



Administrative Board Meeting/Réunion du Conseil d' Administration

Brussels Thursday, 3rd December 2020

ZOOM Video Meeting: 12:35-14:55

Present: Stephanie Buus, Kristin Dijkstra, Luca Dussart Ilies, Alexandre Grigorescu Negri, Nadia Kichaout, Vladas Kukulskis, Horst Nickels, Dan Nicolae, Victoria Petrova, Dana Adriana Puia Morel, Luigi Rosario Filippo Sciusco, Tobias Stricker, Iulian Vasile, Pénélope Vlandas.

Absent: Mariana Ghitoi, Karim Kettani, Angela Muraca, Tzvetomir Penev.

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

Minutes 03.12.2020

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

1. Approval of agenda.

As requested by Ms Vlandas, one information point is added to the agenda:

- Proposal of Action Sport stages during the second week of January 2021.

The agenda is adopted as amended.

2. Approval of Minutes from November 5th, 2020.

Adopted without any remarks.

3. Proposal of Action Sport stages during the second week of January 2021.

The European Schools in Brussels have decided that from 7th January 2021 to 15th January 2021 all cycles (nursery, primary and secondary) will be following online lessons. In situ teaching will start from 18th January 2021. Ms Vlandas refers that some parents have asked to have part-time or full-time stages for their kids during the online teaching weeks. She has asked the extracurricular manager to contact Action Sport and see if they can organize stages for pupils of the European schools during the second week of January. In the event of a positive response, an offer should be submitted to our association. Ms Vlandas clarifies that these stages should be provided outside school to kids who stay in Belgium and have respected the quarantine and the Belgian regulations. The extracurricular team must not organize these stages but only share this information with parents of the EEBIV and with the other APEEEs based in Brussels. We might send an e-mail to parents directly or post a communication via Facebook by making clear that Action Sport stages do not prevent kids from following the online teaching, the quarantine period and the Belgian regulations. Ms Kichaout fully supports this idea because it is completely manageable to follow online lessons or do homework in the morning and have outdoor activities in the afternoon.

4. Canteen points (when to resume service and microwaves).

According to the Cocom, we can provide the canteen service to pupils thanks to the health measures that we have implemented. Mr Piettre has shared this positive communication with the EEBIV and the OIB. Ms Vlandas asks when and how we can resume the canteen service. She considers that it is essential to open the canteen as soon as possible because we need to help parents and the canteen is one of the core services. Mr Piettre refers that we need the order forms from the OIB to deliver lunches on Wednesday afternoons and snacks in the afternoons. At the moment, the school is using the dining halls of the canteen building (L2 +L3) to allow kids to eat their own lunches. Consequently, our equipment has been moved. According to the Director of the APEEE, if the Board decides to resume the canteen service, we could be ready to provide this service next Tuesday.

The President of the APEEE points out that the reopening of the canteen during the week of 14th December 2020 is a risky proposal because we do not know how many pupils will be at school during that week and too many factors are uncertain. We need to be prudent and keep our association going.

Ms Vlandas points out that we should make a distinction between snacks and Wednesdays' lunches provided to the OIB kids and lunches provided to kids the other school days. We could provide hot meals to nursery and primary kids before Christmas and to secondary students in January. Mr Nicolae fully agrees and supports the reopening of the canteen but he thinks that for a budgetary point of view this is not currently feasible.

Mr Grigorescu-Negri reminds all members that three weeks ago the Board decided by written procedure not to serve meals at the canteen to nursery kids. He points out that before voting on resumption of the canteen service for all pupils (nursery/primary and secondary cycles), we need to have a clear estimation of costs and their financial impact. Ms Kichaout refers that if we decide to open the canteen service, the absence of pupils should not be taken into account and parents should be charged when the service is functioning. We should have clear figures before voting and know the total amount of costs for the reopening or closure.

Ms Petrova points out that the purpose of our association is to provide services to kids and families. It is important not only that children may eat hot meals at lunchtime, but they may have enough time to do it. She raises an important issue: pupils currently have a very limited amount of time to eat their own packed lunches because of the extra-security measures in place. Ms Petrova refers that normally the extra-costs related to the coronavirus would be the same if the canteen opens in December 2020 or January 2021 because the sanitary measures must be put in place.

