20/07/2023

Dear families,

InterParents has been actively involved in the reorganization of the obligatory school trips in the European Schools. As you have read in our previous communications from July 2022, March and June 2023, we have since the beginning expressed our serious concerns with the whole procedure and offered different solutions. Exactly one year ago we asked the Office of Secretary General of the European Schools (OSGES) to either change the approach or postpone the implementation of the outsourcing of the organization of the obligatory school trips by one year. Unfortunately, both our proposals were refused by OSGES because of the obligation to comply with the Financial Regulation as decided by the Board of Governors (BoG) in December 2021.

The InterParents School Trips Working Group has been working hard throughout the whole school year to make parents' voice to be heard, sending emails and letters to OSGES and other stakeholders, giving interventions in the Joint Teaching Committee (JTC), Budgetary Committee (BC) and BoG meetings, as well as during the meetings held with OSGES, stakeholders (including teacher and director representatives) and Denatravel.

We are extremely pleased to let you know that this week Secretary General of the European Schools has informed InterParents about OSGES decision **not to renew the framework contract** with Denatravel which will therefore expire on 27 October 2023. This decision concerns all six lots (Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg).

The decision has been taken after intensive internal and external consultations which also included OSGES lawyers and the Directorate-General for Budget (DG BUDG) of the European Commission.

The Secretary General's intention was to respect the decision of the Board of Governors. However, the envisaged most important amendments of the contract faced legal and factual constraints which could not be overcome, something the InterParents School Trips WG had brought to the attention of OSGES already in May 2023.

The OSGES will exchange with the schools' management about the practical impact of this decision in the coming days.

On behalf of the InterParents School Trips WG, we will send a letter to the Secretary General requesting a revision of the Board of Governors decision about the school trips, underlining that even if the school trips are part of the school budget for transparency purposes, given that they are paid by private money, the EU public tender procedure requirements should not be applicable to the school trips' organization. The schools should be able to freely choose the best service provider for the school trips based on key criteria such as pedagogical value, value for money, safety and security for all pupils.

As always, we will keep you updated about any further developments.

Thank you for your confidence and have a nice summer everyone!

The InterParents School Trips WG