

General Meeting

APEEE BXL III

Monday 28 January 2019

Charlemagne, Alcide De Gasperi Room

170, Rue de la Loi

1000 Brussels

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

**ACTIVITIES REPORT
2017-2018**

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APEEE TRANSPORT ACTIVITY REPORT 2018

A. GENERAL SITUATION IN 2018

Organisation of the transport service

The APEEE Ixelles has exclusive competence for the organization and management of the school transport service, with no involvement from the school management. The responsibility for managing the school transport service is assumed by the Management Board of the APEEE. The Board appoints -among its members- a “sector responsible” in charge of transport, who chairs the APEEE Transport Working Group.

The **APEEE Transport Working Group (WG)** consists of parent representatives of the Parents’ Association (APEEE). In 2018, it consisted of three members of the APEEE Management Board, namely Ms Fani ZARIFOPOULOU (sector responsible), Ms Kamila KAUKIEL and Mr Jakub NICE.

There are three **APEEE staff members in the Transport Office**: Ms Isabelle CALLENS (Transport Manager), Ms Emilia QUIROGA (assistant, working part-time) and Ms Phyllis MICHAEL (assistant, working full time).

Our APEEE employs the **bus monitors** that supervise the children on the buses, either adults (notably from ALE Ixelles), or upper secondary pupils (S6-S7) of our school that are assigned to their own bus. This dual system of bus monitors is followed in other European schools in Brussels. For small mini buses, the bus drivers assume this responsibility. In the current school year, a total of 62 bus monitors are engaged (41 adults and 21 pupils). Moreover, we have six people to supervise the car parks, including two people who collect the nursery children upon their arrival and take them to the nursery hall.

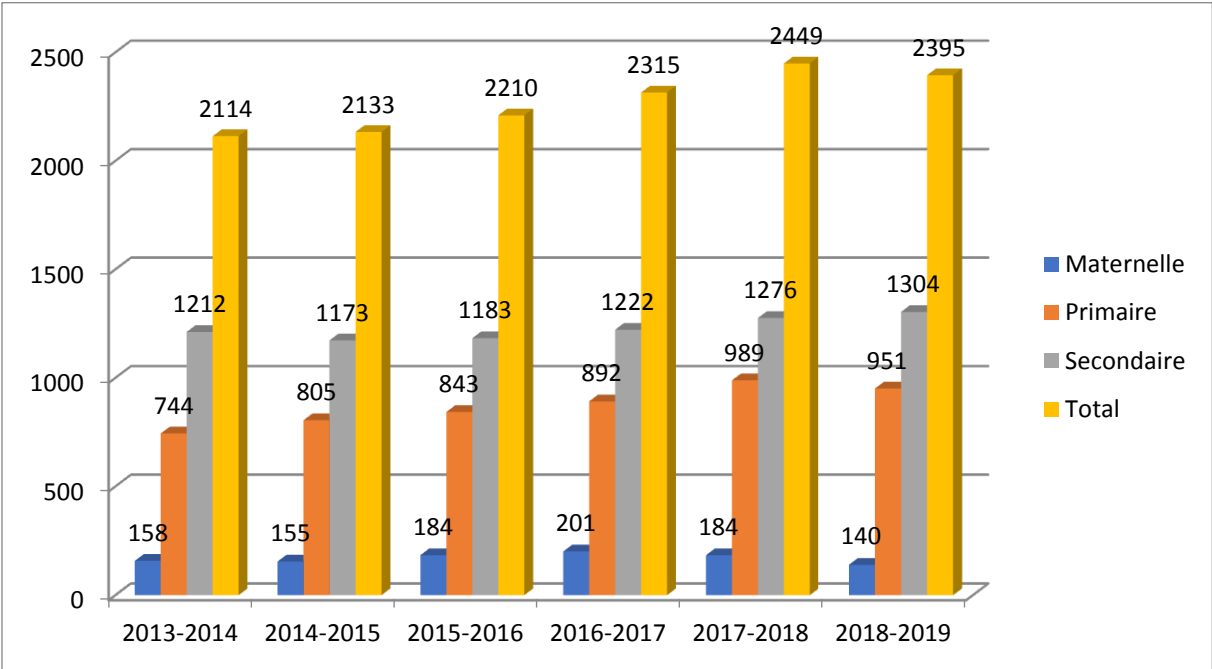
The APEEE collaborates with **six bus companies** that are specialised in school transport: Eurobussing / Keolis (largest external provider), Kim Cars, Albacars, Autocars Gilles, Hermes Lines, and Voyages Star. The current contracts that APEEE has signed with each of these companies end in July 2020. The bus drivers are employed by the bus companies and our bound by the legal obligations and responsibilities that are set out in these contracts.

The Transport Office looks after day-to-day business under the management of Ms Callens. The Office immediately informs the members of the Working Group if there is any particular problem in view of taking a decision on all urgent matters that need to be dealt with immediately. In case of serious complaints or incidents, the communication with parents is taken over by the APEEE Transport Working Group members.

The Transport Working Group and responsible staff meet at least once a month to review the situation, address any problems and take decisions regarding the good functioning of the service. Ms Callens (head of transport sector) and Ms Ornella di Perri (Human resources' and Operations' manager) always participate in those meetings, while other transport staff may attend for specific agenda items.

Transport enrolment, daily operation

The transport service of our school represents a **huge daily operation**, as illustrated below with figures. For the school year 2018-2019, out of the 3.130 pupils enrolled at our school, 2.395 use the school buses.

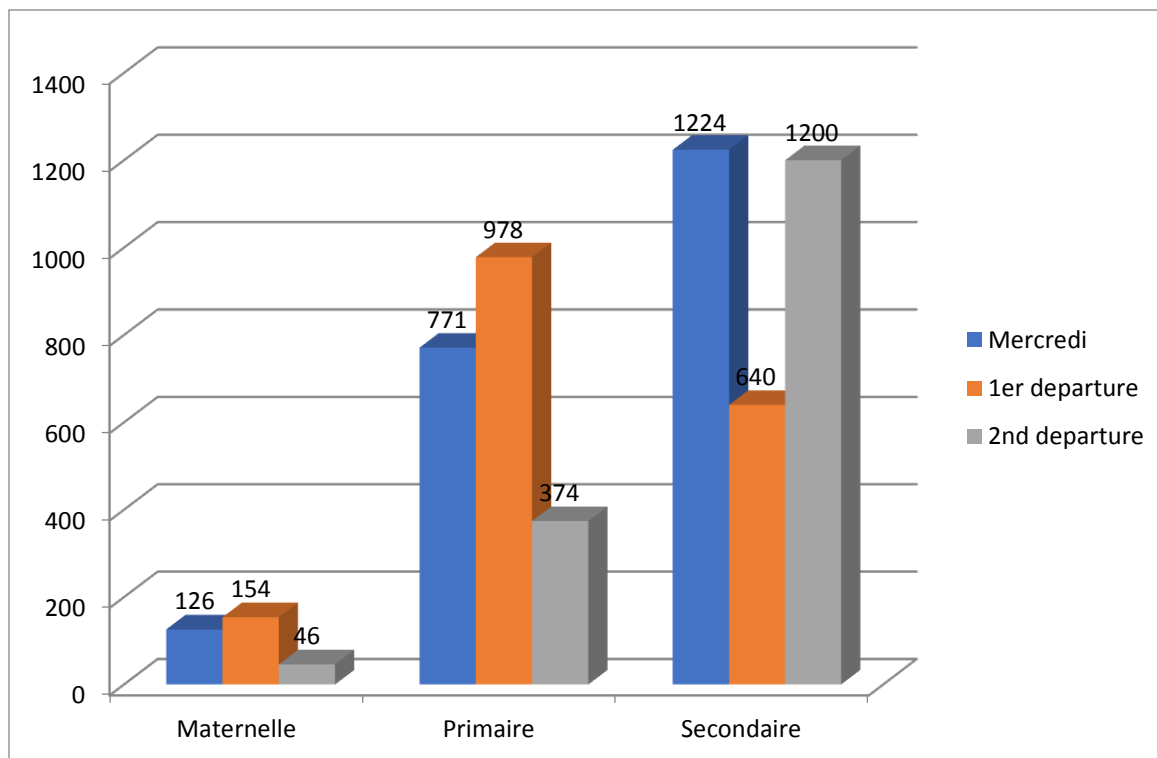


There are three circuits: 51 buses run in the morning, 36 in the afternoon on first departure at 15.35 (MAT/P/S1-S2) and 25 on second departure at 16.30 (S1-S7, but also MAT/P pupils attending an extracurricular activity) on all days except Wednesday. On Wednesdays, there is only one bus departure at 13.00 for all pupils (45 buses).

