



Minutes of COVID WG - December 14th, 2021

Participating

Manuel Bordoy MB	Kristin Dijkstra KD
Isabelle Verwilghen IV	Karim Kettani K2
Martin McGrath MMG	Dina Dragomirescu DD
Niina Viima NV	Marianna Cosco MC
Caroline Hulsen CH	Diane Werhert DW
Justine Dauchot JD	Stephanie Buus SB
Laure Nossent LN	Maria Koidu MK
Eva Puttkamer et Sophie Carly	Dan Nicolae DN
Peter Segers PS	Judith Ecker JE
Suzanne Patin (OIB)	Dijana Ror Boone DRB
Sandra Maset Calpe SMC	

It is Manuel Bordoy's last meeting as he will be leaving to the office of the Secretary General as of January.

He states that he will still be looking into the school as he was really happy in EEB4.

Manuel Bordoy is thanking the Task Force for all the good work.

Isabelle Verwilghen has been appointed acting Director of the school until the school year.

Sandra Maset Calpe has been appointed acting Deputy Director for Secondary until the end of the school year.

Daniella Mutes has been appointed acting Assistant Deputy Director until the end of the school year.

Update on cases

Kristin Dijkstra states that parents have reported seeing fewer N/P students at bus stops this week. Is there any indication that cases are increasing sharply at the moment? There is concern since hearing that EEB2 had to implement an emergency break for their Nursery/Primary.

Eva Puttkamer is stating that from Friday evening until yesterday: 11 new cases and had to close two classes in Primary. There does not seem to be a large increase taking place in our school.

Update on CO₂ meters, especially in gym halls

Although the school has requested CO₂ meters from the Régie des Bâtiments, there has been no response. The school has therefore launched a call for interest (on the homepage) to buy the CO₂ meters themselves so that companies can apply. The tender will be launched next week with winners chosen after the holidays. The CO₂ meters can be ready by end of January.

300 class rooms and other venues need to be equipped with the meters, so this represents a sizable budget.

Maria Koidu is asking about the changing rooms and the gyms: we had requested a pilot project of CO₂ meter in changing rooms already. Now the gyms are considered a safe place for primary kids to remove masks. Have the CO₂ levels been monitored in gyms and changing rooms?

Peter Segers states that they haven't done this yet as CO₂ meters are not available enough in the school (the school has 4, installed in canteen and teachers room). He states that the ventilation system is in place.

Maria Koidu is suggesting to take advantage of the fact that Wednesdays there is no lunch and use the CO₂ meters from canteen in gyms to monitor how the levels are.

Manuel Bordoy states that changing rooms are not a risk as children stay there a short time. He asks Mr Segers if it would be possible to buy 4-6 meters to place in the gyms so that they are already installed for January and would not have to wait until end of January.

What is the current definition of a high risk contact, in the context of a single case in a class?

A high risk is somebody who was in contact without mask and less than 1.5 meters for more than 15 minutes.

Isabelle Verwilghen has added the definition of Sciensano in the chat:

“Une personne ayant été en contact avec un cas confirmé de COVID-19 pendant au moins 15 minutes cumulées à une distance de <1,5 m « face à face », par exemple dans une conversation, sans utilisation correcte d'un masque buccal (nez et bouche complètement couverts) par l'une ou l'autre personne.

Cela comprend, entre autres, les cohabitants, des enfants d'un même groupe résidant dans une collectivité, des personnes avec lesquelles on a partagé un repas et éventuellement des voisins au travail. En cas de séparation complète par une paroi en plexiglas, ceci n'est pas considéré comme un contact « face à face.

Une personne qui a été en contact physique direct avec un patient COVID-19. »

Judith Ecker is stating that masks are not without fail.

If a child sits close to an infected student for a whole class, even if they are wearing masks, there might still be a risk.

Why is this not being considered?

Manuel Bordoy states that they are following the Belgian regulations and teachers have to remind the students to wear them correctly.

Teachers send Isabell Verwilghen information about students who do not wear their mask properly. If students don't follow the rules, those students then need to copy a whole paragraph on how to wear a mask properly.

Question from some families/sections about in situ attendance for S1-S3 Dec 20-22

Dina Dragomirescu: Several parents in the Romanian section from S1-S3 have requested if the last day in situ for S1-S3 (22.12) which comes after 10 days of DL, could be transformed into DL as well. Students risk to get infected on the last day and take the virus home for the Christmas break. The benefit of being only one day in situ is too small to be worth this risk.

Isabelle Verwilghen: parents of S1-S3 are concerned as they plan on going back to their families. Younger students stay this week at home as the older students are in B-Tests.

It is also done so to protect teachers as it is demanding and tiring for them to have hybrid teaching.

