

## Minutes Board Meeting 20 February 2025 (online)

**Board Members CA (voting):** Pēteris ANCĀNS (LV Berkendael), Blanca BALLESTER MARTÍNEZ (ES Prim Uccle), Mateja BLAJ (SWALS Sec, deputy SWALS Uccle prim, deputy CE SWALS Uccle Prim), Marc GUITART (member elected by GA, ES Uccle), Delphine HEBERT (VP of Berkendael, FR Berkendael), Magdalena HORODYSKA (PL Prim Uccle), Nathalie KALOGERAS (VP of Secondary, FR Sec), Elisabeth KAVALIERAKIS (member elected by GA, FR Uccle), Alba MARIÑO ENRÍQUEZ (ES Berkendael), Sara MARTELLI (IT Berkendael), Kremena MILEVA (EN Prim Uccle), Maria Montserrat BADIA SERRANO (DA Uccle Prim), Miklos NAGY (Treasurer, HU Sec), Gundars OSTROVSKIS (LV Sec), Valentina PAPA (EN Sec), Sandrine PIERLOZ (Deputy Secretary, FR Prim Uccle, member elected by GA, deputy CE FR Prim Uccle), Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ (President, ES Sec), Nadia ROSINI (VP of Primary, IT Prim Uccle, Deputy CE IT Sec), Tanja TROJOK (SL Prim Uccle, CE SL Prim Uccle), Jan TYMOWSKI (PL Sec), Daniel VON HUGO (DE Berkendael)

**Proxies:** Maria GERHARDT (DE Uccle Sec) to Blanca BALLESTER MARTÍNEZ, Sara MILANO (Secretary, IT Uccle Sec) to Nadia ROSINI, Rafael SAUTER (DE Uccle Prim) to Blanca BALLESTER MARTÍNEZ

**Deputy Board Members CA (non-voting):** Bartosz HACKBART (FR Berkendael, Deputy CE FR Sec), Mihaly HIMICS (HU Uccle Prim), Andreas KEIDL (DE Uccle Prim), Marianna KOLYVA (EL Berk), Ruben MARTINEZ (ES Sec), Yasemin TURETKEN (EN Berkendael)

**Other participants:** Talia BOATI (Deputy CE IT Uccle Sec), Noemie BEIGBEDER (CE FR Sec), Santiago CALVO RAMOS (ES Prim Uccle), Peter CADY (Teacher Representative LRT), Laura SERRAO (Deputy CE IT Berkendael), Aleyda HERNÁNDEZ LAVIADES (ES CE Prim, IP deputy member), Gorazd PETERNEL (Deputy CE SWALS Prim Uccle), Margarita SAVOVA (Languages WG), Evangelia SYLLELIADOU (Coordinator Communications WG)

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

### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus with a point added under AOB: Safety & Security Policy.

### 2. Approval of Board minutes 16 January 2025

The Minutes of the 16 January board meeting were adopted by consensus.

## POINTS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION

### 3. APEEE delegates to official bodies and working groups: clarification and reminder vacant roles to be filled; discuss renewal of mandates for APEEE working groups and soliciting volunteers; second-hand book sales: update and soliciting volunteers; 6-9 April Science Symposium: soliciting Coordinator, volunteers from each Section and jury member

President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ referred Board members to the list uploaded on One Drive, reminding them of vacant positions still to fill. President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ informed the Board that Nathalie KALOGERAS (VP of Secondary, VP of Pedagogy, member of bureau) is now teaching at EEB1. He asked if there were any objections for her to remain in the positions or a preference for her resignation. After consulting the legal Working Group, there is nothing preventing her legally from continuing. Nathalie KALOGERAS clarified she teaches 3 period class for S1 FR section with a contract until 28 February to cover a prolongation of absence. There were no objections from the Board.

