



Association des parents d'élèves de l'école européenne de Bruxelles IV  
Parents Association of the European School, Brussels IV  
Elternvereinigung der Europäischen Schule Brüssel IV  
Associazione dei genitori della Scuola Europea di Bruxelles  
Oudervereniging van de Europese School Brussel IV  
Асоциация на родителите на учениците от Европейско училище Брюксел IV AISBL

# General Assembly

**5<sup>th</sup> December 2012**  
**19.00 – 23.00**  
**at the Salle Polyvalente**  
**European School IV**  
**Drève Sainte-Anne, 86, B-1020 Brussels**

English version

## Minutes of the Meeting

**From Berkendael to Laeken**



# **AGENDA**

## **General Assembly 05/12/2012**

### **Part I (19.00 – 20.00): Election of the Board**

1. Appointment of the Electoral Board
2. Presentation of candidates to the Board
3. Election of the Board

### **Part II (20.00 – 21.00): Open to the public**

4. Introduction by the President of the Parents Association
5. Discussion with:
  - Mr Kivinen, General Secretary of European Schools (tbc)
  - Mr Schlabe, Mr Faldt and Mrs Ivanauskiene, School Director and the Deputy Directors
  - Commission DG HR.Questions/Answers

### **Part III (21.00 – 23.00): For Members only**

6. Report on Activities (a) and Presentation of Accounts 2011-2012 (b)  
Questions and Answers  
**VOTE** on discharge of the Board on the Certified Accounts 2011-2012
7. Report on the move and establishment in the new school: What lessons can be learned from this experience.  
Discussion
8. Presentation of the Budget 2012-2013  
Questions and Answers  
**VOTE** on the Budget 2012–2013
9. Points/Resolutions submitted by parents  
Resolution  
Questions and answers  
**VOTE** on the resolution(s)
10. Results of the elections
11. AoB

## **Attendance of the General Assembly**

The GA was held on December 5<sup>th</sup> 2012 at the Salle Polyvalente of the European school IV, Drève Sainte Anne, 86, 1020 BRUSSELS.

The meeting was attended by 109 “full members”, some of which hold proxy authorisations for voting by other full members (27), resulting in a total of 136 votes present or represented.

This number of voters present or represented satisfies the quorum condition (10%) as requested by the article 9 of the statutes of the APEEE, to the voting of points under parts I and III. Further, affiliates members and guests are present as well.

The President of APEEE, Erika SCHULZE, chairs the GA. The meeting starts at 19:10 and ends at 23:20.

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## **Minutes of the General Assembly**

The President of APEEE, Erika SCHULZE, chairs the GA. She opens the meeting at 19:20, and she welcomes the attendees in the new premises of the school in Laeken, to the 6<sup>th</sup> regular General Assembly.

She then explains that the agenda has three parts: the first part is devoted to the election of new board members, a second part which is public with School Directors as invitees, and then a part for APEEE members only.

She also mentions that, for the first time, there are resolutions coming from the parents. As these resolutions address some points where APEEE has no competence but the school administration has, these items will be moved to the second part where the school representatives can response.

The documents are available in French and English.

## Part I (19.00 – 20.00): Election of the Board

There are 14 vacancies to the Administration Board of APEEE.

### 1. Appointment of the Electoral Board

The President asks the attendees to volunteer to the electoral board. Four persons volunteer and introduce themselves.

1. Camilla GAUDINA WIKSTEDT (IT)
2. Katrin MAHRENJOLZ (DE)
3. Lorraine EMSBACH (DE)
4. Yves BEKAERT (NL)

**Decision 2012-12-05\_1:** *The four volunteers, Mrs Camilla GAUDINA WIKSTEDT, Katrin MAHRENJOLZ, Lorraine EMSBACH and Mr Yves BEKAERT are APPROVED as the election board. (unanimity).*

### 2. Presentation of candidates to the Board

There are 14 candidates to the Administration Board. The President asks whether there are any other candidates. No other candidates step forward. Thus, the candidates are the following:

1	Marc HENRIQUES de GRANADA
2	Serge LEBEL
3	Monika PAULUS
4	Joëlle SALMON
5	Erika SCHULZE
6	Ralph WISHERMANN
7	Christian DRANTMANN
8	Martina SINDELAR
9	Sarah CONYERS BARBER
10	Nigel FREAKE
11	Iseult LENNON HUDSON
12	Steve O'BYRNE
13	Josephine USHER
14	Benoît VANDERGEETEN

Each candidate introduces himself/herself and answers to questions by the attendees.

