

**Association des parents d'élèves de l'école européenne de Bruxelles IV AISBL**

Parents Association of the European School, Brussels IV Aisbl

Elternvereinigung der Europäischen Schule Brüssel IV Aisbl

Associazione dei genitori della Scuola Europea di Bruxelles IV Aisbl

Oudervereniging van de Europese School Brussel IV Aisbl

Асоциация на родителите на учениците от Европейско училище Брюксел IV AISBL

Asociația de părinții elevilor de la Școala Europeană de Bruxelles IV AISBL



## **General Assembly**

**10 December 2014**

**19.00 – 23.00**

**Salle Polyvalente**

**European School of Brussels IV**

**Drève Sainte-Anne, 86, B-1020 Bruxelles**

**English version**

**Minutes of the Meeting**

**Agenda**  
**General assembly 10/12/2014**

**Part I (19.00 – 19.30): For Members only**

1. *Election*
  - a. Appointment of the Electoral Board
  - b. Cessation of mandate (resign and end of mandate)
  - c. Presentation of candidates
  - d. Election

**Part II (19.30 – 20.30): Open to the public**

2. *Discussion with the school Directors:*
  - a. Mr Schlabe, Mr Cole and Mrs Kirby
  - b. Questions/Answers

**Part III (20.30 – 23.00): For Members only**

3. *Report on Activities (a) and Presentation of Accounts 2013-2014 (b)*
  - a. Questions/Answers
  - b. VOTE on discharge of the Board on the Certified Accounts 2013-2014 closed on August 31<sup>st</sup> 2014.
4. *Report on the start of the school year 2014-2015*
5. *Presentation of the Budget 2014-2015*
  - a. Questions /Answers
  - b. VOTE on the Budget 2014–2015
6. *Presentation and discussion on current files*
7. *Points/Resolutions submitted by parents*
  - a. Resolution
  - b. Questions/Answers
  - c. VOTE on the resolution(s)
8. *Results of the elections*
9. *AoB*

### **Attendance at the General Assembly**

The GA was held on December 10, 2014 at the Salle Polyvalente of the European School IV, Drève Sainte Anne, 86, 1020 BRUSSELS. The meeting was attended by 81 “full members”, some of whom held proxy authorisations for voting by other full members (63), resulting in a total of 144 votes present or represented.

Since the APEEE has 357 registered class representatives, the quorum (10% i.e. 36 voters) required by article 9 of the statutes was present. Affiliate members and guests were also present.

Joëlle Salmon chaired the GA for part 1, Ralph Wischermann and Carla Sabeva chaired for part 3.

The meeting started at 19:05 and ended at 23:00.

## Part I: For Members only

### 1. Election

#### a. Appointment of the Electoral Board

Joëlle Salmon called for volunteers to be on the Electoral Board.

The General Assembly was asked to accept all received candidatures.

**Decision 2014-10-12\_1:** *The General Assembly APPROVED the appointment of the four volunteers, Camilla Gaudina (IT), Carine Hanssens (NL), Agatte Recil (EN) and Thomas Küpper (NL) as the Electoral Board. Unanimity, no abstentions or objections raised.*

#### b. Cessation of mandate (resign and end of mandate)

The Chair informed the General Assembly of the resignation of the following members during the year:

Catherine Mahaux resigned on 7 February 2014.

Cristina Vanberghen Coteanu resigned on 4 July 2014.

Jane Okafor resigned on 21 August 2014.

Alessandro Roggi resigned on 14 October 2014.

Rachid Ahajjam resigned on 17 November 2014.

The General Assembly took note of the resignations (r) and termination of function of end of mandate (t) of:

Catherine Mahaux (r) ; Cristina Vanberghen Coteanu (r) ; Jane Okafor (r), Alessandro Roggi (r) ; Rachid Ahajjam (r) ; Sarah Conyers Barber (t) ; Christian Drantmann (t) ; Marc Henriques de Granada (t) ; Iseult Lennon Hudson (t) ; Joëlle Salmon (t) ; Martina Sindelar (t) ; Josephine Usher (t) ; Benoît Vandergeeten (t) ; Ralph Wischermann (t).

