



Administrative Board Meeting/Réunion du Conseil d' Administration

Brussels Thursday, 9th November 2023

Teams Video Meeting: 12:45-14:35

Present: Johanna Alkhafaji, Stephanie Buus, Marianna Cosco, Nicholas Costello, Alexandre Grigorescu-Negri, Angela Guarino, Dan Nicolae, Jane Okafor, Tzvetomir Penev, Stefan Petrovski, Dana Adriana Puia Morel, Iuliana Serbeniuc, Adja Awa Sissoko, Diane Werhert.

Absent: Victoria Petrova.

Excused: Romina Garbi, Josephine Norris, Pénélope Vlandas.

Proxy: Romina Garbi to Diane Werhert, Josephine Norris to Stephanie Buus, Pénélope Vlandas to Adja Awa Sissoko, Dana Adriana Puia Morel to Johanna Alkhafaji until 1:20 pm, Jane Okafor to Diane Werhert from 1:05 pm, Diane Werhert and her proxies, from Romina Garbi and Jane Okafor to Johanna Alkhafaji from 2:00 pm.

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

Minutes 09.11.2023

The quorum is reached. The President welcomes all attendees and chairs the Board meeting.

1. Adoption of Minutes: Board meeting 5th October 2023.

Adopted.

2. Adoption of the Agenda.

Adopted.

3. Proposed Date for the GA: Tuesday, 23rd January 2024.

The Board agrees to hold the APEEE General Assembly meeting on the evening of Tuesday 23rd January 2024. The meeting will be held online, an option that is allowed by the APEEE Statutes.

Mr Costello underlines that it is important in the future that the Board takes the time to discuss together how to run our meetings: in-person, online, or hybrid. He expresses concern regarding the lack of face-to-face meetings over a long period of time as this might negatively impact volunteer involvement and lead to the end of any association.

The possibility of holding physical or hybrid General Assembly meetings will be discussed with the new Board in February or March 2024.

4. APEEE Presidency, 2024-2025.

Ms Buus informs the Board that she will be stepping down as APEEE President after the next APEEE General Assembly meeting. She encourages every Board member to consider the possibility of taking over this position. She explains that the President's role needs to be sustainable, and it has to be a job that people feel they can do alongside their work and private life. She will be happy to give any advice and help to ensure a smooth transition.

5. Board vote: 9/11/2023: Written Procedure for Reimbursement Request: AGSEV's Legal Costs.

The Board is kindly asked to vote on the reimbursement request for legal costs incurred by the Parents' Association of the European School of Varese (AGSEV). The President of the APEEE of Brussels IV previously shared with the Board the reimbursement request for a total amount of €834 sent from Interparents to the 13 APEEEs (total amount: €834, € 64,15 per APEEE)

Vote: *Does the Board agree that the APEEE of Brussels IV pay € 64,15 (€834/13) to reimburse the AGSEV's legal costs for the Safety and Security Framework agreement?*

- 17 in favour

ADOPTED

It is outlined that the four APEEEs based in Brussels are still negotiating this agreement with the Central Office of the European Schools.

6. Replacement or addition of Board members to the following groups:

a. Community Fund Committee (CFC).

Ms Buus informs the Board that Mr Nicolae has stepped down from the CFC and Mr Costello has kindly agreed to step in as a new Board member to the Community Fund Committee. Mr Penev, the Chair of the CFC, thanks Mr Costello for volunteering and outlines that we need more members for the panel. The CFC has already received two requests for funding, so it is important to start discussions and make decisions.

Mr Grigorescu-Negri informs the Board that he is not only interested in joining the CFC but also the Health and Security Working Group. The Board takes note that the CFC is composed of the following members: Penev Tzvetomir (the Chair), Costello Nicholas, Grigorescu-Negri Alexandre who are Board members and Ironside Sarah who is not a Board member.

b. Social Fund Committee, Health & Safety Working Group, Extracurricular Working Group.

The President of the APEEE of Brussels IV recalls that the Social Fund provides financial aid to those members of the school community who has proven and demonstrated financial need for specific activities: school fees, obligatory equipment (e.g. BYOD), obligatory school trips, extracurricular educational activities (e.g.: Eurosport, MUN, MEC), school transport, school canteen, and other costs.

There is no request to nominate additional Board members to the Social Fund Committee.

With reference to the Health and Safety Working Group, Mr Grigorescu-Negri expressed his interest in joining this Working Group. The Board takes note that the Health and Safety Working Group is composed of the following Board members: Nicolae Dan, Cosco Marianna and Grigorescu-Negri Alexandre.

