



Administrative Board Meeting/Réunion du Conseil d' Administration

Brussels Thursday, 7th December 2023

Teams Video Meeting: 12:36-14:41

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

Absent: Victoria Petrova.

Excused: Josephine Norris, Jane Okafor, Diane Werhert.

Proxy: Tzvetomir Penev, Marianna Cosco and Alexandre Grigorescu-Negri to Stephanie Buus.

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

Minutes 07.12.2023

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

1. Adoption of Minutes: Board meeting 9th November 2023.

The Minutes were adopted with Mr Grigorescu-Negri remarking that his name was missing from the attendance list.

2. Adoption of the Agenda.

The agenda was adopted.

3. Preparations for the General Assembly on 23rd January 2024.

Activity Reports due by next Thursday, 14 December + Oral presentation of your service/fund/activity expected at GA itself.

NOTE: Please upload your respective Activity Reports in each dedicated WIKI section that Stefan Petrovski has created for you, thanks!

Board members are requested to prepare and send their Activity Reports to the APEEE office by Tuesday 14th December 2023. On the question of whether there will be a report submitted for the Community Fund, Ms Vlandas states that this is usually done in an oral presentation and that a report (written or oral) should be available for all APEEE funds that are related to expenses where we therefore have a financial implication.

Ms Guarino will be happy to help and improve the Activity Report document in terms of readability and formatting. She thinks that it would be good to have two separate Activity Reports with the APEEE logo and paragraph numbering: one in English and one in French.

The President invited Ms Guarino to liaise with Eric Rega, Irène Douvris, and Stefan Petrovski of the APEEE to make some simplistic changes to the activity report document in order to make it more readable.

4. Recruitment of new President/recruitment of new Board members.

Ms Buus announced that she would be stepping down as APEEE President after the General Assembly meeting. At the time of this Board meeting, no Board member had expressed interest in this position. The Board members discussed different options in this context such as the possibility of a rotating presidency, the possibility of having two presidents with distinct positions or the possibility of a joint position between the President and the Vice Presidents.

Ms Buus underlined that it was very important to have this type of discussion before the next General Assembly meeting. In her view, it was difficult for an outsider who has no APEEE Board experience to come in and take on this role.

She announced that there were 12 vacancies on the Board and encouraged all Board members to interact with parents and find potential candidates interested in serving on the Board.

5. Extraordinary Board meeting during the week of 18 December or vote by Written Procedure for approval of final budgets after meetings with respective Service Managers & Board responsables next week?

The President of the APEEE expressed her preference for an Extraordinary Board meeting during the week of 18th December in order to discuss and approve the final budget which will be submitted at the upcoming General Assembly meeting for approval. The Board secretary, Johanna Alkhafaji would send a doodle poll to the board members to fix the meeting's date for the overall approval of the budget.

Moderator for the GA.

The President of the APEEE announced that as the outgoing president she would not be able to moderate the GA and launched a call for a moderator among the Board members.

6. Community Fund – 2 applications for a vote (Kiva support and Rowland-Ryan project from the EN section).

Tzvetomir Penev, the Chairperson of the APEEE Community Fund Committee (CFC), informed the Board that the CFC had received three funding applications for the following projects:

- The first project, submitted by the school librarian, has been approved by the CFC for a total amount of € 500. This amount will be used to reward the 'young librarians', those secondary pupils who offer their help on volunteer basis to the school librarians.

-The other two projects (the Oral Story Telling Workshops and the Kiva anti-bullying project) had to be submitted to the APEEE Board because the amount of the funding for each application was above the threshold of € 750.

On behalf of the CFC, Tzvetomir Penev submitted to the Board the Story Telling Workshops submitted by Ms Rowland for approval. The purpose of this project was to develop the literacy competence and multilingual competences of all nursery and primary pupils in the EN section and the P4 and P5 L2 EN students of other sections by having an opportunity to listen and participate in a live workshop with Mr De Burca, the storyteller.

The amount requested from the Community Fund was € 1.375 in order to cover the costs of travel, accommodation, and the workshop for one day in school.

The proposal was adopted with 13 votes in favour/0 abstentions/and 0 against.

The second school's project submitted to the CFC was to finance a Kiva Booster Training Course with costs for a total amount of € 2.900 (total estimated costs of the project for the 2023-2024 school year: € 9.414).