There is a daily bus service to the OIB afterschool centres "garderies" (8 buses) both for the first departure and Wednesdays. A bus service "garderies" was also added for the second departure (2 buses), in order to accommodate pupils that are enrolled in extracurricular activities.

It is noteworthy that the decision to open the second departure to pupils of primary and nursery that follow an APEEE extracurricular activity at school was proven to be very successful, as 419 pupils use this option on different days of the week.

The following chart shows the flow of pupils per category that are enrolled to the different departures every day:



In order to ensure the safety for our younger pupils, all buses of the first departure have an adult bus monitor on board. The same applies for the buses of the second departure that carry primary and nursery pupils that follow an extracurricular activity. Adult monitors are assigned to all buses going to the OIB gardenies, while on Wednesdays this task is assumed by the OIB monitors themselves, who also have lunch with the pupils enrolled to the different gardenies.

The annual subscription fee for the school year 2018/19 was maintained for the third consecutive year at the level of € 1.260. The price covers all costs of buses, staff and operation of the transport service, and is below that of the other four European Schools in Brussels. While several recent decisions and measures in the transport sector entail significant budgetary implications and are reflected in our budget of next year (new bus lines, increased number of supervisors, purchase of tablets), the overall financial situation of our association, as well as the financial results of the past year in the transport sector allow for further investments to be made without increasing fees accordingly.

B. MAIN ACTIVITIES IN 2018

APEEE Transport Regulation

The Transport WG prepared and presented a single new APEEE Transport Regulation, which includes all rules and procedures that underpin the school bus sector and its operation. This was the result of several months of preparation, given that the previous transport rules were either fragmented in various short documents covering different aspects of our operation (separate regulations for bus monitors, pupils, bus stops etc) or not written at all, reflecting predominantly best practices that were not known especially to new parents.

The Transport Regulation does not only consolidate in a single document all applicable rules. With the aim of increasing transparency and accountability, the WG decided to include in this Regulation

other internal procedures that are of interest to the parents (e.g. procedure for deciding on bus routes and bus stops), but also the role and obligations of all actors involved in the daily operation of the service (Transport Office, bus monitors, parents, pupils), including a specific section on bus drivers (on the basis of the contracts that APEEE has signed with their bus companies). Parents will find there all information on procedures that need to be followed in specific cases (e.g. inability to pick up the child at the bus stop) or specific provisions applying at different times of the year (e.g. first and last days of school).

This Regulation establishes the framework for all day-to-day and other operational decisions taken by the APEEE Transport WG and the APEEE Transport Office, and is compulsory for all users of this service, including the enrolled pupils and their parents. It was adopted by the APEEE Management Board on 25 October 2018 and will be revised before the start of each school year. The Transport WG, in cooperation with the Transport Manager, is authorized to impose sanctions for non-respect of the provisions of the Transport Regulation.

Improved communication - new FAQ section

Since the previous school year, the Transport WG has engaged in a close consultation process with parents, especially new parents of nursery and primary, with the aim of registering their questions and complaints, and understanding the difficulties that they encounter while using the school bus service. Parents expressed their wish to receive comprehensive and reliable information on school bus operations, especially with the view of new users.

The WG responded by preparing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) concerning the transport sector. They were uploaded on our website in the beginning of the school year. This FAQ section includes the totality of procedures that are in place and was subsequently used for the elaboration of the Transport Regulation. This initiative was tested and positively assessed by new parents. It will be regularly updated and contribute to ensuring the good functioning of the service.

Improved Communication – Complaints’ Database

A new online database was put in place, in order to enable parents to submit their complaints or to report on specific incidents (instead of sending an email or calling). The use of the new database allows for the information to reach immediately not only our staff in the Transport Office but also the members of the WG. A procedure is then followed to assign each case to one staff member, while allowing for the follow-up to be known to all. The new database also allows for properly archiving those cases and making an assessment on how each bus line works and the possible problems that arise.

However, the use of this online tool remains rather limited, with parents opting for more traditional means of communication, especially emails. This tool will be further promoted during the current school year.

Revision of bus routes

Our bus routes are regularly revised on the basis of actual demand (especially following the new enrolments) and the rules and requirements set out in the Transport Regulation. In essence, this means that our bus routes should, to the extent possible, cover general axes and larger roads. It

should be reminded that we provide a school bus service that cannot operate on a door-to-door basis. The circuits and timetables are not available on the website due to general security reasons.

It should be noted that the bus routes and the capacity of our buses are decided exclusively on the basis of a home – school – home (or school – garderie) journey of our pupils.

All efforts are made to keep journey times under an hour in the mornings, and an hour and a quarter in the afternoons, always bearing in mind the need to ensure efficient use of resources and contain costs. However, given the large number of road works, strikes and demonstrations, and the increased traffic jams that are observed in Brussels, it is recognised that journeys are occasionally over this limit. We are actively working to provide alternative solutions in the interests of the children.

In the same spirit, it is of utmost importance for our service to ensure that all morning buses arrive to school on time, in order not to disturb the daily school schedule. Several changes were introduced to that effect, and such delays have been observed on a purely exceptional basis this year.

The Transport WG has taken a number of decisions this year with the aim of shortening the journey time by adjusting the location of several bus stops. These decisions are taken after thorough examination of the cases involved.

Security and Safety

One of our main objectives is to maintain security and improve the safety of the children taking the school bus. This is why we work only with well-known and professional companies that specialise in school transport and select their drivers carefully. Most of the drivers and supervisors have been working for us for many years. To the extent possible, we try to keep the same bus driver and monitor on every bus line throughout the year.

A number of trainings are organised each year. Our supervisors receive special training in first aid from the Red Cross; our bus drivers follow two security trainings that are provided by a volunteering parent who is an expert in this field. All three staff of our Transport Office have also followed a 'training for trainers' course especially regarding emergency situations and evacuation exercises, and they perform these exercises for the pupils of our school, in collaboration with the school management.

Special focus is also given to our bus monitors, who are constantly reminded of their role and responsibilities. Two information sessions are organised for this purpose every year. For the first time this year, each bus monitor had to undergo a personal evaluation with our Transport Manager and the APEEE Human Resources and Operations' Manager.

Daily Operation

Our Transport staff is predominantly charged with ensuring the good functioning and daily operation of this service. This was achieved in an exemplary manner this year, including in the very beginning of the school year that traditionally represents the most difficult and problematic period. Having resolved the IT problems related to the introduction of the new e-enrolment system in 2017, our staff managed to ensure a smooth start of the school year with any problems being resolved quickly

and efficiently. This was reflected in the very limited number of complaints that we received this year.

Our staff uses exclusively the new e-enrolment platform for all daily operations of the transport service. A number of problems were encountered this year regarding the payments' functionality, increasing considerably the workload of our staff that needed to resort occasionally to manual verification of the data used. In this context, parents received email notifications for payments that did not correspond to reality. These problems are now resolved and our staff managed to close and verify all payments linked to the previous school year.

Cooperation with other APEEEs

A meeting of the APEEE transport staff of the four European Schools in Brussels takes place twice a year, in order to exchange experiences and to further improve services and safety. A meeting of the four APEEE Board members in charge of the transport sector took place for the first time in November 2017 and was repeated in April 2018 with the aim of establishing a regular dialogue on transport policy-related issues that are of common interest for the four APEEEs (e.g. on safety and environmental requirements, IT tools used etc). It has also proven to be very useful in exchanging best practices between the four Transport Offices.

Transport Satisfaction Survey

In December 2018, the Transport WG decided to launch a satisfaction survey in the interest of improving the APEEE transport service. This survey provided for a unique opportunity to get direct feedback from parents on the different aspects of the organisation and daily operation, the problems that parents encounter, but also their assessment on how our collaborators (bus drivers and monitors) perform their duties. Parents were asked to fill out the questionnaire with the help of their children, in order to learn more about their experience with travelling on one of our school buses, what they like, what they dislike, what they wish to change, about the atmosphere in which they travel.

The survey was hosted in our in-house APEEE platform, which requires a username / password for accessing it. The last time that such a survey was launched for transport was in spring 2014.

At the moment of writing this activity report, the transport satisfaction survey is still open and no conclusions can yet be drawn. A first assessment of the results of this survey will be presented directly to parents at the APEEE General Meeting (January 2019).

C. OUTLOOK FOR NEXT YEAR

The Transport WG has set a number of objectives for the coming year, which are expected to significantly impact on our service:

Launching of new IT Transport Application. In an attempt to further reinforce safety, APEEE will introduce a new IT system for registering the presence of pupils on each bus. The system will be operated by bus monitors, who will be provided with specific tablets or smartphones for this purpose. The monitors will perform a check-in / check-out operation for each pupil using the bus. Our Transport Office will have real time access to this information, and will be able to inform parents whenever needed. Moreover, the new system will allow us to know exactly at what time the bus

serves each bus stop, in order to adjust the timetables accordingly, but also determine if and where delays occur and how the routes can be optimally designed to avoid them. This new APEEE Transport Application is already developed in-house by our APEEE IT manager and is currently being tested in a pilot phase, in order to determine practical functionalities (e.g. which network will provide us the best coverage and speed). The launching of the new application, covering initially the first afternoon departure, will be the focal point of our activity in the coming months.