Following Ms Botoroaga's departure, the Extracurricular Working Group is composed of two Board members: Angela Guarino, the Board member responsible for extracurricular activities, and Romina Garbi. Ms Guarino would like to have a third member in this Group if possible. The Board Secretary asks if this Working group welcomes members outside the Board. Ms Buus thinks that this is an interesting idea and invites Ms Guarino and Ms Alkhafaji to discuss it separately, analyze the advantages and disadvantages of having a non-board member involved in the Extracurricular Working Group, and present it as an option to the new Board in February 2024, if needed.

c. InterParents.

The President of the APEEE invites all Board members to consider the possibility of joining Interparents now or after the General Assembly meeting. There are currently three Board members serving in

Interparents for our parents' association: Buus Stephanie, Norris Josephine, Costello Nicholas, and one non-board member, Ecker Judith, from the German section.

Ms Buus explains that serving as IP representative can be a labor-intensive job, but it is also interesting. The IP representatives want to discuss every possible aspect of the European school system so there are a lot of policy documents, readings, interventions, and meetings (the Board of Governors' meeting, the Joint Teaching Committee meeting, the Budgetary Committee meeting etc.). This is a very important post because the IP representatives are expected to review policy documents issued by the Office of the Secretary-General and participate in Working Groups, prepare interventions on behalf of parents regarding curricular and administrative aspects of the European Schools (e.g., the European BAC, Language Policy, Educational Support, etc.) and report back to the Board.

The President points out that the best way to handle Interparents is to attend a few meetings and listen attentively, read as many documents as possible, focus on one or two areas that interest you or your APEEE, and write interventions on these areas for Interparents if possible.

She adds that the role of the APEEE President and the role of the IP representative can be very difficult to tackle at the same time, but it is important that the President of the APEEE be part of Interparents because he/she can get a lot of knowledge about the other European schools and what is going on in our school system globally and can better understand what is going on in our local APEEE and in our local school system.

Ms Buus suggests that Ms Guarino, who is interested in the language policy, can present her candidature for one of the IP representative positions at the next Board meeting in December or after the APEEE General Assembly meeting within the new Board when the Board positions will be assigned.

7. Management of the time slots for lunch and Canteen entrance (S7).

Ms Sissoko, the Board member responsible for Food & Beverage, explains that we are facing a canteen issue, related to the management of the time slots for lunch, that requires a decision at the Board level.

She reminds the Board that the EEBIV has decided to provide students with a 20-minute time slot for lunch per level. This year, S2 and S7 students have the same break in period 5 which is divided into two different parts (time slots for lunch): A part for S2 and B part for S7.

The issue is that this year the S7 students have decided to come to the canteen earlier, at the same time as the S2 students and they are taking the place of S2 students in the canteen space, creating a lot of issues in the canteen and complaints from parents. Ms Sissoko outlines that the S7 students can't have a 40-minute lunch break to the detriment of the other levels and the time slot must be respected by all levels for equal treatment. Furthermore, the school has also decided to close the terrace so there is less space available for pupils. Ms Sissoko identifies two options: the first option is that the school clearly informs parents, students, and teachers that S7 students have to respect their lunchtime slot and not to come to the canteen earlier. If this is not done, the second option is to hire more staff to check the entry of pupils into the canteen building. The negative aspects are that there will be more costs for the APEEE and queues, pupils will have less time for lunch.

It is decided to fix a meeting with the school management in order to solve this canteen issue. The following actions are identified:

- Sissoko Adja Awa to share a quick summary of the canteen situation and explain the canteen issues with the proposed solutions by e-mail.
- Pilatos Evangelos to share with Mr Mattus and Mr Segers the e-mail complaints from parents to the canteen service about this problem.
- Buus Stephanie to call a meeting with the school management regarding this canteen issue.

8. Finances & Wiki.

-Finances: Calander.

Mr Petrovski announces that the audit of the annual accounts of the APEEE of Brussels IV for the year ended 31st August 2023 will be conducted by Ernst & Young auditors from 14th to 17th November 2023. He explains that the process of drafting the APEEE budget is planned for October 2023, and it will be finalized on 29th November 2023.

Mr Rega informs the Board that he is preparing a basic annual report for each department, which will be completed by each manager and submitted to the Board member responsible for each service for review. The objective of this process is to provide as much information as possible about what has happened over the past year. He is pleased to announce that we will achieve a positive result for each department.

Action: Rega Eric to send to the treasurer the final amount for the transport tariffs, which will be published on Wiki.

- Guidelines: Procedures, Rules, and Responsibilities.

Stefan Petrovski invites everyone to look at the Guidelines published on Wiki and report any errors or inconsistencies, if any, directly on this Wiki page.

- Rules: Protection of confidentiality.

