

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

(“Règlement d’Ordre Intérieur”)

Version 2026

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APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

Content

1. Purpose of this document

2. Purpose of the Association

3. The Board

3.1 General Competences of the Board

3.2 Liability of the Board members and the APEEE Director

3.3 Structure of the Board and tasks of the Members

3.3.1 The Bureau

3.3.2 Working Groups

a) Establishment of the Working Groups

b) Mandate of the Working Groups

c) InterParents

d) Central Enrolment Authority

e) Well-Being Advisory Board

f) Board of Governors of the European Schools and the Administrative Board of EEB2

g) Representation at other meetings

3.4 Functioning of the Board

3.4.1 Board meetings

a) Preparation of the meeting

b) Decision Process

c) Minutes

3.4.2 Financial management

3.4.2.1 General considerations

3.4.2.2 Structure of the budget

3.4.2.3 Preparation of the budget

3.4.2.4 Planning financial report

3.4.3 Contacts/exchanges

3.4.3.1 Positions towards stakeholders

3.4.3.2 Answering parents' requests

3.4.3.3 Meeting Pupils

3.4.4 Ensuring proper flow of information

3.4.5 Inactive Board Members

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

4. APEEE Secretariat

- 4.1 APEEE Director
- 4.2 APEEE Secretariat
- 4.3 APEEE Services
- 4.4 Working conditions staff
- 4.5 Recruitment and dismissal

5. Class Representatives

6. General Meeting

- 6.1 Candidacy
- 6.2 Campaigning
- 6.3 Tellers
- 6.4 Minutes

7. Confidential information and data protection

Annexes

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

1. Purpose of this document

The Association of Parents of Pupils at the European School Brussels II – Evere-Woluwe (hereafter “APEEE”) is an international non-profit association under Belgian law with company registration number 419.537.272.

The **Statutes** are the basic legal documents governing the existence and structure of APEEE and are published in the Moniteur Belge¹

The **Internal Rules** are more detailed and specific than the Statutes, regulating the operations and procedures of the association, and do not need a publication in the Official Journal of Belgium. The Internal Rules must not contradict nor modify the Statutes, but are meant to implement and comply with them. Even though the Internal Rules are subject to the Statutes, they must be considered as a binding set of rules and must be respected.

The Internal Rules shall not contain provisions that²:

1° are in conflict with mandatory law provisions;

2° relate to matters for which the Belgian law applicable to international non-profit associations³ require a statutory provision;

3° are in conflict with the provision of the Statutes.

The Internal Rules of APEEE can be modified by the Administrative Board (hereafter “the Board”) according to the quorum and majority described in art. 15 of the Statutes. Abstentions are excluded from calculating the majority. To modify the Internal Rules, the proposal for modification should be listed as an “item for decision” in the agenda of the Board meeting⁴. The proposed modifications should be presented to the Board at least one week in advance of the meeting.

The Internal Rules and any amendments to the Internal Rules shall be communicated to the APEEE members and published on the APEEE website. The communication of amendments shall be accompanied by a matrix of changes providing an overview of the major changes. The Statutes refers to the latest approved version of the Internal Rules⁵.

¹ Official Journal of Belgium or Belgisch Staatsblad in Dutch. The published changes to the statutes of APEEE can be consulted in the legal entity database giving access to the legal entity annexes of the Moniteur Belge: [Annexe Personnes morales \(fgov.be\)](#).

² Article 12, Statutes.

³ For International Non-Profit Organisations book 2 (article 2:5 and article 2:10§2) and book 10 of the [Companies and Associations Code \("Code des sociétés et des associations"\)](#) list the required statutory provisions. Currently article 14 and article 17 are not yet compliant with the legal requirements.

⁴ See Section 3.4.1(a), Internal Rules.

⁵ Article 12 last paragraph, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

2. Purpose of the Association

The European School, Brussels II was created in 1974. The Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools⁶ states in art. 23:

For the purpose of maintaining relations between the pupils' parents and the School authorities, the Board of Governors shall recognize for each School the Association which is representative of the pupils' parents.

Moreover article 38 of the General Rules of the European Schools⁷ states that:

- *the Parents' Association [...] may organise after prior approval of the Director of the school, at its own initiative, expense and responsibility, the extra-curricular activities and the school canteen."*
- *The organisation and management of school transport are the responsibility of pupils' legal representatives, whether acting individually as pupils' parents or through the intermediary of any group or third party*

The existence and the purpose of a APEEE is therefore linked to the Convention and the General Rules of the European Schools, and part of the governance model of the European Schools.

The 8 purposes of APEEE are listed in Article 3§1 of the Statutes.

The activities that APEEE can carry out in pursuit of its purposes are listed in Article 3§2 of the Statutes. The list is non-exhaustive. Other activities, not mentioned in the list, can be carried out, as long as they are in the pursuit of the 8 purposes of the APEEE.

These 8 purposes are the basis for the actions decided by the Board and the respective mandates of the Working Groups. The report presented to the Annual General Meeting provides an annual report on the activities undertaken⁸.

3. The Board

3.1 General Competences of the Board

The functioning of the Board is based on the principle of collegiality⁹. All Board Members shall exercise their rights and execute their obligations under the Board's accountability and collective responsibility.

⁶ [Microsoft Word - SW1-21994A0817en.doc \(eursc.eu\)](#)

⁷ [2014-03-D-14-en-14.pdf \(eursc.eu\)](#)

⁸ Article 9§4 Statutes. See also article 2:59 Belgian Code for Companies and Associations.

⁹ Article 13(1)(A), Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

The Board has full powers of the management and administration, with the exception of the powers vested in the General Meeting¹⁰. Therefore, the Board shall maintain, within the limits of APEEEs 8 purposes, a general residual competence for all matters.

Board members shall conduct their duties according to the principles of

- Transparency;
- Confidentiality;
- Loyalty to the purposes of APEEE;
- Representativeness;
- Commitment;
- Prudent and reasonable person;
- Good faith;
- Civility and courtesy.

3.2 Liability of the Board members and the APEEE Director

Each Board member, or the APEEE Director in charge of the daily management, is accountable for the proper performance of the mandate entrusted to him or her¹¹.

Board members, or the APEEE Director in charge of the daily management can be held liable against the association itself or any third party. Such failures can be assessed by reference to the principle of marginal control. Board members or the APEEE Director in charge of the daily management can only be held liable for:

“decisions, acts or conduct that fall manifestly outside the range in which normally cautious and prudent directors, placed in the same circumstances, could reasonably have diverging opinions”¹².

