Feedback from School Administration Board on 21/09/2023

Attended by APEEEL2 Representatives.

Your APEEEL2 representatives attended the School Admin Board held on Thursday 21/09/23. This meeting is chaired by the Secretary General of the European Schools, Mr Andreas Beckmann.

Information from Mr. Beckmann

- **New AES**: A new Accredited European School (AES) has now opened in Innsbruck, Austria. There is also a new project of an accredited school in Madrid, Spain.
- **Parliament's report:** EP-Report on the system of the European Schools: state of play, challenges and perspectives has been voted by the EP plenary in September.
  A discussion about this report will be continued in the conference organized for the '70th Anniversary of the European Schools' on 19 October and in an extraordinary meeting of the Board of Governors which will take place on 20 October 2023 on this topic.
- **70th anniversary:** On 5th October 1953 the first European School opened in Luxembourg. This event will be celebrated on 19th October 2023, in the premises of Luxembourg I.
- **Implementation of the audit recommendation of the Internal Audit Service:** One important item in this Audit was the responsibility of the Parents' Associations which justified the modifications of the General Rules. Last school year, Parents' Associations and InterParents disagreed with this change and made a formal complaint. But at the end of July, our complaint was rejected at a hearing of the Complaints Board. In the meantime, APEEEL2 had a very constructive meeting with Lux2 School Management and insurance companies.

Report of the School Director

- **School population:** The school population now reaches **2 782 pupils in total** with 196 pupils in nursery, 960 in Primary and 1 626 in secondary. We can notice a slight increase in Nursery and Primary, but a slight decrease in Secondary. The Czech and Danish sections in Nursery have lost some pupils. Smaller sections will need to be carefully monitored.
- **Events:** Last year, the School celebrated its 10th Anniversary on its site in Bertrange/Mamer, together with the School community. This school year, Lux II will organize Eurosport. A team has been created to prepare for this big event, with 2 sports teachers coordinating the event. The School needs an additional budget and has therefore launched a mailing to find some sponsors. APEEEL2 has started organizing the hosting of participating students coming from other ES and was thanked by the School Director for its good collaboration.
- **New management team in Secondary:** There is a new management team in the Secondary school with the nomination of Mr. O'Coïmin as Deputy Director. To replace him in his previous post as Assistant Deputy Director, Mr. Neal Sammut (one of our former Maltese teachers) was selected at the end of last school year.
- **Baccalaureate 2023:** This was a good year with a passing rate of 99,5%. Only one student failed the exam, while another one passed the Bac September session due to an injury.
- **IT:** An update on the IT situation was presented at the Administrative Board: WIFI is now working in Secondary and a new server storage has been bought… but some challenges

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remained to be resolved (replacement of VMware…) as the School decided to focus first on the network.

- **Educational Support:** The school will receive a budget of 21.000€ from the CAS (Comité d'Activités Sociales) to purchase iPads for pupils with specific needs. Since this school year, there are now 2 new coordinators for Educational Support in the Secondary school.
- **Class size:** Teachers' representatives raised the issue of classes which regularly reach 30 pupils, including pupils with special needs. Mr. Beckmann reminded the assembly of the action plan on *Educational Support and Inclusive Education* approved by the *Board of Governors* in 2019. The question of reducing class size due to the number of students in the classroom is one of the open action points being discussed in the *Educational Support Working Group*. A suitable proposal is expected to be presented at the *Board of Governors* next April. This topic is supported by the Parliament and hopefully also by the European Commission.
- **PISA report:** The results of the PISA project are part of the common objectives of all European Schools. These results show no real differences between boys and girls, but there are differences between the best and worst performing pupils. The School will also try to focus more on pupils who are borderline, with additional work using the 8 key competencies. In terms of confidence, the worst performing pupils are also the less self-confident ones. Some workshops on stress management will be put in place.
- **Homework policies:** A first draft has been presented at the Administrative board and will be further discussed this school year with the different representatives from the various cycles. Mr. Beckmann had very good feedback on this draft.

Financial situation

- Since 2022, the war in Ukraine has had an impact on energy costs and salaries (inflation). Our School will lack a budget of about 900 000 € /almost 1 million € to pay for functioning energy bills. Some cuttings were made in various school budgets to free more budget for ICT. The European Commission took note of the School requests and will do its best to meet the budget adjustments requests from all the European Schools.

School Calendar for 2024/2025

- The school calendar is common to Lux1 and Lux2 schools.
- Priority is always given to try and comply as much as possible with the Luxembourgish schools calendar.
- Mr. Beckmann must also wait for the publication of the Parliamentary sessions dates to avoid any clash with school holidays.
- Teachers' representatives complained about the fact there are 2 "pre-rentrée" days. Teachers must start end of August and not in September.

Questions from the Parents Association (APEEEL2)

- **SMS development**: APEEEL2 wanted to raise this topic as SMS is lacking some important functionality and we are looking forward to having a better tool. Mr. Beckmann confirmed that it has been decided to change SMS, but that the current contract with MySchool has been extended for 3 years. They are now working on the various tools which will finally replace SMS.

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- **School trips organization:** APEEEL2 acknowledged being very pleased that the contract with Denatravel was not extended. But we also raised the question about the organization of school trips for 2023/2024. Mr. Beckmann explained that he decided not to prolong the contract with Denatravel for legal and factual reasons. The challenge is now to find a company which understands the specificities of the 6 hosting Member States and will be able to take over this task, which is not easy. Starting from this November, the schools will have to procure the school trips on their own behalf.
- **Seconded teachers' language skills teaching in their L2 or L3:** To ensure teaching quality for non-native speakers in Secondary, parents suggested having language tests for newcomers, as done at the European Commission. As it has been done sometimes, Mr. Beckmann would prefer that Members States involve the Schools during the recruitment process and include a native speaker to get a guarantee for language level/competence.

The next School Administrative Board will take place at the end of January 2024.

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