Results of the Transport satisfaction survey. The Transport WG will screen the results of the survey and examine all elements provided by parents in their responses. This will improve the quality of the service and will allow for concrete interventions and improvements. Besides the policy decisions to be taken on the basis of the quantitative results of the survey, the WG intends to focus also on concrete complaints and assessments that parents made and will deal with all the problems highlighted in the survey regarding specific bus lines.

Review of bus lines. The WG will proceed with a comprehensive review of our bus routes, on the basis of the information that will be gathered through the use of the new Transport application, as well as concrete cases brought to our attention with the survey. The aim is always to ensure that some children are not particularly disadvantaged compared to others, and that they do not spend more time than necessary on the bus. Such review will take account always of the fact that this is a collective service that cannot satisfy the wishes of individual families to the detriment of the rest of the pupils on the same bus.

Application of regulatory framework. The WG will actively work to ensure that the rules set out in our Transport Regulation, as well as the legal obligations that derive from the contracts that APEEE signed with the bus companies in 2017 are fully respected and implemented. This also includes the penalty system that is introduced for any failure on the side of the bus company to perform their services up to the standards agreed with our APEEE. The Transport WG will also monitor closely the application of safety and discipline requirements set out in the new Regulation, including the performance of our bus monitors and bus drivers.

As regards the day-to-day operation of the service, every effort will be made to ensure that this is further improved in the interest of the pupils, their parents and the school. The Transport WG will continue to be available and ready to listen to all parents. We try to satisfy most requests and treat all parents equally, to the best of our ability. We reply to all your concerns and recommendations within a very short timeframe. Together with the Transport Office staff, we have developed a robust conflict-resolution mechanism, taking decisions in a prompt and collective manner, which contributed significantly to increased user satisfaction. The ultimate aim of our collective efforts is to ensure that your children are safe and happy on their journey to and from school.

The Transport Working Group

Fani ZARIFOPOULOU

Kamila KAUKIEL

Jakub NICE

CANTEEN ACTIVITIES REPORT

I. General overview of the activities of the canteen

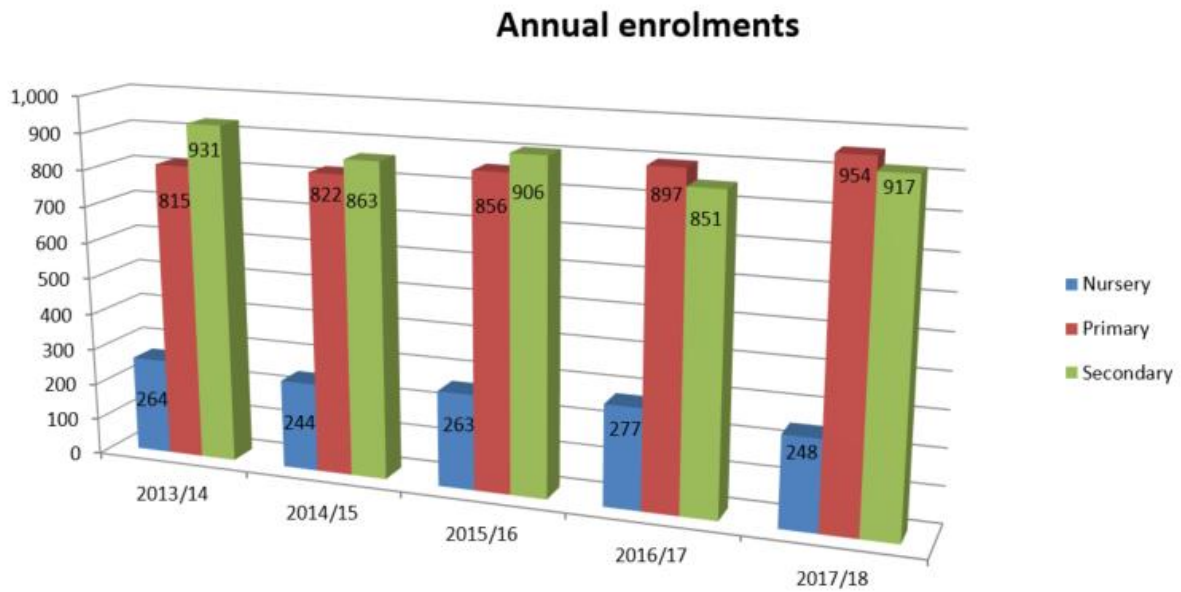
The activities of the HORECA sector include mainly the students' and the teachers' canteens as well as the cafeteria for secondary (see below). The sector also provides services to the OIB on-site childcare facility ("garderie"), which include lunch on Wednesday and snacks on Monday to Friday, to extra-curricular activities (Snack & go), for the organisation of Springfest (purchases of raw materials for the barbecue, chips and beverages stands), BAC students (barbecue and drinks for the BAC party) and the school (breakfasts, pick-nicks and working meals). On the basis of an agreement with the school ("Canteen Convention") the APEEE has exclusive financial and managerial responsibility for the provision of these services.

1. The students' canteen

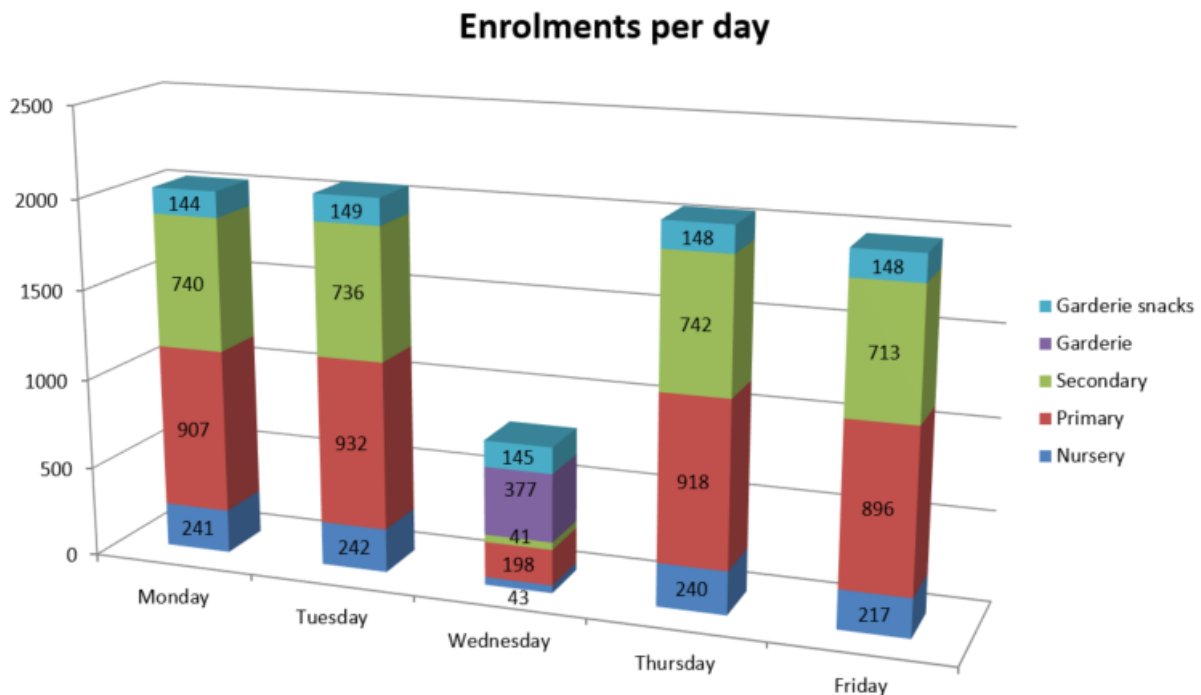
Inscriptions

In the 1st trimester, the total weekly number of students enrolled in the canteen has changed from 7.606 in 2016/2017 to 8.019 in 2017/2018 (garderie excluded), which represents an increase of 5.43% compared to previous year (situation at 31/12/2017). The biggest increase occurred on Friday (+5.43%) and Wednesday (+67.5%).

Evolution of registrations in the last 5 years



Enrolments by day of the week (average for 2017/2018)



Composition of menus and ingredients

There is a single menu per day. The monthly menu is published on the APEEE website including information on the possible presence of allergens (per week). The photo of the main course is also published daily on the website and on the four TV screens in the canteen.

