

## May 2024 Board Meeting

**Date:** Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 from 19h to 23h45

**Location:** Teachers' Canteen Woluwe & Online (ZOOM)

**Present in situ:** Sofia AMOR – Luca CARAPELLI – Catarina DUARTE GOMES – Andrew Janis FOLKMANIS – Pim GESQUIERE – Andrea GRGIĆ – Bruno LARANJEIRA – Elita PETRAITIENÉ – Myriam PINI – Albert RÄDLER – Fabricio SANTOS – Monika SZULYOVSKY – Francesca TUDINI – David ZELINGER

**Present online:** Célia ALVES RODRIGUES – Pierre DEBAR – Sabrina FASOLI – Jan VON PFALER

**Absent:** Alexia MIKHOS – Andrea HUTTERER – Nicolas LACROIX

**Others:** Anja GALLE – Clémence EUGENE

All related documents were sent to the Board members before the meeting.

### Agenda Points

#### 1. Approval of the agenda

The Board discusses the evening agenda and agrees to move the Eurêka discussion point forward to point 3.

**Decision:** the agenda is approved.

#### 2. Approval of the report of the Board meeting of 09/04/2024

The Board votes on the Board meeting report of the Board meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

10 votes for yes (Monika Szulyovszky, Catarina Duarte Gomes, Myriam Pini, Albert Rädler, Sabrina Fasoli, Luca Carapelli, Andrew Janis Folkmanis, Pim Gesquiere, Célia Alves Rodrigues, Sofia Amor) and 7 votes for abstain (Francesca Tudini, Fabricio Santos, Bruno Laranjeira, Andrea Grgić, Jan von Pfaler, Elita Petraitiené, David Zelinger).

F. Tudini informs that she abstains because she was not present at the previous meeting.

**Decision:** the report is approved by the Board.

#### 3. Notifications

##### Resignation

Ms Alexia Mikhos (Board representative of the French section) has resigned from the Board.

##### Steering Committee

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> May. The substance of the discussion will be discussed under point II. 5.

##### Canteen internal staff position switch

The Canteen Woluwe is undergoing an internal restructuring. The Canteen Manager has informed both the APEEE Director and the working group that the kitchen chef is overwhelmed with administrative duties related to the bursar role. These tasks include overseeing product supplies, managing stock, negotiating with suppliers, control of HACCP norms & standards, handling orders and deliveries. Consequently, the manager has suggested dividing the role, with the current kitchen chef assuming the bursar responsibilities and a brigade member, with 10 years of experience in the canteen, stepping into the role of kitchen chef.

### Data Processing Procedure

A. Grgić, Coordinator of the Health, Safety & Security (HSS) working group, takes the floor. Following a HSS meeting with the DPO regarding Eurêka data processing, the Data Protection Officer (DPO) has informed the HSS working group that a revision of the APEEE data processing procedures is to be conducted. The DPO has forwarded a document with a recommendation to the HSS coordinator, who has disseminated it to the HSS working group for follow-up.

### Agreement between the European Schools & APEEE

The presidents of the APEEE Bxl have gathered to discuss items, including inputs to the Convention (*The agreement between the European Schools and Parents' Associations on the roles and responsibilities in safety and security*). The President of the APEEE Bxl III G. Payne has assumed the lead on this matter, engaging in discussions with the Secretary-General, who appears receptive to the suggested alterations. A fresh proposal will be formulated in collaboration with the Secretary-General. Once finalised, the APEEE Bxl II Chair will seek to renew the mandate, reflecting the updated document.

The Board discusses the legal advice that was provided in a previous version.

**Action Point:** The Chair to verify who made the legal advice on the APEEE Bxl II. Gather information and request to be kept in the loop.

**Action Point:** The Chair to request the APEEE Bxl III (*lead in the discussion*) for feedback on the Secretary-General collaboration, and to be kept actively in the loop.

**Action Point:** The Chair to send out the current convention to the Board.

**Action Point:** The Chair to kindly remind the InterParents group to reach out to the members of the Board who requested the confidentiality agreement.

**Action Point:** The Chair to provide the list of the working groups of InterParents.

### Baccalaureate Support

D. Zelinger, Coordinator of the CEES working group, takes the floor. InterParents operates a platform where parents and students can report any concerns related to their BAC exams. They require school correspondents to assist in categorising these issues (i.e. central systemic issue, local issue, and individual issue). Local correspondents are responsible for addressing and resolving individual and school-specific issues at the local level and communicating systemic issues to InterParents.

