

Brussels, 2 October 2023

## Minutes Board Meeting 7 September 2023

### ATTENDEES:

**Board Members (voting):** Blanca BALLESTER MARTINEZ (ES Prim), Noémie BEIGBEDER (FR Sec), Talia BOATI (IT Prim) Maria GERHARDT (CA DE Prim), Andreas KEIDEL (Berkendael DE), Brigitte LUGGIN (DE Sec), Sara MILANO (IT Sec), Sandrine PIERLOZ (Member elected by GA; deputy CA FR Prim), Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ (ES Sec), 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:** Claire GAUDIN (Member elected by GA; deputy CE FR Sec), to Sandrine PIERLOZ. Mathilde DESFEUILLET (FR Prim) has resigned, with permanent proxy to Sandrine PIERLOZ (until next elections).

**Deputy Board Members (non-voting):** Santiago CALVO RAMOS (ES Prim), Marc GUITART (ES Sec), Bartosz HACKBART (Berkendael FR), Alba MARINO (Berkendael ES), Sara MARTELLI (Berkendael IT), Stefan PAGEL (Berkendael FR), Emese SAVOIA-KELETI (HU Sec)

**Other participants :** Aleyda HERNANDEZ LAVIADES (Dep CE ES Mat), Fiona KERNAN, (CE EN Prim), Magdalena KUPCZYK (CE PL), Rachele TOSTI (Dep CE IT Prim)

**APEEE Secretariat:** Selena GRAY

#### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted by consensus.

#### 2. Approval of Board minutes 8 May 2023 and 29 June 2023

Still to be uploaded once ready, approval postponed until the next meeting.

### POINTS FOR INFORMATION

#### 3. Administrative Meetings and Reports:

- [APEEE Meeting 4 July with EEB1 Director Tran regarding annual school Pedagogical Plan and Risk Register.](#)

VP of Pedagogy Monika Velikonja reported on the meeting with EEB1 Director David TRAN on the preparation of the next Annual Pedagogical Plan 2023-2024, emphasising its strong link with the Risk Register. Comments and suggestions from APEEE, most of which were discussed during the meeting, were sent in writing to the Director afterwards, together with a document comprising of comments directly on the current APSP 2022-2023. The email was also forwarded to Board members for information. She took Board members through these uploaded documents, underlining



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the many potential challenges and outlining the key issues, in particular in relation to harmonisation, pedagogical continuity and cancelled classes, with the need to push these issues during the next School Admin Board and for system level to take these obligations seriously. School management are now supposed to prepare a new draft. With the SAC scheduled for 18 September and the Admin Board 28 September, it is a concern that as of today no draft has been received. President Valentina Papa confirmed that the annual plan is in the draft agenda of the SAC and will be circulated to the Board as soon as received. In the meantime, Board members were asked to read through the reports and to let APEEE know of any additional issues to be highlighted.

- School Meetings: meeting of the Respect et Propreté WG

No delegates of the WG were present to report, a report will be uploaded before the next meeting.

#### **4. Berkendael letter to OSGES on swimming lessons**

Members were referred to the uploaded letter sent directly to the Secretary General Mr BECKMANN by VP for Berkendael Gundars OSTRAVSKIS. The letter addressed the situation at EEB1 concerning swimming lessons and lack thereof for P4 and P5 Berkendael. No feedback on the letter had yet been received, despite the situation going on for 2 years and which it seems school management are unable to solve. School management and the President of APEEE were copied in, however President Valentina PAPA reiterated that it is vital in the future to discuss and agree on such action beforehand together with the Board. The letter had been signed only on behalf of Berkendael, whereas working together makes the APEEE stronger. She underlined that in the future it is very important to do such action in cooperation.

