence translating the BAC results for university admission in national systems.
- Educational support, with active participation in the Educational Support Policy Group by Sven MATZKE from EEBl.
- School psychologists, child protection, tolerance and conflict mediation and the introduction of the Well-Being Policy Framework.
- Recruitment and retention of teachers, attractiveness measures and fair treatment for locally recruited teachers.
- Call for tender on school trips.
- Education for sustainable development.
- Distance teaching and learning and pedagogical continuity for absent students, with the continuous work of the INTERPARENTS distance learning working group, coordinated by Kathryn MATHÉ from EEBl.
- Roll out of GeoGebra and BYOD.
- Homework policies, book lists and learning materials.
- European Schools Language Policy and differentiated teaching in L2.
- Overcrowding in the Brussels schools and the opening of a fifth school.
- Quality assurance and pedagogical development, the role of inspectors and school-level annual planning.

Participation of our Delegates in Working Groups:

- Pere MOLES PALLEJA represented INTERPARENTS at the meeting of the Board of Governors in December 2021 and at the Joint Teaching Committee in February 2022.



-
- Kathryn MÁTHÉ represented INTERPARENTS at the Board of Governors in April 2022 and at the Joint Teaching Committee in October 2021. She took part in periodic meetings of the Pedagogical Reform Working Group and served as a deputy for the IT-PEDA Group.
 - Monika VELIKONJA took part in meetings of the Career Orientation Working Group.
 - Sven MATZKE is an active participant at the Educational Support Policy Group.
 - Istvan VÁNYOLÓS represented parents of all Belgian European Schools in the tender process for school trips.



The APEEE's Activities



WORKING GROUPS

Pedagogical Working Group (PedGroup)

The Pedagogical Working Group (PedGroup) works with the APEEE and the school to ensure the quality of the educational offer and to support, propose and help implement measures or initiatives to improve the daily classroom experience of our children as well as also their longer-term educational prospects. The group aims to promote a close working relationship between parents, students, teachers, management, and the wider school community on issues of pedagogical import. The PedGroup is currently coordinated by Monika VELIKONJA (APEEE Vice President of Pedagogy & Uccle Secondary), Talia BOATI (APEEE VP of Administration & Uccle Primary) and Alex WILSON (APEEE Bureau Member).

The PedGroup provides analysis and consultation on pedagogical issues for the APEEE Board (CA) and Education Councils (CEs), responding directly to parent concerns on topics within its mandate. It also consults and advises INTERPARENTS on pedagogical issues raised at system level. Finally, the PedGroup issues non-binding opinions on requests for funding of projects within its scope.

It currently functions as an umbrella group for several issue-driven subgroups and dossiers:

- **SubGroups:** Educational Support (EdSupp); Gifted Children's Network (GCN); Languages; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); Digital Learning & Educational Technology (EdTech); Primary Trips; Secondary Trips, Projects & Project Weeks(Projects&Trips); INTERPARENTS (IP).
- **Other Dossiers:** Quality Control; Baccalaureate, Evaluation and Orientation; Art & Music; Sport

The PedGroup tries to meet several times each year to hear reports from subgroup coordinators, task leaders and Educational Council representatives, to agree on proposed measures and to discuss future strategy. Otherwise, each subgroup and dossier has its own coordinator or lead and its working method is set to best fit the demands of the dossier and the group members.

Activities 2021-2022 and Outlook 2022-2023

In 2022, the group has been working on several dossiers and has pushed to set up dedicated working groups (parents + school administration + teachers + students) to boost the most relevant dossiers:

- **Languages:** The PedGroup's Languages group is working closely with INTERPARENTS to oversee the implementation of the European Schools Language Policy, ensuring the provision of language teaching for a range of learners, in particular L2 lessons and bilingual pupils. They are pushing for the use of textbooks that meet syllabus requirements, striving to increase the diversity of the L3 offer and to extend language certification to more languages (currently supported by the school only for English).
- **Consultation of Stakeholders:** The Pedgroup is committed to fostering the key role of Education Councils (CE) as a forum for consultation, strategic thinking and shared vision on a range of educational topics. The group closely involves the CE representatives within its activities and discussions. (See: Education Councils)
- **New Marking System, BAC Results and PISA:** The PedGroup has continued to monitor the implementation of the "new" marking system in the Baccalaureate cycle and the pupil results at EEBl. It tracks the release of national equivalence formulas updated to reflect the new system. It will likewise follow up on the results of the PISA test that took place in Spring



2022 and support analysis of these results.

