

Brussels, 13 February 2023

Minutes of APEEE Board Meeting 12 January 2023

Attendees: 34

Board members (voting)

Ioanna ANAGNOSTOPOULOU (Berkendael EL), Blanca BALLESTER MARTINEZ (ES Prim), Noemie BEIGBEDER (FR Sec), Talia BOATI (IT Prim), Mathilde DESFEUILLET (FR Prim), Marek DVORSKY (Berkendael SK), Claire GAUDIN (Member elected by GA; deputy CE FR Sec), Maria GERHARDT (DE Prim), Viktor HAUK (Treasurer; HU Sec), Andreas KEIDEL (Berkendael DE), Kathryn MÁTHÉ (Secretary; EN Sec), Pere MOLES PALLEJA (member elected by GA), Sandrine PIERLOZ (Member elected by GA; deputy CA FR Prim), Kenneth MYRUP (DK Sec), Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ (ES Sec), Casper Ristorp THOMSEN (DK Prim), Gundars OSTROVSKIS (VP Berkendael, LV), Valentina PAPA (President; EN Prim), Jan TYMOWSKI (Deputy Secretary; PL Prim), Julia TYMOWSKA (PL Sec), Monika VELIKONJA (VP Pedagogy & Uccle Secondary; SWALS), Alex WILSON (Member elected by GA; Deputy Berkendael EN)

Board Members Voting by Proxy: Sara MILANO (IT Sec) to Talia BOATI

Deputy Board Members (non-voting):

Marc GUITART (ES Sec), Agnes BOROS (HU Prim), Santiago CALVO RAMOS (ES Prim), Alba MARINO (Berkendael ES), Sara MARTELLI (Berkendael IT), Emese SAVOIA-KELETI (HU Sec), Thomas SPOORMANS (FR Sec)

Other Participants :

Carlos GONZÁLEZ-FINAT (deputy CE ES Prim), Magdalena KUPCZYK (CE PL), Ioana SANDU (CE FR Sec), Rachele TOSTI (deputy CE IT Prim)

APEEE Secretariat: Selena GRAY

1. Technical check

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted by consensus, with a change in order for Pt 8 and Pt 9, and Pt 12 (Discussion on Community Building and 'returning to campus') postponed to the next meeting. The Evaluation of Deputy Director and Assistant Deputy Director was added under AOB.

3. Approval of the minutes of 15 December 2022 and review of action points

Comments on content had just been received so more time was required before minutes could be approved. President Valentina PAPA informed members there was therefore time for any further comments to be received and indicated some changes for the drafting of the next Action Plan.

Action: Secretariat to circulate Minutes 15 Dec Board Meeting; deadline for comments 18 January.



POINTS FOR INFORMATION

4. INTERPARENTS: debrief from 6-8 December BoG; updates on 180 days, OSGES Pedagogical Reform WG, language issues, homework policy.

The debrief was included again to ensure it was well reported on, as Interparents delegates Kathryn MATHE and Pere MOLES PALLEJA were not present at last month's Board meeting. Kathryn MATHE reported, referring members to the documents uploaded on OneDrive. She explained how the process works with 2 cycles of meetings taking place each year (September-December / January-April) and in each cycle a School Admin Board, Joint Teaching Committee, Budgetary Committee then BOG (the culmination of these preparatory meetings and where the decisions are made). She took Board members through main approved measures on key topics APEEE were following through the autumn cycle, also clarifying some queries raised by Board members during her reporting:

- Approved Changes to General Rules related to Safety & Security (which parents did not approve and for discussion in Pt.10 of the agenda).
- Approved Task Force by parents on lessons cancelled during oral BAC period and 180 days (after working closely with, and with support from, the European Commission).
- Approval of Ukrainian students to stay in the system and additional financial support.
- Distance Learning Policy, initiated during COVID, effectively dismantled and replaced with a framework for DL in urgent situations. As the school is now required to put one in place, APEEE will raise this at the upcoming Admin Board on 25 January.
- Strong PISA scores (Spring testing S4 and S5) for European Schools relative to the OSGES average; especially impressed with students who took it in their L2 and SWALS; EEB1 strongest in Brussels, however not reflected in BAC scores so something to monitor, with attention to relative weakness in Math, Science and Languages compared to other schools of similar social economic background. In response to a query regarding next steps, she clarified that there is supposed to be an action plan in each school and would raise this at the upcoming admin board. As for our scores being weak, she reiterated that it is a matter of what you are looking at. If compared to OECDs we look strong; Central Office and most Directors were quite happy with results so it is seen overall as a success, but there are certainly areas to work on. PISA reports were uploaded to the shared OneDrive during the meeting. VP of Pedagogy, Monika VELIKONJA added that these are also of interest to those in lower years and not just about grades but also about teaching practices and issues relevant to Well Being.
- S5 students to receive a Junior Laureate Certificate after successfully passing the year.
- Pedagogical reform given go ahead: Bio2 to be phased out in favour of general science; Philo 2 and Ethics merged into Citizenship Course; Religion to become option 1 course or complementary Religious Studies course; introduction of a new specialisation in ICT; new complementary Sustainable Development course; Cross curricular project with independent research project similar to IB. ICT 4 would realistically take 2-4 years, as it entails making the curriculum, putting teachers in place and real practical changes.
- Approved changes to General Rules S4 B testing (down to 2), better defining of A marks.
- System Level Assessment WG now working on common template for Homework Policies after APEEE pushed for guidelines for all schools.
- Primary Writing Festival to continue and possibly expand to Secondary.
- Citizens Actions for all Programmes (CAAP). CAAP was proposed in September with a first meeting in November / December which had IP representatives, with an initial discussion on



how fundamentally difficult it might be to put in place with the different Member States, with a lot of questions as to what it would look like, whether requiring us to work closely with NGOs or quite open.

- Updated Language Policy with some modalities still under discussion including requirements concerning enrolment into different language sections. The System Level Language Policy consolidated a few documents with issues remaining related to L2 grouping, SWAL L1 and enrolment. There will be an IP meeting in a week with L2 language inspectors promising to work out practical options as part of an update to L2 syllabus. In response to as to whether Dutch could be L2 at Brussels ES, she clarified that some years ago a rule had been put in place that the host country language of ES could become L2 but requires approval at admin board level. The option to have Dutch L2 is therefore there but requires a formal decision and to see how it could work logistically, with its repercussions on history and geography.
- Future of Brussels Schools (for information in Pt. 4).

She added the costs of school trips as an additional issue. Following a tender, the entire system now uses the same travel agency and a huge rise in the cost of certain school trips (double) has been noted, with sometimes strange itineraries and long travel. Similar situation for accident insurance with the new provider seemingly requiring parents to pay upfront for any problems. This is a problem on an administrative level and IP will be looking into it.

When queried on how positions are built through a cycle, she explained that APEEE have representatives from the Board who attend and bring back issues as they come up in order to hear members' opinions and explore issues in their early phases. The representatives take things forward from the Board, stating as examples that Homework Policy, 180 days, L2 all came mostly out of APEEE EEB1, and that APEEE EEB1 has very involved IP representatives so a lot of their issues make it to the table. It is hard to make a formal process because in general members of the Board do not want to follow IP that closely. Steering groups have been attempted in the past, but members do not want to read all the documents. It takes the IP representatives a lot of time and energy to follow up every detail, so members have to trust to some extent that the representatives coming out of the Boards of 13 school know the real concerns of their parents and come together to share positions as meetings come up, with long interventions.

President Valentina PAPA thanked Kathryn MATHE for her very structured presentation and that some issues could be discussed in more detail in relevant agenda points.