A message is currently being drafted on the topic which will be sent to S7 parents.

Catarina Duarte Gomes and Francesca Tudini volunteer to be the contact members.

## Discussion Points and Vote

### 1. First reading of the draft budget – proposal online Extraordinary Board Meeting

J. Von Pfaler, as Treasurer, takes the floor to present the first reading of the draft budget for 2024-2025 informing members that the APEEE's financial year runs from September to August and adding that the purpose of this exercise is to indicate the possible price increases for the school year 2024-2025 and confirm any necessary major changes in the services.

The documents provide a context and overall state of play for the financial years 2021-2022, 2022-2023, the current budget and results up to the second term as well as a first draft for the financial year 2024-2025. The overall approach is to have a breakeven point for the services, and a 2% margin for the Transport as authorised by the Institutions to compensate additional needs.

The Board discusses the services' budget and ways forward, including the extracurricular activities' registration and cancellation analysis to be provided, including a suggestion for benchmarking of APEEE Bxl II activities with other APEEEs. Members express a desire for more detailed analytical data for each service. Additionally, members are encouraged to actively engage with and investigate areas of interest.

The Board also concurs, following past practice, that when informing parents about possible price adjustments, it is important to provide explanations regarding the reasons behind any increases. As has been done over the past few years before the start of the registrations on 1/6 for transport & canteen, and mid-June for the extracurricular activities.

During the month of May, the extracurricular activities service will already launch the pre-registrations, as done over the past years, to give parents whose children are registered for a class this year, to continue next year. However, there's no financial commitment for these pre-registrations since parents have the opportunity to cancel the accepted extracurricular activity without any cancellation cost if it's cancelled by 1/9/2024 at the latest.

The treasurer suggests that the Board thoroughly reviews the financial figures and schedule a more in-depth discussion on the price setting/provisional budget and vote during an extraordinary Board meeting (conducted online), focusing specifically on designated agenda items, including II. 2. An online budget working group meeting on Tuesday 21/5 at 12:30 is foreseen to prepare this.

**Decision: The Board agrees to meet online on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 19h.**

**Action Point:** C. Eugene to send the ZOOM details to the Board.

### 2. General Terms & Conditions - proposal online Extraordinary Board Meeting

J. Von Pfaler, in addition to the above agenda point being discussed on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024, also invites the Board to discuss the 3 proposed changes on the General Terms & Conditions on the same evening.

The adjusted document (including the pricing and extracurricular activities' service modifications) has already been discussed at the last budget working group meeting and will be discussed on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024. It's imperative that the General Terms & Conditions is properly updated before the start of the registrations for the new school year 2024-2025 which start on 1/6/2024 for transport & canteen.

### 3. Eurêka

M. Pini and B. Laranjeira, Board members and Eurêka volunteers, reached out to the Board on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024 to take a decision regarding the status of Eurêka. In March 2024, the Health, Safety and Security raised the fear of a data breach regarding the use of tablets and limited information related to students (name, class including section and parent email address). After a discussion with the APEEE DPO, it was revealed there was no data breach. However, in the meantime, Eurêka was denied access to the data on the tablets and information until a solution was found and implemented and the volunteers have been working without any tools. As of May 13<sup>th</sup>, no solution was found or proposed. Therefore, the members propose that the Board deliberate and take a decision on whether to grant Eurêka parent volunteers access to the data on the tablets in order to fulfil Eurêka's objectives. Alternatively, they suggest allocating one hour every Thursday and Friday for an APEEE staff member to assist in identifying the names of the students of the lost items for notifying parents in case it concerns belongings of secondary students or being able to put the lost items in the correct box of the nursery & primary classes. Various suggestions have been put forward since March regarding the operational approach for Eurêka to ensure compliance with legal requirements while delivering the requested service to parents.

The Board engages in discussions and expresses concerns regarding the follow-up on APEEE's data protection considerations by the APEEE DPO.

**Action Point:** A. Galle will look into asking an APEEE staff member to take the time until the end of the school year (5<sup>th</sup> July 2024) to support the Eurêka volunteers.

**Action Point:** The HSS WG will look into the processes and the Statutes WG will meet to discuss the legal and administrative aspects.