It was explained that Kiva was a research and evidence-based anti-bullying program developed in Finland with the aim of this Kiva anti-bullying project to support the well-being of all in the EEB4 school community.

Tzvetomir Penev and the other members of the CFC did not recommend financing the Kiva Booster Course at this stage because more information was needed. Alexandre Grigorescu-Negri expressed his view that the Board should have access to data and see if it was successful or not only for bullying, degradations, drugs or violence and these numbers.

It is decided that Tzvetomir Penev will send specific questions to Ms Viima who had submitted the project. The vote on this project was postponed to the January Board meeting.

7. Together School update.

Dan Nicolae and Eric Rega gave an oral update of the Together School application.

They explained that the process of drafting the APEEE budget was planned for October 2023, and it would be finalized on 29th November 2023.

Angela Guarino underlined the need for updating the enrolment system and announced exploring the possibility of using Together School for PÉriscolaire as well or opting for another system. She expressed the need to budget for a new enrolling system now. She also volunteered to head the search.

Eric Rega explained that current problems with the App stem from poor network coverage in some areas and human error (faulty execution by bus monitors). It was decided to continue the discussion in the next Comex.

8. Brief Update on the Template Agreement between the European School of Brussels IV (Laeken) and the APEEE on the Roles and Responsibilities in Safety and Security.

Ms Buus informed the Board that the Template Agreement between the EEBIV and the APEEE of Brussels IV should be signed by 15th December 2023 thus completing the process that started in 2016. The Template Agreement text, including comments and revisions provided by the APEEE Services (managers and Board members responsible for services) would be sent to the school's director shortly. The APEEEs comments should be incorporated. All APEEEs will have to sign the agreement.

9. Finances.

a) 2023/2024 General Affairs Budget in 2 versions.

There was a preliminary discussion on the draft 2023/2024 General Affairs Budget. Two versions were submitted to the Board for analysis: one version with € 364 K expenses and another one with € 394 K expenses due to the temporary replacement of two APEEE staff members. It was pointed out that a zero-deficit budget needed to be presented at the next General Assembly meeting.

Pénélope Vlandas raised the question whether the office could function without replacing these two staff members. Eric Rega answered that this was not possible as both positions, the accountant and the communication officer are extensive.

Eric Rega would fix specific meetings focused on the budget with each Board member responsible for a service in the following days.

Johanna Alkhafaji would launch a WhatsApp pool to fix an Extraordinary Board meeting focused on the budget during the last week of December. Angela Guarino noted that the communication officer might not have to be replaced but that her duties might be partially taken over by a member of a Board or that an external person could be hired for punctual needs. Eric Rega proposes to share the programme the communication officer has laid out for the year to check if some duties could be shifted to other APEEE staff or Board members. Dan Nicolae explained that no other staff members could take over the duties of the accountant. Alexandre Grigorescu-Negri stated that the Board should not take over the jobs of the APEEE staff as they are paid for that. The Board's responsibility is to supervise the APEEE staff. Eric Rega explained that the deficit would be 110.000€. Two explanations:

- During 2022/2023, bus prices increased by 7,3 % but the price for parents and the institutions was only increased by 4 %. The impact of this decision was 171 K €.

- Two maternity leaves with replacements that start one month before and end one month after the leave amount to 30 K€. Dan Nicolae underlined that that a negative budget was not acceptable, all measures to reach at least a balanced budget had to be taken.
- Pénélope Vlandas recalled that extensive discussions in the previous year had already concluded that a negative budget cannot be presented at the GA and that repeating the same discussions was a huge waste of time.

The Board members agreed that the budget needed to be balanced, cost cuts had been implemented in the previous year, that prices had to be raised where possible and that a negative budget cannot be presented at the GA. In preparation of the extraordinary Board meeting to finalise the budget all measures to improve the budget have to be laid out clearly. The president impressed upon the Board the fact that all APEEEs have increased their prices, and that this needed to be communicated clearly at the GA.

The Board meeting ended at 2:41 pm.

The following points were postponed to the next Board meeting:

- APEEE's position on provision of services for UA pupils in 2024-2025 and beyond.
- Need for at least ONE, relatively active InterParents Representative on the incoming Board, 2024-2025.
- More physical meetings of the Board from 2024, and if so, how to organize in a systemic manner? (note: last Board meeting before GA 11.01.2024, last Executive Committee meeting 18.01.2024).