### 3. Election of the Board

As there are 14 candidates for 14 vacant positions, the President proposes to have a vote en bloc, to speed up the voting process.

**Decision 2012-12-05\_2:** *The General Assembly decides to proceed to a vote en bloc for the election of the new CA members (unanimity).*

The vote takes place. The electoral board provides the results as follows:

**Decision 2012-12-05\_3:** *The General Assembly decides to appoint the 14 candidates as Board members :* Marc HENRIQUES de GRANADA, Serge LEBEL, Monika PAULUS, Joëlle SALMON, Erika SCHULZE, Ralph WISHERMANN, Christian DRANTMANN, Martina SINDELAR, Sarah CONYERS BARBER, Nigel FREAKE, Iseult LENNON HUDSON, Steve O'BYRNE, Josephine USHER, Benoît VANDERGEETEN. (Unanimous vote, no abstentions).

The President welcomes the new Board members, and invites them to attend the first CA meeting on 6th December 2012.

As the election process was resolved quickly (Part 1), attendees agreed to initiate the discussions on Part 3 as the speakers for Part 2 had not yet arrived.

## **Part II (20.00 – 21.00): Open to the public**

### **4. Introduction by the President of the Parents Association**

The President welcomes our guests:

1. Mr Schlabe, School Director
2. Mr Fäldt, Deputy Director for the secondary school
3. Mrs Ivanauskiene, Deputy Director for the nursery and primary schools

### **5. Discussion with our invitees :**

Mr. Schlabe makes a short presentation about the difficulties surrounding the move from Berkendael to Laeken. He also describes the present situation at Laeken and the problems he faces. More positively he signaled his efforts to improve the situation. He provides figures on how the pupil and teacher population is developing. In particular he notes the structural problem that the school now has 77 classes, has 55 seconded teachers and 110 locally-engaged staff. He announces that a Romanian section will open in September 2013. .

**Playground:** It is a high priority for Mr. Schlabe to resolve this situation. He stresses that there are too few places for the children to play. A working group has been set up. Equipment has been ordered for the nursery school and work will be carried out soon. He also notes that unexpectedly other equipment has had to be paid for out of the school budget (e.g. the blackboards in the nursery school).

**Security:** Mr. Schlabe announces that video cameras have been ordered but they will not be installed until legal questions have been resolved. The purpose of having cameras is to avoid bullying in unsupervised corners and to ensure security in the car park. There are too few seconded teachers and he cannot use locally-engaged teachers for playground supervision. More supervision is also necessary to avoid petty vandalism (e.g. paper in the toilets).

**Entrance to the school:** Mr. Schlabe notes the need to improve security around the school entrance. Mr. Schlabe has already written to the Board of Governors regarding the car park as a weak point in security. He reports speeding levels in the car park, and that the car park is reserved for people with reduced mobility, such as pregnant mothers or parents with small children.

**Permission to leave school grounds:** Mr. Schlabe would like to keep this to a minimum for security reasons and so that the children do not create a nuisance in the surrounding area. He suggests it may be possible to set up a canteen under the multi-use room (salle polyvalente) for older pupils.

**Timetable 2013-2014:** Mr. Schlabe initiates a discussion on the timetable, suggesting the start time could remain the same but that the end of the school day could be different according to the age of the pupils. It is not possible to give a final decision now, since there are too many variables. He notes that any change to the school timetable would have an impact on the school bus service, and that it may be necessary to have two services in the afternoon. The timetable also depends on the options offered next year for secondary school. Mr. Schlabe expresses his reluctance to rely on public transport for the older pupils.

