

Brussels, 5 December 2023

## Minutes APEEE Board Meeting 29 June 2023

### ATTENDEES:

**Board Members (voting):** Talia BOATI (IT Prim), Mathilde DESFEUILLET (FR Prim), Marek DVORSKY (Berkendael, SK), Claire GAUDIN (Member elected by GA; deputy CE FR Sec), Maria GERHARDT (CA DE Prim), Delphine HEBERT (Berkendael, FR), Viktor HAUK (Treasurer; HU Sec), Andreas KEIDEL (Berkendael DE), Kathryn MATHÉ (Secretary; EN Sec), Sara MILANO (IT Sec), Pere MOLES PALLEJA (member elected by GA), Sandrine PIERLOZ (Member elected by GA; deputy CA FR Prim), Valentina PAPA (President; EN Prim), Jan TYMOWSKI (Deputy Secretary; PL Prim), Julia TYMOWSKA (PL Sec), Monika VELIKONJA (VP Pedagogy & Uccle Secondary; SWALS)

**Board Members Voting by Proxy** Blanca BALLESTER MARTINEZ (ES Prim) to Pere MOLES PALLEJA, Noemie BEIGBEDER (FR Sec) to Claire GAUDIN

**Deputy Board Members (non-voting):** Agnes BOROS (HU Prim), Santiago CALVO RAMOS (ES Prim), Marc GUITART (ES Sec), Bartosz HACKBART (Berkendael FR), Nathalie KALOGERAS (FR Sec), Emese SAVOIA-KELETI (HU Sec)

**Other participants:** Beatriz CASTAÑO (CE ES Prim), Klára ENGELS-PERENYI (CE HU Sec), Sylvia MATRICARDI (Deputy CE IT Sec), Ioana SANDU (CE FR Sec), Rachele TOSTI (Deputy CE IT Prim)

**APEEE Secretariat:** Guendalina COMINOTTI, Selena GRAY

### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted by consensus.

### 2. Approval of Board minutes 23 March and 8 May 2023

Both set of minutes were approved by consensus, with an amendment to wording in the 23 March Minutes as raised by the French section and agreed during the meeting before adoption.

### Points of Information

#### 3. Administrative Meetings and Reports:

- **CE Secondary meeting Uccle 30 May**

VP of Pedagogy Monika VELIKONJA referred Board members to the OneDrive folder dedicated to School Meetings where all reports and minutes are consistently uploaded as they become available. Minutes of the 30 May meeting will be uploaded by September, once received. She went through the uploaded flash report of the recent meeting, highlighting key issues: the announcement of the change in S1 organisation (where there was a consensus among CE reps that the process was not used as it should be, while there were different views of sections reps on the content of the change);



clarity on how the S4, S5 and S6 can view their exams; changes to project and trips (S4 activities, plans to continue S5 Workshops with parents on sharing their work experience, special framework contract to organise trips in the European schools at system level is being questioned, NB was cancelled after); using PISA results (looking into gender differences and among sections, S5 results, and systematic underperformance of some sections, e.g. French and English sections results mostly under average for math); Gym kits (obligatory but leeway given if miss for first or second time); Mobile phone policy (the survey should be launched, school management consider current policy too restrictive to implement, should beware it does not become too watered down); homework policy (no progress); Well Being (highlighted framework, which was adopted at the system level in April 2022 and should be implemented, there is template as base to tailor make to needs of the EEB1. There are many activities on well-being, but this is different from policy and it's important to have guidelines and clarity.); number of CE representatives (with suggestion by Director Tran to reduce, but this cannot be changed unilaterally. Number of stakeholders should be equal and determined in the EEB1 Administrative Board. The discussions about changing the rules on the CE started in 2018. APEEE Board discussed the possible changes. All information and APEEE draft suggestions ready on the APEEE shared drive. Key messages/objectives: do not reduce number of representatives and better use CE meetings for discussions and not as a forum to share information).

President PAPA added that Rules of Procedures is actually one of the governance issues that has been raised in the EEB1 Administrative Board for several years now, and we should continue with our position. She reminded that the CE structure is 1 representative per section plus 2 APEE representatives (at least primary Uccle and secondary).

