



Administrative Board Meeting/Réunion du Conseil d' Administration

Brussels Thursday, 28th May 2020

ZOOM Video Meeting: 13:00-15:05

Present: Stephanie Buus, Kristin Dijkstra, Luca Dussart Ilies, Dorothee Farwerck Lefort, Mariana Ghitoi, Alexandre Grigorescu Negri, Ambar Hernandez Pacheco, Karim Kettani, Nadia Kichaout, Vladas Kukulskis, Angela Muraca, Dan Nicolae, Tzvetomir Penev, Dana Adriana Puia Morel, Luigi Rosario Filippo Sciusco, Tobias Stricker, Pénélope Vlandas.

Absent: Victoria Petrova, Iulian Vasile.

Excused: Horst Nickels.

Proxy: Horst Nickels to Kristin Dijkstra, Alexandre Grigorescu-Negri to Kristin Dijkstra from 2:13 pm to 2:28 pm.

Guest: Manuela Pamio, Secretariat of APEEE and, Eric Piettre, the Director of the APEEE of Brussels IV.

Minutes 28.05.2020

The quorum is present. Ms Dijkstra chairs the Administrative Board meeting.

1. Approval of agenda.

One item is added to the agenda:

1) Proposal to send a Thank-you letter to teachers.

The agenda is adopted as amended.

2. Approval of Minutes from May 7, 2020.

Unanimously adopted without any remarks

3. Presentation of figures and VOTE on reimbursements.

Mr Grigorescu-Negri, the Treasurer of the APEEE of Brussels IV, gives an overview of the financial impact of Covid-19 on the APEEE services (canteen, transport, and extra-curricular activities). All documents related (the Excel file and the PowerPoint presentation) were previously posted on Bitrix platform and sent to all Board members by e-mail. The Treasurer presents to the Board:

-The evolution of cost reduction by making a comparison between two periods: from September 2019 to 16/03/2020 and from 16/03/2020 to the end of the school year. Mr Grigorescu-Negri refers that a part of the APEEE staff is in teleworking and another part has been placed on 'temporary unemployment' (chômage temporaire) in order to reduce costs to the minimum and be able to reopen as fast as possible.

-A projection of the APEEE financial position. The total amount of revenues, fixed costs, and benefits per service from 16/03/2020 to the end of the school year.

-The financial cash flow. A simulation of what could happen in terms of cash flow from May 2020 to August 2020.

-An estimation of the amount reimbursed per parent and per service without including fixed costs.

After this analysis, Mr Grigorescu-Negri submits to the Board two voting options for consideration. He indicates the rationale behind each vote, the amount that should be globally reimbursed to parents and how much cash we should keep in July 2020:

-1st Option: Reimbursement of 1.3 M € (except those who did not pay). Benefits at the end of the year =0 (31/08/2020) and a minimum free cash of 631 K € if we reimburse parents in July.

or

-2nd Option: Reimbursement of 1.9 M € (except those who did not pay). Benefits end of year: -600 K € and minimum free cash of 31 K € if we reimburse parents in July.

The Treasurer of the APEEE explains that the option of keeping money for next year is not feasible from an accounting point of view.

Mr Kettani points out that the partial reimbursement of advance payments made by the parents is a debt for our parents' association. Basically, we are paying back the debt that we have towards parents. He insists on the fact that the service regulations for next year should include a specific clause stating that the reimbursement for services not provided will be made by reduction of fixed costs.

With reference to the timing of reimbursement, Ms Vlandas, the Board responsible for the extra-curricular activities, would like that the reimbursement of the extra-curricular activities not provided may be made in June before launching the payment request for the next academic year.

VOTE ON REIMBURSEMENT

OPTION 1 - Reimbursement minus fixed costs and change in regulation.

Or

OPTION 2 - Full Reimbursement.

Voting result: 16 for option 1, 2 for option 2.

The Board adopts by large majority the option 1.