The principle of marginal control takes into account that, in a given situation, two normally diligent and prudent persons may reasonably behave differently. Only the breaches which fall outside the scope of a caution of a dedicated and skilled person, with a certain margin of error, can be sanctioned.

Since the Board is a collegial body, the liability of the Board members is also joint and several¹³. The joint liability of all Board members also applies for any damage resulting from a breach of the provisions of the Statutes or the Belgian Code for Companies and Association¹⁴. However, the above-mentioned principle of marginal control does not apply to legal and statutory obligations.

¹⁰ Article 17, Statutes.

¹¹ Article 2:51, Belgian Code for Companies and Associations.

¹² Article 2:56§1, Belgian Code for Companies and Associations.

¹³ Article 2:56 §2, Belgian Code for Companies and Associations.

¹⁴ Article 2:56 §3, Belgian Code for Companies and Associations.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

A Board member will only be able to avoid liability for Board decision taken during a meeting he/she attended if certain conditions are met:

- (i) the Board member may not have taken part in the wrongful action (eg. he/she voted against the resolution by the board) and;
- (ii) the Board member must have notified the Board of his/her protest against the wrongful action. This denunciation and the discussions to which it gives rise shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting¹⁵¹⁶.

3.3 Structure of the Board and tasks of the Members

The Board shall appoint Board members to become members of the Bureau, Working Group coordinators and in other roles described below. The appointment shall be done according to the quorum and majority described in art. 15 of the Statutes. Abstentions are excluded from calculating the majority.

If there are several candidates for a position, the person appointed still needs to be appointed according to the quorum and majority described in art. 15 of the Statutes. If the Board decides to terminate the appointment, the termination of the appointment shall also be done according to the quorum and majority described in art. 15 of the Statutes.

3.3.1 The Bureau

The Board shall elect from among its members the following Bureau¹⁷:

- one President, who shall be President of the association;
- one Vice-President especially responsible for pedagogical matters;
- one Vice-President especially responsible for administrative matters;
- one Secretary;
- one Deputy Secretary especially responsible for information;
- one Treasurer;
- one Member.

A Board member can hold office of not more than one position in the Bureau.

3.3.1.1 Mandate Bureau

The Bureau is a body that has no decision-making powers. The Bureau as a body confirms that the list of class representatives and therefore the electoral list of the General Meeting, is correct¹⁸. For more details on class representatives see Section 5. The minutes of the

¹⁵ Article 2:56 §4, Belgian Code for Companies and Associations.

¹⁶ See Section 3.4.1(c), Internal Rules on minutes of Board meetings.

¹⁷ Article 14, Statutes.

¹⁸ Article 6§8, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

meeting where the Bureau grants extensions for class elections and confirms the list of class representatives shall be shared with the Board. The main importance of the Bureau are the members and the roles and tasks they have in the association.

First of all, all acts that are binding upon the APEEE shall, save where special powers exist, be signed by two members of Bureau, who shall not have to furnish proof of their powers to third parties¹⁹.

Secondly, members of the Bureau have specific tasks:

a) **The President:**

- convenes the Board meetings²⁰ and chairs them. During those Board meetings the President has in case of parity of votes a casting vote²¹. The President oversees if the quorum of the Board meeting to take decisions²² has been obtained and when the quorum for taking decisions has been lost.
- signs the register of the recorded resolutions decided by the Board²³.
- chairs the General Meeting²⁴.
- signs the register of the recorded resolutions decided by the General Meeting²⁵.
- represents the Board, assisted by another Board member, in legal proceedings brought, defended and requested by the Board²⁶.
- represent the APEEE on the Board of Governors of the European Schools²⁷.
- represent the APEEE on the Administrative Board of the School²⁸.
- contributes to the functioning of the Board by maintaining close and direct cooperation with the Vice-Presidents as well as with all Board members and the APEEE staff. In doing so the President ensures the coherence and continuity of the APEEE activities.
- monitors the implementation of the mandates of the Working Groups and the annual budget.
- leads the external representation of the Board as a collegial body.
- liaises with the Presidents of the parents' associations of the other European Schools in Brussels.
- Leads the performance review of the APEEE Director (see section 4.1).
- monitors and approves the invoices as indicated in Annex I.
- Provides the final approval for communications sent by the Board not related to the services (such as newsletters, convocations to meetings).

b) **The Vice-President especially responsible for pedagogical matters:**

¹⁹ Article 18, Statutes as reflected in the Delegation of Authority (see section 3.4.2.1).

²⁰ Article 15, Statutes.

²¹ Article 15, Statutes.

²² Article 15, Statutes

²³ Article 16, Statutes.

²⁴ Article 9, Statutes.

²⁵ Article 11, Statutes.

²⁶ Article 19§1, Statutes.

²⁷ Article 20§1, Statutes.

²⁸ Article 20§1, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

- coordinates, in particular with the coordinators of the CEES and CEP&M Working Groups, the APEEE's activities in pedagogical matters.
 - follows the developments in pedagogical matters, liaises with the School in these matters and endeavours to represent parents' views within existing bodies.
 - represents the Board, in absence of the President, assisted by another Board member, in legal proceedings brought, defended and requested by the Board²⁹.
- c) the **Vice-President especially responsible for administrative matters:**
- is the co-coordinator of the Business Process Working Group.
 - follows the developments for the management of services, liaises with the School in these matters and endeavours to represent parents' views within existing bodies.
 - represents the Board, in absence of the President, assisted by another Board members, in legal proceedings brought, defended and requested by the Board³⁰.
 - represents the APEEE on the Administrative Board of the School³¹.
 - monitors and approves the invoices as indicated in Annex I.
- d) The **Secretary:**
- is responsible for the preparation of the agenda for the General Meeting and the Board meetings.
 - is responsible for the minutes of the General Meeting and the Board meetings.
 - signs and keeps the register of the recorded resolutions decided during the General Meeting³² and Board meetings³³.
 - receives nominations for election to the Board³⁴.
 - oversees the correct implementation of the Statutes and the Internal Rules.
 - is responsible for the document management within the Board.
- e) The **Information Secretary:**
- is the coordinator of the Communication Working Group.
 - implements APEEE's internal and external communication in close cooperation with all Board members and APEEE staff.
 - contributes to maintaining open communication channels with parents, students and school staff through all appropriate means, such as social media platforms and the publication of the APEEEs newsletter.
 - coordinates the redaction of the APEEE annual report.
 - monitors the regular update of the APEEE website.
- f) The **Treasurer:**
- is the coordinator of the Budget Working Group.
 - is the co-coordinator of the Business Process Working Group.
 - oversees the correct implementation of APEEE's financial procedures.