The menus follow the guidelines on the Food policy, available on the APEEE website, including i.a.: fresh fruits and vegetables, organic and local products, preference given to high quality meat and sustainable fish products, and to cold pressed sunflower oil and olive oil; reduction to the minimum of pre-processed products and desserts with added sugar.

The menu is proposed by the canteen management and an external nutritionist is consulted on its composition, as well as on the preparation of certain dishes. The menu is always adapted according to nutritionist's remarks.

Compliance of hygiene rules

Hygiene is regularly monitored. Checks carried out regularly by the association Qualacs (www.qualacs.be) in compliance with HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) confirm a compliance level which is above the recommended threshold (compliance rate of 92 % in the last report dated of 13/10/2017).

2. The teachers' canteen

The APEEE provides also a separate canteen for teachers. Since September 2016 the service in the canteen of teachers is organised as a self-service. The main course of the menu is the same as the one served in the students' canteen, a salad bar and a soup are also offered every day, as well as different desserts (yoghurts, fruits), beverages, tea and coffee. In 2017/18, the teachers' canteen was

attended by around 80 teachers/day. The average income is around 300 EUR/day. The pricing policy was adapted in January 2018 to better align the cost of various components of the menu. The teachers' canteen creates a deficit but measures to balance the budget of this part of the sector have been taken, such as the reduction of one person of the service, control of prices of raw materials, price adjustment of the salad bar.

3. Cafeteria

The cafeteria is available for secondary school students. It is a good alternative choice, since it proposes not only fruit and warm and cold sandwiches but also soup, pasta and salads every day. At the request of students, sandwiches without products of animal origin are now also for sale. In 2017/18, the cafeteria was used by between 400 and 500 clients/day. The restrictive exit policy decided by the school management in previous school years had a positive impact on financial results of cafeteria, the relaxation of the exit policy in 2017/2018 led again to a decrease of demand. The overall result of the cafeteria for 2017/2018 was at the break-even point. A slightly decreasing trend seems to continue also for 2018/2019, most likely as a result of further relaxation of the exit policy.

4. The management and the staff

The manager of the canteen is Mr Didier Delhoux. Since May 2017, the management has been reinforced by Mrs Paola Catalano in the position of deputy manager, especially in the area of implementation of the food policy and to assist Mr Delhoux in the daily management of the canteen. Since October 2015, Mr Pascal Forton is the chef, who is assisted by 3 people in the kitchen for preparing the meals. 3 staff members work in the dish-washing, 2 people in the cafeteria, 1 external person in the teachers' canteen and 1 external person in the preparation of garderie snacks. The table service is provided by 27 persons of the external company Atalian whose contract was renewed in September 2017 after public tender.

On behalf of parents we would like to thank all HORECA staff for their individual and collective hard work in providing high/quality nutrition and services to all members of our school community:

Mr Didier Delhoux, Mrs Paola Catalano, Mrs Nathalie Forest, Mrs Anna Di Marzio, Mr Pascal Forton, Mr Sakhi Zakharia, Mr Youssef Messaoud, Mrs Fifi Muhizi, Mr Mohamed Achcharifi, Mr Thierno Barry, Mr Jean Francois Vonesch, Mr Abdellilah Mouthar and Mrs Ma Mei Lin.

5. Canteen Working Group

The Working Group Canteen of the APEE Board continued its activity with Ms Maria Saura Moreno (Member of the APEEE Board responsible for the canteen), Mr Tomas Hruby and Mr Jakub Nice as members. The WG Canteen regularly meets to discuss current issues, as well as to identify and propose measures to be taken to improve the service. Members of the WG Canteen maintained contacts with their respective counterparts in Uccle, Woluwe and Laeken with the aim of exchanging best practices. The WG Canteen is always attentive to requests and wishes of parents and invites all parents, students and school staff to get in touch at any time, if they have a concern or idea connected to the HORECA sector in our school. WG Canteen would also very much welcome as members new parents interested in nutrition or financial management.

6. Canteen Committee

The Canteen committee, as set out by the canteen convention, is a consultative body. It is composed of representatives of the school and of the APEEE Board. Representatives of teachers and pupils, as well as the canteen management participate as observers. It meets approximately every two months. The members of the WG Canteen shall participate in the meetings of the Canteen Committee in representation of the APEEE.

The Canteen Committee serves as a platform to discuss all subjects related to the canteen which require coordination with the school. The Canteen Committee met in October 2017 and February and April 2018. Meeting in June 2018 couldn't take place for time schedule reasons.

The main issues addressed were the collaboration with the school in projects such as the clearing of tables by the students, the role of supervisors, increased offer of vegetarian food, menu in the teachers' canteen, possibility to revive the self-service project, inventory of the kitchen equipment etc.

The WG Canteen would like to highlight and appreciate the constructive and solution-oriented approach of the current school direction and thank for fruitful exchanges with all stakeholders.

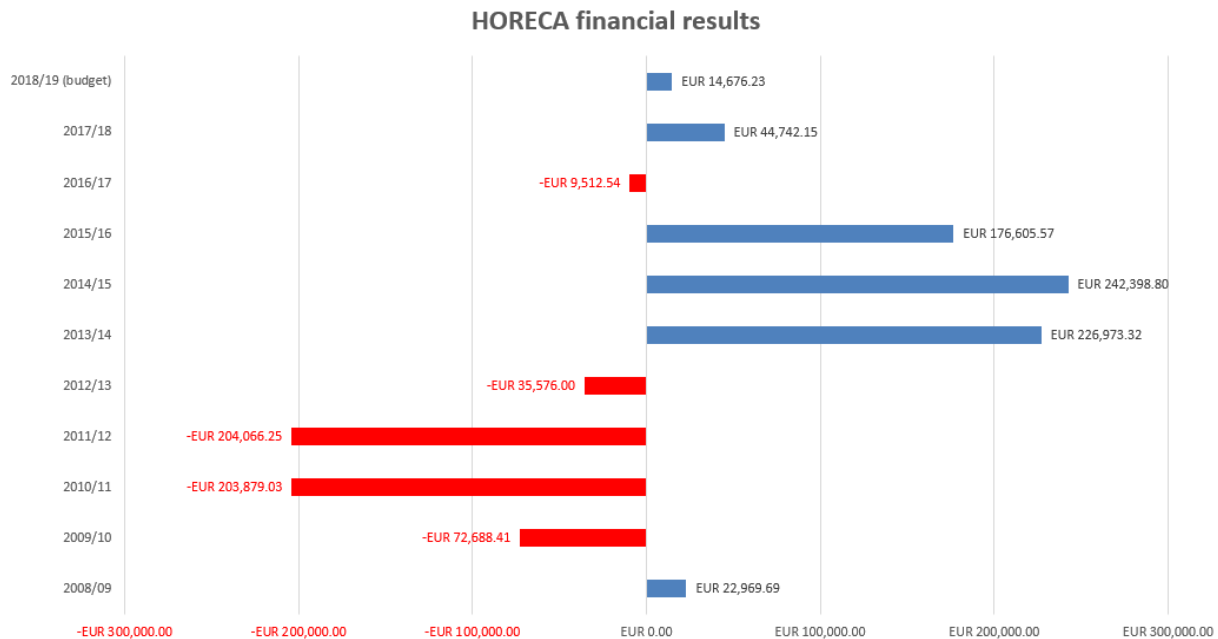
II. Financial situation

In 2017/18 the APEEE HORECA sector finished with a yearly balance of +44.742,15 EUR, despite the budgeted deficit of ca. -17.000 EUR. This resulted mainly from improved revenues (+3,6 %) and reduced personal cost (-6,1 %). Contrary to previous year, food cost remained stable despite increased prices of certain raw materials¹, continuous use of organic food, high-quality meat and regular offer of a starter (raw vegetables or soup). This excellent financial result was achieved thanks to close cost control executed by the canteen management and despite a significant increase of cost for the payment services provider (ca. 20.000 EUR/year). Other investments to improve the service (electric pots for the soup, new dishes for garderie) were also made.

For the year 2018/2019 the WG Canteen intends to continue with the balance budget without excessive profits or deficits. The budgeted total income is 1.907.500 EUR and a total costs 1.888.823,77 EUR should results in the profit of 14.676.23 EUR (0,76% of the total revenues). The budget is built on conservative estimation of expected revenues and on minimal increase of raw materials prices (indexation only).

¹ For example, besides regular inflation, between May 2017 and May 2018 the prices for butter, milk, cream, cheese, eggs, yoghurts increased by ca. 11% and for tomatoes and olive oil by ca. 7%. Prices went up also for non-food items like packages or plastic wrap.

Results of the HORECA sector in the previous years:



In case of further significant costs increase a review of the tariffs for services might become necessary in the future (last price increase approved by GA in 2012). The WG Canteen will follow-up closely the revolution of financial situation in HORECA sector and if necessary propose measures for the school year 2019/2020.

Detailed figures are presented in the report on the overall financial situation.