**Events:** The Chinese Mission has offered to visit and celebrate *Chinese New Year* (at their expense). The *Science Symposium* will be hosted by EEB4 this year on 11-15 March 2013. Pupils will present their projects and there will be a competition. The best projects will go forward to the main competition. Mr. Schlabe wants to open up the school to the public so parents and others can see the exhibits. As for the *Somerfest*, Mr. Schlabe suggests opening it up to include the neighbourhood in line with the "fête des quartiers". *Other projects* include inviting children with disabilities from the neighbouring school to visit, installation of solar panels on the canteen roof etc.

## Questions and Answers

**Nursery playground:** Installation should take place over the Christmas holiday. There will be a soft play area and trees. There is talk of extending the area for bikes and installing a sheltered space for the children to play outside during rainy playtimes.

**Primary playground:** Consultation with children and teachers is underway, bearing in mind the architecture constraints since the site is a historical monument. For P1 and P2, a playhouse and a play train have been ordered. Requests include a movable imagination playground, calm area, football, possibly basketball, and a stage for performances. 60k€ will be invested this year, but for next year they may need other fund raising activities. The priority is to install as much equipment as possible, as quickly as possible.

**Timetable:** Some days may need to be different because of the different needs between the nursery, the primary and the secondary schools in 2013-2040. However, there is recognition that this will impact the bus services.

**Website:** Parents report difficulties to navigate between the Secretariat-General site, the school site etc to find out relevant information. There is a request that the minutes of committees and working groups are published on the website. Mr. Fäldt states that information on the composition of committees and working groups is already available on the official web site [www.eurasc.eu](http://www.eurasc.eu). A link to that website will be put on the school website. As for the publication of minutes there is a concern that this may breach personal data protection legislation. Mr. Fäldt commits to publishing a list of active working groups.

**Student Council:** Mr Fäldt explains that each class elects two reps, and two represent each language section. Meetings are held every 6 weeks with Mr Fäldt and also on their own initiative. The students are learning how to work effectively. The Student Council contributes to the improvements of the school and it also has a representative on the Education Council.

**Spiral staircase in the canteen:** The school is aware that it is slippery and they are monitoring the situation. Procedures to access and exit the canteen have changed. Nursery pupils no longer use the spiral staircase. They use the outside staircase as they have a longer eating period.

**How is the timetable adopted?** The timetable can be changed after the consent of parents (not for the administrative council in February), and the Board of Governors must be informed.

**Who signs off on the building?** As there have been numerous problems, parents ask who decides the building is safe. It is answered that the Régie des Bâtiments signs off and the fire brigade undertakes a check etc. Belgian building norms must be fulfilled. School keeps a list of problems but it has no leverage over the Régie des Bâtiments to get anything changed. When there are problems under guarantee, if it is not the fault of the school, there is more chance of getting them resolved.

**Secondary school lunch break:** Mr. Fäldt is open to consultation on how to improve the timetable. The current situation creates confusion.

**Opportunity for a refectory in the nursery:** This has been requested. It was not possible this year. However, other schools have it so Mrs Ivanauskiene is hopeful that it may be possible in the future.

**Playground:** Parents are concerned that the playgrounds will be used for pre-fabs when the school is overcrowded. There are also concerns that there is not a lot to do for pupils that are not interested in football. The suggestion is that a less expensive option could be pursued for the primary playground. Mrs Ivanauskiene mentions her interest in installing a garden area.

**Morning rush hour:** There was a lengthy debate on how to reduce the chaos of the morning rush hour. Mr. Schlable noted that a neighbourhood meeting with the town council will take place on 18 December at 19:00. He has written to the mayor regarding a possible speed limit in the Drève Sainte Anne. A



suggestion has been put forward by the town council to discourage car use in Drève Sainte Anne by making it a one-way street. Mr. Schlabe says he is actively monitoring the situation.