²⁹ Article 19§1, Statutes.

³⁰ Article 19§1, Statutes.

³¹ Article 20§1, Statutes.

³² Article 11, Statutes.

³³ Article 16, Statutes.

³⁴ Article 9, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

- monitors the APEEE's orders and payments in cooperation with the APEEE's staff and external accountants and auditors, in line with Annex I to the internal rules.
- monitors the preparation and presents to the Board the annual draft budget and the financial report.
- presents the budget and the financial report at the General Meeting.

g) The Member:

- is the coordinator of the Health, Safety and Security Working Group.
- represents the APEEE in the Health and Safety committee³⁵.

3.3.1.2 End of mandate Bureau

The mandate of the members of the Bureau expires at the election of members of the Board at the General Assembly. Therefore, there is a clear separation between the outgoing and the incoming Board.

3.3.1.3 President ad interim in between Boards

In the period between the election of the new Board during the General Meeting, and the election of the new Bureau, a member of the newly elected Board, who is according to article 14 of the Statutes the highest ranked member of the previous Bureau, shall act as President ad interim. If no member of the previous Bureau is a member of the newly elected Board, the member with most seniority in the Board will act as the President ad interim. In case there is more than one member with the same seniority, the member of the Board member with most senior by age shall act as President ad interim.

The mandate to represent the Board can only be given by the Board as a collegial body. Therefore, the President ad interim cannot represent the APEEE, or sign any acts that are binding upon APEEE. The main role of the President ad interim is to chair the first Board meeting until the election of the new President. In the first Board meeting, chaired by the President ad interim, the first agenda point shall be the election of the new President. Once the new President is elected, the newly elected President takes over from the President ad interim and is responsible for further chairing of the meeting. In case the Board needs to be represented prior to the election of the new Bureau, a mandate should be provided by the Board as a collegial body to that person representing the Board.

3.3.2 Working Groups

The Administrative Board may decide to set up Working Groups and Task Forces and establish their composition³⁶.

³⁵ For the legal basis of the Health and Safety Committee, see section 7 [Health and Safety Policy for the European Schools & OSG \(2022-09-D-75-en-1\)](#).

³⁶ Article 17, third paragraph, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

- **Working groups** are established on a permanent basis.
- **Task Forces** are Working Groups established ad hoc at any time by the Board for a limited period of time and with a specific mandate. Task Force might be turned into a Working Group if the topic of its mandate becomes permanent or to be followed up over a multi-annual period.

For each Working Group, a member of the Administrative Board is the coordinator³⁷. All parents may volunteer to participate in the work of the Working Groups³⁸.

a) Establishment of the Working Groups

The establishment of the Working Groups through the appointment of their coordinators shall take place as soon as possible following the Annual General Meeting and the appointment of the members of the Bureau:

- At the introductory meeting following the Annual General Meeting, Board members are informed about the existing Working Groups, their mandate and results of the previous year.
- During the first official Board meeting, Working Groups are confirmed or created.
- The following Working Groups can be considered as fixed in nature:
 - The Business Process Working Group, co-coordinated by the Treasurer and the Vice-President especially responsible for administrative matters (see 3.3.1(c) and 3.3.1(f)). The Business Process Working Group may include correspondents focusing on one specific service (transport, canteen and périscolaire);
 - The Communication Working Group, coordinated by the Information Secretary (see 3.3.1(e));
 - The Budget Working Group coordinated by the Treasurer (see 3.3.1(f));
 - The Health Safety and Security Working Group coordinated by the member (see 3.3.1(g));
 - The Working Group for the Education Council for the nursery and primary cycles called the CEP&M Working Group³⁹.
 - The Working Group for the Education Council for the Secondary Cycle called the CEES Working Group⁴⁰.
- Once the Working Groups are officially confirmed or created, and the coordinator has been elected, any Board member can volunteer to become member of a Working Group by informing in writing the coordinator, with in copy the APEEE Secretariat.

³⁷ Article 17, fourth paragraph, Statutes.

³⁸ Article 4, third paragraph, Statutes.

³⁹ Conseil d'éducation des cycles primaire et maternel. For the legal basis see Article 21(3)(a) of the [General Rules of the European Schools](#).

⁴⁰ Conseil d'éducation élargie du cycle secondaire. For the legal basis see Article 21(3)(b) of the [General Rules of the European Schools](#).

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

- In the pedagogical CEP&M and CEES Working Groups, all language sections represented in the Board must be represented⁴¹. If a language section has only one Board member elected, that Board member becomes ex officio member of both the CEP&M and CEES Working Groups.
- It is desirable that the President is not the coordinator of any Working Group. If the President is the coordinator of a Working Group and if an item of that Working Group is included in the agenda of a Board meeting, then the President should not chair the meeting for the duration of this item.
- The Vice-President especially responsible for educational matters shall not be the coordinator of the CEES or CEP&M Working Groups. However, if no coordinator has been elected for the CEES or CEP&M Working Groups, the Vice-President especially responsible for pedagogical matters shall become the coordinator ad interim until a coordinator is elected.
- Parents that have expressed their interest or requested to participate in Working Groups⁴² might be invited by the Working Group to participate in the activities of the Working Group. If decided by the Working Group, a Working Group might publish a call for interest for parent volunteers to join the Working Group.
- The Working Groups, the name of their coordinators, and the names of the Board members who are members of the working group, shall be published on the APEEE website.

Working Groups meetings are convened by their coordinators.

- When convening their meetings, the coordinator shall communicate the agenda of the meeting to the members of the Working Group.
- The date and time of the Working Group meetings shall be communicated to the APEEE Secretariat which will communicate this to the other Board members in the weekly agenda.
- The coordinator may invite APEEE staff or any other party that contribute to the meetings of the Working Group.
- During the deliberations of the Working Group, there is no differentiation or hierarchical relationship between parents who are Board members and volunteer parents who are not Board members.
- Following the Working Group meeting, minutes of the meeting consisting of at least a concise summary of conclusions and actions points shall be distributed to the members of the Working Group.

Working Groups shall meet at least twice a year, and whenever needed to fulfill their mandate. Before summer, the Board should review the Working Groups that met only once to establish its mandate and did not have any subsequent meetings, so that the Board understands the reasons

⁴¹ For that matter article 20§2 of the Statutes states: *"The Administrative Board shall appoint the Association's representatives on the enlarged Primary and Secondary Enlarged Councils and other bodies on which the APEEE has a seat."*

⁴² Article 4§3, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

for the absence of meetings and can take appropriate action, up to and including changing the Working Group Coordinator.