- **Baccalaureate Cycle and Career Orientation:** The PedGroup works to ensure that the arrangements for the Pre-Baccalaureate and Baccalaureate Exams meet system requirements, that results are transparently reported, and that students are well prepared for the next step in their education. The APEEE has also worked on the INTERPARENTS BAC complaints system and assisted—when needed—in administrative appeals. It also works to enhance the uptake of work-experience and suggested to integrate it better with class learning (e.g., the writing of CVs in L1), to increase its flexibility (e.g., placements during holidays) and to improve support in securing placements.
- **Digital Learning and Educational Technologies:** The PedGroup's EdTech group worked through the end of COVID restrictions to ensure pedagogical continuity for all students at home or in school. This included pushing for lessons online when necessary and for clear policies around the use of TEAMS and SMS for all students. The group has also followed the implementation of GeoGebra and the decision to discontinue its use, ensuring that parents' concerns are well reflected in discussions. It has likewise encouraged the school to implement a coherent BYOD policy, working with management in 2021 to identify suppliers of devices. EdTech aims to facilitate the transition from distance learning to blended learning and to ensure that pupils are trained on the safe and appropriate use of educational technologies.
- **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM):** the PedGroup's STEM group has encouraged the school and provided funds to introduce a Primary robotics programme (currently for P3 pupils). Moreover, it has offered the school support to increase the opportunities for students to use the FabLab. It promotes the school's annual Secondary Science Festival, and it keeps an up-to-date inventory of STEM-related programmes, competitions and projects and explores possibilities for their promotion and extension. It encourages synergies with sustainable education and digital learning initiatives.
- **Promoting and Enhancing Project Weeks and Trips (Projects&Trips):** And last, but not least, the PedGroup's Secondary Projects&Trips team strives to link extracurricular activities more strongly with classroom teaching, to ensure that activities have a specific educational, didactic and social value and to organise more activities on-campus. They support APEEE representatives in the Secondary CE Working Group on Projects and Trips, which has a mandate to define priorities for establishing various school trips and to examine the purpose, format and timing of the Project Week. At the same time, the Classes Transplantées team has successfully created a relationship with the school and has worked closely on the logistics of the 2022 replacement for the Snow Trip where pupils travelled to Austria.



Well-Being Working Group

The "Well-being (WB) Working Group" aims at accompanying the pupils, via the school and the parents, to build a healthy personal, mental and social development. The members of the group, through parent's feedback and active contribution looks into the challenges faced in these days by children and parents and sometime teachers. The WB group is currently coordinated by Sara DAGOSTINI, with support from Kristza SZABÓ and Marc GUITART.

The main focus of the group is on:

- Emotional intelligence;
- Substance abuse and addictions;
- Bullying and cyber-bullying;
- EVRAS (Education à la vie relationnelle, affective and sexuelle) ;
- Safe internet and social media
- Mental Health

Special focus is given to impact of COVID on pupils' mental health and how to support them.

Actions carried out in 2021-2022 and Outlook for 2022- 023

- The school year 2021-2022 has been a fresh re-start. After two years of stop, we were going slowly back to a "normal" pre-COVID situation. The School management and representatives of the WB group has met in September 2021 to identify pupils' needs post COVID and relaunch tailored-made WB programmes. A draft for a multiannual WB framework has been agreed and slowly some WB activities have been launched.
- In primary, the emotional intelligence programme took place, with very positive feedback from the school and the students, the KiVa programme has continued and the cyberhero - safe internet programme has taken place for P5.
- In secondary, the value project "COVID Impact for teens" has been organised, with great appreciation from students; the substance abuse addiction and prevention programme took place, with ateliers in class from external specialists; renew focus was put on the implementation of EVRAS and on extension of the KiVa programme to secondary. The idea of a mental health survey has been dropped, in agreement between School and APEE WB group, as preference was given to implementation of WB activities.
- The mobile policy task force, headed by Caroline CAMBAS and Noémie BEIGBEDER, reached a common line with the teachers' representatives and CdE representatives. The document was discussed at the CE early 2022 and the policy approved. The APEE has proposed to launch a raise awareness campaign to support the new policy.
- The first good draft of June 2021 of child protection policy, showed no progress. The task force, set up early 2021 (school management, teachers and APEE reps) was put on hold until the BoG was releasing the Child Protection Policy/framework.
- The outlook for the year to come seems promising. The collaboration remains fruitful and intense for both primary and secondary. In primary, the school is working on EVRAS for P5 and consolidating KiVa . In secondary, the school and WB representatives has discussed and consolidated the WB framework, which has been completed for all levels of secondary. All levels now benefit of one or more WB activities, targeted on the specific needs of each level. For secondary, Implementation of EVRAS took place in autumn, Ateliers on Mental health are currently being organised, ateliers for emotional management have been kicked



off and few others are undergoing implementation. KiVa on the other hand has been abandoned for secondary. A conference about mental health for parents is on the air ... A bright start, for a healthy and mindful school year.



Community Building Working Group

The Community Building Working Group (CBWG) 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. The group mobilises APEEE financing, organises or promotes activities, or raises awareness about values including, but not limited to: solidarity, sustainability, respect, team spirit, belonging. The Community Building Working Group is currently coordinated by Samantha Chaitkin.

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 behaviours exhibited by students (including for example vandalism, harassment, addictions).

APEEE activities that fall under the CBWG relate to the following areas:

- Solidarity and charitable actions
- Green school and sustainability
- Free time/free spaces (FT/FS), particularly issues related to the school's physical/built environment
- School events and parties, including but not limited to the Fête de l'École
- School image campaigns, including sweatshirts, NewsFlash, Facebook, and more...
- Outreach, including welcome initiatives for new students and their families, teacher appreciation, Student Committee liaison
- Community-member-driven projects involving a community building objective, including the Student Values Workshops with the Well-Being Group; the Francis Pirotta Creative Arts Prize; Climate Neutral European School; ES School Events, such as EUROSPOORT, MUNUccle, FAMES and ESSS, together with the Ped Group.