**Action:** add point on CE representatives to agenda for next Board meeting

- **CE Primary meeting Uccle 27 June**

VP for Primary Talia BOATI attended the meeting, and a report will follow soon. She highlighted the following issues: Trips (school management announced that the sea trip would not take place, and the P3 trip will be shortened, P4 will have a snow trip, P5 the usual L2 trip but want in future only 3 trips not 4 as they claim they are the only school that has 4 trips); Well Being (following the request from parents for an analysis on the number of cases, statistics on bullying and vandalism were provided, with 48 reported incidents, mostly on the buses); Special needs Coordinator (following the request from parents, statistics were provided and information on how learning support is structured, with 105 cases and 6 in the process of being set up). She concluded it was quite disappointing as representatives insist on a proper discussion but are not able to have this, and during this meeting only managed to get in 2 comments on S1.

- **CE Primary meeting Berkendael 20 June**

The CE representative for Berkendael Primary was not able to be present, the report will be requested to ensure it is uploaded to the CE folder as soon as it is made available.

**Action:** APEEE Secretariat to request report from CE Primary Berkendael Representative



- **School Meetings: meeting of the Respect et Propreté WG**

The Working Group Coordinators were not able to be present, the report will be uploaded for a next Board meeting.

**Action:** APEEE Secretariat to request report from WG Coordinators

- **School meeting with the Well Being Working Group 24 May**

The Working Group Coordinators were not able to be present, members were referred to the report which had been uploaded on the OneDrive.

#### **4. Extraordinary APEEE General Assembly 30 May and increase in the APEEE membership fee (from 50 EUR to 55 EUR per family per year)**

President Valentina PAPA reported that the increase in the APEEE membership fee had been adopted at the extraordinary APEEE GA Meeting on 30 May, dedicated to this vote. Results were 127 votes in favour, 27 votes against and 6 abstentions. The fee was increased from 50 EUR to 55 EUR per family per year, to enter into effect for the next school year 2023-2024.

#### **5. INTERPARENTS – BAC complaints system; CULT Committee report; school trips; Secondary assessment; 180 days and more**

Kathryn MATHE explained the BAC complaints system run by Interparents who negotiate on behalf of parents, after the parents' associations in different schools have all complied and submitted complaints received. The biggest issue for EEB1 was the mathematics exam (also in the system in general this year). She thanked Talia BOATI and Monika VELIKONJA, the APEEE representatives who worked on this at the EEB1. IP Delegate Monika VELIKONJA explained that during exam week, all S7 parents can open a ticket in the special platform, raising different problems with mistakes in translation, printing, format changes, formulas, also of any situation where they believe topics in exam questions have not been taught. Issues are separated into system or local level problems. In the case where a topic is not taught but is in the syllabus, they cannot complain but can only inform (and point school management to a better monitoring for the next year; parents are always reminded as from S5 that it is important to monitor the syllabus and make sure students cover it). She reported that there were 165 complaint tickets altogether, covering all 13 European schools. Interparents organise subject teams together with teachers and parents who are experts in the subject. They prepare a case and ask for a meeting with the Head of the BAC Unit at the Office of Secretary General, to see if they can draw attention to some problems before marking starts. The summary report will be uploaded but as an example, in the case of Maths 5, there will be compensation on part of the question where 7 points (out of 100) will be awarded due to a problem with some mathematical signs that wrongly appeared once they were printed and resulting in difficulties for the calculation. For some others there is no systemic correction but up to individual cases when students get their marks, then they can complain individually. Statistics will be uploaded on OneDrive. An interesting issue that was highlighted was that in some cases invigilators did not make an announcement when an issue was raised in Maths, but instead only informed some students individually. Invigilators need to be better prepared to handle these situations. Members were reassured that IP representatives consistently raise the issue of ensuring future translations are proof checked. In terms of syllabus and whether the school takes objective measures to make sure it is covered, Kathryn MATHE explained that the school does have harmonized planning now which they are trying to put in place at all levels, but APEEE does send out a mailing ahead of time for S7, informing to double check as there is no legal case that can be made afterwards.