At the end of their mandate, each Working Group Coordinator prepares a handover file for its successor.

b) Mandate of the Working Groups

Each Working Group shall have a specific mandate, that defines the scope of its work. The proposed mandate is agreed by the members of the Working Group, presented to and approved by the Board. During the Board meeting, Board members may have substantial comments on the mandate, or it may occur that the mandate does not receive the required majority for approval by the Board. In that case the coordinator should rediscuss the mandate with the Working Group and resubmit a modified mandate at the next Board meeting.

Together with their proposed mandate, when possible and if required, the Working Group Coordinators should present for approval by the Board an estimation of expenses for the implementation of specific activities undertaken by the Working Group (e.g. costs of a conference). The CEP&M and CEES Working Groups will receive for each financial year a budget of EUR 3,000 each for cross-sectional projects. The Board will be informed about this financial support for cross-sectional projects during a Board meeting. The APEEE Director will be consulted, so that the correct financial procedures are followed.

The Working Groups do not have the power to make decisions. Decisions are taken by the Board⁴³ or by the APEEE Director as part of the day-to-day management⁴⁴. Therefore, the role of the Working Group is:

- to review proposals for decisions to be taken by the Board, and for cases not related to the operation of the services, to prepare decisions to be taken by the Board;
- to act as a sounding board to the APEEE Director and APEEE staff;
- to facilitate communication and interaction within the European School ecosystem.

Therefore, in principle, decisions to be taken by the Board regarding the operation of the APEEE services or the APEEE Secretariat shall always be presented to the Board by the APEEE Director, and not by any Board member.

c) InterParents

Interparents⁴⁵ is the umbrella association for the parents' associations of the European Schools. Interparents is an international non-profit making association (AISBL) registered in Luxembourg. They are the officially recognised representative of parents of all pupils in the European Schools in the Board of Governors of the European Schools, the Budgetary Committee and the Joint Teaching

⁴³ Article 15, Statutes.

⁴⁴ Article 17, Statutes.

⁴⁵ See [Interparents](#).

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

Committee (JTC) and the working groups mandated by the Board of Governors. Interparents sends four delegates to the Joint Teaching Committee; two observers to the Budget Committee; and two delegates - an official delegate and a deputy - to the Board of Governors.

The Board shall elect for Interparents two delegates, and two observers. Within Interparents only the delegates have the right to vote.

Interparents have several Working Groups. Depending on the Board members interest or expertise, Board members may join any of these Interparents Working Groups.

d) Central Enrolment Authority

The Central Enrolment Authority⁴⁶ (CEA) is responsible for managing enrolments in the Brussels European Schools. This authority handles administrative decisions regarding enrolments, ensuring a standardized process across the schools in Brussels. The Central Enrolment Authority is composed of: the directors, parents' representatives from each school, representatives of the European Commission and Belgian Government and the Secretary General and colleagues of the Enrolment Unit. The Staff Committees and Future Parents are invited as observers.

The Board shall elect for the Central Enrolment Authority one representative for each school site, and one substitute for each school site.

e) Well-Being Advisory Board

EEB2 installed in school year 2020-2021 an internal Well-Being advisory Board (WAB) for the secondary cycle. The Well-Being advisory Board is a body unique to EEB2. The Well-Being advisory Board gives the school the opportunity to speak in depth about well-being for students and staff. At the same time the official pedagogical platform concerning well-being remains the CEES. The Board shall elect for the Well-Being advisory Board two representatives.

f) Board of Governors of the European Schools and the Administrative Board of EEB2

The President shall represent the APEEE on the Board of Governors of the European Schools. The President and the Vice-President especially responsible for administrative affairs shall represent the APEEE on the Board of the School⁴⁷.

The President, and the Vice-President especially responsible for administrative affairs, are entitled to be represented for these meetings by another Board member appointed by the Board⁴⁸. Therefore, in due time, the latest prior to those meetings, the Board shall elect those other Board members. In particular as a measure to have the Board properly represented at those meetings in case of illness or conflicting engagements of the Board members that are statutory entitled to attend these meetings.

⁴⁶ See [Rules of Procedure for the Central Enrolment Authority for the Brussels European Schools](#) (2016-11-D-25-en-3).

⁴⁷ Article 20§1, Statutes

⁴⁸ Article 20§1, Statutes

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

g) Representation at other meetings

The President is also invited to attend the APEEE at other meetings, such as the Brussels Steering Committee⁴⁹ or any other ad hoc meeting. In these cases, the President can take the decision to be represented or be accompanied by a person to his or her choice.

3.4 Functioning of the Board

3.4.1 Board meetings

Following the Annual General Meeting, the Board shall decide as soon as possible, the agenda of the Board meetings that will take place during its mandate. Board meetings shall take place on a monthly basis, with the exception of any school holiday period. If required, non-scheduled Board meetings can be organised. These non-scheduled Board meetings are called Extraordinary Board meetings.

Board meetings shall take place in situ or in hybrid format (in situ with the possibility of online participation) or online.

Evening meetings during working days shall start at 19h and finish at the latest at 22h30. In case all items on the agenda cannot be treated by 22h30:

- the Board may discuss after 22h30 the date and time of the next meeting.
- the Board may agree on extending the meeting, and the items to be treated during the extension of the meeting time.

Lunch time Board meetings during working days shall not start before 12h30 and shall finish the latest at 14h. Lunch time Board meetings during working days shall take place online.

During Board meetings, no alcohol shall be consumed.

a) Preparation of the meeting

Agenda

The Director or any Board member may submit to the President or the Secretary items for the agenda of the next Board meeting.

With the exception of Extraordinary Board meetings, the Secretary or the President sends the draft agenda at the latest one week before the Board meeting to the Board. Board members may

⁴⁹ The Brussels Steering Committee is organised by the Secretary General as a strategic discussion between the stakeholders in the European Schools in Brussels. It traditionally brings together directors, teachers' and parents' representatives from each school, and representatives from the European Commission and the Belgian Government. The Staff Committees, AdP (a.k.a. Future Parents), and student councils also attend.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

provide additional comments and feedback. Depending on comments and feedback provided, the President may revise the draft agenda. The revised draft agenda shall be shared with the Board as soon as possible and at the latest the day before the meeting, when it is made public through the APEEE website. The agenda is approved by the Board at the beginning of the Board meeting, and the approved version will be made available on the website, replacing the draft version.

The draft agenda should include the following items.

1. Approval of the draft agenda;
2. Items for decision;
3. Items for discussion;
4. Implementation of the action points agreed at the previous meeting;
5. Items for information;
6. Any other business.

