



Administrative Board Meeting/Réunion du Conseil d' Administration

Brussels Thursday, 22nd September 2022

Teams Video Meeting: 12:38-15:19

Present: Cerasela Botoroaga, Stephanie Buus, Marianna Cosco, Nicholas Costello, Romina Garbi, Mariana Ghitoi, Angela Guarino, Yannick Hartstein, Nadia Kichaout, Maria Koidu, Vladas Kukulskis, Dan Nicolae, Josephine Norris, Victoria Petrova, Dana Adriana Puia Morel, Adja Awa Sissoko, Pénélope Vlandas, Diane Werhert.

Absent: Jane Okafor, Iulian Vasile.

Proxy: Yannick Hartstein to Adja Awa Sissoko from 1:26 pm.

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

Minutes 22.09.2022

The quorum is present. Ms Buus welcomes all attendees and chairs the first board meeting of the new academic year.

1. Approval of agenda.

ADOPTED.

2. Approval of Board Minutes from June 23rd, 2022.

Postponed.

It is outlined that the Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings, which are internal documents, should be made available to all Board members for information.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
01 CA 22/09/2022	To make the Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings available to all Board members for information.	Diane Werhert	In the coming days

3. End of Mandate for Kettani Karim.

The Administrative Board takes note that Kettani Karim is no longer a member of the Board, as well as Vice President for Pedagogical Affairs from 2nd July 2022 because his youngest child graduated from the EEBIV. The Administrative Board is now composed of 20 members.

4. APEEE services- Information point on the Services' state of play.

-Transport.

Mr Rega gives an update on the transport service. He explains the main challenges that the transport office faced during the first three weeks of the school year:

-A shortage of school bus drivers which is leading to bus cancellations. Mr Rega explains that there are currently six bus lines that are not operating but two of these should be operational by 3rd October 2022.

-A lack of bus monitors in some school bus lines.

-The new mobility plan which is being implemented in the Brussels capital Region. The 30 km/h speed limit, as well as the addition of new one-way streets and pedestrian zones have an impact on the bus stops and the traffic flow.

-School bus cleaning. The transport office reminded the bus companies to keep school buses clean as specified in the transport contracts.

Mr Rega points out that some bus routes are too long, and children spend too much time on school buses. A solution might be to shorten the bus routes and establish a common pick-up/drop-off point for most pupils when possible. The Director of the APEEE explains that our transport service was understaffed from Monday 5th September 2022 to Friday 16th September 2022 but is now fully operational. The discussion focuses on how to improve the proactivity of the transport service and the communication with parents and bus companies in the event of bus line delays or cancellations. Mr Rega explains that we have to deal with drivers who do not notify the bus company of their absence on time, so the information doesn't reach the transport team who has to deal with many phone calls and emails from parents. Ms Cosco suggests that a specific message be sent to all transport users explaining the current situation and the efforts being made by the transport service to ensure that all bus lines run smoothly.

Ms Sissoko refers that we should return to the old tools like sms and phone calls to inform parents in the short term and revitalize the Transport Working group. Ms Petrova, the Board member responsible for transport, agreed with the other members of the Executive Committee to have a Working Group on Transport to discuss long and short-term issues and find solutions. A Transport Working Group meeting should be held in early October to discuss the short-term issues to be taken urgently and another one at the end of October to discuss the long-term issues. Ms Vlandas kindly requests that a member of the Extracurricular Working Group joins the Transport Working Group. Ms Norris expresses her willingness to join the Transport Working Group.

The President of the APEEE points out that the good functioning of the transport service is now our number one priority, pupils must come to school on time. She points out that we need a transport plan to present at the next General Assembly meeting in January. It is also essential to follow up the issue of costs and see how the Institutions can react if our parents' association incurs additional costs and the bus companies refuse to pay. The following actions are identified:

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
02 CA 22/09/2022	To send a communication to the transport users by explaining the current situation and the efforts to solve transport issues.	Transport service/APEEE Communication Officer	ASAP

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
03 CA 22/09/2022	To revitalize the Working Group on transport and hold a Transport Working Group meeting as soon as possible, preferably at the end of September or early October, if possible.	The Administrative Board	ASAP

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
04 CA 22/09/2022	To present a transport plan to parents at the next APEEE General Assembly meeting in January 2023.	The Administrative Board	ASAP

- Canteen.

Ms Sissoko informs the Board that the results of the online satisfaction surveys distributed to parents and pupils in May will be shared with parents tomorrow. The purpose of these surveys was to evaluate the degree of satisfaction with the APEEE canteen services, to assess the effectiveness of the communication, to identify the pupils' eating habits, and to define the expectations and priorities for the APEEE canteen services.

- Extracurricular activities.