**Pedestrian and cyclist safety around the school boundary:** Parents have put forward proposals but are discontent. As regards the parent request to open the school gate onto Rue Medori, Mr Schlabe does not believe it is feasible due to the need for an additional security guard, and the possible risk of children using the gate when the busses arrive. There were additional comments about parents parking on the pavement, the extent to which the school has engaged with the Belgian authorities; and school liability for accidents on the way to school. Mr. Schlabe noted the school cannot take responsibility for issues out of its control. Nevertheless, he is willing to help where he can. He also mentioned that budgetary constraints, which make it impossible to fund an additional security guard. He reiterated that he has twice requested assistance from the town council regarding the pavements, that he remains vigilant and will follow-up.

**Tests and continual assessments:** Parents requested copies of test results so that they can better monitor pupils' progress. Mr. Schlabe says that the tests must be kept on-site but noted that some teachers provide photocopies. He noted his concerns that this could lead to falsification of test results, and the volume of paper needed for systematic photocopies. In his view, copies should be made only on a case-by-case basis. He suggested that parents visit school to see test results. A parent suggested scanning documents as an alternative, and reiterated that parents are partners in the education process and that loss or falsification would be low risk. Mr. Schlabe accepts that scans could be a solution and that he is open to suggestions that do not cause undue bureaucracy for his staff. Parents reiterated that other European schools in Brussels give test results to the parents. Other parents suggested that greater use could be made of on-line tools for education and that a technological solution could be found.

**Language 2 and disparities between pupil abilities:** Mr. Schlabe recognized that there are disparities and that a temporary solution in secondary school is in place purely because of children coming from the Belgian system have studied NL instead of one of the school choices. FR, DE, EN.

**Timetabling:** Parents requested that the school account for the fact that one way for the children to integrate with their local community is to participate in local activities on a Wednesday afternoon.

**The barrier surrounding the floor above the canteen:** Mr. Schlabe notes that additional barriers with red and white tape have been installed to keep pupils away from the edge. The older secondary students may be granted access to this floor at a later date.

**Supervision at playtime:** Mrs Ivanauskiene says the ratio between children and supervisors is good, better than other schools. There are even two supervisors just to supervise the football.

**Timing at canteen and whether classrooms could be used as alternative:**

The school stated that timing should be sufficient if food is delivered on time and pupils talk less. Classrooms cannot be used for hygiene reasons and a restricted budget which precludes additional cleaning.

**Question of whether the bus park could be used for playtime:** Mr. Schlabe is looking into it but there is a problem of rainwater.

**Study class in breaks:** Mrs Ivanauskiene indicated her preference that pupils play.

**Lunch time periscolaire activities:** Mrs Ivanauskiene indicated her preference that pupils play, but that she remains open to discussion. Mr Fäldt noted the need for more activities for secondary school pupils. Last year he introduced a newspaper and science club but this places a burden on teachers.

**Parking for nursery school pupils:** Parents would like to have a 15-minute kiss and ride so that they can accompany their children to the class. Mr. Schlabe replied that extending kiss and ride would be a problem due to capacity of parking, but that monitors are available to accompany children from their parents' car.

**Mobility:** Mr Schlabe will hold a meeting after the 18 Dec meeting.

**Class sizes in primary:** This is a particular issue for P2FR (3x3 classes of 30 children). Mr. Schlabe noted that the school regulations state that 30 children are the maximum number allowed.

**Camera surveillance:** The parents expressed their surprise at the cost and lack of preparation regarding data protection. Mr. Schlabe restated his view that it is necessary and says he is seeking legal advice and will inform parents through the education council.

**Level 2 language teaching:** Mr Fäldt refers to national research which points against streaming students. No other school streams except EEB4 who makes an exception for the S1 and S2 students that are absolute beginners (an additional 2 hours) and those who are perfectly bilingual. He says it is a dynamic process, and he aims to continue with mixed groups in S3.

