



## Administrative Board Meeting/Réunion du Conseil d' Administration

**Brussels Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**Teams Video Meeting: 12:36-14:36**

**Present:** Johanna Al-Khafaji, Stephanie Buus, Marianna Cosco, Nicholas Costello, Alexandre Grigorescu-Negri, Angela Guarino, Dan Nicolae, Josephine Norris, Stefan Petrovski, Dana Adriana Puia Morel, Adja Awa Sissoko, Diane Werhert.

**Absent:** Victoria Petrova.

**Excused:** Romina Garbi, Jane Okafor, Tzvetomir Penev, Pénélope Vlandas.

**Proxy:** Romina Garbi to Angela Guarino, Jane Okafor to Diane Werhert, Tzvetomir Penev to Stephanie Buus, Pénélope Vlandas to Adja Awa Sissoko, Josephine Norris to Stephanie Buus until 1:00 pm, Diane Werhert to Johanna Alkhafaji from 1:30 pm, Dana Adriana Puia Morel to Stephanie Buus from 1:55 pm, Alexandre Grigorescu-Negri to Stefan Petrovski from 2:00 pm.

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

### Minutes 11.01.2024

The quorum was reached. Ms Buus, the President, wished everyone a happy 2024 year and chaired her last Administrative Board meeting.

#### 1. Some words from the outgoing President.

Ms Buus reminded the Board that she would step down as President and Board member at the next General Assembly. She expressed her thanks to all the Board members for having elected her to this position. In her view, being President has been a good challenge and an interesting experience. She therefore took the opportunity to share her thoughts about the past and the future with the Board.

Ms Buus thanked all the members of the Board for their work and for the collaborative spirit in which we work on the Board. She exhorted them to maintain this team spirit, underlined that congeniality played an important role in our interactions and encouraged everyone to be nice to each other, to be respectful, and to listen to each other and work together for solutions.

She concluded her intervention by stating that the Board should have at least one or two face-to-face meetings every three months.

#### 2. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted.

### **3. UA pupils' policy for 2024/2025.**

Issues to be discussed:

**- Depending on the state of the budget, does the Social Fund Committee accept to finance UA pupils for canteen meals after means testing?**

**-Does the APEEE also stop offering free Transport and Extracurricular Activities (+ Membership fees?) to UA pupils in 2024-2025?**

Stefan Petrovski, the Treasurer of the APEEE, introduced this sensitive issue. He informed the Board that our parents' association had paid for all costs of the APEEE membership and service fees for the Ukrainian refugee pupils since 2021. He emphasized that our financial assistance, estimated at approximately €75 K, has been a great act of solidarity with the Ukrainian refugee pupils and their families.

Stefan Petrovski recalled that the Board had decided not to extend free canteen meals to Ukrainian pupils during the second and third quarters of this academic year (Q2+Q3), a decision reflected in the 2023-2024 budget. Prior to this meeting, Board members had been asked to vote in favour of one of the following budget proposals: version 5, to stop offering free canteen meals to Ukrainian pupils, and version 6, to continue to offer them free canteen meals that are paid for by all parents, as we do not receive any funding from the school. Version 5 of the budget was adopted. Adja Awa Sissoko, the Board member in charge of the canteen services, explained that the canteen was also a social service, but that we cannot afford to provide it free of charge to the Ukrainian pupils due to our financial constraints.

According to Stefan Petrovski, we could ask for payments in several instalments for the second and third terms and use the Social Fund to cover the financial needs of the Ukrainian families who are most in need. It is important to continue this discussion with the new Board members in February and see how to prepare for the transition period and how to explain the change in the enrolment procedure for Ukrainian students to the concerned parents/host families.

The President explained that the Board would take the general decision and the canteen manager, the Board member responsible for canteen services, and the APEEE Director would decide on the details of invoicing. She added that the Board should decide on how to use the Social Fund to provide financial assistance to Ukrainian families.

### **4. GA Preparation.**

The President of the APEEE reminded every Board member whose mandate was coming to an end that all application forms had to be submitted to the APEEE secretariat by 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024. Board members were encouraged to look around in their classes or their parent groups and bring one or two parents who were interested in specific issues or had specific skills and competencies that would be a good addition to the Board. Ms Buus was pleased to announce that Dana Puia Morel had kindly agreed to act as a moderator for the upcoming General Assembly. She took the opportunity to thank Dana Puia Morel for her willingness to serve as a volunteer in such an intensive role.