III. Actions in 2017/18

The following measures are implemented:

1. Quality of the offer

The food policy document as adopted by the Board on 20 September 2016 is being implemented. As a reminder the document has a double objective:

- defining the general principles for the organisation of menus, as well as the preparation of the meals in the canteen; and
- establishing concrete mechanisms to monitor the implementation of this policy and to assess the satisfaction of pupils and teachers.

See document: http://www.apееeb3.be/sites/default/files/APEEE_food_policy.pdf

A few measures have been put in place as part of food policy:

- Salad/raw vegetables are served first (instead of bread) for the first service (Nursery, P1 and P2).

- Optional soup with the salad bar from P3, for nursery and P1-P2 soup is offered during winter months alternating with raw vegetables.
- Increased use of organic food.
- Simpler menus
- Reduction to the minimum of sweet desserts and pre-prepared meat
- Follow-up of the adaptation of menus and the satisfaction of the children.

The principles and guidelines set out in this document have been applied, to the extent possible, also to the cafeteria as well as all food served in garderie and periscolaire activities.

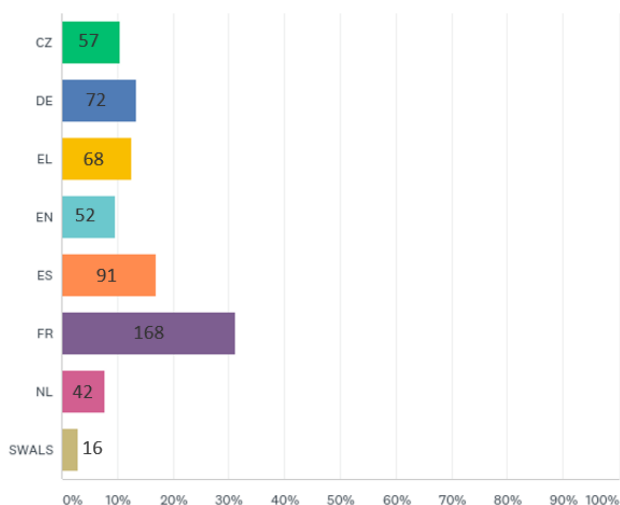
The canteen proposed a new service to the nursery classes in form of a "soufflé", soup served during the morning in a cup (best practice in certain Belgian schools), but there was no take-up from teachers.

The cafeteria offer is constantly being reviewed, i.a. following on requests from students. The menu now includes products such as fresh fruit juices, yoghurt, cereals, and preparations without products of animal origin (sandwiches and salads). New marmites were purchased to offer soup in the cafeteria. The micro-wave in the cafeteria was moved to a better accessible place.

2. Canteen satisfaction survey

On initiative of the WG Canteen, a large survey about satisfaction of users with the canteen and cafeteria was conducted in June 2018. An external service provider was used for the organisation of the survey (surveymonkey.com). The survey met with a very enthusiastic response from parents from all sections, with highest response rate from FR section (in total 564 answers representing more than 900 pupils = 31% of total). The overall results are rather positive, satisfaction rates vary between 67% and 79% for canteen and 74% and 86% for cafeteria. The lowest satisfaction concerns the time available to eat, where only 57% of parents think pupils have enough time to eat. Full results are included in the Annex of this report.

Number of responses to the survey



Nursery	100
P1	82
P2	81
P3	80
P4	89
P5	68
S1	68
S2	82
S3	56
S4	47
S5	40
S6	35
S7	21

Parents provided several hundreds of individual comments about reasons for not using the canteen, ways to improve the Food policy, quality of salad bar, variety of the menu or quality and taste of food. Examples of often repeated comments were:

- requests for more fresh ingredients and vegetarian food / less meat / more vegetables, especially pulses
- requests to serve soup regularly
- complaints about non-implementation of Food policy
- requests for more bio food
- requests not to mix the meal ingredients/sauce
- complaints about quality of preparation or lack of taste (meat, cooked vegetables)

The WG Canteen would like to warmly thank to all parents who took their time to respond to the survey and in this way tried to help us improve the quality of the canteen and cafeteria. We know it is not self-evident in today's times of questionnaires coming daily from all sides – big thanks to you all!

WG Canteen has analysed all responses to the survey and will feed them into its priorities and concrete follow-up measures.

3. Monitoring of the implementation of the Food policy

The draft monthly menu is always being reviewed by external nutritionist, also from the point of view of Food policy. Among her other tasks, the deputy canteen manager is monitoring daily the implementation of Food policy. Regular reports are submitted to the WG Canteen and suggestions are presented to the canteen manager.

Parents are encouraged to come to share a meal with their children and give their opinion on the service. Parents can eat in the school canteen for free 1x per trimester – to use this possibility, simply send an e-mail to the canteen office at least the day before.

4. Increased access to Wednesday lunch

Following a request from parents during the APEEE General Assembly 2018, WG Canteen and the school administration agreed to modify the time schedule to allow all nursery students to have warm lunch on Wednesday as of September 2018. A separate survey among nursery parents was conducted to explore the demand and get arguments for this option – WG Canteen would like to warmly thank to all parents who responded to the survey.

5. Participation of students

The participation of students in clearing the tables remained one of the priorities and one of the issues also this year. The objective is that all pupils from P1 to S7 classes should be responsible for clearing the tables after their lunch. Thanks to intensive effort of the supervision coordinator for primary, Mrs Nidelet, the situation has been improving and more and more pupils are complying with the canteen rules. However, despite several discussions with the school, the compliance rate remains unsatisfactory for secondary pupils, one of the reasons being the absence of a supervision

coordinator and insufficient number of supervisors (only 2-3 for ca. 800 students). The canteen managements estimates that the compliance objective is achieved by 100 % for the first service (nursery, P1-P2), 50 % for the second service (P3-P5) and only 10 % for the third service (S1-S7).

6. New table service contract

In 2017/2018 was the first year of the new contract with the external company Atalian for the table service. New table service tender has been organized by the APEEE in 2017. Four companies participated in the tender and the company ATALIAN was selected by the APEEE Board. We were able slightly reduce the price for the table services for the most used staff (commis or brigadier):

Company	Commis (hourly rate in EUR without VAT)	Chef de sale (hourly rate in EUR without VAT)	Brigadier (hourly rate in EUR without VAT)
Atalian – New contract	24.40	27.28	26.04
Atalian – Previous contract	24.74	25.98	27.21

7. Horeca procedures

Internal procedures of the sector have been revised by an external auditor (RSM) as part of an audit commissioned for all sectors. The objective was to provide a reasonable assurance of efficient and sustainable functioning of the existing system of internal control. The auditor reviewed and consolidated the existing internal procedures and the whole set was approved by the APEEE, including i.a. rules for purchase cycle, stock management, revenue management, handling of complaints, hygiene policy or HR management.

8. Investments

Based on request from nursery teachers, the Canteen Committee discussed the possibility to use booster seats for very small children. The canteen is ready to purchase the seats, as soon as the school decides about the storage, handling and cleaning of the seats.

Based on requests from parents and OIB, the canteen purchased new unbreakable plates, glasses and bowls for garderie made from BPA- and phthalate-free materials.

Based on request from students, canteen badges used for purchases in cafeteria can be now recharged also with little coins, from 0.10 EUR upwards.

The school purchased new furniture for the teachers' canteen with support rails which enables easier access and handling of the trays and food.

Installation of sound absorption panels was executed during summer break 2018, additional panels were installed in December.

A meeting of all stakeholders was organised to explore the feasibility of introducing self-cleaning zones for students in the refectory. As conclusion, the school would prefer to introduce such zones as part of a comprehensive solution, i.e. transformation to a self-service.

Internal procedures, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, have been put in place to ensure the daily management of the stock only through the BIV IT tool.

9. Changes in the organisation of the canteen service

Pupils in the 1st service received 5 more minutes of time to eat and 1 person for the table service was added to ensure smooth service.

IV. Ongoing issues

The following measures are currently being implemented or are under consideration:

1. Follow-up on satisfaction survey

WG canteen and canteen management will explore ways how to implement other suggestions from parents and how to further increase the satisfaction with the services of the sector, i.a. the offer of vegetarian meals, better choice, recipes better adapted to taste of pupils, seasonal products, reduction of noise, accessibility of services.

2. Budget balance

The priority of the WG Canteen 2018/2019 is to keep the budget in balance. Close monitoring of the results of the activities is done per month and per quarter. During the first months of 2018/2019 there had been a negative trend in cost of raw materials and revenues of the cafeteria and teachers' canteen. Corrective measures will be proposed to the Board if necessary.

3. Participation of students

Improving the participation of secondary students in clearing the tables after their lunch is also among the priorities for the year 2018/2019. The school is aware of the issue and promised to reinforce the pedagogical supervision for secondary pupils to ensure the compliance with the rules. Further measures strengthening the educational aspect and responsibility of students are being analysed.