---

On the CULT Committee report (which should be voted in the European Parliament plenary meeting in July, *NB at the end, resolution was adopted in September*) Kathryn MATHE reported that this finally came out in March, followed by the amendment process and the final was released at the beginning of June:

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2023-0205\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2023-0205_EN.html))

This will go to plenary mid-July. IP were already heavily involved in the first draft; in the amendment process issues were put in that IP were concerned about: teacher and school autonomy, which sounds best practice across Europe but which in our school system has become a problem and falls between the cracks; the same with the schools where the system level policy is the same but not implemented equally in our schools. For example, the Well-being framework which has not yet been rolled out at school. Wording about autonomy needed counterbalancing, 'with accountability and monitoring' fought for by IP. Governance and the European dimension were a big part, trying to frame our system as the best practice European system, capturing the idea of a European identity, important also with the expansion of accredited schools. It was noted that there will be an extraordinary meeting of the Board of Governors in Luxembourg in the autumn to discuss the report and follow-up of the European School System to the resolution.

On School trips, Pere MOLES PALLEJA informed on the conflict with the Spanish company contracted for the organisation of trips, with a consensus to request Central Office not to extend the contract (1-year contract so in theory possible), but the contract will be extended despite requests from parents and other stakeholders. But prices had increased and conditions substandard. APEEE EEB1 had signed a letter with other APEEEs against this agency.

On secondary assessment, Kathryn MATHE reported that there were 2 meetings of the secondary assessment WG, which used to be a closed WG but where IP successfully fought to be involved in. Members were encouraged to consult the document uploaded. They had looked at formal B marks, Pre-BAC and BAC and have an official IP position. It is felt that our BAC has too much internal assessment by own teachers. Also, the formality and modality of the Pre-BAC, harmonised in our school but different at every school, with very little interaction between the schools. There have been complaints between and within schools, where even if exams are harmonized, there is no common marking rubric. Another point on the secondary reform at an early stage is on the S4 to S6 marks and a move away from over examining, with S4 starting next year with only 2 B tests. Another proposal is for S5 and S6 to have harmonised exams at the end of year.

On 180 days, Kathryn MATHE reported that this is a Task Force that came out thanks to the efforts of the APEEE of EEB1, now established at system level and which had its first meeting. After a discussion including the problem with cancellation of classes during the BAC oral exams, there is a tendency towards changing rules to fewer days of school, maybe resulting in 170 days of school as a rule instead. But INTERPARENTS are arguing that this should be for pedagogical rather than management/logistics reasons. Commission is supportive so INTERPARENTS will continue to fight for a better discussion and possible solutions on 180 days (an international and general benchmark).

Finally, Pere MOLES PALLEJA updated the board on the amendment of the General Rules. He gave a brief reminder on the history of the IP Admin appeal which was dismissed so then sent to the complaints board, where a hearing will be organised on 21 July. He will attend together with the IP lawyers. As this is a formal procedure at the discretion of the Complaints Board, this is positive and means they require further information.



---

## **6. Enrolment – first phase numbers and meeting between parent reps on the CEA and the LSC on next year's policy**

Kathryn MATHE reported that there had been 3 meetings in the last month, where they had been receiving preliminary numbers and going through cases. Parents apply, if some exceptions, the enrolment board goes through case by case anonymised (There is 1 vote each allocated to parents, Director, Belgian authorities, and the Commission) which is the practice they have just been going through. She stated numbers next year at this moment (the enrolment board are still running the second phase) are 3436 pupils at Uccle (this number has been between 3350 and 3450 for several years, so over capacity but stabilised). Primary at Uccle is 913, Maternelle Uccle 148, Primary Berkendael 813 and Secondary Uccle 2375. Ukraine pupils have been guaranteed through 2023-2024 but the Working Group will restart already in the autumn to look at the future of these pupils. Finally, there was a meeting between staff committees and enrolment board representatives for the first time, requesting to renegotiate the enrolment policy every year. Also, an interest to talk to APEEE about geographical criteria in the longer term and the question of overcrowding in secondary and measures to be agreed upon in the 4 schools.

