

Brussels, 12 January 2023

## Minutes of APEEE Board Meeting 16 November 2023

### ATTENDEES:

**Board Members (voting):** Blanca BALLESTER MARTINEZ (ES Prim), Agnes BOROS (HU Prim), Hjørdis Virgarsdottir DALSGAARD (DK Sec), Marek DVORSKY (Berkendael, SK), Maria GERHARDT (DE Prim), Viktor HAUK (Treasurer), Delphine HEBERT (Berkendael FR), Nathalie KALOGERAS (FR Sec), Pia KOFOED (DK Prim), Sara MARTELLI (Berkendael IT), Alba MARINO ENRÍQUEZ (Berkendael ES), Andrej MATIC (SWALS Uccle) Sara MILANO (IT Sec), Kremena MILEVA (EN Prim), Miklos NAGY (HU Sec), Valentina PAPA (President; EN Prim), Sandrine PIERLOZ (FR Prim, member elected by GA), Nadia ROSINI (IT Prim), Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ (ES Sec), Jan TYMOWSKI (Deputy Secretary; PL Sec), Gundars OSTROVSKIS (Berkendael, SV), Alex WILSON (EN Berkendael)

**Deputy Board Members (non-voting):** Santiago CALVO RAMOS (ES Prim), Jure ČUŠ (SWALS) Gladys EVANGELISTA (IT Prim), Bartosz HACKBART (Berkendael FR), Cecilie HAHN PETERSEN (DK Prim), Fiona KERNAN (CE EN SEC), Marianna KOLYVA (Dep Berkendael EL), Mihaela LAFONT (FR Sec), Olivier PLUMANDON (FR Berkendael), Luis SANCHEZ ALVAREZ (ES Sec), Emese SAVOIA-KELETI (HU Sec), Laura SERRAO (Berkendael IT)

**Other participants:** Luca AGUZZONI (CE IT Sec), Magali BARRAL (deputy CE FR Sec), Noemie BEIGBEDER (Deputy CE FR Sec), Talia BOATI (Deputy CE IT Sec), Marc GUITART (CE ES Sec), Aleyda HERNANDEZ (APEEE IP Delegate), Oliver KOCH (CE DE Sec), Stefan PAGEL (deputy CE FR Berkendael), Magdalena KUPCZYK (CE PL Prim), Sven MATZKE (Educational Support WG), Ioana SANDU (CE FR Sec), Margarita SAVOVA-PEYREBRUNE (Educational Support WG - Gifted Children), Rachele TOSTI (deputy CE IT Prim Uccle), Javier VILLEGAS BURGOS (CE Prim Uccle, Dep Health & Safety Committee), Juan Pedro VILLANUEVA HOLM-NIELSEN (CE DK Sec),

**Former Board members** attending for transition to new Board: Monika VELIKONJA (VP Pedagogy & Uccle Secondary; SWALS), Sara DAGOSTINI (IT Sec).

**APEEE Secretariat:** Selena GRAY

### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted by consensus.

### 2. Approval of Board minutes 29 June and 5 October 2023

The Minutes of 5 October were adopted by consensus. The minutes of 29 June were not ready, voting was postponed.

### 3. Short tour de table: newly elected Board members

The newly elected CA representatives introduced themselves. Some sections still needed to confirm their representatives and President Valentina PAPA reiterated the importance to do so before the 5 December General Assembly, where the 4 new Board members will be elected.



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## POINTS FOR INFORMATION

### 4. Administrative Meetings and Reports:

President Valentina PAPA informed new members that documents relative to the different meetings are uploaded to a dedicated folder on OneDrive.

10 October CE Meeting Primary: VP Primary Talia BOATI briefly highlighted key issues discussed during the meeting - the sex education initiative and school trips. In response to a query from the board as to whether the sex education initiative is also foreseen for P5 Berkendael, she confirmed that as per her understanding it was the whole school but would double check. For trips a unilateral decision had been taken cancelling the P2 trip and shortening other trips. She added that the survey on preferred choice of snow or mountain trip, agreed to during the school WG meeting in June, had been run and so far, 550 families out of 900 had replied. This will be discussed further during point 15 of the agenda.