4. Changes in the organisation of the canteen service

Based on agreement with the primary director, from September 2018 P3 classes should be accompanied by class teachers during lunch. Extension to P4-P5 classes will be discussed with the school with the view to the school year 2019/2020.

From September 2018, all primary classes should eat together in the main refectory, including the "tartinists".

From September 2018 all nursery pupils can enrol for warm lunch and eat together with their class in the main refectory on Wednesdays. WG Canteen will examine together with the school possibilities to offer lunch on Wednesday also to primary students who take the school bus.

An external consultant is working on a re-examination of the self-service feasibility study, first results are expected in January 2019.

5. Pedagogical project / Class visits in the kitchen

The planned pedagogical project about healthy eating wasn't pursued due to lack of interest. Instead the canteen will offer to all classes the possibility to visit the kitchen, based on request from teacher. Visits are possible on Tuesdays or Fridays. The visit includes a "tour de cuisine" with the explanation of the used utensils (capacity, volume, power, weight of the goods), rules of hygiene, demonstration of preparation of the daily menu, from soup to dessert, to finish with a mini-tasting of raw vegetables as an aperitif. The explanations are adapted to the ages of the children. Visits for S1 could also be envisaged.

6. National cuisine day

For 2018/2019 the canteen is preparing to offer a traditional menu of the countries represented in our school. This menu, developed in collaboration with our nutritionist, will be cooked internally by our staff with healthy ingredients from the best quality. With this measure we return to a tradition from the past. We promote this special action under the motto "I taste and I discover", first days should be dedicated to the German, Czech and French cuisine.

7. Increased access to Wednesday lunch

WG Canteen and canteen management are exploring ways to enable the access to Wednesday lunch also to primary and secondary pupils taking the school bus. Given time constraints, a take-away lunch might be one of the options.

8. Noise reduction

The school commissioned an external study of possible noise reduction measures. Installation of sound absorption panels was envisaged during summer break 2018, additional panels were installed in December.

9. School vending machines

In 2017/2018 the Canteen Committee discussed the quality of products offered in vending machines operated by the school. These machines are outsourced to an external contractor and they don't always follow the Food policy of the APEEE. WG Canteen will continue the discussion with the school in order to take over the vending machines into its management after the expiry of the current contract with the external company.

10. New OIB Convention

A new Convention with OIB regulating the provision of lunches and snacks for children attending the on-site garderie in EEB3 will be signed for 2018/2019.

11. Online charging solution for the badges of secondary students

From January 2019 it will be possible to charge the badges for the secondary students online through NetPay Webloader application. The possibility will be tested by parents by end of the school year 2018/19 and then WG will decide about the continuation of the project. WG consider the benefits of the application are threefold, a) reduce the manipulation with the cash for students/APEEE staff, b)

reduce administrative burden for the canteen staff and c) better control of the parents how children spend their money.

The WG Canteen

Maria SAURA MORENO

Tomas HRUBY

Jakub NICE

COMMUNICATION WG REPORT

This report presents the work APEEE Working Group Communication performed in the following areas:

- (1) Regular communication
- (2) Website
- (3) IT

1. Regular communication

We, the APEEE Working Group Communication, gather the information concerning the life at school and APEEE services and bring them to the attention of parents and pupils in the form of a newsletter. APEEE circulates that newsletter in general every week to parents who opted in for receiving it.

Recently, we adapted the newsletter itself and the procedure for sending it out to the rules concerning data protection.

2. Website

In the recent months, the APEEE staff and the Working Group Communication have put lots of effort into updating the [APEEE website](#). Our aim was to make it easier to navigate and present the information relevant to school community in a clearer way. Among others, the platform behind the [APEEE website](#) was upgraded in order to make it quicker. The new version will be published soon and will include functionalities like:

- Invoicing
- ii) small ads,
- iii) events
- iv) newsletter
- v) e-commerce/e-shop
- vi) assets inventory
- v) canteen TV notifications

3. IT

In the past year, the IT activities included the following:

- The speed, capacity and security of all APEEE staff computers have been upgraded

- An online VPS(server) to host staff emails has been introduced, which also led to the change of e-mail addresses to those ending with @apeeeb3.be, instead of @skynet.be used previously
- A new server with more space and additional backup functionalities is being prepared and tested
- The internet connection has been upgraded to increase its speed
- The internet and internal network has been protected by an additional enforcement with a firewall

3.1 E-enrolment system

The most important project for the period 2016-2018 was the setting up of an electronic system for the handling of registrations to the different APEEE services.

This new system is now operating since June 2017. It allows parents to register their child(ren) to the transport, canteen and extracurricular activities from one single platform. The system is also being used by the APEEE staff for the administration of all registrations.

After initial roll-out difficulties, the system was further refined and stabilized during the school year 2017-2018. That led to a much smoother start of APEEE services at the beginning of the school year.

The platform was also completed by the possibility to proceed to payments via SEPA (Single European Payment Transfer) and by a tool to deal electronically with questions and complaints.

In 2019 APEEE will add the possibility to make payments via VivaWallet .

3.2 Further projects

We created an in house platform in order to develop applications/functionalities for parents and the APEEE staff to use:

- A database to allow the APEEE to manage records for staff, families, children and class representatives
- An eVoting application, where only registered members (class representatives) can vote at the general assembly
- A HelpDesk/Complaints application

Further development of this platform will include functionalities such as:

- A BusPresence application, which offers live tracking of buses and children. That means for parents that they will have access to information on e.g. when their children got on and off the bus and whether their bus would arrive late etc.
- Better and more flexible parents/families registration to services provided by the APEEE
- The possibility for parents to subscribe/unsubscribe to the newsletter directly from their account/profile and review a list of the past issues even if they are no longer subscribed
- A finance section to better track transactions and authorize payments

We will also continue with the replacement and further upgrade of aging systems with new, better IT equipment such as:

- A new data server with backup and data migration functionalities
- Upgrade and further develop the main website
- Test and enforce network security according to market standards

WG Communication

Catherine Fenech

Kamila Kaukiel

Geraldine Barry

I. TREASURER REPORT 2017-2018

Results 2017-18 and related activities:

The APEEE's financial situation has overall improved further compared to the previous period 2016/17 to a positive result of € **219.222,15** against € -39.910,31 initially budgeted. This result partly reflects a number of changes, improvements and decisions taken by the previous and the current Board and overall improved management of APEEE.

In general terms, it is to be noted that the internal Rules adopted by the Board in 2016 set out an even more stringent framework for external control of APEEE accounts, while the internal control measures were also reinforced thanks to a systematic overview of financial results by the APEEE Working Group on finances and internal control, which was set up by the Board.

The **2017-18 financial results** are summarised below²:

1. The **Horeca sector** (pupils' canteen, teachers' canteen and cafeteria) shows a surplus of € 45.946,29 that is € 63.664,45 more than the initially budgeted deficit. The surplus is mainly due to increased revenues than initially forecasted and small reduction in charges.
2. The **transport sector** shows a surplus of € 130.032,75 that is much better than the initially budgeted deficit of € -31.644,33. This result is mainly due to increased demand for transport services and adaptive management of the bus lines.
3. The **extra-curricular activities** sector shows a surplus of € 46.264,10 against an initially budgeted surplus of € 3.027,65. This is mainly due to the increased number of activities, teaching hours and inscriptions as well as a decrease in expenditure.
4. The **general affairs** budget is in equilibrium. The deficit of € -3.020,99 that is € 9.445,57 less than the initial budgeted amount is mainly due to the exceptional expenditure made because of the transfer of the SF amount of € 9.257,34 to this line.
5. The **SF and the students' accounts** are monitored and presented separately from the General Affairs account of the APEEE in order to facilitate monitoring and control, and allow comparisons with previous years. The Board is engaging with the school on the management and accountability of expenses which are not in the core pedagogical budget.
6. The **2018 Springfest**³ event produced a surplus of € 5.978,60. Though this was a record year in terms of revenues, it was also a record year in terms of expenditure resulting to this limited surplus. The overall SF organisation should be discussed and revised with the school to avoid mishappenings and reduce any financial risk. For the third year the proceeds are published on the APEEE website and are distributed to pupil's activities, school needs/projects and charities.

² Partition keys applied are: canteen 35%, transport 50%, extra-curricular activities 10% and General Affairs 5%.

³ Ref: SF convention with the school signed in July 2016. The amount exceeding the € 30.000, reserve kept for the organisation of the next SF, is distributed.

7. **APEEE students' account**, following the Board's decision, is used only for activities for pupils, teachers and parents, provided that the APEEE budgetary impact is neutral. This facility is provided under the condition that the involved parties consent to APEEE's rules and common practice. For example, "no cash" policy, use of APEEE IT systems etc.