## **7. S7 and Baccalaureate Update: Baccalaureate Exams; S7 events and proclamation**

President Valentina PAPA noted that the first part on S7 and the BAC had already been covered in the previous point on IP. Kathryn MATHE reported that there had been a series of S7 events leading to the final proclamation. The BAC Day had gone relatively well, although the school tends to impose unrealistic restrictions on the students. The Bal de Bac held in Tervuren was successful, although promised things that did not happen. Every year there seems to be a problem with S7 students managing their own money (Cde does not help them). The Proclamation was outside, again only 2 family members were allowed to attend, it is not understood why. The student committee wrote to the school who refused to increase, CB WG coordinator, Samantha CHAITKIN, is trying to negotiate this to 4 in future.

## **8. Secretariat update – update on online payment**

President Valentina PAPA reported that the June reconduction had taken place in June, briefly explaining the process with the request for payment of the APEEE membership fee of 55 EUR being sent out. 1754 families had paid and 834 were still pending.

The secretariat had received confirmation from the database developer NSI that they can implement the new online payment possibility for September (in collaboration with company DIGITEAL). This possibility will be sent with the reminder for outstanding payments.

## **9. School trips – meeting with trip coordinators and school management 9 June**

President Valentina PAPA informed that the representatives were not able to be present and referred members to the report uploaded on OneDrive. During the last board meeting members discussed the issue to be raised during the meeting of 9 June, namely, to ask the school to retouch the question of the survey, to compare P2 trips. The main result of the meeting was that the P2 trips were not taking place, not up for discussion and that the survey could be done later but not now. The APEEE representatives wished to inform the Board, that if we want to be involved as APEEE, it would be useful to have a volunteer with experience on surveys.

## **10. Educational support**

The representatives could not be present, members were referred to the report provided. VP of Pedagogy Monika VELIKONJA added that they had a meeting on 2 points: gifted pupils and educational support. The majority of the meeting was spent on Gifted so there was less time for





---

educational support, but there is still the issue of the rules and there are new guidelines that should be implemented, so many things still waiting a reply.

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

WG Coordinator JAN TYMOWSKI summarised the situation, explaining that an Extraordinary GA before the summer will not take place due to a statutory obligation to announce such a GA at least one month in advance and the need for the new Statutes to be first translated into French as this is how they will be formally published. He also recalled the requirement for the change of Statutes to be supported by 2/3 of all APEEE members (which is above 400), and only at a second attempt - by 2/3 of those present or represented (without any quorum). The Extraordinary GA could not be held online, as stricter regulations under Belgian law apply to AISBL, requiring a public notary to be present. Therefore, in consultation with the President and with E&Y lawyers, it had been decided to organise the GA after the summer (towards the end of September), knowing that the quorum will not be reached, possibly as a joint one with GA of APEEE Services (who also need to amend their Statutes but need to wait only 2 weeks before the second GA). The second attempt, without the obligation of quorum, would then be called for the end of October. If the Statutes are adopted, they would enter into force the day after the GA, and APEEE could proceed with the election of section representatives - automatically becoming Board Members under the new rules.

President Valentina PAPA added that the public notary would check the invitation to the GA, and that there was formally no obligation to send it by email (the current Statutes required publishing on the APEEE website). The dates of the GA would be notified around 21 August to all current class representatives (GA voting members). Then there would be a period when new class representatives are elected, which could be challenging but was checked with the E&Y lawyers. It was important to make sure that by the end of October the list of new class representatives is updated. New section representatives would then be elected in the beginning of November under the new Statutes, with one Board member for each cycle (Primary and Secondary) and for each site (Uccle and Berkendael). In addition to the legal obligation to change the Statutes before the end of 2023, the aim was thus to adopt the new Statutes before this election of section representatives, in order for Berkendael to choose 1 representative per section instead of current 5 representatives. All relevant documents would be available on APEEE website.

## **POINTS FOR DECISION**

### **12. New delegates for internal APEEE roles: Magali BARRAL (Deputy CE FR Sec), candidate volunteering for the Respect et Propreté Working Group**

Magali BARRAL (Deputy CE FR Secondary) was not able to be present, but there were no objections to carry out the voting, mainly because she is already a known deputy CE. She was voted by consensus into her new role as Deputy in the Respect and Propreté WG. However, for future nominations, the Board voted by consensus to establish a new rule, whereby the candidate needs to be present at the board meeting to present first.