#### c. Presentation of candidates

The following candidates briefly presented themselves:

1	Christian DRANTMANN	DE
2	Martina SINDELAR (Joëlle Salmon read a statement prepared by Ms Sindelar as she was unable to attend)	DE
3	Josephine USHER (Joëlle Salmon presented the candidature of Ms Usher as she was unable to attend)	EN
4	Sarah CONYERS BARBER	EN
5	Catherine DAGUET (Joëlle Salmon read a statement prepared by Ms Daguet as she was unable to attend)	FR
6	Marc HENRIQUES DE GRANADA	FR
7	Bogdan AMBROZIE	RO
8	Paolo Maria RAFFONE	EN
9	Michela BEATI	IT
10	Karina SULEIMANOVA	FR

11	Nóra Edit KÁRPÁTI	DE
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The chair asked for other candidates from the floor. No further candidates came forward.

d. Election

As the number of candidates did not exceed the number of vacancies in the Board, the chair proposed to vote for all candidates en bloc. She also asked the Assembly whether the votes could be made by show of hands. There were no objections. The plenum was asked to approve this approach. No objections were raised by the floor.

The vote took place and the Electoral Board provided the results as follows:

**Decision 2014-10-12\_2:** *The General Assembly DECIDES to appoint the 11 candidates as Board members (Unanimous vote, no abstentions, no negative votes).*

The chair welcomed the new Board members.

## Part II: Open to the public

### 2. Discussion with the school Directors

- a. **Mr Wulf Schlabe**, School Director; **Mr David Cole**, Deputy Director of the Secondary School; and **Mrs Harriet Kirby**, Deputy Director of the Nursery/Primary School.

Mr Schlabe expressed his satisfaction with the team of directors this year, and his confidence that they will be able to help the students successfully prepare their Baccalaureate examinations in S6/S7.

Mr Cole emphasised the priority of building a whole school, rather than having large divides between the nursery, primary and secondary schools. Communication and collaboration between the school levels is of utmost importance. Particular focus is being placed on the transfer between primary and secondary, in part through teacher exchanges.

Mrs Kirby discussed independent and cooperative learning, with increased differentiation, promoted by the tablet pilot project in S1 and BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) in S5 and music. These pilot projects are being mentored by external consultants, and will eliminate the sometimes difficult task of finding textbooks for the European School curriculum. The technical aspects of these projects are still under development.

In the Primary school, this year there is a special focus on reflective learning and self-evaluation. Students across all language sections are being asked to point out their achievements and to talk about the next steps in their learning process. This is also a key element for students' transition from Primary to Secondary, enforcing their knowledge of who they are, what they are good at and what they are interested in learning next. The goal is to empower children with knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses.

**Growing together:** the Romanian section has shown robust growth, while the Bulgarian section still needs support. Mr Schlabe considers it a priority to show the value of learning and being part of the Bulgarian language and culture. Mention of the possibility that an Estonian section will open at Laeken in 2016, but no confirmation as of yet.

The **Whole School Inspection** that took place in the first part of 2014 was very welcome and had a big impact. One of the main recommendations resulting from the inspection concerns EEBIV Laeken's special need for support from the central authorities because of our unique circumstances. Our school's lack of seconded teachers means a special need for additional middle management support. There are benefits to this situation: the school is free to choose teachers who fit well. On the other hand, the disadvantage is that there is no guarantee that staff will stay.

**Preparation of the Baccalaureate:** Mr Schlabe announced that starting in September 2015, EEBIV will find mentors from other European Schools to come once a week to Laeken, to guide the students and teachers in how to prepare the Bac examinations. This idea has the support of the inspectors, who are prepared to provide names of teachers who could be suitable mentors.