On the Well-Being Working Group, Marc GUITART reported that Coordinator Sara DAGOSTINI plans a



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meeting with school beginning March, President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ advised to hold a preparatory meeting with the members of the WBWG. It will be a good opportunity to present all foreseen Well-Being events to Director TRAN, especially considering a Spanish section talk on WB was recently cancelled.

On Pedagogical Working Group sub-groups: for Languages, Margarita SAVOVA informed that the WG is working on an L3/L4 survey, referring them to a draft uploaded. The survey aims to map the language needs of families and their satisfaction with current offerings, where L3 language is introduced in S1 (compulsory choice) and an L4 in S4 (non-compulsory). The WG also plan to address L2, a point for a future board meeting where Language WG member Pauline DITTE could better present with her historical knowledge of the APEEE position. Volunteers were solicited to take over the role of Coordinator for Educational Support from Sven MATZKE. On Gifted Children, a hybrid information session was organised on 10 October at school where they also underlined the need for teacher training on gifted children, not only on other profiles. Next step is to launch a survey as the last one dates from 2020. For the moment there is need for more support in general at school.

On Primary Trips, Sara MARTELLI reported that a meeting was held with Berkendael in December, and they had several exchanges on the issues of the P3 trip Berkendael and the decision to do the trip in France. The trip programme and cost had still not been received. In the December meeting school management were also clear that there would no longer be a ski trip, with 2 alternatives (sea trip / mountain trip) under consideration. They were planning a survey to parents but no news on this and she is trying to meet again with Berkendael management. There have also been parent complaints on the quality of the L2 ENG trip which did not have enough cultural activities.

President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ clarified the sub-groups within Baccalaureate, Evaluation, Orientation. He reminded that Santiago CALVO RAMOS and Maria GEHARDT had volunteered to analyze the statistics to understand the lower BAC results. Santiago CALVO RAMOS confirmed his continued participation for evaluation and that the data is publicly available. He will give the analysis to the school and is available to meet with them to clarify; JAN TYMOWSKI (PL Sec) raised the issue of poor quality of translation on behalf of his section; BAC Coordinator Nathalie KALOGERAS reiterated that it is important for the Board to nominate an S7 coordinator to act as an interlocutor with the school for all S7 classes in preparation of the BAC. Most of the problems are raised at the end but it is important to get organized now, to centralize all concerns in liaison with herself, who will be the one liaising with IP.

Coordinator of the Legal WG Jan TYMOWSKI reported they had been involved in a case in relation to the well-being of a child. There was a plan for the WG to meet but not much ongoing activity, only individual interventions. Members will be updated with any relevant documents that they will be delving into, that can be of use in individual cases. President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ added that as member of the Legal WG and of the IP legal WG dealing with the ombudsman issue, he would ask for support on this as it is a complex issue that is necessary to put forward for the agenda of the Secretary General.

Evangelia SYLLELIADOU, invited to apply for the role of Coordinator of the Communications WG, presented herself and was approved by consensus to take up the position.

Treasurer Miklos NAGY was nominated as a member of the Solidarity Fund by default of his position and approved by consensus. He will accompany the President to a meeting with the school, following the request by the President in the meeting of the Admin Board that APEEE be involved in monitoring the social fund. Gundars OSTROVSKIS volunteered as the second member of the Solidarity Fund and was approved by consensus.

For the Uccle and Berkendael Safety & Hygiene Committee, Alejandro JIMÉNEZ GARCÍA volunteered for the position of deputy member for Berkendael. As he was not present, he was invited to present at the next Board.

CE internal procedures were removed from the list, there was no opposition to this.

For the Addiction Prevention and Abuse Working Group / Drug Policy Task Force Prevention drugs, the Secretariat will contact member SZABO Kriszta to confirm if it could be removed, with possibility to revive later if needed.

Deputy Secretary Sandrine PIERLOZ suggested a Q&A session in line with the Project Funding Spring Call 2025 once the timing for the Call has been communicated with a deadline for applications.