**Tartinistes:** Another solution needs to be found as the current system does not work.

**Point of order:** Thanks for patience and request for written responses on each point especially surveillance cameras and security around the school. Mr. Schlabe points to role of education council and school board. He makes a plea for solution to deal with the children that are left at school after hours. Mr Schlabe would like to have a meeting with parents' association board members every 6 weeks to deal with issues as they arise.

## **Part III (21.00 – 23.00): For Members only**

### **6. Report on Activities (a) and Presentation of Accounts 2011-2012 (b)**

Erika reported on the last school year. She pointed out that our school is a new and fast-growing school with a high percentage of new pupils, and that about half of the parents are new parents. She noted the impact to service organisation and delivery and the new difficulties and problems for the services provided by APEEE.

Erika made a brief overview of the difficulties in 2011, particularly regarding transport, the last-minute changes to the afterschool provision due to COLE opening, and the knock-on effects to transport. For instance, the transport manager sick leave. She noted the lack of available parent volunteers - in mid-August 2011, there were only 2 parents to arrange the whole transport system (Erika and Monika).

She noted that APEEE has worked through a very difficult situation with a heavy work load. More positively, with director, Eric Piettre, on board, things have improved. She also noted the contribution of other new staff, such as the “periscolaire” manager.

The Parents thanked Erika and Monika for their time and efforts during the summer of 2011.

#### **Presentation of Accounts 2011-2012**

Marc Henriques de Granada, Treasurer of the APEEE, reports about the accounts. He says that all events that had an impact on the budget are given in details in the documents provided to the APEEE members for the General Assembly.

He recalled that the budgetary exercise is based on the school year (i.e.: from 1st September to 31st August) instead the calendar year, that the actual number of pupils enrolled in the year is different from the pre-enrolment number provided before the 1st September.

He explained the reasons behind the APEEE debt for the repayment of a loan by the APEEE of the other Brussels schools. He also explained that since the APEEE was founded there has been a deficit, leading to a cumulative loss of 135 K€.

Marc explained that an accounting principle was introduced. This principle is meant to better show budgetary contribution of the General Affairs section. According to that principle, the support costs of each service (Canteen, transport, periscolaire) is now imputed on a pro rata basis to its cash flow.

Marc also provided a short overview of the difficulties APEEE has had to face in 2011-2012 in terms of staff turn-over, and training for budget management. He also noted that the use of pre-fab buildings in the Berkendael parking lot affected take-up of the periscolaire activities, whereas the fixed costs remained the same.

He also noted that the IT system has been wholly inadequate, leading to loss of work time and delays. The Board had allocated an investment budget to improve the IT system, but this was used instead for the move from Berkendael to Laeken. IT investment has been postponed to the next school year.

There were problems with the school kitchen in Berkendael so that APEEE was not able to provide the children with hot meals at some points in the school year. A special budget has now been allocated to manage such crises, should they occur at Laeken.

Marc then provided some key figures and tables on income and expenditure.

Key figures for the budget for year 2011/2012 are the following :

- Total revenue :	1,821,003.48 Euros
- Total expenditures :	1,767,440.20 Euros
- Net income :	53,563.28 Euros (roughly 3% of total revenue)

As a conclusion, Marc noted that in 2011-2012, for the first time in the history of our association, there was a surplus. He proposed using this to set up a small reserve and to make a first repayment of the loan – roughly 25 K€.

As for the question from an attendee about the loan to the other APEEEs, the treasurer replies it amounts to 135000 €.

**VOTE** on discharge of the Board on the Certified Accounts 2011-2012.

**Decision 2012-12-05\_4:** *The discharge of the Administration Board on the certified Accounts 2011-2012 is APPROVED by unanimity (no abstentions).*

## **7. Report on the move and the establishment in the new school: What lessons can be learned from this experience.**

Joëlle Salmon provided a report on the move from Berkendael to Laeken to inform the parents that the move generated a heavy workload for the APEEE and its employees in June, July and August 2012 (i.e. more or less 10 hours a day, including Saturdays and Sundays). She also noted with regret that even if this was recognized by many parents, other parents had not understood the situation and complained. A motion was carried to thank the APEEE employees for their commitment during the move.