It is the parents' decision and it would be an unjustified absence (unless there is a medical certificate) but no sanction will be taken from the school if they plan on not allowing their child to go to school.

Isabelle Verwilghen has sent this reply to some parents who have written to her:

“Nous avons tenté de maintenir l'enseignement sur site un maximum de jours pour les plus jeunes tout en ne modifiant pas l'horaire de la session d'examens des plus âgés.

Nous avons voulu donner la possibilité aux élèves de se retrouver avec leurs camarades de classe et leurs professeurs ne fut-ce que quelques heures avant le congé de Noël.

Nous sommes parfaitement conscients que certains parents préféreront garder leur enfant à la maison le mercredi 22 décembre ou auront déjà quitté le territoire belge.

L'absence sera considérée comme injustifiée du point de vue administratif sauf si l'élève est couvert par un certificat médical (cfr article 30.c. iv. du règlement général des écoles européennes) mais, dans les circonstances actuelles, cela n'aura pas de conséquence préjudiciable pour l'élève absent.

L'enseignement hybride est mis en place uniquement lorsque les élèves sont placés en quarantaine. Donner cours avec une moitié de classe à la maison et l'autre moitié en classe est très exigeant pour nos professeurs qui sont fortement sollicités depuis plusieurs mois. Plus le nombre d'élèves à distance est élevé plus la gestion du cours est complexe.

Voilà pourquoi limiter l'accès à l'enseignement hybride aux élèves en quarantaine est un engagement que nous avons pris envers les représentants du personnel enseignant.

La direction de l'école a le souci de protéger son corps professoral et de limiter les risques de burnout, ce qui est aussi dans l'intérêt des élèves. »

Diane Werhert is informing the school that a survey was done in FR Section from S1-S5.

From the parents that have answered, 203 prefer in situ classes, 78 in DL and 212 are indifferent or haven't answered.

Therefore, Diane states that the FR section supports the school's rotation to allow the S1-S3 to go back to school for one day and see their friends and teachers before the Christmas holidays.

Manuel Bordoy: No change in the rotation system of the exam dates. The students are under a lot of pressure and we cannot make changes which would be destabilising for them.

Question about differences between EEBs in rules on testing & return to school

It seems there are no differences between EEB rules.

The information from EEB1 was an old document that was sent by a parent.

Any discussion on Distance Learning during the week after Christmas break?

No change for after the Christmas break but a rotation system might occur because in the Belgian circulaire, it states that a rotation needs to happen.

But a new circulaire might come out this week so there's no certainty to what will happen after the Christmas holidays.

The Directors of the Brussels schools are discussing the different possible scenarios but no decision has been taken yet.

Dina Dragomirescu is asking whether it could be useful to ask parents to transmit the info on possible COVID Cases occurring during the winter break to the functional mailbox, so that the school can have an idea about the general situation when deciding about the first school week in January (DL or in presence).

Marianna Cosco is writing in the chat: Est-ce qu'on peut dans le futur prendre en compte dans la rotation le fait que les classes comme les S1 n'ont eu que 4 jours sur trois semaines de présence physique à l'école?

Isabelle Verwilghen répond « Oui bien sûr. »

Est-ce qu'on pourrait annuler les tests B pour les classes en quarantaine?

Isabelle Verwilghen states that exams cannot be cancelled.

They will try to reschedule as much as possible next week and back in January, but B-test in March for some of the exam might have another format (less formal) as being done in EEB1.

The B-tests for October and March for a few subjects could be different.

To be followed up later as Manuel Bordoy states that all EEBs need to follow the rules.

No decision has been taken yet.

Mr Boiy will inform all the parents.

Manuel Bordoy is open to changing the structure of B-tests, but this would require a revision of the General Rules.

Stephanie Buus appreciates hearing this discussion between Isabelle Verwilghen and Manuel Bordoy. She is thanking them for their openness.

Could the school give the possibility to those who need to, to have the primary kids in Homeschooling? Also this week

Manuel Bordoy states that we need to respect the rules but the school can understand some situations. School attendance remains mandatory during the pandemic, but for families in specific situations it is the parents' decision. It would be an unjustified absence (unless there is a medical certificate) but no sanction will be taken from the school if they plan on not allowing their child to go to school during a limited period.

Question about masks

One family from the Romanian section is convinced masks are detrimental to children in primary and is asking the school to lift that measure.

Mr McGrath says that the school follows the rules of FWB like in all Covid matters. Masking up from P1 is the Belgian rule.

Merry Christmas - Happy Holidays

Reminder

En cas de confirmation d'un **cas positif** de Covid-19, celui-ci **doit être communiqué à l'École en utilisant exclusivement** l'adresse courriel dédiée :

LAE-COVID19-NOTIFICATION@eursc.eu

Next meeting

Tuesday, the 11th of January at 09:00.