#### **5. INTERPARENTS – update on latest developments**

Board members were reminded that their 2 main IP representatives, Pere MOLES PALLEJA and Kathryn MATHE, have left now that their children have graduated. A new representative has stepped forward to fill one of the roles, to be appointed in Point.10 of the agenda. VP of Pedagogy Monika Velikonja gave a brief update on the negative experiences with the contracted service provider for school trips and the push by IP to resolve this. It has finally been decided not to renew the contract with this company and the whole framework is now being questioned. But it is unclear what this means for EEB1 and how to now account for this extra cost. She also reminded of the plenary session in Strasbourg next week where there will be the vote on the Resolution on the European School system. IP has worked hard on many issues, including governance and accountability, and have been waiting years for action. There will also be a discussion on the vision of the European Schools and what the follow up will be in the October Extraordinary Board of Governors in Luxembourg. Reflections are welcome and should be sent to the APEEE IP representatives. She reminded members how the system level bodies work, with the new cycle beginning in September. Working Groups and Task Forces work hard in the run up to the October Joint Teaching Committee, where inspectors from all member states, representatives and stakeholders come together. The JTC agenda is being prepared and will be shared at the next APEEE Board meeting on 5 October. Then the November Budgetary Committee and December Board of Governors, with representatives of all Member States voting on decisions that are then implemented in schools. She confirmed that for the October JTC, the 2 current IP representatives will attend one day each to represent the parents.

President Valentina PAPA encouraged members to consult the uploaded document (not for circulation) on the Hearing of General Rules, in relation to the IP appeal. She is following this together with the President of APEEE Services and as soon as there is a decision the Board will be informed.



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## 6. Baccalaureate Update: Exam results and EEB1 Performance

VP Monika Velikonja explained that the report with the identified areas for improvement would only be available in October and more would be known during the next JTC. For the moment it seems only 1 student failed, and challenges identified by the BAC system support group were uploaded in June. Main issues were with Math, due to a technical issue with the printer (which transformed some characters); marks were thereafter moderated to reflect this error. Another issue was of proofreading and quality check of translations (machine translations not cross checked by language or subject experts). Following an IP meeting with the Irish Presidency of BoG, one potentially promising way forward may well be quality control.

VP Monika Velikonja added that the main message coming out is that with the system growing, with more accredited European Schools, 2800 BAC results are expected in 2024, following 2600 in 2023 and therefore quality check needs to be systemic. We get many new syllabuses, and a lack of practice. A competence-based approach is required with a need to better prepare both teachers and students. A key concern is lack of common reference materials, the use of different textbooks and different ways to prepare; there is a need to ensure fairness and equity. The inspectors in the system are not necessarily the best equipped in that area. It is up to the BoG to find a way for this to be organized better to ensure inspectors have the relevant expertise. European Schools also need to be more inclusive and ensure special BAC arrangements for students with specific needs.

She referred members to the OSGES webpage which includes studies, reports, and interactive charts. These are informative and give a good insight into subjects. Webpage of the OSGES with different reports and statistics: <https://www.eurasc.eu/en/Office/reports-statistics>; For the BAC - online version: <http://schola-europaea.eu/bacc/report/2022/mobile/index.html>

## 7. CEA Meeting 30 August

President Valentina PAPA reported that the meeting in July had been attended by Berkendael APEEE Representative Laura SERRAO. Representatives were not available to attend the meeting of 30 August and are therefore waiting for minutes from other parents' associations. She confirmed that she will serve in interim until a replacement is found following the departure of Kathryn MATHE.

## 8. Secretariat update – update on online payments; soliciting volunteers for September Welcome Events and EUREKA

President Valentina PAPA reported on the online payment system developed over the summer break (currently being tested by the Secretariat), for the payment of the annual APEEE membership fee. Despite some resistance in implementing this into a database shared with APEEE Services, this is a positive development as too much of the APEEE secretariat time is spent tracing and assisting in fee payments. Hopefully this will reduce secretariat hours spent on the database. The main issue is that being a paid APEEE member is a pre-requisite to using Services, however the database is set up in such a way that families can still use services despite not paying, resulting in some 300 families to chase up. Board members are asked to reinforce the message amongst sections.