24 October CE Meeting Secondary: VP of Pedagogy Monika VELIKONJA reported, highlighting key points: School trips - mainly that S2 trips were confirmed but with a change of format; that it had been clarified for the Zambia trip there would be the same number of S6 students with a few additional spaces for S5 to ensure continuity; that the number of trips needs to be balanced against absence of teachers; that there would be no project week this year which is new as this was previously organised a week before Easter around the time of the mandatory S6 trips. It was also noted that the new platform for parent-teacher meetings worked well. She briefed the new board on the history of the Mobile phone policy, and the APEEE position adopted in 2019. She reported that the APEEE representatives of this Working Group Talia BOATI and Caroline CMBAS had worked extensively on the draft policy but that the survey did not materialise, and school management adjusted it on their own initiative. The consensus among parents was that there should be at least ownership within the school. Members were encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Code of Conduct.

19 October 70th Anniversary of the European Schools and European School, Luxembourg: President Valentina PAPA shared the link to the video contribution from APEEE EEB1, a recording from the President.

### 5. Reporting from system level meetings

INTERPARENTS – update on meetings and latest developments: 12-13 October Joint Teaching Committee, 26-28 October Complaints Board public hearing, 7-8 November Budgetary Committee, 20 October enlarged BoG meeting (extraordinary), preparation of Interparents meeting (30 November – 2 December).

VP of Pedagogy Monila VELIKONJA referred members to the uploaded documents, very briefly highlighting some issues: BAC complaints saw issues across the schools and a strong intervention from students especially; among proposals of interest were changes in assessment for Primary; school wanting to change approach to S1 for Maths; change for subjects such as ICT, Gym, Art currently taught in mixed language classes to L1 (with an additional proposal being considered, but not yet approved, for the possibility to allow SWALS to select L2); proposal for the Slovenian section approved and going forward, temporarily placed in Uccle as Berkendael currently full. (with a revision that all new SWALS will go to Berkendael but also to Uccle (current and as per sibling rule). On 180 days, the IP proposal to have a Task Force was supported by The Commission in the presentation in the October meeting. The next meeting of the Task Force will be in January with the idea to discuss consequences for budget and resources if a common programme would be run across 13 schools; On the Budgetary committee she drew attention to the document uploaded (not for circulation): as there is now a resolution it is important to push the system and she encouraged anyone interested



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to come forward. She also reminded them that the Commission had just launched the Staff Survey (deadline 24 November) and invited all who work for the commission to take this opportunity to have their say, highlighting the section on how commission is as an institution. Essential as the Commission represents the EU in the Board of Governors part of the Administrative Board for schools.

IP Delegate Noemie BEIGBEDER praised the previous hard work done by IP delegates Kathryn MATHE, Pere MOLES PALLEJA and Monika VELIKONJA and thanked them for their help in the transition. Now working with IP Delegate Aleyda HERNANDEZ, she underlined that many things happen at system level with direct influence on our school and encouraged all CA reps to have a look at documents uploaded and ask questions, stating that the 2 cycle of meetings at the higher level move very fast and the more assistance they can get with reading and assessing documents the better prepared they can be to defend positions. President Valentina PAPA explained that IP is the umbrella organisation of all APEEEs which send delegates and where parents are represented at system level. It requires a lot of preparatory work but as APEEE have a possibility to vote it is crucial work. Sometimes interests are not necessarily the same in the different schools. Monika Velikonja added a final note on European school competitions, noting that there would be a Science Symposium in 2025 hosted by our school. She encouraged parents interested in STEM to reinforce teachers.

7 October & 25 October Central Enrolment Authority: APEEE Delegates Laura SERRAO and Bartosz HACKBART attended both meetings; Laura SERRAO explained how the CEA drafts the enrolment policy and oversees the running of it. Figures are received after each round of enrolments. September sees the result of the policy of each year. In 2022 there was wide discussion on the organisation of the future of the European Schools in Brussels with the opening of a 5<sup>th</sup> school, and the impact on our school with the decision to remove the double of linguistic sections in both sites, Uccle and Berkendael, allocating each to one and to free space for Secondary. She referred members to the September presentation and overall review of the enrolment policy 2022/2023, highlighting the increase in overall enrolment (although not as high as in previous years). The aim of reform was to fill the 5<sup>th</sup> school in EVERE which progresses well with 65% capacity. There are no big changes on this year's policy, but APEEE delegates managed to stress that Uccle and Berkendael are at their full capacity, as well as to have clarification on the transfer of the satellite Greek section to 5<sup>th</sup> school, and that those already enrolled or with siblings will not be moved. The Slovenian section will open in Uccle as of next year (pending approval from the Board of Governors). The section will be transferred to Berkendael in 2028 in block. The Secretary General asked for clarification on the issue whereby the permit on the EVERE site is deemed only temporary, leading to a big consultation for a new permit, he confirmed that he learned about the issue only recently and will be further investigated through the appropriate diplomatic channel. EEB2 (Woluwe) plan to intervene on this and position themselves on the situation. The next meeting on 12 December will approve in principle the guidelines, with no modification to the one uploaded expected.