**Discipline:** follow-up is being done on behaviour issues such as theft and drugs at school.

**SEN:** Mr Schlabe referred to the parent motion put to the GA about EEBIV becoming an inclusive school. He stated that if the school were inclusive, it would mean that every child would have to be accepted, no matter what the handicap. EEBIV does not have the network or the infrastructure to do this. Though EEBIV strives to provide a maximum level of integration, it would be irresponsible for the school to try to provide a level of care that it cannot fully provide. The school can only accept documentation and evaluate whether it is capable of providing the appropriate level of care. In Belgium, there is a network for intensive care which is better than what the European School can provide. The school is required to follow the directives of the Board of Governors. There is a link to SEN policy at [eursc.eu](http://eursc.eu).

**School environment:** The school has repeatedly alerted and continues to alert the commune about the dangerous situation on the Drève Sainte-Anne. They often get either no response, or empty promises.

**Nursery school access:** For safety reasons, the school no longer allows parents to access the Nursery School building. Mr Schlabe approves of the parents' proposal to create a new point of access to the left of the parking lot entrance. This has been suggested to the Régie des Bâtiments, who suggested that such a project would require co-financing, but nothing concrete has been decided.

**Vending machines:** The students have been told that the litter situation must improve, otherwise the vending machines will be taken away. Some parents are strongly against these machines. The contract is for another two years, after which the school can renegotiate and try to find a supplier that better suits our school. The initial call for tender showed that no companies want to provide fresh foodstuffs in such machines.

**Cafeteria:** The students are very keen to have a cafeteria, where they could purchase à la carte sandwiches, etc. The problem is that the cafeterias in other European Schools run at a loss, making it very difficult to find a service provider willing to get involved. A proposal was made to get the students involved and have them run part of the project, providing them with a budget and giving them some responsibility.

## **b. Parent Questions**

**Q:** May the Whole School Inspection report now be made public?

**A:** It should definitely be made public, perhaps most appropriately via the class representatives. The APEEE Board will discuss how to do this.

**Q:** With regards to the vending machines, is there no room in the contract with the distributor to get a different variety of products in the machines?

**A:** Yes, it is stipulated in the contract, but the company came up with a list (of sugar-reduced and sugar-free items) from which the school had to choose after the contract was signed. Mr Schlabe will ask Ms Cheron to contact the company, and perhaps invite a representative of the parents' association to attend a meeting with the Health & Safety Working Group to discuss this matter directly with the parents.

Parents should also make their children responsible for making good choices.

**Q:** How do EEBIV students rank in comparison to other European Schools and national schools?

**A:** The European Schools are among the very best, but results vary from country to country. The Central Authority compares the marks of European Schools to national schools in each

country. There is an annual report from the President of the Baccalaureate (an external person, different every year).

**Q:** What measures are taken for security checks on all staff, from bus drivers to teachers?

**A:** Checks are made of all staff. All personnel employed by the APEEE and bus drivers are security screened, including the request for a police record (*certificate de bonne vie et moeurs, type B*).

**Q:** What is being done about the traffic situation on the Drève Sainte-Anne? What about the proposal for an entrance on the Rue Médori?

**A:** Parents from this school are a big part of the safety problem on the Drève Sainte-Anne. They should be communicated with directly. Mr Schlabe stated that he cannot do anything about the commune or the Régie des Bâtiments. Of course it is essential that any accident involving a student be avoided. The échevine uses this road every day herself and is aware of the situation. Mr Schlabe is open to the idea of an entrance on the Rue Médori, but there needs to first be more information about how the area around the school will evolve.

**Q:** How will parents be involved in planning and implementing the tablet project?

**A:** This project is still in the planning/pilot stage, and the plan has not yet been fully completed. The teachers still need to be trained, but Mr Cole is open to input from parents.

The Chair thanks the directors for their time and contributions.



### **Part III: For Members only**

#### **3. Report on Activities (a) and presentation of Accounts 2013-2014 (b)**

This part of the meeting was chaired by Carla Sabeva and Ralph Wischermann.

#### **(a) Report on Activities of the Board of the Parents Association of the pupils of the European School Brussels IV (APEEE) for the school year 2013-2014**

The General Assembly was asked to voice any questions arising from the Report on Activities included in the preparatory documents circulated prior to the meeting.

