Feedback from the Steering Committee of 16/09/2024

Your APEEEL2 representatives attended the Steering Committee held on Monday 16/09/24. This meeting chaired by the Secretary General of the European Schools, Mr. Andreas Beckmann, is a unique opportunity where School Directors from Lux1, Lux2 together with their different representatives (teachers, parents…) can address issues which concern our schools in Luxembourg to Mr. Beckmann and to the Luxembourgish Delegation. We are pleased to share below with you the main topics which were discussed at this meeting.

Teachers' shortage in Lux1/Lux2 – Attractiveness

Lux1 and Lux2 European Schools continue to struggle with attracting and retaining teachers, as contractual and salary conditions are more favourable in Luxembourg's Accredited European Schools (AES). Many teachers have either left or are attempting to leave for these schools. APEEEL1 and APEEEL2 proposed several measures to improve teachers' retention, including increasing the number of protected posts for locally recruited teachers (LRTs). Mr. Beckman confirmed that more seconded posts allow for more protected ones, but these protections are not permanent and need regular renewal which does not offer the amount of job security needed.
In Luxembourg, class sizes are smaller, though Mr. Beckman does not anticipate system-wide changes except possibly in cases with several ISA pupils in a class.
Regarding salaries and pensions, no immediate solutions are expected. Benchmark analyses, like those conducted in 2019, will be repeated to propose concrete measures. A possible correction coefficient for Luxembourg compared to Belgium was discussed, but no progress has been made, as it would need to apply to all EU institution staff in Luxembourg.

Cooperation ES (European Schools)- AES (Accredited European Schools)

- **Pupils**
  Around 5.000 pupils are attending AES in Luxembourg in 6 different AES. Only 3 of them have a nursery cycle and 2 of them have a German section (Clervaux and Junglinster) so there is no correlation between the decrease in the number of pupils in nursery in Lux1 and Lux2 and in the DE section in Lux2 and the development of the AES.
  The AES cannot fill out all the requests they received. In Clervaux, one out of 3 requests could be filled, but in Gaston Thorn in Luxembourg city, only one application out of 5 could be accepted. Luxembourg intends to open 3 new AES in the coming years.

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- **Management**
  The School Directors from ES and AES met together in May 2024 to enhance their cooperation on some projects, like for example a speech Olympics project.
- **Teachers**
  It is legitimate for teachers to leave for a better contract, but they will not leave our School before they receive their contract from an AES. Unfortunately, they usually receive their contract with an AES late in the school year. This puts the management of Lux1 and Lux2 into difficulties as they might not be able to start the recruitment process to find substitute teachers before September. Directors from AES are open to discussion as soon as the solutions found comply with GDPR.

Enrolment – New equivalence table

APEEEL2 expressed its disagreement with the new equivalence table which stipulates that pupils in the Luxembourg system must have completed 6 years of primary school prior to joining the secondary cycle at our school. Whereas previously, 5 years were sufficient. Mr. Beckmann agreed that this point should be explained more clearly in the enrolment procedure. He would also like to know more about the reasons for our disagreement. APEEEL2 will therefore reply to the Central Office with the following arguments to try and change their decision:

- Imbalance within the same family between older children who entered our S1 level after 5 years in the Luxembourg system, and younger children who will have to complete an extra year.
- Significant age differences between children in the same class: a child born between 01/09 and 31/12 will enter S1 at the age of 12 if he or she comes from the Luxembourg system, whereas the same child who has attended the European School will enter S1 at the age of 10.
- Unfairness compared with other member states where there are also 6 years of primary education, and a European School on the same territory. In such cases, European Schools accept pupils from the national systems, even if they have only completed 5 years of primary school out of 6.

Questions from APEEEL1 & APEEEL2

- **Access to free books**
  APEEEL2 asked whether there was any development on the possibility for ES's pupils to access free schoolbooks, like pupils from AES. The representative from the Ministry of Education explained that it is still not working properly for AES and a change in the law would be necessary to implement this for our 2 schools. In addition, this would be only possible for the 3 sections FR, EN and DE as the others do not exist in AES. There are also important constraints in the choices which will give

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less flexibility to directors and teachers. The Ministry suggested to look again at this point in one or 2 years, when this will be fully operational in AES.

- **One-to-One Access for Pupils with Special Needs**
  It is a recurring question from both Parents' Associations that students with special needs using a device in their learning could benefit from the advantageous rental national program (One-to-one). The Ministry explained that this is still not legally feasible at this point, but he is working on it. He also said that they do not have enough tablets for pupils from AES.

The next Steering Committee will take place in September 2025.

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