It was suggested to add a FAQ, with an explanation for the need to pay the Membership fee. This could then be used to circulate in sections and remind class representatives and parents.

There was a discussion on the soliciting of volunteers and the visit of APEEE representatives to class meetings at the rentrée. The first of these meetings (MAT/P1) were held on 5th September.



Volunteers were solicited and signed up but not all turned up which meant the President and a member of APEEE staff had to manage the majority of the 18 classes. The President and Vice President Monika Velikonja reiterated the importance of following through once volunteers commit, or at least notifying of changes. The idea is to introduce APEEE and explain the importance of electing class representatives, during each class meeting. The secretariat provides the material and bullet points on the essential to say. Not all Board members agreed on a necessity of this as they felt that class teachers generally introduce it well, but it was also agreed that it is useful to put a face to APEEE and reconquer a personal approach. APEEE were not given an opportunity to present in front of general school meetings for new parents at the rentrée due to time constraints. It was agreed to postpone this as a point for discussion at the next Board meeting.

Section representatives were also informed that the main volunteer in charge of Eureka, Mariona Sero, had left in June, replaced by Imola NEMES and additional support is solicited. Section representatives are requested to solicit amongst the parents and the President will remind of this request in her welcome letter for the new school year.

**Action point:** to add soliciting volunteers for the class meetings in September/October as a point of discussion in the agenda of next Board meeting.

#### **9. Legal WG: update on General Assembly on the Statutes**

President Valentina PAPA updated the board on the upcoming extraordinary General Assemblies for voting the new statutes. The date of the 21 September could not be avoided despite the clash with the class meetings as the timing is part of a complicated legal process, and the General Assemblies must also be organized one month apart. She brought attention to the fact that the official vote will take place at the GA of the 26 October (by then the APEEE will have the full lists of class representatives), as in reality they will not have the quorum during the first GA on 21 September. The APEEE has been advised by a lawyer on how to do the procedure legally and to reassure everyone, she had again consulted with the lawyers for further clarification, who confirmed that this was common procedure. As the vote will require a notary and subsequent costs, this expert has only been invited to attend the GA of 26 October, where the official vote is expected to take place.

President Valentina PAPA also took this opportunity to inform of the recent resignation of both Danish section board members. Kenneth MYRUP (Sec), who has sent a permanent proxy to deputy Lene BAGER to replace him until the next elections; and Casper RISTORP THOMSEN (Prim), who has still to send the requested proxy. Resigning member Mathilde DESFEUILLET (CA FR Prim) will also be replaced by Sandrine PIERLOZ in interim.

### **POINTS FOR DECISION**

#### **10. New delegates for internal APEEE roles**

Board members were reminded that its 2 INTERPARENTS representatives, Pere MOLES PALLEJA and Kathryn MATHE, have left the school and a new representative has stepped forward to fill one of the positions: Aleyda HERNANDEZ LAVIADES (Dep CE ES Mat and class representative P1 ESP) introduced herself to the Board and was voted in by consensus. VP of Pedagogy Monika Velikonja welcomed her to the team and informed her there was an IP meeting she could join on Saturday, 9 September as well as another preparatory meeting beginning of October before the JTC. Her support will be important in helping to prepare interventions as there are a lot of documents to read through in a short time. But she was also assured it was a rewarding role as it involves being in contact with other schools and a lot is learnt through many exchanges.



Another position which is urgent to fill with the departure of Kathryn MATHE is the CEA representative. In the absence of the other members this will be discussed in a future board when a member expresses interest in becoming a representative.

Gundars OSTROVSKIS agreed to stay on as Financial Adviser for Project Calls, as his term as VP for Berkendael will soon be coming to an end so he should have the time. Brigitte LUGGIN expressed her interest in being involved in the projects with the idea to create a 3- or 4-person team. Interested volunteers for the project committee are encouraged to reach out before the next Board meeting. This would involve meeting and deciding funding, as well as approving project calls.