To the purpose of the agenda,

- **"Items for decision"** means:

draft decisions presented to the Board for adoption. The documents shall, to the extent possible, contain the options presented and indicate the grounds justifying the decision.

- **"Items for discussion"** means:

outstanding issues that the Board examines and provides clear direction on with a view to any further technical examination.

- **"Items for information"** means:

whereby members are provided with information enabling the Board to acknowledge progress. Information points may include: reports of meetings with the school and other bodies, contacts and actions by Board members, etc.

During Board meetings, Board members keep their interventions short, fact-based and within the topic being discussed. The person chairing the meeting may set a time-limit for interventions (e.g. 3 minutes), if needed, which will then apply to all Board members.

Inviting Non-Board members

Persons who are not members of the Board may be invited to Board meetings to provide feedback or clarification on certain points. The presence of non-Board members shall be indicated in the agenda of the Board meeting.

The Board may also decide to invite observers to its meetings.

Invited non-board members do not have voting rights.

The agenda shall be organized in such a manner that the items for which non-board members are invited on an ad hoc basis are treated first. Once these items have been treated, these non-board members shall leave the meeting.

b) Decision Process

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

Process

The meeting is chaired by the President. In absence of the President, meetings shall be chaired by one of the two vice-Presidents, or another member of the Bureau in the order described in article 17 of the Statutes.

Wherever possible, items for decision shall be accompanied by supporting documents so that members of the Board can familiarise themselves with the subject matter before the Board meeting.

Prior to a vote, Board members should be able to ask for clarifications and discuss the item to be decided.

The Board makes decisions according to the quorum and majority described in art. 15 of the Statutes. Abstentions are excluded from the calculation. The vote related to individuals is always taken by secret ballot. The President has in case of parity of votes a casting vote⁵⁰. The cast vote becomes immediately binding.

Decision by written procedure

A decision might be adopted by written procedure in case a decision needs to be taken before the next scheduled board-meeting, or if so decided in one of the previous meetings. A written procedure can be launched only if the Board deems a further discussion at a Board meeting not necessary. A decision by written procedure is adopted if all Board members vote unanimously in favour of the decision.

Conflict of interest

Board members shall declare to the Board, in writing or orally at the Board meeting, and in due time, any conflict of interest they might have as a Board member. The conflict of interest might be actual or perceived. This conflict of interest might be either:

- material: for instance, the Board member owns a company that provides services to the APEEE, the costs of which are part of a budgetary decision.
- immaterial: for instance, the Board decides on a position of a stakeholder body, with a family member of a Board member being a representative of this stakeholder body.

A Board member representing members of his/her section, or the education cycle of his/her child, or any sub-community within the parent community at large is not in a conflict of interest, but is part of the representational role as a Board member⁵¹.

Upon declaration of this conflict of interest, the Board as a collegial body will then take the appropriate measures to avoid a situation where this actual or perceived conflict of interest might create reputational or other damage. Depending on the case, the board member having a conflict of interest:

⁵⁰ Article 15, Statutes.

⁵¹ Article 3§2, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

- may stay in the meeting, but may not take part in the deliberations of the Board, nor take part in the vote.
- shall leave the meeting, and called back into the meeting once the agenda point has been closed.

c) Minutes

There shall be minutes of the Board meeting. The minutes will have the following format:

- mentioning the date of the meeting, starting time and time when the meeting is adjourned,
- mentioning the names of the persons attending and the names of the Board members not attending,
- recording the names of the Board members voting yes, no or abstain.
- recording when a person has declared a conflict of interest, and the moment during the meeting that person left and returned to the meeting.
- recording when a person has left the meeting.
- capturing the essence of the discussion, the decisions made, and the reasoning behind those decisions.
- recording the different opinions expressed during discussions, including the dissenting opinions, in principle with the names of the persons expressing these opinions, unless the board member expressly requests his/her name not be mentioned in association with an opinion expressed.

In addition, it is possible for a board member to make a statement for the record.

- Statements for the record cannot be made after the meeting.
- A statement for the record can only be made to express views on items for decisions or rules of procedure.
- Board members can join statements for the record made by other Board members.
- Statements for the record cannot be made for ad hominem remarks.
- If a Board member sees an error or wrongful decisions, a statement for the record is required to be exonerated from personal liability for this decision⁵².

The minutes of the meeting shall respect confidentiality and data protection (see Section 7). In particular for recurrent cases involving employment matters and financial information about the APEEE's contractors which could be considered a business secret.

The Board meeting shall be audio recorded electronically solely to facilitate the drafting of the minutes. The Secretary of the Board shall send a draft of the minutes to all Board members as soon as possible after the meeting, who can provide corrections or precisions if required. A revised version is then sent to board members for final approval. The minutes are approved if all board members approve them by the deadline. Otherwise, they are approved at the next Board meeting

Once the minutes of the meeting have been approved by the Board, the electronic recording of the meeting shall be deleted within at least five working days. The approved Board minutes shall also be published on the APEEE website.

⁵² Article 2:56, Belgian Code of Companies and Associations.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

3.4.2 Financial management

3.4.2.1 General considerations

- a. The Delegation of Authority⁵³ describes the APEEE financial procedures and the segregation of duties. The Delegation of Authority is part of the Internal Rules and can only be modified by decision of the Board. The Delegation of Authority shall be available on APEEE's website.
- b. The Internal Rules for the use of the APEEE-Social Fund⁵⁴ describe the procedures to be followed to provide financial assistance to individual families on behalf of a child and the procedure for subsidies to projects that enhance school life. The Internal Rules for the use of the APEEE-Social Fund⁵⁵ is part of the Internal Rules and can only be modified by decision of the Board. The Internal Rules for the use of the APEEE-Social Fund shall be available on APEEE's website.

3.4.2.2 Structure of the budget

The budget consists of five cost centres:

- a. After-school activities;
- b. General Affairs;
- c. Canteen;
- d. Social Fund;
- e. Transport.

The results of each financial year will be allocated to the funds of the five corresponding departments, unless on the basis of duly motivated reasons proposed by the Board, the general meeting decides otherwise.

The level for financial reserves is calculated on the basis of⁵⁶:

- f. Employment contracts of unlimited duration;
- g. Employments contracts of limited duration;
- h. Indemnity for the termination of ongoing service and supply contracts;
- i. The value of the investments undertaken for the duration of the current financial year.

3.4.2.3 Preparation of the budget

The budget shall be prepared by the APEEE Director with a review by the Budget Working group.