5. Future of Brussels Schools: 20 December Letter from Commission and SecGen; update on launch of enrolment 2023-2024

President Valentina PAPA gave a brief update, referring to the letter issued by the OSGES and the Commission, that was circulated by APEEE to all parents, which clarified the chosen enrolment model (basically A3 revisited, with an ENG section also in the fifth school). She did not go into detail as this had already been reported on during the last meeting and Bartosz HACKBART (Berkendael FR) had prepared a report on the meeting on enrolment, uploaded on OneDrive. The Enrolment Policy is already published on the OSGES website. She reported on her exchange with Director TRAN, encouraging the school to make communication on the enrolment policy more accessible on the school website. It was noted that there was much more effort made on presentations and in communication in general by other Brussels school and that APEEE, via its communication WG, will continue to work with the school to improve communication via its website and in general, although this is already on the new Director's radar.



6. Secretariat Update: update on staff, calendar of APEEE Board meetings and APEEE membership payments

President Valentina PAPA informed members that the APEEE Secretariat is now functioning with 2 staff only, Samia MABROUK's temporary contract having concluded in December 2022. Work with Services on membership will go on. She referred also to the Calendar of APEEE Board meetings 2023 with a change of date to 16 February. The French section and Berkendael representatives were keen to host at Berkendael site and it was agreed for Berkendael to look into this possibility and to support the APEEE Secretariat if school management at Berkendael agreed to go ahead.

POINTS FOR DECISION

7. Presentation and approval of annual mandates for APEEE Working Groups: Pedagogical (PedGroup), Well-Being, Community Building, and Legal Working Groups; solicitation of new members.

- **Pedagogical Working Group (PedGroup)**

VP of Pedagogy Monika VELIKONJA took the Board through the PedGroup mandate, covering its issue-driven subgroups and dossiers, and its task forces. The mandate outlines its working method, list of coordinators, members for each subgroup, its involvement in the CE meetings with school management and gives concrete details for each subgroup in its activity report 2022 and outlook 2023. A list of files designated as Low Activity Dossiers are where there are not enough members to create a group. She concluded with a call for active members, clarifying that although in general the coordinator of a group should ideally be an active member of the Board, these groups really just need proactive parents willing to push issues forward. Names should be sent to Monika VELIKONJA, Talia BOATI or Alex WILSON. Kathryn MATHE underlined the need to find more members for the STEM group as she would be leaving soon, otherwise the momentum could be lost on some interesting projects. Names can be sent to her and to Noemie BEIGBEDER for Digital Learning. In response to queries from Board members, it was clarified that after the mandate is adopted, there is still room to discuss adding topics that parents may be keen to push on without having to adopt a new one. Also, where once a year an inventory of members is taken, members can change throughout the year but a change in Coordinator or delegates to the formal meetings should be taken to the Board. The mandate was adopted by consensus.

- **Legal Working Group**

Jan TYMOWSKI took Board members through the Legal Working Group mandate. The WG is predominately reactive, members are mainly the same as last year with names reshuffled slightly, and includes 3 sub-groups: Disciplinary, Statutory and General. The mandate was adopted by consensus.

- **Well Being Working Group**

Coordinator Sara DAGOSTINI took Board members through the scope, mission, group initiatives (EVRAS, substance abuse and prevention, digital risks, value, parents conferences, bullying/cyberbullying, mental health, mediation, and mindfulness) and group composition, outlook 2022-2023 and actions carried out in 2021-2022. Meetings are held twice a year with school who have now implemented a Well Being Framework in Secondary, Primary now under discussion.

A discussion ensued on EVRAS as questions are raised to section representatives. EVRAS is mandatory in Belgian schools and is now fully under the responsibility of, and funded by, the school. They have managed to define the framework and implement the activity, school contacts are Deputy Director Secondary Susanne KUNSTER and Assistant Deputy Director Olivier HAZAN.



Members asserted that it is important to clarify to parents that EVRAS is not only sexual but a complete set of topics (emotions) involved in daily relations with people, this can be supported by promoting the EVRAS website (only in FR) on APEEE website: www.evras.be. Further questions can be forwarded to Sara DAGOSTINI until a new EVRAS coordinator is designated, as Veronika ORTIZ has now stepped down. The Mandate was adopted by consensus.

Action: Sara DAGOSTINI to follow up on the discussion around EVRAS, send further information including EVRAS website and what association is being used at our school.