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#### 4. Fête 17 May 2025: update and soliciting volunteers

Fete Coordinator Valentina PAPA reported that since the last Board she had a meeting with the school, together with President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ. She will try to organize another in March, in the meantime she consulted the APEEE Board on the following issues:

- Director Tran's proposal for teachers who organise a stand to keep the money to continue their projects in the future, without having to go through an APEEE Funding Call, similar to the stands organised by teachers for the Zambia and Guatemala projects last Fete.

During the school meeting a calculation was introduced by management on the costs borne by the school, and their concern subsidising such a large cost. School management raised that in other schools (for example Ixelles) the school organises its own Fete during a weekday. It was clarified that the point is not to earn money for APEEE but to hold a community building initiative where money can also be raised for projects, to give back to the school community. With regards to teachers retaining money from their stands, this money still needs to be monitored (as for those during the last Fete, Zambia and Guatemala) to keep control of funds that have been generated. School management were reminded that there are rules for Project Funding, for which teachers are also invited to apply, and where a comparative evaluation is done professionally, not decided in a unilateral way but during a panel of several stakeholders representing the school community. Board members discussed and it was agreed that the idea for teacher stands needs to be well thought out in practical terms. School needs to confirm exactly what teachers are raising funds for and it was concluded this needs to be discussed further with them.

- Re-usable cups, an idea received positively by the school. Logistics (transport, washing, etc) and who to handle this (school, APEEE Services?) need to be figured out. She presented 4 quotes, summarising that budget would be approximately 2500 EUR for 5000 cups and clarifying that a Written Procedure could be held if the decision was made to go ahead and produce these.
- For sports, she had initiated contacts with previous interested parents and expects feedback in the coming days. It seems school will organise basketball for girls. No feedback has been received yet from students.

Valentina PAPA added that it is not clear how the football tournament will be run. There would be a need to organise tournaments before if only finals will take place during the Fete. A lot of questions as needs to be prepared in advance, which were not clarified in the former meeting. A Sports Coordinator would be essential.

- She had a first meeting with Fete section representatives and had given a deadline of Friday 7 March to confirm their activities. It was a proactive turn out, but some sections still miss representatives. She is hopeful these will be mobilised after the holidays, at least to confirm what was organised last time.
- Regarding Fete hoodies, she reported that an invoice had been received from the same company as those contracted for the last Fete. As the offer seems very high, she suggested to limit the production to 200 hoodies or decide not to produce them. Community Building Working Group should follow up on this.

She also reminded that hoodies were a great success last Fete and a good souvenir to have. If the decision was made to proceed this could be done by Written Procedure to adopt an amount for prefinancing.

She would report on further developments at the next Board.

Regarding Berkendael, VP of Berkendael Delphine HEBERT, announced that there would be a meeting to discuss 9 May festivity with Berkendael school management after the break, which Director TRAN will join.

#### 5. BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Policy: update

Representative Noemie BEIGBEDER updated the Board on the meeting that took place on 6<sup>th</sup> February between deputy director for secondary, Mrs MAKARSKA, 2 teacher representatives, a student representative and APEEE representatives Talia BOATI and herself. She referred to the informal report uploaded on OneDrive.

Ms MAKARSKA started the discussion on the BYOD proposal explaining that a BYOD policy is adopted with

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different provisions in many European Schools and informing participants about her reflection on the possibility to introduce in our school a BYOD policy on a voluntary basis, potentially as of next year. She was open for a discussion on the different elements of the policy such as the device choice and the classes to which it would apply. The APEEE representatives noted that before envisaging the introduction of a BYOD policy, a thorough reflection is needed. First of all, it would be important to highlight the specific pedagogical objectives to be achieved and to understand whether those specific objectives would be best fulfilled by a BYOD policy. They also requested information on the teachers' pedagogical needs, in particular on the specific uses that teachers envisage in class, section by section and subject by subject. The teacher representatives seemed supportive of the BYOD proposal but informed the participants that they had not yet had time to consult colleagues. The students' representative enquired about the possibility to lease devices. The APEEE representatives also enquired about the use of the devices that were purchased with the parents' financial contribution. Ms MAKARSKA replied that the parents' contribution went towards the purchase of 5 trolleys with devices and therefore does not cover all the needs. APEEE representatives expressed the parents' fear of circumvention of the newly adopted mobile phones policy and the undermining of its benefits. In conclusion, the school planned to send a survey to teachers to find out precisely their pedagogical needs and usages envisaged. Participants agreed to meet again, and a follow up email had been sent to the deputy director with the conclusions taken.