Activities 2021-2022

As the social limitations of the COVID crisis receded over the school year, some losses in terms of school community feeling came to light. All told, the school's openness to the presence and participation of families in school life, that weakened since the 2016 terrorist attacks and further suffered under two years of pandemic-related challenges, seems to be at an all-time low and ripe for reconstruction. With the normal ebb and flow of staff and teachers, students and parents, many of our traditions, good practices and sense of constructive cooperation have been partly forgotten, and it will take efforts in all parts of the community to revitalise a holistic school life!

The Community Building Working Group has done its part this year to hold on to some important traditions: APEEE maintained its annual presence at the **new families welcome event** in September, with renewed hope for a “normal” year. Soon after that, for 5 October the APEEE sought to coordinate once again with the school management to celebrate **World Teachers' Day**, but the **school declined**: unstoppable parent volunteers instead greeted teachers as they entered school in the morning, offering them a shiny and cheerful pinwheel, complete with an inspiring message of appreciation, eliciting big smiles and not a few tears from touched teachers! It was clear that despite their success at enabling digital learning and interaction, the human contact with parents means something to them, too.

Not all community building is a party, and this year the APEEE struggled to meet the demands of parents and students to honour the memory of a student who was lost in the terrible floods that swept across Belgium in summer of 2021. **Rosa's** loss rallied our community at the climate marches, where EEB1 participation was prominent and captured in the media, while the project to leave a memorial



on campus would not see the light during this school year. In other solidarity action, some members of our school community came out to march for the better treatment of locally hired European School teachers, who are very often important pillars of our community and responsible for roles and traditions that we value very highly. The annual Francis Pirotta art competition, remembering one of our small students, remains a meaningful tradition that the primary children look forward to each year.

At the end of the year a new tradition was (re-)launched, namely the production of a new generation of **EEB1 sweatshirts**, inclusive of both Uccle and Berkendael identities and available for students from Nursery to S7, as well as to teachers and parents and everyone. Our hoodie sale brought important innovations, being an online ordering system and, moreover, in close cooperation with the Student Committee's sale of their own line of fashionable sweatshirts aimed at teenagers. The sale raised money for a Ukraine charity and for projects to improve our school life, and more importantly, lets children and adults alike proudly wear a symbol of our school!



Parents greeting teachers on World Teachers' Day 2021



Poster of the Francis Pirotta Arts Prize 2022



Hoodies 2022



Legal Working Group

The Legal Working Group provides advice to the APEEE Board on legal issues arising in the context of the functioning of the school.¹ The working group does not take decisions, but reports to the APEEE Board for any decisions to be taken, and its role is per definition a reactive one. The Legal Working Group is currently coordinated by Tibor SCHARF.

The Legal Working Group works mainly by email exchange with occasional meetings. We communicate with relevant interlocutors such as school authorities on individual files under the auspices of the APEEE Board, periodically reporting to APEEE Board. The Legal Working Group is increasingly solicited on a wide range of issues, often at relatively short notice. In order to increase efficiency, clusters have been formed:

- Disciplinary issues
- Statutory issues (APEEE and APEEE Services and their relation with the school)
- General legal issues (into which such issues as Belgian law could fall)

The working group remains open to all those interested and committed to delivering work at the best of their ability and availability.

Activities 2021-2022

The Legal Working Group had an active year. Its main files were (some of which are ongoing for several years):

- Advice on APEEE's role and standing in the school community (attendance at meetings, functioning, governance)
- Update of APEEE Statutes, Rules of Procedure and working arrangements, including relations with the APEEE Services
- Participation in the EEBI Child Protection Policy Working Group
- Guidance on employment and other issues concerning AISBLs
- Consultation on the Draft Framework Convention for the APEEEs-Schools
- Advising on interpretation and compliance with school and system rules and on European Schools governance issues
- Response to issues arising out of the COVID situation
- Advice on issues with individual teachers and bullying issues
- Advice on exam issues
- Advice on the Future of the European Schools in Brussels

In addition, members of the Legal Working Group have been called upon to assist pupils (and their parents) who face the school's disciplinary board. This happened a few times during the year.

¹ Any advice provided by the Working Group or any of its members individually is not intended to replace legal advice or support sought from or provided by external sources such as independent external legal counsel or governmental bodies, and accordingly nor the Working Group nor any of its members can be held liable to (non) accuracy, delay or omission in the provision of any such advice or support. Any assistance provided to parents or pupils, for instance in the context of disciplinary matters, takes into account the interests of the School as a whole, including any other pupils involved, with the consequence that the role of the Working Group cannot always be assimilated to the one of a defense counsel – where advisable, the concerned parties will be invited to seek outside counsel at their own costs and under their responsibility.



Outlook 2022-2023

Looking ahead, no detailed work programme can be established with the exception of issues either already ongoing or foreseeable to date. Foreseeable topics include: continue work on APEEE Statutes, Rules of Procedure and working arrangements; EEBI Child Protection Policy development and implementation of related procedures (e.g., Internet safety, bullying, substance abuse); continue support of APEEE on GDPR, AISBL issues; advise APEEE on agreements and conventions, including Convention with the School; compliance with system rules and general European Schools governance issues.