## POINTS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

### 11. EEB1 Fete 2023

- update on Fête accounts and lessons learnt by Fête coordinators.
- proposal that APEEE covers total of rental cost for chairs and tables.

President Valentina PAPA confirmed the successful profit made from the Fete and proposed to cover the total of the rental costs for chairs and tables. She reminded that prior to the Fete a compromise had been reached to go through with the Fete, with the Board agreeing via Written Procedure to subsidise the cost with 500 EUR. The proposal was not well received, many members argued that this had not been requested but aside from that the Fete had nearly been blocked due to the situation and discussion surrounding it. The consensus was to stick to what was agreed and instead focus as foreseen on giving money to the school via projects. It was agreed to proactively ask Director David TRAN about the project(s) he would like financing and a preference to use the profits to finance something positive for the school rather than using the money for chairs and tables.

**Action point:** President to write to Director Tran to proceed to the payment of 500 euros for the APEEE agreed contribution to the rental of tables and chairs for the school fete and to ask him about possible projects for the school.

### 12. World Teacher Day 5 October: decision on activities to organise, soliciting volunteers.

President Valentina PAPA explained to the Board that APEEE usually organises, via the Community Building Working Group, a gift or surprise for the teachers on this day. Berkendael representatives specifically asked if the same could be organised on both sites this time. The President mentioned that last year the celebration was organised also in Berkendael. Board members were reminded that during a last presentation by the Community Building WG, the representatives strongly underlined they were missing volunteers and appealed for support, but since then the situation has not improved. Kathryn MATHE, one of the main volunteers driving this Working Group, has left.

The President concluded that she would be in touch with the main representative of the CBWG, Samantha CHAITKN, and instigate a communication to circulate to the Board, explaining the roles of representatives and volunteers. A team of volunteers, from both Uccle and Berkendael, is needed to drive and support ideas as well as be in situ to assist on the day, it is not possible for the Secretariat to cover both sites on their own.

**Action point:** The President to reach out to Community Building Coordinator to start organisation of the World Teacher appreciation Day celebration. The secretariat to send a call for volunteers to participate to the Community Building WG and for the organisation of the World Teachers Appreciation Day.



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## POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

### **13. Autumn Call for Project Funding: discussion to seek guidance from the Board to define Autumn Project Call, to be adopted at October Board**

President Valentina PAPA referred members to the document *APEEE Call For Project Proposals, SPRING 2022* which outlines the funding background, objectives, eligibility and selection criteria, also published on the APEEE website: <http://www.uccleparents.org/apee/subvention-de-projets/appel-a-propositions-de-projets/?lang=en>

The timeline and budget of an Autumn Call should be adopted during the next Board meeting so that people can apply if the projects are to be implemented by Spring.

Brigitte LUGGIN (DE Sec) expressed her interest in volunteering for the project committee and instigated a discussion around the project committee, suggesting to maybe take the time to rethink the procedures, as the funding involves a lot of work to select, follow up and check if delivered. She also argued that as Fete profits go into funding, then teachers, management and students should also all take part in the decisions. Project Financial Adviser Gundars OSTROSKIS clarified that the Calls had been running several years, twice per year, with established procedures which had all been approved and tested. School administration is represented in the selection panel, as well as several APEEE representatives who consult and seek opinions of relevant WGs (CB, Education) who all express their preferences and opinions on selected projects. But this is the second stage of the procedure, and he emphasised that under discussion was the actual launch of the Call. For this it is more important to discuss and agree the objectives, types of projects we would like to see apply for funds, maximum amount of funds APEEE is ready to commit (which in practice is never exhausted as not so many high-quality projects are received, it is rather a ceiling for budgeting purposes. This amount is meant as a safeguard against 1 project absorbing the entire budget of the Call.) The award panel prepares a decision that later goes to the board for adoption, preselecting projects based on well-established and existing criteria. It is important to check what initiatives school would finance and where APEEE need to come in to support with project funding. It is therefore up to the Board to go through projects and either agree with recommendations of panel or amend as deemed appropriate.