Ms Vlandas informs the Board that the extracurricular service has received 1.400 applications this year, a stable trend compared to the 2021-2022 school year. We are seeing high demand for some extracurricular activities whose groups have been doubled, while others have been cancelled due to a lack of registrations. In fact, parents have shown less interest in extracurricular activities that take place outside school like swimming or circus. Ms Vlandas explains that Ms Baldelli, the new extracurricular manager, is doing well and appropriate feedback will be provided to the Board after the start of extracurricular activities. She announces another change in the APEEE staff: the replacement of supervisors who take care of kids from the meeting points to the activities and between activities.

The discussion focuses on how pupils with special needs can participate in an extracurricular activity. Ms Vlandas refers that they should be able to take part if the disability is compatible with the activity. If they need the support of an adult, it is important to clarify who is financially responsible. A discussion should be made on what we can provide, how we can provide it, and who will bear which costs. Ms Vlandas informs the Board that the extracurricular activities service has now accepted the enrollment of a SEN pupil in our extracurricular activities and the additional cost has been charged to the parent.

5. Vetasoft: Update on the situation and State of play of the possible alternative providers.

Mr Nicolae gives a brief background on the Vetasoft system, stating that the person who initiated this project was not an engineer and we spent a lot of time dealing with IT issues. He suggests that we hire an IT specialist who meets the APEEE managers, evaluates the current situation, and looks for a new software. According to Mr Rega, an IT consultant for this type of project would cost much more than 1.500 euro. The Director of the APEEE announces that the Apeee of Brussels II will start using a new software covering all services. He is also in contact with the other APEEEs Directors on this topic and will have a meeting with the Director of the APEEE of Brussels II to exchange ideas and experiences.

Ms Koidu points out that the most important thing we need to know before hiring an IT consultant and comparing software solutions, is to know which functionalities we want. We should now make a list of things we need for each service and then we can decide whether we need an IT manager, whether the one that the other operators have is suitable.

Ms Buus thanks Mr Nicolae and Ms Kichaout who have expressed their willingness to help Mr Rega on this project. Mr Nicolae will take the lead on the Vetasoft project and Ms Kichaout will be the back-up. The first step is to have a virtual meeting restricted to Mr Rega, Mr Nicolae, Ms Kichaout and Mr Verona, a volunteer parent of the EEBIV with IT knowledge who has kindly offered his help for free and fix the deadlines.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
05 CA 22/09/2022	To have a virtual meeting on Vetasoft project and fix deadlines.	Mr Nicolae, Ms Kichaout and Mr Rega.	In the coming weeks

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6. Presentation and call of interest task and roles.

There is a brief discussion on the tasks and roles of Board members. The Vice-President of the APEEE of Brussels IV points out that we need a job description for Board members and determine who contacts the Director of the APEEE and the staff and how the staff should respond. Ms Sissoko refers that we should list the needs to be covered in the Board and which people are working on these. When we are preparing the General Assembly, we should mention the APEEE challenges and the projects where we are looking for contributions from people. This could help to have people motivated and develop these projects. Ms Puia Morel points out that Board members are not responsible to solve all problems but through the working groups: the manager of a service, board members and parents can discuss and improve things. The President of the APEEE notes that some tasks are not fully covered and require more personal involvement. The difficulties in defining a Board member job description may be explained by the fact that it is a volunteer position, and we are a complex organization with constantly changing jobs and challenges. The President invites all Board members to start sharing information about those processes to make them better.

7. Proposal for a 4th Interparents Representative.

Ms Buus points out that it is important that our Association has a voice in Interparents, an umbrella association which represents the 13 APEEEs vis-à-vis of the European school system. She makes a call for volunteers for the Interparents representative position among Board members. She would like to have up to four representatives in order to cover all work. This position is very interesting but time-consuming. She announces that there will be a two-day Interparents meeting on 10th and 11th October in preparation of the Joint Teaching Committee meeting. The President asks the Board to appoint Ms Burley, who is interested in being part of Interparents, as 4th Interparents representative.

Vote: *Proposal for a 4th InterParents representative – Natasha Burley (EN Section Representative) would like to be part of Interparents.*

- *Unanimously in favour*

The Administrative Board unanimously agrees to appoint Natasha Burley as 4th Interparents representative.

8. Physical meeting and/or a team building in late October /November.

The Board's general feeling at the end of the last school year was to continue with online meetings and hold one physical meeting in the fall and another one in the spring. The discussion focuses on whether the Board should continue to have virtual meetings or hold a regular physical Board meeting or a team building. Various points of view are expressed on this subject. Mr Costello emphasizes the importance of holding as many physical meetings as possible because these will have a very good impact on General Board participation. Ms Norris is in favour of having a high percentage of meetings in person as well as some type of team building to meet the APEEE staff. To work effectively as a team, it is important to meet in person and get to know each other better as individuals.

Ms Puia Morel suggests holding hybrid meetings in the European quarter area, as well as team building for Board members and staff. This type of event, which took place in 2018, was a great way for the Board and the staff to get to know each other and share ideas. She would like to have this event on a Saturday or Sunday in an external location. A dedicated budget is needed to cover the location and catering expenses. It could be planned in early December 2021 or early January 2022.