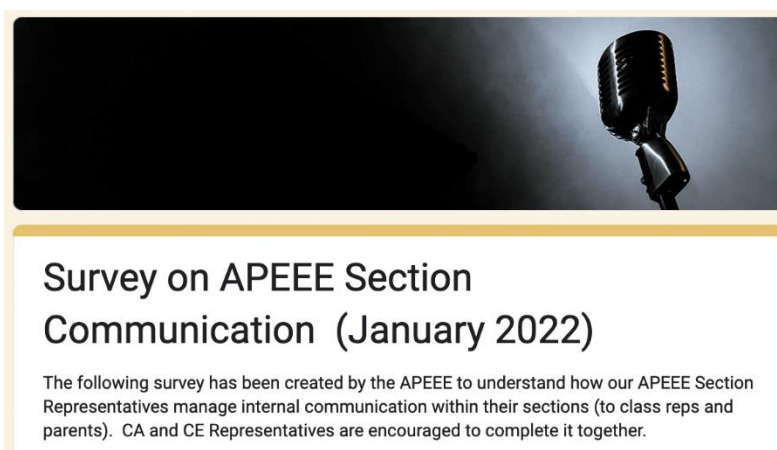
Communication Working Group

The Communication Group was launched at the beginning of 2020 and endeavours to put in place good channels of communication and to disseminate information to parents in formats that meet their needs and interests.

The group met twice this year (18 February, 3 March) in dedicated meetings on the NewsFlash and School Communication Policy and continued its efforts on several fronts under the supervision of the APEEE Secretariat's Head of Communications and Information, Guendalina COMINOTTI and APEEE's Secretary and Deputy-Secretary Kathryn MÁTHÉ and Jan TYMOWSKI.

Activities 2021-2022

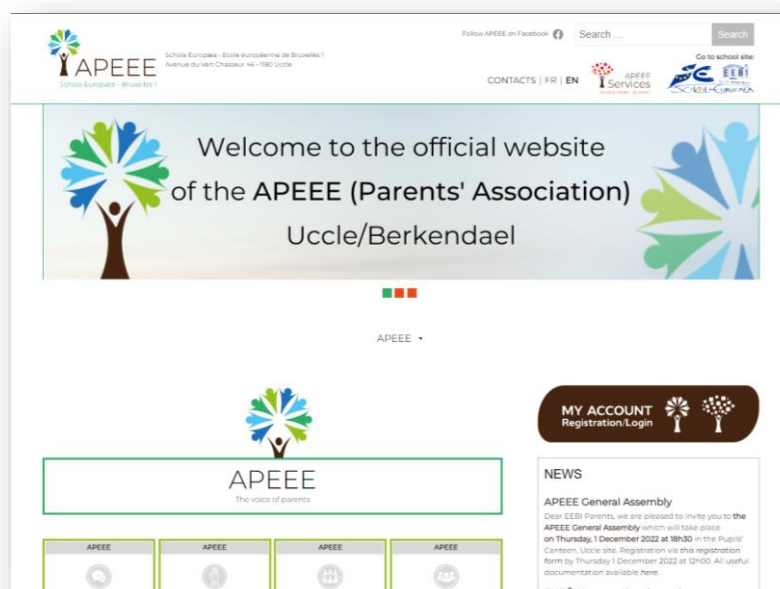
- **Internal Communication:** This year the APEEE Bureau undertook a survey of the APEEE CA (Board) and CE Representatives on both sites to understand more about their internal communication practices. The results were reported back to the Board on 17 March, and it was agreed that guidelines on good practice would be developed to be given to new section representatives in Autumn 2022. The final [Guidelines of Good Practice for Internal Communication](#) within Sections was approved by the Board in October 2022, circulated at the November section elections and published on the APEEE website.



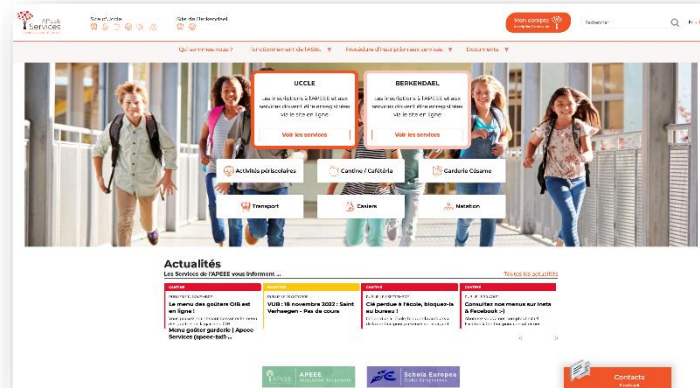
- **School Communication Policy Working Group:** This year our Communication Team linked up with the working group on the School Communication Policy, set up through the Secondary Education Council. APEEE delegates to the working group, Thomas SPOORMANS and Simon DERRY, liaised with our team and kept us apprised of the ongoing work. In early 2022 the working group established “Golden Rules” that would form the basis for the eventual policy. The APEEE agreed with most Rules proposed but believed that the different school players should be better clarified and that the principle to respond quickly to inquiries should apply to the school and not only to parents (in keeping with the system policy on [Quality Assurance and Development in the European Schools](#), Code of Good Administrative Behaviour, p. 16). The working group has also agreed to move forward on a suite of tools and procedures that could support communication. Among other things, the APEEE is keen to introduce a common school calendar, an updated school website content policy, clear policies on use of TEAMS/SMS, procedures for reporting teaching absences, school email templates, and updated form and scope of annual meetings between teachers/coordinators and parents.