- **Community Building Working Group**

This could not be voted as no mandate had been sent. Postponed for next meeting.

Action: APEEE Secretariat to update the 3 adopted Mandates on APEEE website.

8. Review, replacement and approval of APEEE delegates to official bodies and school Working Groups, solicitation of new delegates.

The list of APEEE delegates to official bodies and school Working Groups since November Board meeting had been updated and uploaded onto One Drive, with proposals for changes and additions indicated in red. Noémie BEIGBEDER volunteered for the role of Deputy, Safety & Hygiene Committee. Secretary Kathryn MATHE explained that Marc GUITART, although no longer a Board member, is still an official delegate for the Primary CE (supporting Talia BOATI through longevity, as previous VP Pedagogy), therefore this status would also be renewed through adoption of this mandate. Green Group was moved from Community Building to Interparents, with work on sustainable education being done at IP level, allowing a better link to the higher level. With regards to APEEE internal roles, Gundars OSTROVSKIS would need a replacement if /when Project Calls start up again. In response to queries by the Board, she clarified that Working Groups are internal APEEE groups which come with APEEE positions and report back to the Board, specialising in topics and working mainly with parents; CE Working Groups are groups where parents are represented in stakeholder groups. The list was adopted by consensus.

9. Appointment of Fête coordinators and establishment of the Fête Committee

President Valentina PAPA reported on work done with the Community Building Working Group on a memo uploaded on OneDrive to present the Fete to the School Director and asked Board members to give a mandate in order to continue negotiations with school along these lines. The mandate was adopted by consensus. She reminded the Board that raising of the APEEE membership fee had been discussed and it had been agreed to postpone further project funding for the moment and commit to a organizing a fete, therefore it was now important for Board members to find coordinators to create a strong committee, with each section being well represented. Both the memo and the establishment of the Fete Committee with its 3 Coordinators were adopted by consensus, with one small modification (Samantha CHAITKIN as Deputy Coordinator).

Action: The President to meet with Director TRAN the following week for clarification on several issues raised and noted and inform the Board in writing; An introductory letter to be drafted by Claire GAUDIN for circulation to Board members for recruitment, with deadline a week later; Names to be sent directly to the 3 Coordinators of the Fete Committee: Claire GAUDIN, Brigitte LUDIN and Samantha CHAITKIN.



POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

10. Update on the amendments of the General Rules in respect to the responsibilities of School Directors and Parent Associations on security and safety, possibly in the presence of APEEE Services President Rafael PAPI BORDERIA

President Valentina PAPA explained that APEEE and APEEE Services were working together on this issue but as the impact is especially serious on the side of APEEE Services, she had invited APEEE Services President Rafael PAPI BORDERIA to present with an update and next steps. In December APEEE received a mandate from their board to explore together with Interparents and APEEE Services the possibility of making a complaint due to this amendment. APEEE Services Rafael PAPI BORDERIA reported that at the APEEE Services Board meeting end December he received a mandate to join a common appeal managed by Interparents (which may be considered as not directly affected by amendment of rules, but rather directly the parent association in each case, which would mean that legally, in order to file a complaint, each APEEE would have to file a separate claim as the affected party). In order for Interparents to launch an appeal in the name of all APEEE, APEEE Services are subscribing to a common complaint. They had expected General Rules to be published on 27 December, then learnt they are not going to be published, now they have to go for Written Procedure before they are published. So it is now not known if/when they will be published or when they will enter into force. The text mentions they will enter into force 1 January 2023 which would mean retroactively. General Rules state that activities organized by external organizations, such as Parents Associations in the school, and such as canteen, transport and périscolaire activities, remain the sole and entire responsibility of the organizing body. He presented the state of play and issues that needed to be understood:

- the context of this responsibility: there is the possible overlap of insurances. There is a need to clarify the different coverages of respective insurances. In the current situation the school insurance covers students on site and whoever organises activities students are involved in.
- the definition of sole responsibility. Do they mean they would no longer provide any kind of support: what about staff assisting transport in the morning; organization of the canteen; accompanying students to buses in the afternoons? There is no practical application or consequences in these general rules.
- If activities can only take place after explicit authorization by School Director, then the school must necessarily formally design the procedure (in the form of a disclaimer?). What does this mean and how is it put in place? Waiting legal advice. Being discussed amongst all APEEE Presidents across Europe thanks to coordination of Interparents. In several Member States these General rules would even contradict national law because there is no way to get such responsibility away from a School Director. Insurance companies have even informed them it is not even possible to insure activities as there is already insurance in place (school already covering risks on site) and coordinators of activities could not have double insurance

So the real concern is that this is going to be put in place and no one will know how to apply it. There is a need to explore the practical application and consequences. The context of these general rules comes from the non-existence of an agreement between the Parents Associations and the European Schools that follow the recommendation of an internal audit of the European Commission for a clear framework of responsibilities for activities organized on the premises. The main point that blocks this agreement is that we are committing to use the infrastructure but we want school to keep and maintain the infrastructure as fit for purpose. We cannot replace the responsibility that schools have for their own premises. In particular in Belgium where it is complicated as there is an agreement between the European Schools and the Régie de Batiments, as the European School sites belong



to the Belgium government. It was agreed that APEEE Services, as the independent sister Association directly impacted by the amendment, did not legally need APEEE in order to go ahead to join the collective action. It was noted that the deadline of approval by the BoG had expired 2 days ago, but no confirmation had been received as to whether it was approved or not, nor uploaded on the website. Until published they cannot be applied or appealed. There would be more information available following an Interparents meeting scheduled the next day with the lawyers. With regards the organization of a Fete, the APEEE Services President confirmed that APEEE Services already pay for emergency services, that this responsibility is already covered. APEEE President Valentina PAPA thanked APEEE Services President, concluding that the 2 association would continue working together with their Boards behind them and continue to keep their respective Boards informed on progress.

11. Discussion on the possibility by the APEEE Services to organise stages at the end of June in the context of the 180 days.

President Valentina PAPA reported on the email sent by CESAME and uploaded on OneDrive. It is positive that APEEE Services President wanted to consult together in an effort not to jeopardise efforts on 180 days. The APEEE have until 22 January to reply in the case where they oppose the proposal for CESAME to organise stages at the end of June. This kind of service is very valuable for parents if the school does not provide any activities during this period. APEEE should not prevent them from organising the stages, as per the last experience these were requested by parents and organised last minute which created a huge burden on Cesame. In parallel, however, there is a need to continue the battle on the 180 days. She gave the floor to Board members to hear opinions and to confirm the APEEE position. The background on the 180 days was discussed, activities should be provided (BoG 2010) when schools suspend classes, not activities paid by parents. If these are not being provided it is not for APEEE to stop Services providing solutions. At the same time APEEE should not risk undermining the position by already providing paid activities as a solution. It was agreed to send a letter to thank them for good cooperation and consultation APEEE. It was agreed that these interventions should come up more often. APEEE will continue to bring up the issue of the 180 days in the Admin Board and in cooperation with IP at system level.

Action: VP to reply to APEEE SERVICES-CESAME according to Board discussion

12. Discussion on Community Building and 'returning to campus'.

Postponed to next meeting as CBWG Coordinator could not be present.

13. Discussion on ways to facilitate the establishment of class lists for Class Representatives in line with GDPR requirements.

French section representative Noémie BEIGBEDER was given the floor to explain this request to facilitate this circulation of class lists for Class Representatives. Class groups in the French section change nearly every 2 years making it difficult for class reps to reconstitute contact lists for each class. It would gain a lot of time if class reps could communicate to their parents. Her suggestion was for APEEE to inform parents during reconduction in June, when requesting payment of membership fees, that their email would be given to class reps as of September. If they opposed, they should write to the Secretariat. A discussion on the GDPR modalities and procedures ensued, as this concerns the database shared by APEEE and APEEE Services, fundamentally 2 separate organisations. Emese SAVOIA-KELETI was consulted and underlined that GDPR does require explicit consent. APEEE should therefore have to ask consent. The other option of legitimate interest might not be valid as APEEE is not a company. APEEE would need to see what is feasible with the