President Valentina PAPA went through the *List of APEEE delegates to official bodies and working groups* which had been uploaded, highlighting the numerous roles which need to be filled, mainly due to the departure of Pere MOLES PALLEJA and Kathryn MATHE. For Interparents, she explained it is possible to have additional delegates, but APEEE have to pay for these. IP pays 1 delegate for each meeting, but with an exception here because of her key role, Kathryn MATHE was allowed as an extra expense. Candidates should contact IP representatives Monika VELIKONJA or Noémie BEIGBEDER if interested; candidates need to be at least a section deputy to join IP and must regularly attend Board meetings. Pere MOLES PALLEJA will remain as an external adviser.



For the CEA, the President agreed to replace Kathryn MATHE in interim, until a candidate is found. Other openings in CE and Working Groups (including Homework Policy and a representative from legal WG for Child Protection) were clearly marked in red and board members were encouraged to volunteer. She clarified that these WGs are not to be confused with the internal APEEE WGs, these are WGs of the school where APEEE sends delegates (who should be board members or deputies).

## **POINTS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION**

### **13. Safety & Hygiene Meeting 6 May – APEEE position on the decision of the school regarding the VIAS report and the OPSTAL entrance**

Safety & Hygiene delegate Santiago CALVO RAMOS gave an overview of the meeting held with the school on 6 May and its decision to open Opstal and close Vert Chasseur gates. This decision was taken by the school, and it was understood this would be re-evaluated once the VIAS report was received (VIAS are experts in mobility and road safety and part of a European network). This was supposed to happen in Spring but at the meeting they were informed this was now suspended. The school's representative announced that there were shortcomings with the VIAS Report and therefore it could not be accepted. The school representative gave more details and reported that the school is suspicious that the report was influenced by outside sources, and therefore could not accept its findings. A new report VIAS should be appointed to produce an independent version of the report. VIAS had not yet replied to the claim. As the school will not pay for this 'biased' report, there is therefore currently a standoff situation.

A discussion took place amongst board members in order for APEEE to decide on a position and to write a letter to school management. One member pointed out that there are seemingly 2 parts in the report, an objective overview then a consultation with parents, therefore it should not be a problem to consult with parents. The majority argued that APEEE have the right to see the report. APEEE asked the school to consult its representatives and to keep them involved in decisions. It was argued that a complaint should be made in writing, asking to make sure that the school always involve the APEEE, as stakeholder. It is important to be meticulous in citing all letters and replies, as all previous replies from the school claimed decisions were based on VIAS recommendations, and now they do not accept the VIAS. One member argued that it is important to underline the danger for students at the Opstal gate. Some members stressed that the school could at least share the salient points, summarising if not possible to share the full report. The ultimate goal is to have a safe entrance, and this should be the shared interest.

President Valentina PAPA concluded she would consult with the delegates of the Security & Hygiene Committee and APEEE bureau to draft a letter to the school along these lines, reiterating processes we had, underlining that the school based the changes on VIAS and the need to better understand what went wrong for them. She would also request an extraordinary meeting either of the SAC or of the safety&hygiene committee to discuss this issue with the school.

**Action:** include as Parent point next Admin Board. President to consult and send letter to school.

### **14. New organisation of S1**

President Valentina PAPA put this point in context, as the aim is for the board to agree on a common position. She reported that the school held a meeting the same day, to have a new organisation for S1, announced during the CE Secondary Meeting on 30 May. Some classes (art, music, PE) are with different section groups, and the reform proposed to no longer mix these but rather stay with their class. Every section has been discussing this reform. The APEEE asked the Deputy Director for clarification and received a reply after 3 weeks, which was not clear. The APEEE President



requested further clarification, especially as there was no proper consultation done in the Admin Board before the decision was taken by the school. The reply was that this concerned a small change only for S1. She referred members to the documents uploaded on OneDrive. The school stated it aims to do an assessment after this pilot. However, the aspect the APEEE is concerned about is also about governance. APEEE reached out to the Secretary General, asking whether this reform was done according to the rules. VP Pedagogy Monika VELIKONJA added that there is a document which refers to classes taught in mixed language group, approved by BOG. At system level there was a streamlining of this document with the aim to simplify and clarify. In the drafting phase, this part in Language Policy no longer appears. The Office of the Secretary General replied they will look into it, and Director TRAN is in copy.