This account hosts different activities, the situation at 31/8/2018 is as follows:

- Social funds € 11.019,63
- S7 or Bac activities € 2.701,04
- China trip € 10.430,63
- Music concert € 2.188,16
- CDE Committé des élèves € 674,21

8. The APEEE social fund account was closed and the amount was transferred to the Students Account while waiting for the APEEE's board decision on the rules on the way to be used and this is joint agreement with the school direction.

In conclusion, the overall financial situation of APEEE has improved further during the reporting period 2017/18. As a general remark, financial costs increased because of the extensive use of e-payments via Mollie and a change of applicable fees from ING without informing its clients. Corrective measures have been taken and the board has recently taken the decision to start using VivaWallet for the e-payments in 2019.

The existing buffers are a provision for legal obligations and unforeseen expenses, as these areas bear most of the risks for APEEE. This was also one of the conclusions of a special working group on the APEEE assets – with the active participation and involvement of specialists in the field - recently confirmed that:

- APEEE has so far secured against banks' bankruptcy only 20% of its current assets, while this figure should be increased to at least 40%. This would increase APEEE secured reserves from € 500.000 to € 1.000.000. It becomes obvious that there is no need for additional savings, as this amount is available.
- The **working group on the APEEE assets** proposed an investment policy of the excess amounts. The working group defined also negative priorities, and 'not recommended' investments. The board decided in its meeting of 18 December 2018 to present all outcomes to the General Meeting of 28 January 2019 and to continue the discussion on the management options at the first new Board meeting in February 2019. A presentation will be made available during the Meeting on the basis of the Board document CA 50/2018, as amended.

Another issue on which work has started and is now in progress is the recording of **our internal procedures and policies**, one for each sector, IT and Springfest. We start with the adoption of a few fundamental decisions, such as the standard period for investments' depreciation over three years, the inventory of all APEEE assets with a value superior than 100 euros and the segregation of financial tasks while ensuring the "4-eyes" principle. Moreover, workflows and financial management procedures are already in place – as required and in line with the staff job descriptions - with the ultimate objective to monitor them and if, and when needed, improve them further.

Finally yet importantly, the Board constantly analyses the prices and the services provided in an effort to achieve an equilibrium adapting the price of the APEEE services where necessary, while

improving further the quality of the services provided. A new pricing policy in all APEEE sectors will be prepared for discussion in the Board in May as a basis for preparing the draft budget 2019/2020 in June 2019.

New actions taken and on-going work in view to increase transparency and assist in the development of school's projects:

1. The new EEB3 Financial Committee was set up further to APEEE's motion adopted in January 2018 and held its first meeting on 20 September 2018. This joint Committee monitors - four times a year - all financial management of School and APEEE expenditure. The main advantage of this body is the establishment of a new culture of mutual trust. Parents will be informed about its proceedings in due time.
2. **Recommendations** made by the auditors (both the organisational and risk-related assessment as well as the financial auditing by RSM) are constantly being taken into account in order to improve APEEE's internal workflows and reduce certain risks.
3. Last but not least, the **cooperation with the other APEEE** (mainly those in Brussels area) proved to be extremely useful as it allows comparing best practices, managerial attitudes and exchanging ideas on many issues. At the end, all APEEEs face similar problems, and the solution proposed cannot deviate too much. I asked for, and strongly recommend the new treasurer, to establish permanent communication channels and meet at least twice a year to discuss common issues of concern.

Challenges for next year:

Among the key priorities of the next Board is:

- The **implementation of the auditors' recommendations** in order improve our management and reduce further the risks and to use these as the benchmark for all implementing actions in 2018.
- Pursue and enable the **e-payments and the "no-cash" policy** for all activities while reducing the related financial burden.
- Pursue the work on **internal control procedures**, adopt, implement and improve further where and whenever needed.
- Maintain the APEEE's assets register.
- Enforcing training of staff to the new technologies and APEEE's role, activities and obligations.
- Enhance, on regular basis, **the cooperation and exchange of information with the other APEEEs**, in particular on issues related to financing, accounting, tax and related legal issues. This could be extended to sectorial issues to the benefit of the associations and the quality of services provided.

- As mentioned above, implement **consistent policy on the size and maintenance of reserves**, a rule could be that in case of surplus this will be invested as follows respecting the following priority:

- if applicable, in case of previous year's deficit, to cover the used reserves
- coverage of the difference of the "Fund for legal obligations" – see more below
- 20-25% to be added to the reserves using appropriate socially or environmentally responsible investment solutions
- a dedicated % (5% ?) can be used annually for staff training and improving professional skills
- the remaining can be used by the Board for other investments, needs or provisions such as IT equipment or other developments etc.

As this is my last treasurer report to the assembly, I wish to make a short reference to some key indicators and issues from the last 8 financial years of being treasurer of the APEEE, as they reflect the APEEE's evolution through these years and our increased turnovers and services etc:

- increase of APEEE's revenues by 33% to € 5,71 mio
- increase of personnel costs by 25% to € 1,64 mio
- increase of general affaires revenues by 73% to 355 k€
- increase of Horeca sector revenues by 8% to to € 1,89 mio
- increase of transport sector revenues by 33% to € 2,95 mio
- increase of extracurricular activities sector revenues by 46% to € 631 k€
- securing the legal reserves
- the introduction of new or updated procedures and workflows in APEEE
- the introduction of e-enrolment and e-payment systems
- transparency on all activities of APEEE
- increase of the services APEEE offers to parents and pupils
- two consecutive external audits in 2017 and 2018 on both the financial operations as well as the organisational internal workflows by focusing on development factors and correcting any potential risks
- the new tasks of the HR and Operations' Manager as set out in the respective Board decision; these include, inter-alia, a second-eye monitoring of all internal workflows and operations while ensuring continuity
- the setting up of the new EEB3 Financial Committee in September 2018 with a view to overseeing the implementation of all revenues and expenditure on School's extra-budgetary accounts

- the consolidation of a "financial roadmap" for all APEEE operations as agreed in June 2018. This includes the intervention of the external accountant and auditors in critical phases of the yearly financial cycle as well as the preparatory involvement of WGs and ExCo in consolidating annual accounts and budget implementation. The latter is subject to further improvements to be discussed in the Board during 2019 positive results since the financial year 2012/13 allowing to recover the substantial losses of the previous years.

I would like on this occasion to express my special thanks to the present and all past presidents for their contributions, advice and understanding. To all the board members of APEEE for the constructive discussions and to all the parents who have been supportive for all these years.

Special thanks also to :

- The APEEE staff for their invaluable support, input and replying efficiently to my “last minute” requests;
- Mrs. Jocelyne Poupé (past secretary) for her assistance in helping me to understand better the functioning of the APEEE aisbl;
- The members of the Working Groups on Financial issues and the WG on assets;
- Our accountant and auditors for their assistance and contribution, and
- The school management for, among others, assisting in organising successful SFs.

Komninos Diamantaras

Treasurer 2017-18

II. TREASURER REPORT

Budget 2018/19:

Following Board decisions, the financial management of the APEEE's finances for 2018/19

takes into account, among others, the following main issues:

1. Completion of the identification and recording of tangible assets (already achieved).
2. Ongoing collaboration with ING to reduce bank charges.
3. Implementation of a new epayment system (VivaWallet) to replace current more costly contracts and make it simpler for parents to make electronic payments.
4. Increase in staff costs due to the addition of a new part-time I.T. assistant and a pay rise for Extra Curricular Activities (ECA) tutors.
5. Continuing analysis of the possibility of employing a Financial Officer and extra resources to assist with administrative tasks.
6. Successful agreement and greater collaboration with the School Direction in managing all School 'off-budget' finances (i.e. parents money jointly managed by the School and the APEEE) through the creation of the 'EEB3 Financial Committee' chaired by the APEEE.
7. Protection of financial assets (see separate presentation) and longer term planning of investment of surplus funds back into APEEE services.
8. Adjustments to the Budgeting process in an endeavour to finalise the following years forecast budget earlier than currently achieved.

Points to note / challenges:

The 2018/19 proposed budget foresees a small deficit of approximately €65k (about 1% of total revenues but year on year evidence shows that often we are and have been too prudent with budget forecast (e.g. last years forecast deficit of 40k did not occur, indeed a surplus was realised). However are stated aims remain the same, that is, not to produce surpluses, not to unnecessarily increase prices and indeed to continue to explore ways in which current surpluses can be re-invested for the benefit of pupils and the APEEE's involvement with the school generally.

Having said that, whilst prices and membership fees have not increased over the last 5 years, it may become necessary to review the situation in the coming year(s), especially in the ECA and Transport Sectors. If we are to maintain the high level of services given to parents more staff resources may be needed (point 5 above) also.