The Treasurer of the APEEE would like that the communication on reimbursement may be sent to all parents of the EEBIV. This communication should clearly indicate the decision taken by the Board and its rationale.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
01 CA 28/05/2020	To prepare a statement for the APEEE website and an e-mail communication to all parents about reimbursement	Piettre Eric	Tomorrow or next Tuesday at the latest

With reference to the extra-curricular activities, Mr Sciusco asks a verification of fixed costs for all extra-curricular activities as well as the average price per activity. It is explained that the most significant cost for the extra-curricular activities comes from human resources and that the reimbursement to parents will be made on a pro-rata temporis basis. Ms Vlandas announces that there will be an increase of the extra-curricular activity prices for parents next year firstly, because the group of pupils will be smaller (limitations related to the pandemic crisis) and secondly, we need to avoid another deficit situation.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
02 CA 28/05/2020	To check the fix costs for all extra-curricular activities and the average price calculated per each activity.	Piettre Eric	As soon as possible

4. Proposal for supporting bus companies in COVID-19 crisis and VOTE.

The President of the APEEE of Brussels IV introduces the topic of the bus companies and the potential to support them. This topic was also briefly discussed at the last Administrative Board meeting (AB 7/05/2020). Initially the Belgian Federation of Bus Companies made an evaluation of their fixed costs during this crisis period and they fixed that at a percentage of 28 percent. Contractually the APEEEs are not obliged to pay compensation to the bus companies except the APEEE of Brussels II which is obliged to pay 3% for the period where the bus service was not provided.

The proposal that came out as a compromise between the two figures was the 15 per cent and initially, the four Brussels APEEEs entered to talk with the PMO to see if they would support that. The APEEE of Brussels I and Brussels III strongly support the concept of 15 percent solidarity payment to the bus companies. The President and the Director of the APEEE of Brussels IV, the representative from the APEEE of Brussels II thought that it could be better to start negotiations on contracts for September in order to ensure business continuity and security. Mr Piettre presents the position of the Transport Working Group on this matter. After a meeting with the Board member responsible for the transport, the transport manager, the Treasurer, the President and the Director of the APEEE of Brussels IV, it is considered better to close this fiscal year with the current costs and to start next year with new prices covering the evolution of new and different costs. In fact, Mr Piettre informs the Board that we should expect an increase of transport prices in September because the 30km speed limit required in Brussels and the environmental measures will have an impact on transport costs. The payment of the special solidarity compensation of 15 percent to the bus companies would be risky because if a bus company goes out of business, the money would be lost. In addition, these companies could also receive some help from the Belgian State for example the possibility of postponing the payment for ONSS and VAT.

Mr Grigorescu-Negri points out that it is not our role to support private companies and we need to start negotiations with bus companies as soon as possible to ensure the transport service in September. Ideally these negotiations should be made together with the other APEEEs based in Brussels in order to have a framework contract with bus companies, this could give us more leverage in the negotiations.

Mr Piettre announces that the APEEE of Brussels IV will take the lead next week with the other APEEEs (BXL I, BXL II, BXL III) to start negotiations with bus companies. It seems that Woluwe and Ixelles are very keen to enter in this group negotiation. The President of the APEEE of Brussels IV refers it was discussed with the PMO that there would be increased costs for the bus contracts due to a number of factors COVID-related and not COVID-related. The representative of the PMO said that they could agree with higher costs if these are justifiable.

The Vice-President for Pedagogical affairs makes reference to another project: the draft contract between the four Brussels parents' associations and the bus providers for the voluntary and the extraordinary contribution to the bus companies during the lockdown period. Mr Kettani is not in favour of this option. He considers that this proposal might be risky because we are not sure that these amounts

may ensure the survival of our school bus companies and in case of bankruptcy these amounts would be lost. If we wish to continue our long-standing collaboration with our bus providers, we should start negotiations on payment modalities as quickly as possible.

The Board proceeds to the vote on support bus companies.

<p>VOTE ON SUPPORT BUS COMPANIES</p> <p>OPTION 1 - 15% fixed cost solidarity premium to Bus Companies. Or OPTION 2 - Negotiate contracts for next year with augmented costs.</p> <p>Voting result: 2 for option 1, 15 for option 2, 1 abstention.</p> <p><i>The Board adopts by large majority the option 2.</i></p>
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5. Proposed letter to Commissioner Hahn on behalf of transport companies VOTE.