GDPR lawyers and if a short electronic consent could be linked to payment asking them to accept certain terms. The best solution is to ask class representatives to be more proactive as APEEE already faces strange data sharing problems at school where the school gives data to APEEE Services and they share with APEEE. The problems of the database are at the source in its creation. The APEEE Secretariat has access to this data but cannot share it unless parents give explicit consent. Until a solution is found we just have to continue to find ways around the problems.

ACTION POINT: President to contact services to clarify GDPR clause.

14. Review and solicitation of parent agenda points for 25 January EEBI Administrative Board and preparatory 20 January SAC meeting

President Valentina PAPA noted that in the agenda of the meeting there would be a discussion and approval of the annual Pedagogical Plan and as this had not yet been received it will be a rush to work on. She reviewed the parent agenda points gathered so far: Distance Learning Policy; 180 days; PISA results and to make sure school management puts action plan in place; communication policy; Cost of school trips and tender procedures, linked to the use of system level travel agency; Wellbeing framework; Reflection on future of Brussels schools in line with communication and presentation of our school.

Action Plan – President to circulate draft annual plan once received, to gather comments.

15. Update and discussion in preparation for 6 and 7 February INTERPARENTS meeting and for 9 and 10 February Joint Teaching Committee

Secretary and Interparents delegate Kathryn MATHE reported that the APEEE EEB1, will be hosting the next Interparents meeting in Uccle together with Interparents delegates Monika VELIKONJA, Pere MOLES PALLEJA. The meeting would take place over 2 days, 6 and 7 February with around 10-20 representatives from the 13 European schools. Together with the APEEE Secretariat, they will be organising food and support for the meeting, as well as a dinner out the first evening. The Interparents meeting will be hybrid and is quite open for members of the Board if they wish to join. She recommended it as a good opportunity to meet representatives from other schools and see how Interparents works, where issues are discussed at a higher level.

16. Discussion on the future of the Communications Working Group

President Valentina PAPA reported that as Kathryn MATHE who has been the coordinator of the Communication Working Group is now leaving at the end of the academic year, it was important to have a discussion on what to do with the WG. The mandate from last year was uploaded onto the OneDrive for information. The Board discussed options and delegates and whether to close this group off as it will no longer have a dedicated Coordinator, instead fragmenting topics into different groups. APEEE could continue with newsletters but need contributors, staff member Guendalina COMINOTTI could continue with website as best she can with members of the bureau. For the communication policy, interested people can be added and meet in advance of school meetings to prepare the APEEE position together with Talia BOATI. It was concluded to not yet close off the WG as it could be something to revive amongst the newly elected Board and for the moment to keep active on the newsletter (2 a year if possible) and the Communication Policy (in line with point to raise in admin Board).



POINT FOR WRITTEN INFORMATION

17. Secretariat Update

The monthly report on the work of the Secretariat memo had been uploaded to One Drive.

AOB – Evaluation of Deputy Director and Assistant Deputy Director.

VP of Secondary informed the Board were informed that there would be an evaluation of deputy director of Secondary Susanne KUNSTER and Assistant Deputy Director Olivier HAZAN. APEEE are invited to meet with the inspector and with the Director, so it is important to provide feedback and to be aware what criteria people are evaluated around. She shared the following links for information, encouraging members to read and make parents aware.

- Implementing Regulations for the Appointment and Evaluation of Directors and Deputy Directors of the European Schools : <https://www.eursec.eu/BasicTexts/2009-D-422-en-5.pdf>
- Implementing Regulations for the Appointment of Assistant Deputy Directors of the European Schools : <https://www.eursec.eu/BasicTexts/2019-12-D-31-en-1.pdf>

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Supporting reports and documents for this meeting are accessible to Board members in the OneDrive Board meeting folder.

The next meeting is scheduled for the 16 February 2023 (in situ).