Board members raised various concerns, most notably the need to have clear specific objectives and a clear mapping of teachers' needs before considering any BYOD. They also asked to have more details on how the parents' financial contribution was spent, in particular on the number of devices purchased by the school with it. Board members also found that digital skills should be developed through devices provided and maintained by the school. Noémie BEIGBEDER added that the deputy director informed that the school would never be able to buy enough devices and guarantee their maintenance due to budgetary constraints and lack of resources. A teacher representative also raised concerns about the protection of private information stored on pupils' devices and on teachers' ability to monitor students' activity on their private devices in class.

President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ took note and concluded to wait for the results of the survey and to discuss further during the next board.

## **POINTS FOR INFORMATION**

### **6. Debriefing from the conference on Artificial Intelligence of 13 February and announcement of a conference on social media on 18 March**

Noemie BEIGBEDER reported that the conference on Artificial Intelligence had been an extremely positive experience with some 150 participants registered. It was a successful conference prepared by students and philosophy teachers with rich content, providing a positive community building experience with fruitful exchanges, with Director Tran and several teachers in attendance as well as 20 students from S6 and S7. Another conference on social media will be held on 18 March, the invitation will be sent out shortly. The conference will be given by Alberto PELLAI, a neuropsychiatrist who gave a successful conference in Alicante, contributing to the balance in favor against mobile phones. Workshops are also being organized during ethics classes for S4 and S5 secondary on the topic of identity theft, financed by Horizon Europe.

### **7. Information about the situation of Locally Recruited Teachers (LRTs) in European schools**

President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ explained that LRTs are starting several actions. The first industrial action took place today, with a partial strike in periods 3-4. He referred members to a draft letter to the Directors of the 4 Brussels European Schools received from Berkendael parents and that it was important to discuss and agree on APEEE support. He briefed the Board on the historical context. In the European School system, Member States should cover at least 65% of the staff costs via teacher seconding, and the remaining 35% is covered by the school by recruiting teachers with a local contract (LRTs). However, the share of seconded teachers has decreased since 2011. This decrease has been compensated for with School Directors trying to fill the vacant posts with LRTs. LRTs have become valuable and long-time members of the European School communities, but attracting LRTs, and retaining them is difficult. The European Parliament CULT Committee report on the system of the European Schools has explained this by poor employment conditions, unattractive career prospects and difficulties of finding teachers due to more competitive offers in other private or public schools.

Some 144 LRTs in EEB1 are not covered by the same employment contract as the seconded teachers and



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admin staff. The question of personnel needs to be raised in the Admin Board, the continuous increase of personnel costs linked to the indexation in Belgium means a real concern for the Secretary General when dealing with the increase of budget in European schools.

Peter CADY, representative of LRTs, was invited to present on the complexities of the situation of LRTs in the industrial action system. He briefly explained the reasons behind the strike initiative, which is not primarily about salary or indexation but about the right to trade union representation and legal protection in the schools. They currently have representatives in the system but who have no protection, with no ability to make changes in the system. The second issue is the way the European school system sets up contracts and the way they are adapted. Employment exists out of national and European law and outside of the European Court of Justice. At present the only place to appeal is the complaints board of European schools which is not sufficiently independent. In this context, the existence of trade union delegations in school and some kind of legal external oversight (European directives supervised by the European Court of Justice) are fundamental. The CULT committee report gave a deadline of April for school to propose changes, and the objective of the industrial action is to push the Board of Governors to approve some positive changes. The teachers concerned are trying to minimise the impact on students, primary teachers have made concessions to allow supervision of students. The next planned strikes (half day 19 March and full day 1 April) will probably be across primary and secondary.