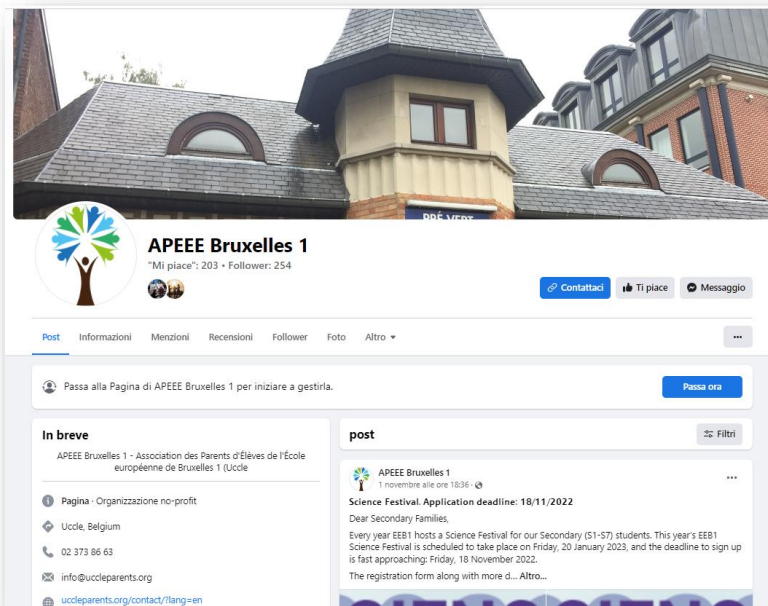
- **Communication to Membership and Parents:** After big changes to our website and visual identity in 2020-2021, this year we streamlined and stabilised our communication to parents. After over a decade of sharing our APEEE Website (www.uccleparents.org) with the APEEE Services, they decided to develop a separate website wholly dedicated to the provision of transport, canteen, after-school activities and lockers. The new site (www.apeee-bxl1-services.be/) was launched in September 2022. The APEEE website was adapted as a stand-alone site based on the previous design. The APEEE NewsFlash tradition continued this year, though due to staffing shortages we were only able to release a single issue in July 2022. The APEEE continues to seek motivated parents interested in writing short pieces or in working with our staff to edit our newsletter. Beyond this, we were able to use our complex mailing list to target regular announcements and information to our membership and parent representatives at all levels of the school. Our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/uccleparents/) continued to be regularly updated with events taking place in the school and community. It complements information sent through our mailing list and published on our web page.



Updated APEEE website



New APEEE Services website



The APEEE Facebook page

Outlook 2022-2023

As we have still not moved over to a new website platform, our priority for 2022-2023 is to further develop the website looking into a new platform. At the same time, we hope to strengthen our NewsFlash writer/editorial team; to build on our work on internal communications to facilitate transparency and consultation; and to work with school stakeholders to develop a School Communication Policy responding to current needs with available tools.

We will also continue to improve and refresh the APEEE information material and to work closely on outreach with Community Building, Well Being and the PedGroup through the support of events and production of topical materials and communications.



PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN 2021-2022



In Autumn 2018 the APEEE Board approved financial procedures for giving grants for school-related projects. This promotes school-level initiatives, fosters ties with the school community and also ensures transparent management of the APEEE budget. The APEEE tries to launch one or two calls for projects each year. These are based on a clearly articulated set of objectives defined for each call, such as:

- Promote solidarity projects, including those focusing on global inter-connectedness or inter-generational dimensions.
- Create safe and friendly indoor and outdoor spaces for all, including pupils with disabilities. Promote innovative outdoor activities and support student clubs, school teams and grassroots campaigns.
- Contribute to the EEBl school ethos and promote relations between sections; build bridges between the Uccle and Berkendael communities. Foster tolerance, diversity and inclusion; confront discrimination.
- Nurture art, music, culture and other forms of free expression in our school.
- Deliver sustainability and “green” or ecological initiatives; support environmental advocacy or environmental education.
- Support community physical and mental wellbeing, including healthy living, mindfulness and stress management; promote early intervention and peer support; explore issues of self-awareness, self-doubt and self-harm.

And more...

Projects are weighed based on the characteristics defined above as well as on the following general criteria:

- Quality of the design and implementation methodology (e.g., clear lines of responsibility, a priori agreement with the school when applicable, a clear implementation plan, clear reporting processes and timelines)
- Expected impact of the proposal, including a) total number of students or parents affected or potentially affected by the project, b) coverage of different sites, cycles/levels and sections, c) perceived seriousness of the issue, d) potential efficacy of the project.
- General financial viability of the project, including the contribution required from the APEEE and whether the remaining funding is assured.
- Any positive or negative experience from previous funding awards, including their methodology and their impact.

Projects are selected by the Board, generally based on a recommendation from an Award Panel, including APEEE working group coordinators, the APEE Financial Advisor, selected Board members, school management, a teacher, and a student. In general, the APEEE endeavours to



strike a balance between different objectives and strives for a good distribution of projects over different cycles, sections and sites, in a particular year and over time. The whole process is overseen by APEEE's Financial Advisor, Gundars OSTROVSKIS.