President Valentina PAPA added that she is in contact with the other APEEE Presidents on the situation with the EVERE site as well as stressing the situation with overcrowding during the JTC. VP of Pedagogy briefed the new SWALS representatives on the situation on SWALS and the Slovenian section in Berkendael and recommended to follow this evolution closely. Finally, the board were also reminded of the need for a volunteer as CEA delegate to come forward, to replace Valentina PAPA who was only in interim until the new board was elected.

#### **6. Legal WG: update on the outcome of the Extraordinary General Assembly 26 October on the Statutes and implementation of the new Statutes**

President Valentina PAPA reported that the new statutes were adopted at the 26 October extraordinary General Assembly, approved by more than 2/3 of votes, representing more than the



majority required for adoption. Legal WG Coordinator Jan TYMOWSKI encouraged members to read through them, although members would only really need to refer to the main composition afterwards as many points cover hypothetical situations which will hopefully never occur. In line with Belgian law, the bureau is required to nominate a person entrusted with the daily management, the easiest option at present being the President. In the future, if any bureau decides differently, they can elect someone else from the board, or even from outside via a mandate. He clarified that for the selection of representatives, they tried to maintain past practices. He remains available for any questions.

### **7. Section Representatives – update on elections 9 November**

President Valentina PAPA reported that the 9 November elections went smoothly, for the first time both sites held this together with a good turnout of some 150 class representatives as well as many proxies, and elections by consensus. Sections had tables together which proved interesting for all. Positive feedback was received on the APEEE presentation. Negative feedback was on the issue of not being allowed to park inside and she explained that school does not allow this. Even for the Board meetings, APEEE has an agreement from school for Board members to park inside but not deputies, APEEE will continue to push for this. She concluded that APEEE will now continue preparation for the 5 December GA and announced she will not run for another mandate as President but reassured that as she was re-elected as board member, she will continue to attend board meetings. 4 new members will be elected at the GA, after which the newly complete board will elect its new bureau. In order to start with the new statutes, the Extra-ordinary GA on 26 October decided that even those who have not completed their terms need to be re-elected. She also clarified that Treasurer Viktor HAUK was attending to present the budget for point 12, but he is now class representative and not a section representative, therefore no longer part of the bureau or board, at present. ALL class representatives can be candidates for one of the 4 members elected by GA.

### **POINTS FOR DECISION**

#### **8. Proposal to amend APEEE financial procedures to award funding of school related projects following the adoption of the new statutes.**

President Valentina PAPA went through the presentation for financial procedures uploaded on OneDrive and the amendments were adopted by consensus. The change concerned the addition of the VP Primary Uccle, VP Primary Berkendael and VP Secondary Uccle as Members of the Award panel to integrate the new statutes.

#### **9. Autumn 2023 Call for Project Proposals - proposal to adopt Awards Panel**

President Valentina PAPA took the members through the proposal. She clarified that the roles of VP of Pedagogy Primary, Secondary and Berkendael were in transition but that the latter would in effect still be represented during this call as Gundars OSTROVSKIS remains Financial Adviser. . She also clarified that the rules of who is eligible as panelist were decided at board level and are currently in the financial rules. The proposal was adopted by consensus, with a slight amendment for the wording to align with the statutes, specifying VP Primary Uccle, VP Primary Berkendael and VP Secondary Uccle.

**Action:** Amend wording for the 3 positions to be filled in Awards Panel and organise the follow up for the meeting of the panel

#### **10. Proposed extension to projects (Creative Food Workshops, Calm Room)**

The proposals for the 2 projects to be extended had been uploaded for information and the extension



for both projects were adopted by consensus.