He clarified that it is hard to find or pay for legal advice and appealed to members for ideas or expertise in international law. He gave the floor to Board members and replied to questions and concerns:

Some seconded teachers will join the strike out of solidarity, but they are more protected in the system, with some having permission to strike from their national unions; primary teachers agreed to not formally strike so as to not to lose a day of pay or leave children unsupervised. Director TRAN had been tolerant, teachers had felt it was the only way to put their points forward and be heard but remain keenly aware of pressure for parents and extra work on school management staff. Legal WG Coordinator Jan TYMOWSKI referred to the website of the European Schools Secretary General and the service regulations of LRTs, on conclusion of contracts. Peter CADY clarified that European Schools have a European Convention enabling them to be outside of national laws. Alba MARIÑO ENRÍQUEZ (ES Berkendael) also volunteered to find information; Members were in general supportive of the need for action, reiterating how important LRTs have become as a necessary part of the system, despite some concerns on the effect on students and their curriculum. Further advice was to try to be represented by a Belgian trade union and that they should mobilize the European Parliament to reach the Board Of Governors.

It was agreed by consensus that President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ would draft a letter expressing APEEE support to LRTs as a first step, and to try to reach a common position with the other APEEE Presidents of the Brussels European Schools, which are affected by the strike. He also reminded that INTERPARENTS are pushing for an ombudsperson who would provide external oversight on the whole system, whereas the Office of the Secretary General is pushing, instead, for a mediator in each school instead of someone like a proper Ombudsperson as suggested by the European Parliament's resolution of 12 September 2023 ([link](#))

**8. APEEE Treasurer handover: update, Berkendael account, membership fees**

The point was postponed due to a lack of time left.

**9. APEEE website revamp**

The point was postponed due to a lack of time left.

**10. Administrative Meeting Reports – reporting on system level meetings: updates on meetings and latest developments**

- 16 January: CE Primary Uccle
- 17 January: SAC meeting

President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ referred members to the report and documents uploaded on OneDrive.

- 29 January: Admin Board

President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ informed that no draft minutes had been received but highlighted crucial



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points. Approval of the budget 2026 and plan of the school for the next school year: the financial implications of the 180-day rule, including the need for meaningful activities with European content during the two-week suspension over the BAC period; support from the Secretary General for an additional psychologist despite the Commission's reservations.

- 10-11 February: INTERPARENTS (hosted by EEB1 Uccle)

President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ reported Interparents meeting, including the election of new representatives and the discussion on improving Interparents' work. There was a discussion on the challenges of finding a sustainable solution for providing Interparents with administrative support and a proposal to establish an IP Secretariat, with a website for information dissemination, was discussed. They also discussed the issue of introducing Catalan language as an ONL (Other National Language) with Interparents deciding to abstain from taking a position given the highly politicized nature of the discussion as explained by the note issued by IP Executive Committee to this aim.

- 13-14 February: Joint Teaching Committee

President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ outlined the key points discussed in the Joint Teaching Committee, including the use of artificial intelligence in schools and the mission and ambition of the school.

- 17 February: General Assembly of the APEEE Services

President Sigfrido RAMÍREZ PÉREZ reported briefly on the GA of the APEEE Services where all candidates were elected to the APEEE Services Administrative Board, ensuring representation from the different linguistic sections.

#### 11. Review and solicitation of agenda points for upcoming meetings 2025

- 11 March: CE Secondary
- 11-12 March: Budgetary Committee

## AOB

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

*The next meeting is scheduled for 13 March 2025 (Berkendael site)*