*Provisional agenda point for the Board meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024: the HSS & Statutes WG will come up with a proposal on the next steps for a Board discussion concerning the APEEE DPO.*

### 4. Statutes: States of articles 14 and 17

The Chair addresses the Statutes Update working group coordinator, seeking insights on how to address the criticisms voiced against the Board during the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 7/12/2023, in preparation for the upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM will serve as the forum for voting on the missing articles of the Statutes (i.e. 14 and 17). A parent highlighted during the AGM that achieving consensus within the Board, should require at least a 2/3 majority on a proposal for the articles.

Members discuss the topics relevant to the mandate in the Statutes Update working group, having announced the articles are no longer discussed within the group. The WG coordinator responded that following a decision of the board, and within its mandate, the WG is revision the confidentiality undertaking. The WG coordinator added that the WG group has been handling a number of ad hoc issues as a matter of urgency, with GDPR being the main topic.

The Chair and coordinator agree to discuss the definition of a broad consensus and to revert to the Board in due time.

**Action Point:** The WG coordinator will send to the Board the draft of the articles 14 and 17 that was initially proposed for discussion in the Statutes WG after the last General Assembly.

### 5. School Infrastructure, Evere, Steering Committee

On Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024, the APEEE management met with the school management to discuss the school development structure.

J. Von Pfaler, as a participant in the meeting, takes the floor to provide feedback to the Board. A. Galle circulated the minutes of the meeting with the Board. The Board discusses the outcomes and items discussed at the meeting.

**Action Point:** TF overcrowding will meet on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 12h30 and discuss.

## 6. IT Team – Support Contract

F. Santos, as IT working group coordinator, takes the floor and informs the Board that the IT working group has signed an assistance contract with the IT company that developed the connector between Salesforce (customer relationship manager and database provider) and Exact Online (the accounting software) with which the APEEE work. The contract allows the APEEE to contact the company in case of issue, struggles and need of assistance.

The Board discusses the status of the IT project and settles that the Board will be able to communicate to parents an update in September 2024.

**Action Point:** the IT working group to provide feedback on the IT project status by September 2024.

## 7. APEEE Recruitment

The Chair takes the floor to inform the Board that he wishes, under this agenda point to (a) look briefly at how recruitment decisions are made and (b) ask the APEEE director to present her case in favour of the recruitment and creation position followed with a tour de table of the Board members' opinions.

Some members are of the opinion that the presence of a staff member is inappropriate whilst discussing the recruitment and creation of a position. Others state as it is not a personalised discussion (linked to a person) they see no issue with having a staff member present.

The Board discusses and envisages asking the staff member to leave, as her presence for a potential voting (screen, online voting, online accesses, IT equipment) is required, they will need to wait outside for as long as it takes and come back after. The Board does not reach a consensus, some members refuse to organise an extraordinary meeting to discuss the item and request to have it now.

The Board does not agree on a procedure and due to the late hour (*the school guards inform the Board it will need to leave the premises by midnight, leaving 15 minutes to the meeting*), the item will be discussed during the next Board meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

8. **U4U Brussels Proposals & relations with the Unions** not discussed due to lack of time.
9. **Progress on ways of working** not discussed due to lack of time.

Meeting ended at 23h45

Next Board meeting is scheduled on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024 (online).

**1. Statement by Anja GALLE (APEEE Director) on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

“The Director has informed the Board in her message of 10/5/2024 that the current APEEE Accounting & finance service is at risk, due to all the reasons mentioned in the message. A solution has been proposed by the Director to ensure a fully secure accounting & finance service, as well as strengthen again the APEEE management team. This solution would enable to secure the accounting & finance service as follows:

- 1) Create a back-up for the Finance Manager.
- 2) Training of the new Finance Manager and mentor by more experienced member
- 3) Follow up on projects and re-enforce project management not only for IT but also for other future projects.
- 4) Overall support & strengthening of the APEEE management team.

The Board has decided to discuss the proposed solution at the next Board meeting on 6/6/2024. Because of the seriousness of the situation, as pointed out in the message of the Director, if no solution is found for the risks, nor the APEEE staff nor the APEEE Director can take any responsibility in case problems would occur concerning the accounting, the invoicing, the finance, the IT project or the general management of the services.

The APEEE administrative staff will always continue to do its' utmost to ensure the best services and an overall good management, but without the proposed solution this will become very difficult. The Board is therefore invited to reflect on the possible consequences of their decision to take on 6/6/2024 and if so decided consider alternative solutions to ensure the security & efficiency of our services.”