**Action:** Communicate the extension to the organisers

### **11. Draft agenda of the upcoming General Assembly 5 December**

The draft agenda was adopted by consensus. A volunteer was solicited to organise the parent questions for the school Director which would be gathered in advance. Board members to communicate availability to the secretariat.

## **POINTS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION**

### **12. Financial Report 2022-2023 and Proposed Budget 2023-2024**

Treasurer Viktor Hauk presented the Treasurer Report, clarifying to the new Board that the financial year runs from September to August. He noted that the solidarity fund of 1000 EUR set aside had not been used. This is posted on the website and APEEE relies on section representatives to spread news on it. He noted that thanks to the proposal by the Treasurer and Bureau and with the support of the board, the APEEE Membership Fee had been increased for the school year 2023-2024, and this is clearly seen as a positive move for the financial situation of the association. He added that some reductions in office expenses were also achieved thanks to the work by the APEEE Secretariat in this regard. The draft budget was adopted by consensus and will be presented to the GA for vote.

### **13. Possible involvement of the APEEE in relation to the humanitarian crisis in GAZA**

Sara MARTELLI introduced the request for APEEE to send a communication to all parents asking for help on the humanitarian crisis in GAZA through support by donation to international humanitarian, with a link to the organisation. The APEEE, together with the CdE, has previously donated a contribution to a humanitarian Ukrainian organisation through the sale of hoodies, of which one had the colour of Ukraine. Following discussion by board members, the majority felt it was too political and sensitive for the APEEE to send such communication. The President concluded that the APEEE will then not get involved and won't send any communication on this issue. She added that it was nevertheless useful to have the discussion at board level and that everyone is of course free to contribute individually but with no action by APEEE.

## **POINTS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **14. Update on Educational Support, including gifted pupils.**

As the meeting ran late, Margarita SAVOVA-PEYREBRUNE had to leave, the presentation specifically on the subgroup gifted children was postponed to the next meeting.

Delegate of the WG Education Support, Sven MATZKE reported that many students benefit from this. According to yearly figures 1/3 of EEB1 students benefit in some kind of form - Intensive (most developed, 6% pupils at our school and on average all EU schools), moderate or general support. The framework is defined at system level but a lot of differentiation at school level is still observed and varies between schools, sections, and cycles. It is difficult to monitor what is happening on the ground. At system level there is quite a push for more inclusive education, following the UN recommendation of 2015 and an evaluation of 2018. The 2019 Action plan was adopted by the BOG and is still in the process of being implemented, with a dedicated educational support coordinator within Central Office offering guidance for schools. There is more guidance regarding qualifications of support coordinators and teachers, new legal status for support assistants, new guidelines school Directors must follow in case of discontinuation of studies or non-enrolment due to support needs, and more accountability required from school Directors. He added that another new action was the



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Junior Laureate certificate for S5 students which can be recognized on a national level, important for students leaving school and going back to their national system or on to vocational training. There is also an obligation for all schools to have school specific guidelines in place. Actions in the pipeline include how to introduce flexibility to curriculum, decisions taken to reduce class size and the creation of qualified support assistants. On the data side he informed that a statistical report is published yearly for all European schools which includes a lot of information such as on the support agreement, teachers, budget, comparing schools: <https://www.eursec.eu/Documents/2022-12-D-6-en-6.pdf>

He explained 2 different budgets for educational support: intensive support as an open budget line and where needs will always be met, general and moderate support as according to what the school receives per pupil and according to total population, underlining that there is a big difference between schools and how they use their budgets. He added that for Gifted children a guidance document is currently being prepared at system level, the school will be asked to introduce certain measures. Once adopted these will be shared.