In the school year 2021-2022, there were two calls for projects:

- **Autumn Call 2021: 13 project proposals, 5 were selected. 4250 EUR allocated.**
- **Spring Call 2022: 28 project proposals, 5 were selected. 4474 EUR allocated.**

Examples of projects run in 2021-2022:

- **Citizens of the [Ocean] World / Citoyens du monde [et des océans] - 2021-2022 Edition**

The project, partially-funded by the APEEE, involved the whole Berkendael community, as well as other interested EEBl classes, in a wide-ranging programme on the oceans and eco-citizenship. A variety of initiatives took place with voluntary participation of different classes: clean-up and waste-water projects; class visits from activists and authors; various class-level poetry, music and art projects; and special exhibitions. This year's art competition was entitled: *Recycled Jellyfish Mobiles*. The project sensitized the students and the whole school community to eco-responsible gestures, while also energizing the meeting place most common to all: the library. The project and related initiatives are part of the *EU Blue Schools Network*.

The APEEE contributed 1000 euros towards this project.

- **Mémoire et oubli - La Shoah (S7L2-FR)**

This project supported the visit to our three S7L2-FR classes (with ~70 students) of Natasha GILER, the director of the documentary film *Ginette Kolinka, une mémoire française*. The film treats the escape of Ginette KOLINKA from Auschwitz, and in the process questions the connection between memory and forgetting through the lens of the Shoah. The programme relates to the theme of "Memory and Forgetting in History", a theme taken up in the FRL2 course in 2021-2022, and has particular links to the study of the work Dora BRUDER by Patrick MODIANO. The APEEE funded the travel from Paris to Brussels of the director as well as the film rights.

The APEEE contributed 500 euros towards this project.

- **Forest Area Berkendael: Sensory Walk and More**

This project aimed to renew the Zen Outdoor Space in the forest at the back of the Berkendael site through the involvement of a Nursery teacher, students and volunteer parents. The space was created years ago but had fallen into disrepair. The renovations included a new sensory path with wind chimes and reflective surfaces, a renovation of the wooden playhouse in the forest, a compost area and a wooded seating area. It is hoped that Berkendael Nursery children and pupils of all ages can use the space to practice meditation and mindfulness, have group discussions and KiVa lessons, take part in outdoor art and music activities, and generally relax and have fun while getting in touch with nature.

The APEEE contributed 1000 euros towards this project.

- **Francis Pirotta Creative Arts Prize - 2021-2022 Edition**

An annual art competition aimed at Primary and Nursery classes in Uccle to celebrate Francis Pirotta's short but creative life and ensure that his spirit and determination remain alive through the creativity of other children. The programme is based on voluntary participation of classes, and teachers and the art coordinator are heavily implicated in the process. A committee including the teachers, the family, the parents and the students decides on the



theme of the competition each year in Autumn and also serves as the judging panel in spring. Past themes include: "Other Places, Other Worlds"; "Flags for Nature"; and "Book Covers". The theme for 2021-2022 was "Sports and Movement". The prize was won in category Mat-P2 by MatIT and in category P3-P5 by P5ENb. The APEEE funds or co-funds the prize, a school trip or other gifts for the winning classes.

The APEEE contributed 600 euros towards this project.

- **Become a Cyber Hero: Promoting Safe Use of the Internet (P4 and P5 / Berkendael)**

A programme organised for P4 and P5 classes at Berkendael by expert group *Bibliothèque Sans Frontière* in close cooperation with teaching staff. The purpose was to make kids aware of the risks related to the Internet and to promote appropriate behaviour when online. Students covered five topics: Cyber futé / "smart" (how to share information safely on the Internet); Cyber vigilant / "alert" (how to develop critical thinking and fake news); Cyber secret / "secrecy" (how to choose and manage passwords); Cyber sympa / "nice" (awareness about cyber harassment); and Cyber courageux / "brave" (encouraging children to talk to adults about what worries them about on the Internet). The association also provided educational / pedagogical kits to each child and teacher and an online conference for parents. Following the successful initiative, the Uccle Primary also picked up this project.

The APEEE contributed 400 euros towards this project.

- **Supporting Children in their Learning Path: What Cognitive Science Tells You**

An online conference for parents and the school community at large, hosted by two experts in accompanying children with learning difficulties from the "Mathémô / Métamô" centers. The main aim was to discover how the young brain of our children develops over years, how it functions and the mental gestures associated with learning. Parents were shown very practical activities and learned how to implement these with their own children in their homework, during online teaching period or to generally support their education.

The APEEE contributed 400 euros towards this project.

- **"Reinforcement of Values" Series**

The APEEE supported a range of seminars and workshops given by the specialist foundation *Les Loulous Philosophes / Les Ados Philos*. This included two workshops on "Emotional Intelligence" for all Uccle P4 and P5 classes, covering Emotional Awareness (being able to identify your own emotions), Self-Management (managing emotions, for example manage stress), Empathy Development, and Motivation. A talk on "Covid and teenagers: fears, feelings, experiences, what did we learn from it, impact and effects...." was also given to all S7 classes in Autumn 2021.

The APEEE contributed 3000 euros towards these projects.

Due the delays from COVID, several project due in 2021-2022 were also prolonged or extended into 2022-2023.



Volunteer-run Services



EURÉKA



The EURÉKA team was back at the beginning of September 2021, although we continued with the restrictions due to COVID, especially during the winter months (access to parents at the school was limited, meetings were done with TEAMS, and at the beginning of December some classes too). Life at the school was almost normal.