The Executive Board meeting decided that the additional costs that we incurred because of Covid-19 should be supported. Ms Petrova refers that we can foresee in the budget a COVID-19 reserve to cope with the coronavirus measures that will have anyhow. We should recall that parents would be charged as soon as our services are functioning. According to her point of view, it is inconceivable that we prefer to keep people outside of work, without no social contact with reduced income for workers.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
01 CA 03/12/2020	To contact the canteen manager and asks for providing a report with detailed figures. This report should allow Board members to take a decision.	Tobias Stricker	In the coming days

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
02 CA 03/12/2020	To check with the school management if the resumption of the canteen service is feasible.	Eric Piettre and Tobias Stricker	In the coming days

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
03 CA 03/12/2020	To inform the OIB that we can provide snacks to kids enrolled in the Afterschool childcare centres from next week.	Eric Piettre	In the coming days

Mr Vladas informs the Board that a Belgian school allows the use of microwaves in classrooms. The following question is raised: what is the situation in our school? Mr Stricker refers that the fire department does not allow the use of microwaves in school because there is a high risk of fire. The school management is following this advice.

5. Budget GA.

Mr Grigorescu-Negri presents to the Board the 2019-2020 results and the proposed draft Budget for the 2020-2021 school year with different scenarios. He clarifies that we do not vote the budget at today's meeting, but we need to discuss the different scenarios and see how these should be presented at the GA. The draft 2020-2021 Budget needs to be approved by the Board before 18th December 2020. A good timing is to launch the online voting on 14th December 2020. The Treasurer of the APEEE of Brussels IV submits to the Board four Budget versions for discussion:

Budget 0, 2020-2021: a version without any increase of prices. The loss amounts to -928.177,00 euro.
Budget 1, 2020-2021: a version including an increase of prices for the Food and Beverage (10%) and for the transport (5%). The loss is reduced to -591.940,36 euro.
Budget 2, 2020-2021: a version including an increase of prices for the Food and Beverage (15%) and for the transport (7%). The loss is reduced to -447.453,09 euro.
Budget 3, 2020-2021: a version including an increase of prices for the Food and Beverage (20%) and for the transport (10%). The loss is reduced -266.628,88 euro.

It is explained that these documents have been prepared considering that all services (transport, canteen and extracurricular activities for nursery, primary and secondary students) will be running from 18th January 2021 to the end of the school year. These versions reflect the decision to suspend a part of our services after the All-Saints Holidays (no canteen service from 3rd November 2020 to 18th January 2021, no transport service and extracurricular activities from 3rd November to 13th November 2020).

Mr Grigorescu Negri asks the Director and the Accountant of APEEE to prepare the worst-case scenario which foresees the closure of our services until the end of school year.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
04 CA 03/12/2020	To prepare the worst-case scenario: closure of all APEEE services until the end of the school year.	Eric Piettre and Eric Rega	In the coming weeks

Ms Vlandas thinks that there is a high probability that the extracurricular activities will remain suspended for secondary students on 18th January 2020. In order to make the budget as realistic as possible, she kindly asks to foresee a scenario where extracurricular activities are provided for Nursery and Primary pupils only. Mr Stricker points out that we should offer more scenarios including an increase of canteen prices by 25 % or 30 %.

The Treasurer of the APEEE refers that we should present three variations of the Budget 2020-2021 excluding the Budget 0 which might lead the parents' association to bankruptcy. He refers that we should increase prices in our services. The President of the APEEE reminds that we officially kept canteen prices very low for a long time and we have to keep in mind that parents make comparison with the other APEEEs and any decision we make we have to be able to justify it. Mr Sciusco refers that we cannot increase prices drastically during the school year. Ms Vlandas explains that we need to distinguish between costs incurred as investment and variable costs. She thinks that the increase of costs should be based on these recurrent extra-costs and not on the investment. She suggests using APEEE reserves to cover the investment costs and for the rest we need to increase the price of services. Parents can understand price increases if they are well justified. The Director of the APEEE reminds that the draft budget 2020-2021 is approved by the Administrative Board of the APEEE and presented at the General Assembly meeting.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
05 CA 03/12/2020	To prepare the draft budget 2020-2021 taking into account that the extracurricular activities are provided to nursery and primary pupils only.	Eric Piettre and Eric Rega	In the coming weeks

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
06 CA 03/12/2020	To send any additional questions on the budget to Mr Grigorescu-Negri, Mr Piettre and Ms Dijkstra for discussion.	All	By 18 th December 2020

6. Token question.

It is clarified that the school provides the tokens for students and the functionalities will be used by the APEEE services. The total cost for the implementation of the system amounts to 150.000 euro + some accommodations for the cafeteria and the payment system.