### **15. School trips (petition on sea class, snow trips)**

Sea class: Gladys EVANGELISTA reported on the situation on P2 sea classes. During the last CE meeting before summer, school announced they would not take place for upcoming school year, with no official announcement but by simply removing from the table of trips. Despite classes writing emails and letters to school management there was no change of direction on this unilateral decision taken without prior consultation with parents. As there is a strong wish from parents to reinstate this trip for Uccle and Berkendael, a last hope was via petition. Following a first consultation to all class representatives of P1 and P2 at both sites there was positive feedback and unanimous support, as well as some constructive comments on the modalities of the petition. The text was improved, and format changed to an EU survey theme, launched the previous evening with already 144 replies (based on 1 form per family and with deadline 26 November), with the idea to collect results and statistics and send to school management. This was done at class level without official APEEE support due to the tight timeline, using internal resources, and now on the agenda to have an APEEE position. Sara MARTELLI thanked her for the good initiative and asked to put the Trips WG in copy when sending results. President Valentina PAPA agreed it was a good initiative and that the Board has always supported trips but warned that it was important to inform the bureau earlier of such initiatives as APEEE delegates are in meetings with the school and these risks undermining them when not aware. She compared to the situation with snow trips which was discussed at board level and in the WG and a survey was agreed upon. Gladys EVANGELISTA explained had tried to act as quickly as they could as places have to be booked or will be gone, but she understood procedures were important. No further decisions had been made and was now being discussed within the Board and open to changing format with all suggestions and support welcome. The conclusion was that APEEE supports the initiative and to go ahead and present results to school, liaising with the President to see how best to present.

Snow Trips: Talia BOATI reported that the survey had been launched and results had been uploaded. The Working Group would be meeting again. A discussion was important now at Board level, as the current Coordinator might step out and the candidate had not been chosen yet. The current trend seems to be for less ski trips due to costs and environmental concerns., steadily replaced by mountain classes. It was suggested to keep an exchange on this with the Working Group, school managers and teachers in advance, to engage further to clearly understand what the issues were, which issues APEEE can support more and where there is nothing that can be done. If not proactive then decisions are made by school and too late to make changes.

President Valentina PAPA concluded that APEEE were more in favor to start early as possible, show results and engage, encouraging them to decide before the end of the school year. Results



should also be shared with parents for transparency.

**Action:** Share results with school and parents

**16. Booklists – sharing ideas (1background questions from uploaded doc “Parents points for Secondary CE 24 October)**

VP of Pedagogy Monika VELIKONJA explained that this was on the agenda to raise views at board level to feed CE secondary, a point requested principally by the French Secondary section. She referred to the uploaded document, Pt 4. CE Secondary Parent Points. Booklist and went through the main points. She questioned in which direction APEEE wanted to go and the views, encouraging members to coordinate with CE representatives. In general, the issue is that the European School curriculum does not fully match the national ones. The books used in the national systems are not necessarily a good match. The question is if mandatory books are wanted, or reference books so not obliged to buy, important by 7 December.

President Valentina PAPA noted that the French, English and Italian sections had organised used book sales for many years. Ioana SANDU added that there had been many questions from parents before the last CE and an ongoing question for many years, raised by all sections. She suggested concrete action be taken, organising used books sales with action in coordination with school management pushing teachers to announce books by the end of school year to organise this successfully for the next school year and manage on time. It is unclear if both sites have the same booklist, seemingly this depends on teachers with no harmonisation through whole school. The objective therefore could be to ask for more interaction for Primary and for Secondary to see how to achieve stability, reviving used book sales in both. Another idea is to encourage bulk orders for better prices.

**17. Review and solicitation of agenda points for next meetings: 7 Dec Berkendael Primary CE and 11 January Primary CE; Secondary CE, Safety & Hygiene Committee (date tbc), 5-7 December BoG**

President Valentina PAPA informed that there are 2 representatives required for Secondary CE, to replace Monika VELIKONJA and Kathryn MATHE. As there are no official representatives at present, the board were asked to approve Monika VELIKONJA to attend the next meeting on 7 December and a volunteer was solicited to accompany her, to be nominated by the Board, as a temporary solution in the transition to the new election of the roles. There was consensus for Monika VELIKONJA to attend. President Valentina PAPA ended the meeting explaining she would remain President during the upcoming General Assembly when they will elect 4 new members and will chair the next Board meeting until the point on elections when the new President would take over.

**18. Review and solicitation of agenda points for next meetings: 7 Dec Berkendael Primary CE and Secondary CE, Safety & Hygiene Committee (date tbc), 5-7 December BoG (10 mins; oral)**

**POINTS FOR WRITTEN INFORMATION**

**19. Secretariat Update**

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

*The next meeting is scheduled for 14 December 2023 (in situ)*