In early September we did the 2020-2021 end of year count. The return to an (almost) normal school life had a significant impact on the numbers.

There were double the number of entries, an increase of 56% compared to the previous school year which was heavily impacted by COVID restrictions.

- We collected a total of 2856 items (including Fabiola's).
- The recovery rate was 53% in mid-June but after counting the entries from the end of June/beginning of July as well as those from Fabiola, it went down to 36%.

There was one very important fact: the School Report Day. It was without presence on the last day of school, which prevented parents from accessing EURÉKA. Although from the end of April parents could register to come.

With the help of the APEEE, in coordination with the school, a secure system was set up for parents to enter the school and, consequently, EURÉKA.

<https://www.eventbrite.be/e/eureka-registration-form-formulaire-dinscription-eureka-tickets-309741714807>

At the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, the amount of lost items was huge, during the last two weeks of September the numbers doubled the usual ones. The cooler weather in the morning and warmer weather at noon did not help. (The same situation happened this school year, the problem continues in October 2022 with a very mild fall).

- Week of 20-24 of Sept.21 - 129 items - week 1-7 of Oct.22 - 166 items
- Week of 9/27/01 of Oct. 21 - 148 items - week 7-14 of Oct. 22 - 122 items
- In October 21 the numbers dropped lower than normal: to 60 objects per week. We informed the school of the situation and the response was very positive.

In order to facilitate the recovery of lost objects, we have set up the "collection points" with new "EURÉKA" boxes, in coordination with the cleaning service. They are located under the courtyard of Plato and near the sports field, where students usually forget many objects.

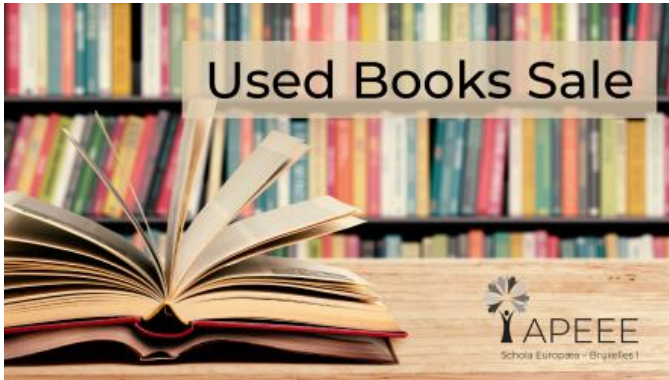
The boxes or coat racks at the collection points (canteen, cafeterias, study hall ...) are accessible all week long. It is important that students have access to them to examine them or to ask the person in charge to retrieve the lost and found.

This is just to facilitate the recovery of lost items during the week outside of EURÉKA hours.

At Fabiola - the Nursery and Primary classes P1-P2 have permanent collection points at both entrances, near the door. This makes it easier for the little ones, teachers and parents to collect their things without having to go to the EURÉKA premises.



USED BOOKS SALE



In June 2022, for the second time, sales of second-hand class books and reading books for Secondary students were carried out through an online interactive Google sheet list in the ES, IT, FR, and EN Sections. This innovation replaced the "live" book sales that these Sections have developed over many years.

Parents/Students interested in buying, directly contacted the seller, arranged payments and exchanged books bilaterally among themselves. For each Section, a

dedicated book sales e-mail was created to allow the team to field questions and administer the list. Thanks to the volunteer parents involved in the creation and development of the online books list! Whilst the company and camaraderie of the live book sales of the past were not possible this year, in the end, books changed hands, allowing parents to access hard-to-find volumes, save some money, and contribute to the circular economy.



The APEEE's Accounts



REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Report of the Treasurer on the financial statements for the year 2021/22 and the budget 2022/23
by Viktor HAUKE, APEEE Treasurer

Execution of the budget for the year 2021/22 (as of 31/08/2022)

Income for the 2021/22 year

Our association received 132 698 EUR in subscription fees and other revenues for the 2021/22 year. This is in line with the revenues of previous years.

Expenses for the 2021/22 year

Staff costs (salaries and charges) were 99 361 EUR. The staff costs were lower than expected, due to the absence of one staff member for most of the year.

Operational costs were 22 048 EUR, mostly due to a significant, unplanned increase in the fees paid to lawyers (13 177 EUR) preparing the new Statutes of the association. This will also impact next year's budget (see below).

Total costs (including amortisation and other financial charges) amount to 133 880 EUR.

As a result, the APEEE's accounts show a deficit of -1 182 EUR for 21/22 (vs. -23 428 EUR in 2020/21).

Projects

All the projects in 2021-2022 have been paid against the profits retained from the 'Fête de l'école' organised in 2018. All in all, 10 052 EUR has been disbursed on various projects in 2021-2022.

On 31 August 2022, the balance available from the fête was 2 760 EUR.

Balance sheet at 31 August 2022

The association had a total of 286 089 EUR available in the following accounts:

- ING bank account: 145 051 EUR
- ING savings account: 121 971 EUR
- Berkendael fête account: 18 728 EUR
- Cash: 338 EUR

The APEEE also held 5 840 EUR funds belonging to the Students' Committee.

Budget proposed for 2022/23

The proposed budget was built on the previous year's (21/22) taking into account the staff situation and the likely impact of inflation; ongoing work on statutes and the project to implement an online payment solution.