7. CA - Deadlines for reports, formal decision to cancel room reservation and hold GA online.

The first notification will be sent out to parents by 11th December 2020 at the latest. This announcement will include the date and the times of the next General Assembly meeting. The President of the APEEE of Brussels IV highlights two important points:

- She would like to formally state in this meeting that the Board agrees on having an online GA meeting before Manuela cancels the room reservation. Then, we should decide which online platform can be used.

-She wants to make sure that everyone who is responsible for providing a report knows what deadline is and they care of that on time. It is important to have reports ready to be sent to parents. Ms Vlandas refers that we need to be aware on voting that if we keep the SCIC reservation, we can use Interactio platform which allows us to have interpretation in few languages and to vote as well.

8. Feedback Gds/BOG (mandate, Evere).

The President of the APEEE of Brussels IV gives a brief feedback on the BoG as well as on the renewal of the mandate and the composition of the Steering Committee of the European Schools in Brussels. She explains that the Steering Committee of the European School regularly discusses the following issues: the overcrowding in the Brussels European Schools, the need for a fifth European School and the Brussels situation in terms of school's infrastructure.

Ms Dijkstra informs the Board that the mandate of the *Groupe de Suivi* (Steering Committee) will be updated. *The Groupe de suivi* will be divided into two groups: a core group and an extended group. The APEEE Presidents (BXL I, BXL II, BXL III, BXL IV) are extremely disappointed with the new mandate of the *Groupe de Suivi* because the parents' representatives in the Core Group will be restricted to two. Their suggestion to include the 4 APEEEs in the Core Group was ignored by the Office of the Secretary General. It is referred that the HR of the European Commission does not understand at all the link between the *Groupe de suivi*, the enrolment policy and the need for proper infrastructure for the APEEE services. The Presidents of the APEEEs based in Brussels have decided to boycott the *Groupe de Suivi* Core Group until we can come to an agreement.

Ms Vlandas points out that all parents' associations in Brussels included the ADP (*Association des parents crèches et garderies*) should write a joint letter with the Local Staff Committee of the European Commission and the Trade unions to the HR of the Commission requiring an appropriate representation. She refers that the APEEE, representing the parents of current pupils and the ADP, representing parents of future pupils may not have the same interest and positions. They should have separate representatives even in the core group.

Ms Dijkstra refers the temporary school in Evere should be delivered by the start of the 2021-2022 school year. It is extremely important that a Plan B may be set up if the Evere site is not ready on time.

Some concerns are expressed regarding the lack of appropriate infrastructure in the temporary school's site and the fact that the terrorism trial is scheduled to take place near the Evere site. Another issue is the overrepresentation of the French section in our school and in Berkendael while there is a minor percentage of pupils in the French language section in Woluwe and Ixelles. It is referred that the Evere temporary site might have 60 or 70 percent of school population who is French speaking next year. The President of the APEEE is pleased to answer any questions on these topics.

8. Charity question.

Ms Dijkstra informs the Board that a group of parents from Uccle are putting together St. Nicolas packages for the healthcare workers in Brussels hospitals. Although it is a very nice initiative, we are unable to set up a specific bank account for this purpose. The EEIBV has sent to parents a call for

solidarity regarding *l'autre table, resto du Coeur* Association and two charity projects: Operation Shoebox and Action Damien.

Ms Dijkstra considers important that our parents' association may support these charitable initiatives in our school community. She clarifies that our support as parents' association is not to give money to these associations but to make a call for solidarity to parents. She would like that our parents' association may ask parents to donate their own time and /or money to these charity organizations. This proposal is not welcomed by all Board Members. It is pointed out that it is not our business to support these initiatives outside school, and our core business is to provide services to parents.

The Board meetings ends at 2:55 pm.