It was concluded that APEEE should encourage the Director to make sure the Deputy Director and the Teacher Representative take part in the panel, well representing the school. School has always participated in the preselection of projects, on the other hand is also eligible to apply for funds as part of project calls. Teachers do come forward with projects with pedagogical implications and these have been financed in the past. Therefore, school is never excluded, with all possibilities to have a say as well as apply for funds, for whatever they consider necessary and not financed by the school budget. The objectives are very broad and really try to serve as a catch all listing that are useful and relevant to benefit the school community.

President Valentina PAPA concluded that the Funding Procedure had already been adopted by the Board and the aim is to have transparent awards with funds that are the responsibility of the Association. The aim is not to do something different but to continue in good cooperation and ultimately funds will be used towards projects of the school. She proposed to further involve the school management by first ensuring that at least a Deputy Director and Teacher representatives participate to the panel and secondly by sending for example to the Director the objectives for the project call to see if the school has any inputs. She will also ask the Director to tell the APEEE if there are any big projects to which we could contribute (considering projects on both sites). The Call will be decided by adoption at the next Board meeting.



**Action point:** The bureau after consulting the APEEE working groups and the financial advisor to propose a Autumn Project call 2023 to be voted at the next Board meeting.

#### 14. INTERPARENTS discussion on 180 school days

VP of Pedagogy Monika VELOIKONJA took members through the *APEEE discussion on 180 school days and Cancellation of Secondary Lessons During Baccaureate Oral Exams* uploaded on One Drive to get initial reaction and feedback, underlining that this is a reflection going on in all European schools. She reminded members that the General Rules of the European School states that the school year must consist of 180 days but gives the possibility that the school can suspend lessons (difference between working days and lessons) with the need to provide pedagogical activities. In the big schools like EEB1 where lots of orals take place the school needs more time and more space, so one can see regularly up to 10 working days school cancelled. Because of this ongoing problem and the difference across big and small schools, INTERPARENTS, with a strong input from EEB1, prepared its position and the need to look broadly not just at cancelled period, but in general lessons not delivered. Many absences are not replaced. The basic idea is that this is looked at broadly and from different perspectives, with the aim to find solutions that support the pedagogical mission, provide 180 days, and ensure equity.

The consensus to the solution of changing the rule of 180 days, and to most suggestions raised was a resounding no from members and she concluded in summary that the APEEE position is to remain with the rule of 180 days.

#### 15. Data protection – APEEE and GDPR

President Valentina PAPA updated the Board on the situation with data protection. The first broader problem for APEEE is the way the database is set up in the first place for registration for members, developed by NSI and shared with Services. Other APEEES are one and the same association with Services and receive data of all families, the APEEE then requests consent if they become members. In our situation, as 2 separate Associations, APEEE Services have an agreement with school and APEEE has an agreement with Services, giving APEEE access to all data. In our case this raises 2 problems:

1. APEEE receives data of all parents, because Services gather the data of all parents independent of whether they use services or not. This also creates the problem where APEEE must chase payment of APEEE Membership after registration to services, as Services already have the data. A logical procedure would have been for APEEE to have the data, send request, receive fee, then share only that data with services. A complicated issue in this case and advice is needed to resolve it completely in the future. APEEE GDPR officer, also the GDPR officer for APEEE Services, does not see this as a problem. However, an external view on the situation is important as the situation is quite worrying.
2. The other problem is Data limitation. For APEEE purposes not as much information as Services is needed. Home address for example is for transport. APEEE only needs data for representation and payment of fee. The risk is therefore of our Association being in breach. APEEE GDPR Officer elaborated a Privacy Policy, but no reports of any audits have been received. Since the contract was signed in January 2020 there have been no reports, only a Cookie Policy was put in place and APEEE had to hire a temporary member of staff to complete streams via an online platform (required by the GDPR Officer to make reports) and which it still pays for. Following a free consultation with another lawyer, the President was informed that a data expert should regularly write reports and advise on instruments to



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provide the data protection considering a published policy. Since January 2020, we have never received such reports nor action plans from our GDPR Officer.