- a. The first reading of the budget should be approved by the Board before the start of the registrations for the services which is usually around the 1st of June. The first reading of the

⁵³ Annex I.

⁵⁴ Annex II: [Revised-rules-for-Social-Fund-16-12-2021-1.pdf \(wpenline.com\)](#).

⁵⁵ Request for subsidy ([REQUEST-FOR-SUBSIDY-1-1.pdf \(wpenline.com\)](#)- and Request for Financial Assistance ([REQUEST-FOR-FINANCIAL-ASSISTANCE-1.pdf \(wpenline.com\)](#)).

⁵⁶ [Annual General Meeting, 31 January 2023, Resolution 5.](#)

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

budget is based on the registrations of the current school year updated with the to be expected price increases (indexations etc) for the next school year. Based on this the Board can define possible price increases for the services and inform the parent community before the start of the registrations for the upcoming new school year.

- b. The preparation of the final budget starts during the month of October and is based on the actual registrations for the services of the new school year. Based on these registrations, the Board can establish the prices for its services. The prices for the services are to be approved by the Board before the All-Saints holidays, at the latest. This allows the invoicing of the first trimester to be organized before the All-Saints holidays to guarantee sufficient cash flow.
- c. Based on the prices for the services and therefore the expected revenue, the Board will approve the final Budget for the presentation at the next General Meeting⁵⁷.

3.4.2.4 Planning financial report

The financial report shall be prepared by the APEEE Director and be reviewed by the Budget Working group.

The draft financial report is to be prepared during the month of September for approval during the October Board meeting. Once the draft financial report is approved, the Auditor can proceed with the audit of the previous financial year. The Auditor will present the audit report to the Board which shall approve it at least one month before the next General Meeting. Following this approval, the final financial report will be presented at the General Meeting⁵⁸.

3.4.3 Contacts/exchanges

3.4.3.1 Positions towards stakeholders

When a Board member will attend an external meeting where a formal position needs to be taken, the Board should be informed ahead of meetings; so that the formal position can be discussed and agreed by the board.

Without prejudice to the tasks and roles set out in the Statutes, any Board Member may be mandated by the Board to participate in meetings with stakeholders. Wherever possible, it is desirable that at least two persons be present at meetings with stakeholders.

The mandate given by the Board should contain indications on the position and the line to take. Board representatives should not deviate from the decisions taken by the Board under any circumstances unless new information has arrived that could have changed the position taken by the Board. If the decision is unknown, or non-existent, Board representatives should inform their counterparts and seek to obtain a position from the Board. If unable to do so in due time, Board representatives may express to the counterparts, informing that it has not yet been discussed in the Board, the following:

- their personal opinion, clearly stating that it is a personal opinion,

⁵⁷ Article 9§4, Statutes.

⁵⁸ Article 9§4, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

- or the different and even contradicting opinions within the parent community, clearly stating that these are the opinions they are aware of.

This does not apply to the cases where the Board explicitly decided not to take a position. In that case, the position expressed by the Board member representing the Board, should be that the Board has not taken a position.

3.4.3.2 Answering parents' requests

Parents should be encouraged to write to the APEEE secretariat for any request they might have. Before sharing the request with the Board, the APEEE Secretariat will first ask the parents if they agree to share their name/message and email address with the relevant Board members, who will be able to follow up with them.

If the request is related to the services, the Secretariat should answer the question. In complex and sensitive cases, the Business Process Working Group might be invited to assist in providing a response.

If the request is related to pedagogical issues, the Secretariat will immediately dispatch the request to the relevant Working Group coordinator, with copy to the members of the relevant Working Group. In that case the Vice-President especially responsible for pedagogical matters should be copied.

3.4.3.3 Meeting Pupils

Pupils are organised through the Comité des élèves⁵⁹ (CDE) and are one of the stakeholders in the governing system of the school. Since the majority of the pupils are minors, special considerations are required:

- a. The CDE is a part of the school activities, therefore in their capacity as a CDE member, the pupils are legally under the responsibility of the school. Therefore, outside the formal meetings such as CEES, the Board can only engage with the CDE for specific projects after having requested authorisation from the school.
- b. Board members are aware that pupils may challenge the opinions of Board members and may also have opposing views.
- c. Board members should treat pupils with dignity and respect, the same way they would like that adults would treat their own children.
- d. Board members should not plan to be alone with pupils, either online or in person. Always make sure there is more than one adult present.
- e. If the school requests to stop engagement with pupils for a specific project, Board members shall not start parallel communication with the pupils concerned to turn around this decision.

3.4.4 Ensuring proper flow of information

⁵⁹ See Article 37(b) [General Rules of the European Schools](#).

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

Transparency, completeness and comprehensiveness are key when circulating information to interested parties.

The Board follows the following principles of information sharing:

1. The Board is a collegial body and therefore Board members have equal right of access to information.
2. Information received in capacity of an APEEE Board member can be shared unless the information is confidential⁶⁰.

When a member of the Bureau, a Board member, a Working Group Coordinator or other members of a Working Group is mandated to represent the Board on the various bodies of the European Schools, the Board members shall report back to the Board in writing within 5 working days.

3.4.5 Inactive Board Members

Article 13.2§1(b) of the Statutes states that Board member should attend at least 50% of the Board meetings. A high number of inactive Board members may result in difficulties in organising Board meetings due to the quorum required to take decisions.⁶¹ Therefore, Board members who are not able to be present at the sufficient number of Board meetings, due to professional or private reasons, are recommended to communicate their resignation in writing to the President⁶².

In any case, the position of a Board member with a two-year mandate will become vacant after the first year if the Board member has not attended 50% of the Board meetings during the first year of the mandate⁶³.

4. APEEE Secretariat

4.1 APEEE Director

The day-to-day management is entrusted to a APEEE Director⁶⁴ who is responsible for APEEE staff. The mandate listing the powers and actions relating to the daily management of the Director is approved by the Board. The mandate is published in the Moniteur Belge and on the website of the APEEE. The APEEE Director can further subdelegate the mandate entrusted to him/her.

Apart from reporting to the Board at Board meetings, the APEEE Director reports to the President and the Vice-President especially responsible for administrative matters. The performance review of the Director is done annually by the President and another member of the Bureau.

The Director is the liaison between different Boards. Therefore, the Director will inform a new incoming Board in writing of the state of play of all ongoing and upcoming projects related to the operational activities of APEEE. This should be done the latest by the first Board meeting taking

⁶⁰ For confidential information, see Section 7.

⁶¹ Article 15, Statutes.

⁶² Article 13.2§1(a), Statutes.