## **8. Presentation of the Budget 2012-2013**

Marc presents the proposal for the budget of the next school year 2012-2013. The presentation slides are given in annex.

He explained that the move generated additional unforeseen costs, delays and impacts on the quality of services provided by APEEE (Examples include the

lack of available fixed phone lines which resulted in the need to purchase mobile phones, staff overtime and pressure, the flood in the kitchen).

He also noted that as the school is continually growing, there was a need to purchase additional canteen equipment. The canteen operational system had to be reorganised due the configuration of the new space, for instance more cleaning is required. A badge system is being put in place to ensure that meals are served only to paying pupils.

As regards the bus service, the bus lines had to be organised from scratch with twice as many pupils. This has also generated additional costs due to recruitment of AELE and other contractual agents.

For the future, Marc noted the urgent need for a Human Resource Strategy, which would include an agreed salary and benefits system, training programme and other aspects to comply with Belgian legislation. He also warned that if Belgian legislation changes, as it may from January 2013, it will no longer be possible to use AELEs as monitors on the buses. If this occurs, the costs of running the transport service could triple overnight.

Regarding the difference in prices between Brussels 4 and the other European Schools in Brussels, Marc explained why such a comparison is not be relevant. For example, he noted that as the enrolment policy to European Schools in Brussels is no longer based geographical proximity, this has a significant impact on the number of bus lines and demand for services, which results on higher costs. He also noted the structure of our school population, which mainly comprises nursery and primary pupils, which explains why we have fewer periscolaire activities and lower use of the cafeteria (as apposed to the canteen), than other European Schools in Brussels. Finally he noted the lack of historical financial reserves, due to the shorter length of time the association has been in operation, the higher proportion of new parents, who are less informed or less aware of the specificities of the European schools. This explains why, in comparison to other European Schools in Brussels, staff has to field many more questions from parents.

**Decision 2012-12-05\_5** *The budget 2012-2013 as proposed to the GA is APPROVED by majority (unanimity, no abstentions, no cons).*

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

Most of these points have already been answered in section 5 by the School Directors.

### **Musical activities in the school through the periscolaire.**

A parent expressed interest in supporting musical lessons at the school in periscolaire. Erika explained the priorities of the board – to provide activities that encourage the pupils to interact with one another (e.g. team sports), rather than individual activities, which can be accessed through the private sector or locally. It is recalled that the school is already offering an orchestra and a choir, and that the school needs to have a pupil population with a certain level of music skill if these activities are to be a success. A debate ensued as to

whether the parent resolution would favour music to the detriment of other activities.

**Decision 2012-12-31\_6:** *The GA supports the school to build up an orchestra and a choir. APPROVED by majority (45 pros, 39 cons, 17 abstentions).*

#### **Bus line for M1-P2 to have bus home at 12.45 on Fridays in 2013-2014**

There was discussion as to whether this could be arranged for next year. Parents estimated that around 230 pupils would be concerned. This would require 6 more busses at a cost of 200 000 €.

Ralph Wischermann made clear any feasibility assessment could not be carried out by the existing transport committee due to competing priorities – preparations for the new and increased pupil intake, the new school timetable and putting in place a new enrolment policy across the APEEE services.

**Decision 2012-12-31\_7:** *The GA decides to support an investigation by means of a survey into the subject within the work plan of the Transport Committee. However, whatever the result, implementing a Friday lunch transport service is subject to resolving higher priorities first. APPROVED by majority (41 in favour, 28 against, 22 abstentions).*

#### **10. Results of the elections**

See Section 3 and Decision 2012-12-05\_3.

#### **11. AoB**

None

The General Assembly is closed at 23:20.

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