The President concluded with a warning that money will need to be invested in the future on this unique situation, in consultation with APEEE Services.

With regards to the query raised by the French section, with regards to the possibility of class representatives obtaining class lists, APEEE are asking clarification on the reply from the GDPR Officer. From her understanding, APEEE can pass this information on to class representatives but need to first update the APEEE policy online, which is at least a step forward. The communication will be forwarded to Emese SAVOIA-KELETI (HU Sec) for her opinion.

French section representative Noémie BEIGBEDER thanked the President and reiterated that she understood then that class representatives could receive these lists and would need to ask consent from parents individually to share. She noted that this would be particularly important for the levels which are mixed from one year to the other like S1, S4 and S6 and several primary classes. The President reminded that there could not be automatic sending as this would be too much work for the secretariat.

**Action Point:** President to send to Emese SAVOIA-KELETI (HU Sec) for her feedback and opinion.

## 16. School trips for P2: decision process and next steps

Sandrine PIERLOZ, Member elected by GA, explained that it was important to raise this point to know next steps as well as to discuss how the whole process had taken place, following her exchanges with Sara MARTELLI (Berkendael IT) and a small group of concerned parents. She noted that the P2 trip to the Belgium coast had been cancelled, in her opinion an important trip as pupils can connect with another part of Belgium. Meetings and decisions were overall disappointing. In the first meeting where trips were reviewed and a presentation prepared, the P2 trip was already removed so it was clear a decision had already been made by the school. Arguments given were that they were the only school to do this trip, that teachers were not motivated, travel costs were too much. The Board had discussed the issue in June and were against this decision. VP of Pedagogy Monika VELIKONJA concluded that unfortunately, although trips are mandatory, not all of them are as the scope is more in the domain of the school; In the end, APEEE representatives did as much as they could but were not successful. This decision-making situation needs to be stressed again in the SAC, as another example under governance and the need for communication and transparency. But she also reminded the Board that as section representatives they also have the responsibility to make sure messages are passed on effectively to parents. Sandrine PIERLOZ concluded that it should have been communicated and raised with parents better, so a lesson learnt and the need to better exploit other channels.

## 17. Review of APEEE agenda points for SAC meeting 18 September & EEB1 Board meeting 28 September

Members were referred to the agenda points uploaded on OneDrive. VP of Pedagogy Monika VELIKONJA added that for the point on Governance, the example of the P2 trips could be included; Implementation of the decision of the Board of Governors on the Future of Brussels Schools is included in view of the revision; 180 days is to be adapted with latest updates; SMS and teams will be underlined in the point on Online Learning. The question on OPSTAL discussed at the last board meeting will be raised in the SAC, but not at the admin board.





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#### **18. Update on the security agreement between the European Schools and the APEEEs**

There was no update as no meeting was held and no document received, so the point was postponed for a next Board meeting when more information is available.

#### **19. Soliciting agenda points for next meetings CE meetings: CE Primary Berkendael 26 September, Primary Uccle 10 October and Secondary Uccle 24 October**

Section reps should let representatives know of anything to raise during the upcoming meetings. Berkendael representatives asked to clarify the situation and replacement for the Deputy Director's sick leave. Another member inquired whether there was any feedback on the enrolment policy. Finally, a query on whether anything will be organised in celebration of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the European Schools. The VP of Pedagogy, Monika VELIKONJA, agreed to raise this during her discussion foreseen with the school Director the following day.

#### **POINTS FOR WRITTEN INFORMATION**

##### **20. Secretariat Update**

Members were referred to the uploaded memo.

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

*The next meeting is scheduled for 5 October 2023 (in situ).*