

From: **eeb4petition@gmail.com** <eeb4petition@gmail.com>

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Subject: European Schools: petition to keep the Berkendael site open beyond 2012

To: Christiane.BARDOUX@ec.europa.eu, magdalena@spzg.pl, gigliola.bonomelli@esteri.it, kcosteas@moec.gov.cy, Lars.Damkjaer@udst.dk, agostinho.santa@ige.min-edu.pt, emer_egan@education.gov.ie, veronica.fuselova@medu.edu.ro, gaal.edit@okm.gov.hu, Javier.gonzalez@reper.maec.es, cristobal.gutierrez@educacion.es, kristin.hollo@hm.ee, richard.hoy@education.gsi.gov.uk, Tatjana.Jurkovic@gov.si, helina.karner@mfa.ee, Reinhard.Koehler@tmbwk.thueringen.de, e.kostadinova@minedu.government.bg, dmitrijs.kulss@izm.gov.lv, jose.maroto@educacion.es, marco-umberto.moricca@ec.europa.eu, eva.obzerova@gmail.com, gary.odonnchadha@education.gov.ie, Marja-Leena.pernu@oph.fi, liliana.preoteasa@medu.edu.ro, joyce.pullicino@onvol.net, audrone.razmantiene@smm.lt, viviane.rhein@men.lu, bre-ocw@minbuza.nl, catherineroba@skynet.be, jrobin@epo.org, Christian.Ruhs@bmukk.gv.at, john.russell@education.gsi.gov.uk, salgeor@googlemail.com, 612-rl@diplo.de, denis.soriot@diplomatie.gouv.fr, merja.stromberg@education.ministry.se, marie.suchoparova@msmt.cz, lukas.teply@msmt.cz, frans.vandekerkhof@stichtingnob.nl, marianne.vanlancker@ond.vlaanderen.be, natalie.verstraete@ond.vlaanderen.be, gilles.vial@education.gouv.fr

Cc: maros.sefcovic@ec.europa.eu, connie.hedegaard@ec.europa.eu, janez.potocnik@ec.europa.eu, irene.souka@ec.europa.eu, juraj.nociar@ec.europa.eu, marie-helene.pradines@ec.europa.eu, Bernd.biervert@ec.europa.eu, hans.torrekens@ec.europa.eu, georges.vlandas@ec.europa.eu, cristiano.sebastiani@ec.europa.eu, renee.christmann@eursc.org, kari.kivinen@eursc.org, antonia.ruiz-esturla@eursc.org, richard.galvin@eursc.org, antonio.pino@eursc.org, markus.radhuber@eursc.org, wulf.schlabe@eursc.org, ana.gorey@coe.int

Dear Members of the Board of Governors of the European Schools, we write to you in view of your next meeting of 6-8 December. We represent the parents of more than 300 pupils currently enrolled in the European School Brussels IV who would like their children to continue to be schooled at the Berkendael site beyond this school year rather than to have them commute 3 hours per day to the new site and back when the school moves to Laeken in September 2012.

We have sent a petition to European Commission Vice-President Sefcovic on 14 October 2011 (attached; cf. also the petition website with further information: <https://sites.google.com/site/berkendaelpetition/>) which requests to run Brussels IV with two sites, Laeken and Berkendael, in the next school years up to the opening of the 5th Brussels school (Brussels V) in 2015 and to split the current Brussels IV school population according to geographical criteria (proximity to place of residence). We also refer to the recent Parliamentary Questions [P-10334/2011](#) and [E-10841/2011](#) on the issue of the Berkendael site.

We would be very grateful if you could discuss the issue in your meeting next week. The Secretariat-General is likely to tell you that keeping Berkendael open beyond 2012 for part of the pupils currently enrolled in Brussels IV will be too costly. Quite to the contrary, by taking a minimalist, no-frills approach several hundred young children in nursery and primary school from 4 (!) to 11 years of age could be saved from having to commute for 3 hours a day without incurring any additional costs. For details please refer to the attached analytical document which also sets out the other advantages of keeping the Berkendael site open

until Brussels V opens in 2015.

Should you have any further questions you can contact us via this email address. We will try to contact some of you in the coming days to further discuss the matter, so we apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused, but you will understand that we do this for the well-being of our children. We can assure you that it is not for our personal comfort or the comfort of our children that we seek your help. We are quite simply concerned about the evidently negative repercussions that this long commute will have on the learning capacity and development of our children while there is a solution that could be put into practice easily and with no additional costs if there was the political will to do so!

The decision is yours. Please use your powers in favour of the well-being of our children. We thank you for your kind attention.

Best regards

Eva Schriever and Claudia Hahn