⁶³ Article 13.2§1(b).

⁶⁴ Article 17, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

place after the election of the President.

4.2 APEEE Secretariat

Apart from the three services (transport, canteen, périscolaire), the APEEE Director oversees the APEEE Secretariat which provides administrative support to APEEE such as communication, IT services, accounting and general administrative management.

4.3 APEEE Services

General Conditions⁶⁵ apply to the APEEE services: canteen, périscolaire and transport. The General Conditions are part of the Internal Rules and can only be modified by decision of the Board. The General Conditions shall not be modified during the school year, unless there is a situation of force majeure. Modifications shall be announced when the registrations for the services for the next school year are announced. However, modifications of General Conditions can be done during the school year when they are in favour of the members of the Association.

4.4 Working conditions staff

The employment relations with the APEEE's staff are ruled by Belgian law. A "Règlement de travail" describes the working conditions of APEEE employees. The "Règlement de travail" can only be modified by decision of the Board. The APEEE Director shall inform the Board members when the "Règlement de travail" must be modified to comply with the law and submit a proposal for modification.

APEEE employees with a permanent contract are paid according to a salary grid. The salary grid can only be modified by decision of the Board, unless adjustments required by law.

No member of the APEEE staff is in a hierarchical relationship with any member to the Board. The APEEE staff are answerable to the APEEE Director which is in its turn answerable to the Board as a collegial body. In case a matter of concern comes to the attention to a Board member in relation to the services, the issue shall be raised with the APEEE Director. The Director will then discuss with the concerned staff members and take the necessary action; or alternatively discuss with the Business Process Working Group in relation to all other actions and priorities to be undertaken.

Members of the Board shall respect the right of APEEE staff to disconnect, and shall not establish direct contact with them during their free time. Unless under a situation of force majeure for reasons of business continuity (e.g. extreme adverse weather conditions disrupting the services; outbreak of a pandemic; a terrorist attack; breakdown of key kitchen equipment). In this situation,

⁶⁵ Annex VI: [General-Terms-and-Conditions-13-06-2024-with-pricing-list.pdf \(woluweparents.org\)](https://woluweparents.org/General-Terms-and-Conditions-13-06-2024-with-pricing-list.pdf).

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

concerned APEEE staff can be contacted by board members responsible for the portfolio's concerned.

4.5 Recruitment and dismissal

The following recruitments and dismissals need to be decided by the Board:

- The APEEE Director, which consists of two decisions: a decision on the employment and a decision on the mandate;
- The Managers of the three services.

Apart from the posts of the managers of the three services, the recruitment of posts that exist within the organigramme of APEEE are within the remit of the APEEE Director. The creation of new posts, or any other change in the organigramme, needs to be decided by the Board.

Dismissals for these other posts are also within the remit of the APEEE Director, unless the costs implications of the dismissal exceed the financial ceilings for the APEEE Director as established in the Delegation of authority and requires therefore a decision by the Board. In any case, any act binding decision of APEEE needs to be signed by two members of the Bureau⁶⁶. Therefore, the APEEE Director needs to consult for any case involving recruitment or dismissal the President, the Vice-President especially responsible for Administrative matters and the Treasurer.

In case of termination on serious ground (*"faute grave"*), the legal notice period is three working days. In that case, following legal advice establishing that there are serious grounds for dismissal, the letter on the serious can be signed:

- Either two Board members jointly who are members of the Bureau at the same time. In this case, the two individuals sign in their capacity as members of the Board and members of the Bureau;
- either by the Director, if urgency can be demonstrated, following agreement by two Board members jointly who are members of the Bureau at the same time.

5. Class Representatives

Four parents per class are elected as representatives. The Class Representatives are elected at the first parents' class meeting early in the school year. The procedure for their election is set out in Article 6 of the Statutes. It is recommended that both parents of a pupil are not elected as a class representative in the same class to assure the widest possible representation of class parents.

⁶⁶ Article 18, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

The Class Representatives become full members of APEEE with the right to vote at the Annual General Meeting.

Their role is vital. Class representatives are the link between the Board and the parent community at large. They also play an essential role in the communication with the school.

There is one class representative responsible for Information and one is serving as Treasurer of the class fund, while for the remaining two the role is undefined. One of them is often designated social representative and in charge of organising class parties.

The tasks described below are distributed among the Class Representatives based on mutual agreement.

Their tasks fall under three main categories:

1. They are the contact persons for the class teacher and other teachers, as well for the educational adviser in the Secondary. Class representatives are requested to help the class to run smoothly or to improve the atmosphere in the class, on their own initiative, or at the request of parents or the class teacher, in particular:

- Organizing meetings with the class parents.
- Helping with organizing social gatherings, visits and other activities for the children.
- Helping the teacher to find parents to accompany children during school trips or Footfest.
- Helping with buying/ selling of second-hand schoolbooks, etc.
- Welcoming new parents and answering to their questions.

Networking among the Class representatives is very much encouraged, within a linguistic section as well as on class level. The Board members representing the linguistic sections are also committed to help and facilitate contacts.

2. Representatives liaise between the class teachers and the class parents on questions which are of general interest for the whole class.

They can be asked by other parents to intervene on educational or organizational matters which arise within their particular class with a view to solving any problem in the class, with pupil or teacher, raised by a parent. It is the Class representatives, in the first instance, who faces the sometimes-difficult task of identifying the approach of the teacher(s) or parents concerned to try and find a solution. Quite often in these cases, it is the Information representative that is requested by the class to take the lead.

3. In relation to APEEE, the class representatives:

- Shall attend the Annual General Meeting of APEEE to vote in the election of new Board members.
- Should be the main channel of communication between the class parents and the APEEE for any matter regarding the class.
- Are invited to pass on criticisms, observations, etc., from the parents to the APEEE and APEEE services, as well as transmitting information from the APEEE to the class.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

- Act as contact points of the Board when any survey or other request of information is done, and they are expected to gather and transmit the information provided by the parents of their class.

Given their position, their tasks, and their function as full members of the APEEE, the Class Representatives are expected to act, as is the case for the Board members, in due respect of transparency, confidentiality, loyalty, representativeness, commitment, civility and courtesy. Due discretion on the information they might have access to because of their role is of particular importance.

6. General Meeting

The organization of the General Meeting is set out in Section 3 of the Statutes. The election of Board members at the General Meeting is set out in Article 13 of the Statutes.

6.1 Candidacy

The call for candidates to become a member of the Board is made when the notice of call of the General Meeting is circulated.