Vote: *Physical Board meeting late October.*

- ✓ *Only Physical Board meeting - 2 in favour*
- ✓ *Board meeting and team building – 8 in favour*
- ✓ *No physical meeting – 2 in favour*
- ✓ *Only team building – 1 in favour*

There is an interest from the Board in planning one physical Board meeting in late of October, early November and a team building later once the new APEEE Board is elected.

9. Brief update on Ukrainian students, including Social Fund request.

The President of the APEEE of Brussels IV informs the Board that 31 Ukrainian refugee pupils are temporarily enrolled in our school, and some of them are registered in the APEEE services. At the moment, there are 11 canteen registrations, 6 transport enrolments, and two potential enrollments in the extracurricular services. The President of the APEEE refers that as announced at the pre-administrative board meeting last week, the school has no amended budget for Ukrainian pupils for this academic year and this could mean more requests for help to the APEEE, the Social Fund and parents.

The discussion focuses on how we can additionally help the Ukrainian children and their families in a short and long term. Some calls for volunteers or donations were made. Ms Werhert sent a message to parents via section representatives, asking if they had an extra-computer or extra-laptop to give or lend to the Ukrainian students. Ukrainian families were also informed about Oxfam's initiative of lending or selling computers to Ukrainian pupils.

Ms Kichaout informs the Board that the Social Fund Committee (SFC) received a request from a Ukrainian refugee family to finance the purchase of books, sport suits and IT equipment. The Social Fund Committee took the decision to fully cover 100 % of the books and sport suits for a total amount of 300 euro. With reference to the financing of IT tools, the SFC invited the parent to go for the Oxfam's option. Ms Kichaout points out that we need take a clear stance on what we finance or do not finance and be reasonable in the way we want to support Ukrainian pupils and be consistent and fair in how we support the other pupils as well.

It is explained that Ukrainian children, particularly those in primary school, only speak their native language. Teachers need support to face these language barriers and find a way to communicate with these children.

The school is looking for people who speak Russian and Ukrainian languages to help and integrate these kids into the school system.

10. Financial issues.

The Director of the APEEE of Brussels IV asks the Board to approve a payment limit increase from 300.000 euro to 400.000 euro per week. He would like to be able to sign online payments with a weekly limit of 400.000 euro to cover any expenses. This request is submitted to the Board for approval.

Vote: *Possibility to sign payment with a limit of 400.000 euro instead of 300.000 euro:*

- Unanimously in favour

The Administrative Board unanimously agrees to increase the weekly payment limit from 300.000 euro to 400.000 euro.

Mr Rega informs the Board that the audit of the Annual Accounts of APEEE of Brussels IV for the year ended on 31st August 2022 will be made by Ernest & Young auditors between 14th and 18th November 2022. The financial report is expected to be transmitted to the APEEE by 9th December 2022 at the latest.

11. Update on pre-Administrative Board meeting and upcoming Administrative Board meeting.

All Board members are kindly requested to provide feedback on previously circulated points or submit new points, if any, to the President of the APEEE. She has to send to the school all points for the upcoming School Administrative Board meeting by tomorrow afternoon.

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
06 CA 22/09/2022	To provide feedback on previously circulated points or submit new points, if any, to the President of the APEEE.	ALL	ASAP

#	Action	Owner	Deadline
07 CA 22/09/2022	To send the final points to the school for the upcoming School Administrative Board meeting.	Stephanie Buus	Tomorrow afternoon

12. Update on latest Steering Group Committee and position of Board on proposals.

Ms Buus shared the information with the Board yesterday evening. It is agreed to discuss this agenda point at the next Administrative Board meeting.

13. Brief update on Class Representative elections and possible points to discuss with Section Representative in Pedagogical Team for next CEMP/CES.

There is a brief discussion on different topics that should be discussed with the section representatives in the Pedagogical Team for the next CEMP/CES: the possibility of reusing the previous sport outfits without the name of the kid, the need of having a clear communication on shipment fees, the errors on the booklists etc. It is outlined that the pedagogical group is very active, and they need an adequate space in the board meetings to explain the pedagogical issues, what they are doing and what they intend to raise at the Board level. The President of the APEEE announces that when we can go back to more business as usual, we will have a larger pedagogical component at our Board meetings.

14. Point of information regarding Somerfestto.

The 2023 Somerfestto edition should take place at school in May. Ms Werhert and Ms Norris point out the importance of having access to the *salle polyvalente* for this event.

15. AOB

- Quick update on Framework Agreement (FA) negotiations between OSGES and the 4 Brussels APEEE's.

Ms Buus informs the Board that the 4 Brussels APEEEs Presidents will have a meeting with the Office of the Secretary General of the European School (OSGES) in the beginning of October to try to hammer out the final details on the Framework Agreement.

The Board meeting ends at 2:45 pm.