The APEEE of Brussels II has drafted a letter to Mr Hahn, the European Commissioner for Budget and Administration, in order to highlight the financial problems of our transport providers due to coronavirus and to get financial support from the European Commission (PMO). This letter should be signed by the Presidents of the four APEEEs based in Brussels. Ms Dijkstra invites all Board members to have a look at the draft letter, previously published on Bitrix platform, and send their comments. It is clarified that there will be no vote on the proposed letter.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
03 CA 28/05/2020	To look at the proposed letter to Commissioner Hahn and send the comments to the President and the Director of the APEEE of Brussels IV	The Board	In the coming days

6. Service inscriptions and text of regulations.

Mr Piettre is pleased to announce that the on-line enrolment to the canteen service for the 2020-2021 academic year will open on Tuesday 2nd June 2020. Ms Vlandas refers the enrolments are being processed 'on first come, first served' basis so it is very important that the open enrollment announcement may be transmitted not only to all parents of the EEBIV but also to the newcomers. She would like that Mr Piettre may ask the Secretary-General of the European Schools the electronic mailing list of new parents who have agreed to share their contact details with the parents' association.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
04 CA 28/05/2020	To ask the school the electronic mailing list of new parents.	Eric Piettre	In the coming days

The discussion focuses on the 2020-2021 rules for the transport and canteen services. The Board agrees to remove the following sentence *'No refund will be made in case of exceptional circumstances caused by third parties'* from the 2020-2021 transport rules. This sentence, not related to the COVID-19 crisis, could create confusion among parents. It was included in the 2019-2020 transport rules due to the modifications done by the EEBIV regarding ending school on Fridays noon before Christmas and Easter holiday. Mr Sciusco refers that this cancellation should be notified to all parents by e-mail.

With reference to the data protection sentence included in the 2020-2021 canteen rules, Mr Stricker affirms that we should mention that all personal data collected by the parents' association may be communicated to the European school of Brussels IV. The Board member responsible for the canteen, is also in favour that the unused canteen tickets related to the lockdown period may be valid next year. Ms Vlandas announces that the extra-curricular activity team is revising the 2020-2021 extra-curricular activity rules and finalizing the programme of the extra-curricular activities for the next academic year. They would like to offer a wider range of extra-curricular activities on Wednesday afternoons followed by a school bus line from school to the EU Quarter (Drop-off Merode).

7. Proposal to send a Thank you letter to teachers.

The President of the APEEE of Brussels IV informs the Board that last night there was a WhatsApp exchange regarding the thank you letter to teachers. The WhatsApp Group proposed that the text of the letter may be re-drafted, supported by the APEEE Board and sent through the Community Building WG. Ms Hernandez Pacheco explains that the thank-you letter should thank globally the body of teachers for the work provided in these difficult times and explain what the APEEE Board is doing during the lockdown period. She thinks it would be better to send the letter through the Community Building Working Group. Different views are expressed regarding this proposal. There are different feelings within the Board, so it is decided to proceed to the vote.

<p>1. VOTE ON THANK YOU LETTER</p> <p>OPTION 1- To send from the Board Or OPTION 2 -To send from the Community Building WG. Or OPTION 3 -To send nothing</p> <p>Voting result: 8 for option 1, 4 for option 2, 4 for option 3, 2 abstentions.</p>

It is agreed to launch a second vote on the Thank you letter.

<p>2. VOTE ON THANK YOU LETTER</p> <p>OPTION 1- To send from the Board Or OPTION 2- To send from the Community Building WG.</p> <p>Voting result: 8 for option 1, 7 for option 2 and 2 abstentions.</p> <p><i>The Board decides that the thank you letter will be sent from the Board (1st Option).</i></p>
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Ms Hernandez Pacheco has amended the draft letter to the teachers taking into account the comments expressed during the meeting. As agreed at today's meeting, it will be used the 'many of you' formula to thank the many of teachers who have worked hard during this time.

With reference to the upcoming meetings, Ms Dijkstra announces the following dates:

- 29/05/2020 Pedagogical Working Group meeting
- 2/06/2020 INTERPARENTS meeting to prepare the Extraordinary JTC meeting
- 4/06/2020 Meeting with the EEBIV
- 5/06/2020 Extraordinary JTC meeting

The Board meeting ends at 15:05 pm.