- All parents, whether they are a class representative or not, can put themselves forward to be elected as a member of the Board on the condition that they:
 - have a child enrolled at the European School of Brussels II Evere-Woluwe;
 - they have paid their membership fees⁶⁷;
 - the youngest child is younger than 18 years old⁶⁸;
- Applications must be sent in writing to the APEEE secretariat to the attention of the Secretary of the Board.
- Upon submission of their application, candidates will receive a template consisting of one page PowerPoint slide, where they can display their candidacy.
- The PowerPoint candidacy may be published on the website or displayed at the Annual General Meeting so to inform the members of the General Meeting.
- Candidates will receive a maximum two-minute period to present themselves at the General Meeting. The candidates will be called to present themselves according to the alphabetical order of their family names.
- In case the candidates cannot be present at the Annual General Meeting, they can be presented by another parent that is not an APEEE Board member or staff member.
- Parents who decide to stand for a candidate after the administrative deadline to submit their candidatures, may submit their application at the Annual General Meeting for which a form will be at their disposal. Candidates who submit their application at the Annual General Meeting will not be able to display the PowerPoint slide with their candidacy. Those

⁶⁷ Article 5, Statutes.

⁶⁸ Article 4, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

candidates will be called to present themselves following the order of submission of their candidature.

- Candidates should be informed that by putting their name for election to the Board, when elected:
 - they agree to share their email address with the other members of the Board;
 - The named of the elected board members will be published in the annexes of the Belgian official journal.

6.2 Campaigning

- Board members should encourage parents to participate in the school's life by participating in APEEE projects, being a volunteer and by becoming a Board member⁶⁹.
- Board members should not engage in campaigning against parents putting themselves forward as a candidate since this goes against the purpose of the association⁷⁰. Moreover, they should not use for this purpose contact details of parents at their disposal since these contact details have only been put at their disposal within their mandate as a Board member within the purposes of the association.
- The Board members or APEEE staff members should not present any candidate at the elections at the occasion of the Annual General Meeting.

6.3 Tellers

To handle the voting procedures, at least four tellers are required at the general meeting. Among the tellers, one will be appointed as the Presiding Officer⁷¹.

The Presiding Officer and the other tellers shall conduct themselves impartially towards decisions put to a vote of the General Meeting. Their duties are:

- To verify the voters' lists;
- To verify the name of the voters and the validity of the proxy votes;
- To meet the company providing the voting software prior to the General Meeting;
- To monitor the voting software during the General Meeting;
- To verify that participants are registered correctly;
- To verify that the counting of the number of members entitled to vote and participating in the General Meeting is done correctly for the whole duration of the meeting;
- To oversee that the voting process is in line with Statutes;
- To announce, through the Presiding Officer, the voting results to the General Meeting;
- To sign, by the Presiding Officer, a report with the voting results;

To be a teller, one needs to fulfill the following requirements:

- Having paid APEEE membership fees;

⁶⁹ Article 3§1(1).

⁷⁰ Article 3§1(1).

⁷¹ Article 9§7, Statutes.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

- Be a class representative or a Board member;
- Not run for the election of the APEEE Board.

From the moment a person expresses to the APEEE their interest to act as teller, a candidate teller shall refrain from engaging in electoral campaigns for candidate APEEE Board members.

6.4 Minutes

For the format of the minutes of the General Meeting, section 3.4.1.c applies, with the exception that individual names of members attending shall not be recorded.

If applicable, the minutes of the General Meeting should always mention technical issues or incidents that prevented or disturbed, electronic participation to the meeting⁷².

⁷² Article 10 :7/1 Belgian Code of Companies and Associations.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

7. Confidential information and data protection

The Sharing of information policy⁷³ defines confidential information and how to treat confidential information.

- 7.1 The Sharing of Information Policy is part of the Internal Rules and can only be modified by decision of the Board.
- 7.2 The Sharing of Information Policy is shared with all new Board members after their election, and should be signed as received, understood and accepted. Board members who are re-elected should sign a new copy of the Sharing of Information Policy.

The Data Protection Officer of APEEE shall be an external Data Protection Officer with whom APEEE has a service contract.

- 7.3 The APEEE Privacy Policy describing APEEEs data protection policy are part of the Internal Rules and can only be modified by decision of the Board.
- 7.4 The APEEE Privacy Policy shall be made available on the APEEE website⁷⁴.
- 7.5 The Data Protection Officer of APEEE may be contacted for advice or for requests to investigate a particular matter, access to personal data or any occurrence directly related to tasks of the Data Protection Officer.
- 7.6 The Personal Data Protection Policy⁷⁵ is a separate document that is shared with all new Board members after their election, and should signed as received, understood and accepted. Board members who are re-elected should sign a new copy of the Personal Data Protection Policy. The Personal Data Protection Policy is part of the Internal Rules and can only be modified by decision of the Board.

Following having signed as received, understood and accepted the Sharing of Information Policy and the APEEE Privacy Policy, Board members shall receive an APEEE email address and access to the APEEE common drive.

Information containing personal data should be kept confidential and not shared with the parents' community. If a document containing personal data is received that has to be shared (e-mail, paper document, written or oral message, etc.), such document will be anonymised. All references to personal data will be removed before sharing the document.

Information containing personal data can be shared with the Board members on the need-to-know principle. If there is no legitimate need for other Board members to know the information containing personal data, personal data should not be shared. In such case, a document containing personal data shall be anonymised.

In case of any doubt, when dealing with information which are potential personal data, the APEEE Data Protection Officer should be consulted.

⁷³ Annex III.

⁷⁴ Annex IV.

⁷⁵ Annex V.

APEEE Evere-Woluwe Internal Rules

In the school community, many parents communicate with each other through social media channels through applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp or Signal. Some of these groups are confined to the class, other groups to the language section, while others may be established across sections. Board members in their individual capacity as a parent may participate in these social media channels. However, the APEEE as an international non-profit association under Belgian law does not set up such electronic communication channels. The creation, management and publication of messages on these groups are carried out independently of the APEEE activities and remain the sole responsibility of each parent who joins the group and communicates in the group. Therefore, the APEEE is not responsible for the content shared, and the data processed in these groups, regardless of the quality of the person or parent who creates or administers these groups. The personal data protection of these groups does not fall under the responsibility of the APEEE.

Annexes

- [Annex I: Delegation of Authority](#)
- [Annex II: Internal Rules for the use of the APEEE-Social Fund](#)
- [Annex III: Sharing of information policy](#)
- [Annex IV: Privacy Policy](#)
- [Annex V: Personal Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Annex VI: General Conditions](#)
- [Annex VII: Mandate APEEE Director](#)