An in-depth discussion between board members, representing the views of the different sections, discussed to focus the APEEE position, with an emphasis on the fact there was no consultation, which is essential. It should be noted that APEEE considers this not to be a small change as it changes the idea behind the European school and there are many concerns from different sections. While APEEE understands and welcomes attempts to help S1 students who have difficulties in adapting, it believes more assessment needs to be done before this reform is proposed. Other members added that it would be useful to ask if the decision can be postponed to the following year in order to first have proper consultation, as well as ask confirmation if this really is a pilot and therefore reversible, asking how the assessment will be made. Essentially to ask them to do such a reform properly, as not every section is opposed.

The President concluded with an APEEE position that the school needs to communicate clearly its motivation and objective in the change and to emphasise the decision was taken with no proper consultation. The letter should state that there are concerns with how it is playing out and the impact it will have on all sections. The letter would also mention the report of the European Parliament and its clear reference to governance and European aspect. Also asking them to explain clearly the problems they are addressing in this reform. Her understanding is that APEEE do not completely discourage it in the letter but rather postpone and be constructive.

**Action:** President to write a letter to Director Tran along the lines described above

#### 15. EEB1 Fete 2023

- **Update on Fête accounts and lessons learnt by Fête coordinators.**

President Valentina PAPA reported that accounts on the Fete had been finalized and had been uploaded under documents not for circulation. The total profit calculated by the APEEE Secretariat was 33257,18 EUR, but this still needed to be verified by the external accountant in order for the profit to be announced officially.

- **proposal that the APEEE covers the total of the cost of renting chairs and tables.**

President Valentina PAPA reminded the board that after many discussions prior to the Fete, APEEE had agreed via Written Procedure to co-finance 500 EUR of the total cost of approximate 2000 EUR for tables invoiced to the school. This with the condition that this agreement would not set a precedent and that the school would budget it for the future. The school would also be presenting their expenses at the next Admin Board. It was agreed to postpone this proposal to cover the total amount until the APEEE Treasurer and external accountant reconfirm the exact profit which had been made.





---

## POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

### **16. Planning and reporting European Schools & EEB1 – Why does it matter and preparing for the Annual Pedagogical School Plan 2023-2024**

VP of Pedagogy Monika VELIKONJA reported on the documents uploaded, encouraging all members to read through Pedagogical Risk Register. She underlined that the Annual Pedagogical School Plan 2023-2024 is important as it goes into the consolidated report that the system level adopts and is presented to the public (Annual Activity Report of the European Schools). Part of this is the EEB1 Pedagogical Risk Register which she analyzed in detail for the board. She drew attention specifically to key issues identified: harmonisation; teacher absences and risk of non-replaceable and overcrowding; a meeting of the School Advisory Committee was requested before the September meeting of the Admin Board; this will not be possible but possibly bilateral meetings with the Director. It is unclear why the EEB1 is lowering their own risk registers (noticeable by comparing the numbers of consolidated European school figures and EEB1 figures). She concluded the point stating that this should be a key concern for APEEE.

### **17. Data protection – APEEE and GDPR**

This point was postponed for the next Board meeting as the meeting was running late and a complicated point that needs detailed explanation.

### **18. Soliciting volunteers for September Welcome Events**

The dates were not yet communicated by the school, but once APEEE has the date an email will be sent out and volunteers are solicited to participate.

### **Soliciting agenda points for next meetings CE meetings**

Board members were asked to write to the CE delegates directly for any issues. The President also drew attention to the calendar of meetings (up until end of the year) which had been uploaded.

## POINTS FOR WRITTEN INFORMATION

### **19. Secretariat Update**

A memo was uploaded on the priorities and tasks carried out by the Secretariat.

## AOB

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