Income

Fees: the current budget is based on an estimated 2600 families paying the 50 EUR annual fee. This is projected to result in 130 000 EUR income.

Late payments could be as low as <1% due to the close follow-up by our secretariat and the APEEE



Services.

Our association is planning to organise a school fête in 2023, but still has not received the final approval from the school. Therefore, the expected income is not yet included in our budget.

Expenses

Staff costs: The APEEE secretariat staff was temporarily increased to three members in September 2022, as one temporary staff continued to reinforce the secretariat to help the return to work of the staff member returning from sick leave.

Therefore total annual staff cost is currently estimated to be at EUR 118 690, of which 83 500 are salaries and 35 000 are social security charges. These figures already include a mandatory salary increase based on current Belgian legislation.

Operating costs are going to increase in 22/23 and currently expected to reach EUR 28 670. This increase is partly due to inflation, which is reflected in the budget planned for Internet, phone charges etc.

Other increases are linked to projects:

- Lawyer's fees are expected to be around 6000 EUR on the basis of the estimate provided by E&Y. This includes ongoing work on the Statutes, translation and registration by the notary.
- Work continues on an online payment solution. This payment solution is intended to make it easier for APEEE members to transfer the annual fee, through a QR code or other payment options, including a credit card. The continuation of the project is estimated at 3000 EUR on top of ~1400 EUR normal expenses for IT.

In addition to the above, a further 1000 EUR is proposed to be set aside for catering for in-person Board meetings (4x) in order to encourage participation and 500 EUR for occasions such as the teacher's breakfast.

Projects

The proposed budget currently does not include any funds for a new project call, since the previous project calls almost exhausted the funds available.

As mentioned above, the APEEE is currently planning a fête, which would provide the funding for new project calls. In the meantime, the Board is considering the following sources to ensure funding for ongoing (already approved) projects:

- recognising 3858 EUR as revenue from the deposits given for calculators;
- using part of Berkendael fête account.

Solidarity Fund

The funds allocated in the 21/22 budget (EUR 1000) have not been used, therefore the 22/23 budget does not include any additional funds.

Amortisation

Amortisation, as a cost item in the budget, is projected at 9 350 EUR for immaterial and material APEEE assets. However, it is important to note that amortization does not result in actual cash flow (already was spent at the stage of acquiring the assets).

Operational results

The currently proposed budget is projected to result in a deficit of -30 211 EUR (or -20 863 EUR without amortisation). This deficit will be financed through the reserves of the Association.

The Board is currently not proposing an increase of the annual fee.



However, if the current trends in inflation continue, the General Assembly might be asked to authorise a 10% increase (from 50 to 55 EUR) for the 23/24 budget in order to ensure the sound financing of APEEE activities. The situation will be evaluated in spring 2023 and, if necessary, an extraordinary GA might be convened in order to vote for a raise of the fee.



	Budget 2021/2022	Actual 2021/2022	Budget 2022/2023
EXPENSES			
Project funding	7,852	0	0
Recurring actions	3,000	0	3,000
Maintenance of premises	500	0	500
IT expenses	1,400	2,254	4,400
Telephone/internet expenses	2,000	1,971	2,200
Office supplies/computer/printer/photocopy expenses	1,100	720	1,100
Interparents membership fees + expenses	1,500	840	1,700
Lawyer, accountant and other Fees	2,000	13,177	12,500
Social Secretariat Fees	1,400	1,204	1,550
Training, seminars	0	0	0
Legal Publications for Association	200	140	220
Travel expenses	300	0	0
Donations, gifts	800	942	500
Hosting of meetings	500	800	1,000
Temporary staff / Interim staff	0	0	0
Solidarity Fund	1,000	0	0
TOTAL OPERATIONAL COSTS	23,552	22,048	28,670
Salaries	79,000	76,532	83,438
Severance pay			
Travel			
Differences in vacation pay provision		-3,188	
Employer Charges	31,150	22,185	35,253
Other staff costs		210	
Insurance - workplace accident / Civil Responsibility		1,470	
Medical services		322	
Meal vouchers		1,795	
Employer-specific expenses		34	



TOTAL STAFF COSTS	110,150	99,361	118,691
Intangible assets	0	5,362	5,975
Fixed assets	6,500	3,267	3,373
TOTAL AMORTISATIONS	6,500	8,628	9,348
Non-deductible VAT on fees	600	2,767	2,625
Interest and late fees and fines	0	0	0
Bank charges	1,000	1,076	1,000
TOTAL FINANCIAL CHARGES	1,600	3,843	3,625
Taxes	0	0	0
TOTAL TAXES	0	0	0
TOTAL CHARGES	141,802	133,880	160,334
REVENUE			
Membership Fees	130,750	132,553	130,000
Other income	0	102	0
TOTAL SALES	130,750	132,654	130,000
Exemption from withholding (payroll) tax	0	44	0
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	0	44	
Interest received	100	0	100
TOTAL FINANCIAL REVENUE	100	0	100
TOTAL REVENUE	130,850	132,698	130,123
Result without amortisation	-4,452	7,447	-20,863
RESULT FOR THE YEAR	-10,952	-1,182	-30,211



www.uccleparents.org



[www.facebook.com/
uccleparents](https://www.facebook.com/uccleparents)