It is clarified that the Board has never passed a resolution requiring Board members to sign a non-disclosure agreement. The NDA (Non-Disclosure Agreement) is not a formal requirement for Board membership because it was rejected by the majority of Board members. Mr Grigorescu-Negri explains that the main argument against the NDA was that our purpose as a Board was to share information with parents and provide them with the knowledge that we might collect.

The President states that if the current Board members or the new board would like to revisit this and put a confidentiality agreement in place, the discussion could be reopened.

-2018 Audit recommendation (Moore & Stephens).

Mr Petrovski kindly requests the list of recommendations issued by Moore & Stephens, the audit firm. He would like to post these recommendations on Wiki, so they can be available to all Board members.

-Rule 54: composition of Executive Committee.

The Treasurer of the APEEE has published on Wiki page the Draft Rules of Procedure of the Administrative Board. It is outlined that Rule 54, related to the composition of the Executive Committee, should be updated. The discussion focuses on whether or not the VP for Pedagogical affairs should be included in the Executive Committee. Ms Buus clarifies that the Vice President for Pedagogical Affairs is not a member of the Executive Committee because the person in charge of this post doesn't manage funds or operational services (canteen, transport, or extra-curricular activities). Ms Puia Morel explains that the issues related to services should not be discussed in pedagogical meetings which are exclusively dedicated to pedagogical issues. Her intention is not to attend the Executive Committee meetings focused on services.

- APEEE services – Wiki training -2023.

The Treasurer of the APEEE has offered a Wiki training session to 15 Board members. Board members are invited to contact Mr Petrovski or consult the User Guide and FAQs if they have any other questions or need more information on the Wiki tool.

9. Update on 'pedagogical' issues from VP Ped.

Ms Puia Morel gives a quick update on pedagogical matters. She explains that every language section is now supposed to organize itself for the election of a new 2023-2024 section representative. Regarding these elections, she notes that there are some problems in identifying the new representatives for the Dutch section.

The Vice President for Pedagogical Affairs provides an oral report on the N/P Education Council meeting. One of the topics discussed was the upcoming ski trip for the P5 pupils. She reported that there is a new 'silent room' in primary, and the school asked parents not to use the students' accounts to join Teams meetings with the school and reminded all the parents that kids have to come to school on time, some primary pupils are late in the morning.

Ms Puia Morel informs the Board that there will be an upcoming Secondary Education Council meeting. She outlines that the absence of teachers and the difficulty finding teachers are recurring points in our discussions with the school management. Other broader issues discussed in the educational cycle concerned: the role of class teachers, the policy document that we received about the behavior code of conduct, the increase in the number of conflicts in school, the upcoming school trips for S4 and S6 that are mandatory, etc.

The VP for Pedagogical Affairs also gives an update on the school's mobile phone policy. The EEBIV has put in place a policy that foresees a temporary exclusion of students from school from 1 day to 3 days in specific cases: when students use a mobile phone in areas or times not authorized and refuse to hand it over to any staff member who requests it, or students refuse to identify themselves when asked by a member of the school staff.

10. Update on APEEE logo launch.

The Board Secretary announces that the launch of the new APEEE logo will be delayed to a later date, probably early next year.

11. AOB.

-APEEE Website.

Ms Alkhafaji had a first meeting focused on the APEEE website with Ms Douvris, the APEEE Communication Officer. Their thinking is that our website looks quite nice, but the content needs to be managed in a better way. The goal is not to have a big overhaul but to reorganize the website gradually without spending a lot of time and money.

Ms Guarino thinks that the back-office system of our website is obsolete and requires a lot of manual interventions from the APEEE staff members, so the time spent on these administrative tasks could be used differently to improve the quality of our services.

-Update on Together School application.

Mr Nicolae informs the Board that some bus monitors do not use Together School application in the transport service. At the Executive Committee meeting, it was discussed the possibility of amending the bus monitors' contracts because they are not legally obliged to use this application on the school buses. Ms Guarino informs the Board that the Transport Working Group will discuss how to launch the new application in the transport service at next week's meeting.

-APEEE online enrolment system.

The Director of the APEEE of Brussels IV informs the Board that he has prepared together with the APEEE Communication Officer a project called: 'One Face to the Parents'. The objective is to have a new APEEE online enrolment system replacing Point Be, the current one, and investigate 4 or 5 potential partners who can do it. Mr Rega explains that there is the possibility of having a second roundtable meeting with more in-depth information which is free of charge. He informs the Board that managers' needs have been identified and some good ideas have been developed. They would like that parents can directly access their personal space with a limited number of steps, register for the APEEE services in one click, and make payments with a QR code to be sure that the payment is correctly recorded.

The issues related to this project will be tackled next year, in April or May 2024.

The Board meeting ends at 2:35 pm.