A question was raised about Somerfesto, wondering about the figures from the last party. Sarah Ironside replied, emphasising the magnitude of effort required to plan and execute this event and the absolute necessity for more parents to become involved. As for the figures, they had just been finalised that morning and the Somerfesto committee was planning to meet to discuss them. The results will appear in the next APEEE newsletter.

#### **(b) Presentation of Accounts 2013-2014**

Marc Henriques de Granada presented the 2013-2014 results. He reminded the Assembly that when the APEEE was set up, there was a deficit, a loan to the other Brussels APEEEs that needed to be repaid, and no fiscal reserve.

The overall financial result is positive. The Assembly was reminded that at last year's meeting it had been announced that there would be a positive result for transport.

The main elements that have had a positive impact on the 2013/2014 results are:

- An increase in service enrolments;
- Improved follow-up of payment thanks to the point.be registration system, resulting in fewer unpaid bills;
- Unused margin for transport and canteen;
- Non-implementation of salary adjustments due to Belgian governmental decisions and less training costs than foreseen;
- One of the investments planned for the canteen was delayed.

Marc reminded the Assembly that the loans from the other Brussels APEEEs had to be repaid. Last year, Ixelles asked to have their loan repaid in advance. This year, Uccle has made the same request. The Assembly was told they would be asked to vote on that later.

Marc emphasized that it is good practice to keep a financial reserve. The APEEE has legal and financial responsibilities to uphold. The organization must have enough reserve to pay off the entire staff if necessary. For reference, he mentioned that the other Brussels APEEEs have much higher reserves. In addition, EEBIV is still growing and changing every year. The number of service users is still not stable.

Following the presentation, a number of questions were raised:

Q: There was a request to see a balance sheet and a question asking why there was a different result in the Auditor's Report and in Marc's report.

A: Marc replies that the report as presented contains the results and investments.

Q: Is the budget cost neutral? The information was unclear, incomplete and therefore impossible to vote upon.

A: Thus far, budgeting has been very conservative but with the aim of becoming neutral. Due to the constantly changing context, the budget still needs to be fine-tuned, but we must remember that it has been a period of upheaval and that bankruptcy must be avoided.

Q: Another remark from the floor concerned transport and asked about explanations.

A: This parent was invited to come to the Transport Office to have a detailed explanation.

## VOTE

The vote took place and the electoral board provided the results as follows :

**Decision 2014-10-12\_3:** *The General Assembly DECIDES to discharge the Administrative Board on the 2013-14 accounts (138 in favour, 4 abstentions, 2 negative votes).*

**Decision 2014-10-12\_4:** *The General Assembly DECIDES to carry forward the positive result to the following year (136 in favour, 8 abstentions, 0 negative votes).*

**Decision 2014-10-12\_5:** *The General Assembly DECIDES to reimburse the loan from the APEEE of EEBI Uccle before the anticipated deadline (134 in favour, 4 abstentions, 6 negative votes).*

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## 4. Report on the start of the school year 2014-2015

The Assembly was asked whether there were any questions about the report on the start of the school year.

Joëlle Salmon emphasised the creation of the Community Fund this year. The Fund has already received requests for project funding from the school, and anticipates requests from the students. The Community Fund is awaiting contributions from Somerfesto and from the Anglophone section Halloween Party.

Q: How are the requests for financing from the Community Fund assessed?

A: The guidelines can be found on the APEEE website. The Community Fund is managed by a committee of 6 people, who can approve any amount up to 750 euros without putting it before the Administrative Board. The Community Fund aims to help finance projects that will benefit the children at EEIV. The source of the budget will be through fundraising projects.

Q: How does the Community Fund relate to the class funds?

A: Clarification that the Community Fund is completely separate. Once children move into the Secondary school, it becomes very difficult to manage class funds because the students are not in one particular group all day. Further, class funds are only used to benefit a particular class, where projects financed by the Community Fund have a much broader scope.

Q: Is the Community Fund the same as a Social Fund?

