

Motion to present to the General Assembly: Creation of a Social Fund at EEB IV to commence in the academic year 2016 - 2017

Motion

The General Assembly asks the APEEE to set up a working group which will include representatives from the School, the Administrative Board of the APEEE and which may include other members of the APEEE^[1] with a view to establishing a Social Fund to support members of the school community in situations of financial hardship. The Social Fund would be launched at the earliest in the academic year 2016 – 2017.

The General Assembly agrees to provision 15,000 euros from the profits resulting from the financial year 2014-2015 to launch the Fund.

^[1] The APEEE means any member of the Parents Association

Explanatory Statement

Background

Many of the other European Schools, including EEB2 and EEB3, have a Social Fund which supports both projects and events that enhance school life and individuals who are in situations of social hardship.¹

In 2014, the APEEE of EEB4 established a Community Fund. The objective of the Community Fund is to contribute to projects and events that may enhance school life.² The Community Fund is not mandated to support individuals who are in situations of social or financial hardship.

It has become increasingly apparent that there are members of our school community who find themselves in situations of social and/or financial hardship. The absence of a Social Fund is problematic as there is no means by which the APEEE can assist in those situations and support is currently provided on an *ad hoc* basis by the School.³ It is therefore, important to establish a means by which the APEEE can show solidarity to those members of the School Community who require it.

The APEEE is now in a position of financial stability and has reported profits in the financial year from 2014 – 2015. It is therefore feasible both to provision some of those profits (15 000 euros) to launch a Social Fund. The Fund would not be operational until 2016 – 2017 at the earliest as it will be necessary to draw up and approve detailed rules.

Objective of the present motion

The objective of this motion is to mandate the APEEE to work in collaboration with the School to create a Social Fund which will be financially and structurally independent from the Community Fund and which will support members of the school community in situations of social and financial hardship.

Organisational Structure

¹ For details of the Social Fund in Ixelles:

http://www.eeb3.eu/fichiers/contenu_fichiers2/539/RulesFondsSocial23-10-07EN.pdf

For details of the Social Fund in Woluwe:

For details of the Social Fund in Uccle:

² See Article 1 of the Community Fund Rules,

http://www.bru4.eu/images/community_fund/CommunityFundRegulations_EN.pdf

³ The APEEE is not involved in the provision of that assistance and does not have access to the form in which that assistance has historically been provided.

Given that to date the APEEE has not played a role in assisting members of the Community who find themselves in situations of social hardship, the proposal is to set up a working group with the School and potentially with other members of the school community, to define the rules that would apply including the criteria for eligibility, the amount of funding that may be available and the type of information applicants would need to provide. The rules will also determine who will be empowered to decide applications. The rules will be approved, once drafted, by the Administrative Board of the APEEE.

It is anticipated that the rules in EEB4 will be broadly in line with those applicable in the other European Schools in Brussels but they may also reflect the specificities of our school community.

As to the members of the Committee who decide applications, in the other schools these are members of the elected Board of Administrators or CA. Those CA Members are, however, expressly empowered to consult the school in order to verify details as to the financial situation presented by individual applicants and to ascertain whether there has, for example, been a reduction in school fees. It is envisaged therefore, that there will be ongoing collaboration with the school.⁴

Unlike the situation in some of the other European Schools, the proposal for EEB4 is to keep the Social Fund organisationally and financially independent from the Community Fund. After consultation with the current Community Fund Committee⁵ and discussions with representatives from other European Schools, it appears that the two Funds pursue different objectives and must be organised differently. In particular:

- The Community Fund is dependent on the fundraising initiatives and donations of parents⁶. It applies a policy of complete transparency in terms of both the sources of its funding and the distribution of those funds.
- A Social Fund is necessarily based on a principle of solidarity and will be funded differently. In the interests of future Applicants, whilst there will be transparency as to the source of the funding, the details of how the funds are distributed must respect the right to confidentiality.

Financing

It is proposed to launch the Social Fund with an initial grant of up to 15,000 euros. This money will be provisioned from the profits from the 2014-2015 financial year and will be made available to the Fund on its launch. This sum has been calculated with reference to the amount budgeted by the other European Schools.⁷

In order to sustain the Social Fund in the future, it will be necessary to examine different options and different potential financial mechanisms. For example, in EEB2 and EEB3 the social funds are

⁴ Members of the school staff have indicated a willingness to be involved in this process.

⁵ <http://www.bru4.eu/the-eeb4-community-fund/community-fund-committee>

⁶ A launch donation was made by the APEEE in line with the motion passed at the General Assembly in 2014.

⁷ In 2014, Ixelles had approx. 11,000 euros in its social fund account. In 2014 – 2015, Woluwe budgeted for just over 8,000 euros.

financed by an allocation from the APEEE budget which is determined annually and approved at the GA⁸. This takes the form of a transfer of a proportion of the membership fee directly in to the Fund. However, the “Social Fund” in those schools is a hybrid of both the Community Fund at EEB4 and the proposed Social Fund. Accordingly, the proportion of the Membership Fee also contributes to sustaining the monies available for community projects. This is not the case in EEB4.

At this stage, the GA is not being asked to approve any proposal regarding the long term funding of the Social Fund. If and when the fund is established, any proposal as to its future sustainable funding will be brought back to the GA for approval⁹ by which time the rules will have been defined. In the first year, the provision of up to 15,000 euros should be sufficient to enable the fund to function.

Potential Beneficiaries

The way that the other European Schools have defined potential beneficiaries of the Social Fund varies. In Ixelles, the rules refer to “individual families in the school” and to “individual pupils”. In Woluwe grants are also made to “individual pupils”. There is no explicit condition that the families must have paid the APEEE membership fee.

Given the variance in practice, and the need to examine with the School the profile and needs of our school community based on their experience, this current proposal is to mandate the APEEE to establish a fund which would benefit members of the “school community” without defining at this stage what precise eligibility criteria will apply (i.e. whether it will be a requirement to be a paid up member of the APEEE). Prior to the launch of the Fund, the criteria will be established and the rules will be approved by the Board of the CA who will therefore, have the opportunity to discuss this issue in greater detail.

⁸ For example, in 2013 – 2014, the amount allocated by EEB2 was 5 euros (annual subscription 45 euros).

⁹ At the earliest – the GA in the 2016 – 2017 school year.