The President of the APEEE pointed out that we needed to appoint three Board members as volunteers for the Electoral Board to check that all votes cast at the General Assembly were valid and the quorum was met. It was specified that the Electoral Board should be composed of Board members who did not stand for election to the Board and who did not present any activity report at the General Assembly meeting. Following this call for volunteers, the Board appointed Nicholas Costello, Dan Nicolae, and Diane Werhert as members of the Electoral Board. A preparatory meeting with OneTec would be organized shortly to test the functionality of the voting system. To support the oral presentations, some slides would be prepared by each Board member in charge of a service using the same format and template.

The discussion focused on the votes that would be submitted at the General Assembly. For the financial part, the Board decided to submit to the General Assembly the increase of the APEEE annual membership fee from €50 to €57 as of the 2024-2025 school year.

Stefan Petrovski clarified the order of votes. First, there would be one vote on the 2022-2023 results (past), then, a vote on the 2023-2024 budget (present), and after that, a vote on the increase of the APEEE membership fee for the next academic year (future). He clarified that the increase of the 2024-2025 APEEE membership fee would have an impact on the 2024/2025 budget and not on the current budget. The payment of the 2024-2025 APEEE membership fee would be requested in May when the 2024-2025 enrolments would be launched to cover the costs of the next academic year. Eric Rega noted that the amount of the current APEEE membership fee was the lowest of all 4 Brussels APEEEs and that this raise was needed to build the APEEE reserve and to anticipate inflation.

## **5. Finances.**

**-Cost of works by all volunteers, i.e. nb H/year x €/hours = total costs (to be displayed as information in the GA).**

Stefan Petrovski pointed out that Board members invested a lot of time and energy in their work as volunteers. He expressed his wish to show the cost of the work done by all Board members during the General Assembly meeting for information. The President added that this was an interesting idea. Therefore, she cordially invited all Board members to provide an estimation of the average time spent on a task or function for the parents' association.

**-Reallocation of reserves. Proposal to GA.**

Stefan Petrovski suggested that the 2022/2023 loss of €46.092,48 should be covered by the APEEE benefits.

He reminded the Board that the purpose of a reserve was to cover all expenses in case of unforeseen crises, for example, to cover the costs (All end contract costs- CDD/CDI and others calculated by our Payroll Experts-SECUREX) of the APEEE staff in the event of bankruptcy. He explained that there was no legal requirement to establish legal reserves, but the Board had to act with due diligence, thus underlining the importance of setting reserves. Ms Norris clarified that this duty of diligence also applied to the individual Board members, and it could be invoked against any Board member or against the Board as a collective.

Stefan Petrovski presented to the Board a new allocation of reserves that he wanted to submit to the General Assembly for approval. The proposed changes to the allocation of reserves on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, included the elimination of funds for pedagogy and access control and the allocation of €70 K for the new IT tool (setting up of the new APEEE enrolment system).

It was explained that Eric Rega and Irène Douvris were in contact with four digital companies that were involved with non-profit organizations to acquire a new online enrolment system user-friendly for parents. The President pointed out that how to rebuild our reserves was an important topic that should be seriously discussed by the new APEEE Board.

**-Financial objectives -Budget 2024-2025.**

Stefan Petrovski invited all Board members to review the PowerPoint presentation on the financial objectives for the 2024-2025 Budget and make their comments on Wiki.

## **6. Discussion & Vote on Supporting a Conference on Neurodiversity.**

**Neurodiversity conference with Amanda Kirby via InterParents.**

Before the Christmas holidays all APEEEs had received a request, via Interparents, to support the online conference for parents on neurodiversity and contribute to the conference fees for a total amount of €130 /€140 per APEEE. Ms Buus informed the Board that the supporting documents of this initiative had been published on Wiki.

The APEEE President reminded all Board members to look at the supporting documents and vote on the financial support for the Neurodiversity Conference on WIKI platform by the evening of this Board meeting.

The Board meeting ended at 2:36 pm.