



Administrative Board Meeting / Réunion du Conseil d'Administration

Brussels Tuesday, 9 July 2013

12:30-14:30

Room: J-79 02/03, Rue Joseph Deux, 79

Present: Erika Schulze, Martina Sindelar, Joëlle Salmon, Sarah Conyers Barber, Nigel Freake, Kunka Ilieva, Steve O'Byrne, Carola Streul, Benoît Vandergeeten, Pascal Manzano, Iseult Lennon Hudson, Max Strotmann and Eric Piettre, Director of the APEEE.

Excused: Josephine Usher, (proxy to Sarah), Marc Henriques de Granada, Serge Lebel (both proxy to Joëlle), Christian Drantmann, Daniella Terruso (proxy to Max), Serge Lebel, Ralph Wischermann, Jacopo Lombardi, Anja Mangels, Monika Paulus (proxy to Erika).

Some Board members only attend part of the meeting. The sequence of points minuted is not necessarily as discussed.

Steve O'Brien chairs the meeting.

Draft Minutes

- 1. Adoption of draft agenda**
Adopted with small changes.
- 2. Adoption of minutes of meeting of 20 June 2013**
Adopted with small changes, as circulated before the meeting.
- 3. Approval of the minutes of the General Assembly 6 December 2012**
Joëlle presents the draft prepared by Daniella and Serge and invites members' comments latest for the next board meeting.

Thanks to all for brave drafting!

Points for decision

4. Vending machines.

Steve introduces the point, recalling the main arguments exchanged at and since the last board meeting.

Members express strong opposition to the school's decision to conclude a contract for vending machines and the limited choice of products, undermining educational efforts (including by the school!) to promote healthy eating and drinking. There is broad agreement among members about the need to start early preparations for the period after the end of the current contract for vending machines (2016), considering in particular plans for the cafeteria. Also the entry into force in 2015 of rules for Belgian schools banning sales of sodas and snacks of high sugar content should not be ignored.

Some members caution against parents' involvement in the management of the vending machines now, as this could be – wrongly – interpreted as tacit endorsement of the decision to have vending machines, which was entirely the school's own. Despite this reluctance, however, and as the presence of vending machines on school grounds is a fact for three more years (apparently the contract cannot be terminated), members feel obliged to engage with the school in order to improve the choice of products as much as possible.

Decision 2013-07-09_1: The board decides unanimously to address a letter to the school:

- expressing parents' opposition to the unilateral decision of the school to conclude a contract on vending machines without adequate choice of healthy drinks and snacks;
- requesting involvement of parents' representatives sufficiently ahead of any decision on future such contracts, in particular also considering options such as a cafeteria;
- expressing willingness, despite opposition to the initial decision, to engage with school in order to help improve the choice of products; and,
- recommending to the school to seek advice of a nutritionist when deciding on the choice of products on sale.

Thanks to all involved in this unfortunate saga, in particular Nigel!

5. Staff issues.

Decision 2013-07-09_2: On the basis of a recommendation from Eric, the board unanimously decides to extend the contract of one staff member for an indefinite duration as from 20 July 2013.

Thanks to Eric and all our staff members for much appreciated work and commitment!

Points for information / discussion

6. Communication Working Group – progress

Nigel reports for the group. Once agreed among group members, they will circulate a draft work / strategy paper for board discussion and agreement. As a particular example issue to be addressed, Nigel mentions the need for web updating guidelines.

Thanks Nigel and all the team! Much needed good work ...

7. Progress report from HR working group

Eric reports on a number of issues: cheques repas, staffing plans, salary developments, kitchen equipment, semi self-service tests in the canteen. All current plans are covered in the current budget; to cater for 2013/2014 needs, a draft budget should be available for the next board meeting.

Big thanks to Eric and the whole team!

8. Progress report from Interparents on cost sharing and secondary reform

Sarah and Iseult give an overview, in addition to their written report circulated earlier.

On cost sharing the debate is clearly developing into a larger discussion about sustainable funding of the system. More countries' positioning is moving. The Brussels APEEEs are better coordinated, also in contacts with Local Staff Committee. The link to secondary reform is evident, including reflections about grouped secondary and spread nursery/primary schooling – efficiency gains, better choice for students, proximity.

Interesting ideas are floating around but a multitude of parallel discussions (cost sharing, secondary reform, enrolment policy, fifth and sixth schools etc) make it at times difficult to see clear orientations and make progress. Also, ensuring parents' representation and coordination is a challenge (eg career guidance group). The same applies for lack of impact assessments for proposals.

Members suggest the whole group of issues should be brought to the General Assembly, also to obtain a mandate to Interparents representation.

Big thanks to Sarah, Iseult and Nigel – and all others struggling with / in these deep waters full of dangerous undercurrents ...

9. Update on Educational / Pedagogical activities

Martina reports that the preparations for next year are well en route, eg calendar for the meetings with the ped. working groups was sent out. To keep the momentum with the parents who expressed their interest in the new working groups for behaviour, anti-bullying and sexual education, she and Nigel will meet Mrs Ivanauskiene to discuss how parents can support school in these areas.

Communication with parents is always a critical point: To depend less on the parents in the ped. working groups and their availability or not for particular dates and issues, Martina proposes the setting-up of a functional mail box for ped. questions which can be an important source for parents' input to the Education Councils and at the same time offers a permanent possibility for parents to address their questions to the ped. working groups. Nigel will create this mail box.

Members agree that offering contacts and information to the new class reps is very important. A good option could be asking the school to start the usual class meetings in early September (where class reps are elected) 30 minutes later so as to allow parents to attend a general APEEE information session, eg between 18.00 and 19.00 in the canteen or the salle polyvalente.

Martina and Steve will explore further – volunteers among members for the information session are very welcome :-). Many thanks and good luck to Martina and the whole pedagogics team!

10. Report of Eric on services.

Done in writing – many thanks to Eric!

11. Information about next year's Admin board meetings.

Point not taken because of lack of time.

12. Book Sale – outline of plans for new & second hand book sale in September

Point not taken because of lack of time.

13. Utilisation of Cloud Drive of one.com (Nigel)

Point not taken because of lack of time.

14. Discussion about unpublished minutes of board meetings. What is the hold-up? Review the procedure / set realistic deadline for adopting / publishing meeting minutes.

Point not taken because of lack of time. [I check in my files and found no trace for the dates given by Steve, sorry! Max]

15. AoB

Erika and max refer to the draft enrolment policy presented by the SG for a CEA meeting on 11 July. Comments / feedback will be circulated among members.

Wishing all APEEE members and staff a great summer holiday! Come back relaxed and happy :-)

Note taking by max.