A: Other EEBs have Social Funds, which are funded by a percentage of the APEEE membership fee. We would indeed like in the future to reach a stage where we are stable enough to establish such a fund. Last year, the Secondary school families were charged 60 euros for outings, which was not used in some classes. In the end, the surplus money was used as an unofficial Social Fund. Currently the profits from the vending machines are being used in the same way.

## 5. *Presentation of the budget 2014-2015*

Natalia Vandenberghe, who took over from Marc Henriques de Granada as Treasurer this year, presented the budget for the school year 2014-2015. Her goal was to assess as accurately as possible the financial situation of the APEEE, while maintaining a secure provision of services.

### **Proposals**

The proposal includes the budgets as presented by the services managers, the administration and the Community Fund, including all revenues and costs that can reasonably be expected to take place during this budgetary year 2014-2015.

Proposals related to the 2014/2015 budget are:

- maintaining the membership fee at € 50;
- maintaining the prices for transport;
- average 5% reduction in price for periscolaire activities;
- decreasing the prices for canteen by 20%;
- recruiting two additional part time staff members: transport assistant (transport) and webmaster (general affairs). The Board thanked outgoing webmaster Nigel Freake for his many contributions over the years;
- making a one-time € 5,000 donation to the Community Fund and have bank account charges (around 100 € per year for this sole bank account with financial charges, following a modification in the regulation in the bank sector) that are currently related to the Community Fund be paid from the general affairs financial costs budget line.

Question from the floor:

Q: Why are parents required to pay a € 50 membership fee? This fee is more expensive than in other EEBs.

A: The membership fees are compulsory in our statutes for “full” members. They were also made compulsory for families of children using APEEE services because when they were voluntary, very few members paid. In other schools, the voluntary payment level is about 85%-90%.

These fees are necessary to cover the APEEE administrative costs.

### **VOTE**

**Decision 2014-10-12\_6:** *The General Assembly DECIDES to adopt the budget proposal presented by the Board for the school year 2014-2015 (137 in favour, 0 abstentions, 6 negative votes).*

## 6. *Presentation and discussion on current files*

### Transport: Transport costs for children of divorced parents

The Chair reminded the Assembly that since the drafting of the General Assembly documents, the status of the file had improved. A letter was sent to all parents on December 8, 2014. There were no questions from the floor.

### Section representatives

The Assembly was asked whether the Section Representatives system could be approved as it was proposed in the report that accompanied the invitation to the GA.

### **VOTE**

**Decision 2014-10-12\_7:** *The General Assembly DECIDES, in order to facilitate communication between school (including the Education Councils), the APEEE and parents, to establish a Section Representative system (107 in favour, 21 abstentions, 9 negative votes).*

## 7. *Points/Resolutions submitted by parents*

The board received 3 points/motions to be discussed during the meeting:

- Motion on "The APEEE will pursue the issue of the provision of unhealthy snacks on school premises with the school administrative board".
- Motion on "Inclusive school methods with a focus on SEN (Special Educational Needs)"
- Question on "Inspection of Hygiene in the Kitchen and Canteen areas" (for this question, please also read to the 2013-2014 report on canteen).

The persons who put forward these motions were asked to stand up and make a brief presentation. There was no vote on the motion regarding hygiene in the kitchen and canteen areas, as the person who put forward the motion was absent and the questions raised in the motion were answered in the report on the canteen.

### **VOTE**

**Decision 2014-10-12\_8:** *The General Assembly DECIDES to work to either have the vending machines removed from the school premises after the contract with the provider has run out, or to have the machines stocked with different, healthy snacks (117 in favour, 20 abstentions, 7 negative votes)*

**Decision 2014-10-12\_9:** *The General Assembly DECIDES to reinforce the SEN Working Group, with the goal of improving SEN policy at EEBIV (121 in favour, 19 abstentions, 0 negative votes)*

## 8. *Results of the election*

See point 1 Election.

9. *AOB*

Nothing is treated in AOB.

The Chair thanks the parents and closes the session at 23:00.