Gerard Payne

Treasurer 2018-19

PEDAGOGICAL AFFAIRS REPORT

This part sets out all key achievements and results during the school year 2017/8 as well as in the first months of school year 2018/9. The outcome of our participation in the Interparents' bodies is included in a separate chapter. The same applies as regards the developments in the temporary site for schooling of higher Secondary students.

Parents' coordination in pedagogical affairs - Representation in School and other bodies.

The parents association follows up the pedagogical affairs of the school through the following working groups and bodies of the association:

- *Secondary Education Working Group*
- *Primary Education Working Group*
- *Working Group on "Prevention of Violence, Well-being, Drugs and Addiction at school"*
- *The Educational Advisory Committee* (as the coordinating body for pedagogical affairs of the APEEE and preparing pedagogical matters for the APEEE Board meetings)

The parents association is represented in the following bodies operating at the level of the school:

- *School Administrative Board*, meeting twice a year, parents represented by two persons: the president of the association and the vice-president for pedagogical affairs
- *School Advisory Committee*, meeting twice a year, parents represented by four persons: the president of the association and the vice-president for pedagogical affairs + one representative for primary and one for secondary
- *Secondary Education Council*, meeting 3-4 times a year: parents are represented through one member for each section + the president of the association and the vice-president for pedagogical affairs
- *Primary and Nursery Education Council*, meeting 3-4 times a year: parents are represented through one member for each section + the president of the association and the vice-president for pedagogical affairs

In addition to the more formal meetings with the school management parent representatives held two informal meetings with the deputy director in charge of the secondary school.

Representation within the system of European Schools:

- The association is represented in the *Joint Enrolment Authority* for European Schools
- The association is represented in *Inter Parents*, both at general level, and specifically in a working group on educational support.

For the first time since many years parents' positions in all bodies and fora were well-coordinated prior to the meetings. A greater transparency of results and a better communication towards parents remain high on the APEEE agenda for 2019.

The key issues dealt with in 2018 are as follows:

A successful start of school year 2018/9

We note this year the best ever possible start in terms of coverage of teaching posts and limited loss of hours in the beginning of this school year. Our good cooperation with the School management and their proactive stance produced excellent results. The few posts that had to be covered by recruitment of Locally-hired teachers (LRT) or ad-hoc arrangements with other Brussels Schools were a) only one Primary teacher in the DE section and b) in Secondary, one Bio/Chemistry teacher in DE section, two L1/2 and MAT/PHY teachers in the EN section, one MAT/PHY teacher in the EL section and one L3/PHILO in the NL section.

Recruitment of teachers

Generally the tendency observed is a decrease of the percentage of seconded teachers. Such lack of secondments has become a problem not limited to the EN section. A lack of secondments means that the school has to hire more teachers locally. In the area of EN L2 teaching one can observe a larger number of teachers who are “non-native” speakers.

The parents association follows this up very closely. This includes developments as regards the pedagogical supervision and control of locally hired teachers, for which the schools are responsible but the European schools are currently testing the involvement of national inspectors. We continue to actively engage with the school management on the quality of teaching.

Replacement of teachers

The APEEE strived for the strict application of the replacement policy adopted for Secondary as from the school year 2017/8. Registered absences are less and are followed closely, while the "stand-by system" works well and ensures, as a minimum, that students do not remain unaccompanied outside school classes. We aim at improving further the current policy by ensuring teaching continuity in the event of a prolonged absence of a teacher for more than two/three weeks.

Whole school inspection

In November 2018 the school was subject to a “whole school inspection”. The whole school inspection was carried out by a team of seven persons: three inspectors from primary, three inspectors from secondary and one European School Director. The parents association gave input on the parents’ side to the exercise. This consisted of a coordinated contribution of all sections to the school’s self-assessment. Furthermore 7 parent representatives (one per section) were present during a one hour interview with the inspectors.

The whole school inspection raised three main recommendations:

- The level of variation in teaching and learning methods in secondary should be examined by the school management in order to identify and promote best practice.
- Management and coordinators should identify best practice in differentiated learning and ensure that this is shared and implemented more widely throughout the school.
- To enhance the European dimension in daily school life the European dimension should be included in teachers planning, lesson delivery and classroom displays.

The parents association welcomes the overall positive outcomes of the whole school inspection. It will continue in scrutinising the follow of the results of the inspection by the school management.

European Schools' "Summits"

Our fruitful contacts with the European Commission (meeting of all Presidents with Commissioner Oettinger in December 2017) generated the idea of the first-ever "European Schools' Summit" in the course of 2018.

On 23 May and on 26 November 2018 the Commissioner in charge of European schools organised two consecutive, high-level Ministerial meetings focusing on the challenges that European schools are facing. It addressed, *inter-alia*, the reform of cost sharing system between Member States and the EU budget in the light of the growing reduction of seconded teachers, the difficulties to recruit and retain qualified teaching staff and the overall situation and future financial contribution of accredited European schools (19 schools) to the functioning of the European Schools' system.

Annual school plan

The School Advisory Council discusses the Annual and pluri-annual school plans. Both were produced following a large public consultation of parents and included for implementation their points of interest. Priorities for the 2018-19 school plan are:

- Introducing and supervising the new marking system in secondary
- Implementing the recommendations of the report on educational support (a priority in all European Schools)
- Reinforcing the harmonisation of teaching
- Promoting the key competences for lifelong learning
- Looking after the well-being of pupils and staff

The parents association will closely scrutinise the follow up of these priorities by the school management.

Enrolment policy in European Schools

The enrolment policy is decided by the Joint Enrolment Authority in which the parents association participates with one representative. The policy for 2019-20 is a continuation of the policy for 2018-2019. This means that, in order to combat the overcrowding in our school the class levels of nursery and primary classes will be limited to 20 pupils (pupils already enrolled are not concerned and priority enrolments such as siblings will still be accepted beyond the limit of 20 pupils). In secondary the limits have been fixed at 26 pupils (again, with the exception of siblings). The main difference with previous years is that for the school year 2019-2020 the first phase of inscription is obligatory for all pupils in all sections where one parent is employed by the European institutions by 31 December 2018.

The total current school population is 3,099 where the nominal capacity is 2,650. Within the school the growth of the pupils' population is due to increases in the Greek section (which only exists in our school except for one P1 class in Berkendael) and the French-speaking section.

Like in 2018-2019, in order to address overcrowding, further classes in Nursery and Primary will be created in Berkendael, as soon as the threshold of 7 pupils is achieved. All sections of our school can be affected by this policy.

Educational support

Educational support is available within the school. The intensity of support can vary, from temporary and relatively light, to quite intensive and long-term. Special arrangements can be granted, subject to specific approval from the system, to help pupils including in the BAC phase. The website of the General Secretariat of the European Schools (<http://eursc.org/index.php?id=140>) contains links to the relevant official documents with the details of the policy.

In December, the Board of Governors discussed a wide-reaching evaluation of educational support in the European schools, also against the background of an UN inquiry into integration of handicapped pupils in the European Schools system. It showed that European Schools have run into constraints in fully implementing the policy, not least due to bottlenecks in finding and hiring staff with the required expertise in dealing with specific difficulties or impairments. The recommendations from the underlying evaluations reports, which cover a range of issues, should be used to improve the provision of support in the schools. Interparents, with a strong input from our APEEE over many years, represents the parents in bringing this forward. For our own school the APEEE continues to engage with the management, staff and inspectors to ensure good educational support.

Extended use of SMS

Our appeals for an extended use of SMS across all teachers in all sections, as expressed in the General Assembly's motion for a resolution nr 1 of 2018, produced the first significant results. Teachers use it now more frequently and it contains more information for parents, including forward planning and guidance for tests and exams, as the latter have still no access to the Sharepoint. However, the use of SMS still varies largely between teachers, some using it extensively and others in a minimal way. We will continue following this topic systematically while striving for including parents in the IT Action Plan of the General Secretariat.

New marking system

The new marking system in S1-S5 was introduced in September 2018. Its introduction had been postponed by one year to ensure adequate preparations involving training of teachers as well as the finalisation of the revision of existing secondary programmes to supplement attainment descriptors for all subject areas.

According to the General Secretariat of the European Schools the new system should make marking more transparent and more harmonised. Its main focus should be on pupils' positive performance and attainment. Apart from the grades in S1-S5 the main difference of the new system is its focus on attainment levels of knowledge and skills, rather than on observing failure.

Under the new system in S1-S3 seven levels of performance are distinguished. The highest mark is A. The pass mark is grade E. Grades F and Fx are the only failure marks.

In S4-S7 the marking will also be based on attainment levels of knowledge and skills, but the marks stay numerical, with (half) marks in S4-6 and decimal numerical marks in S7.

The introduction of the system is gradual. As from the current school year it was introduced for S1-S5, next school year it will be introduced in S6 and the last school year also in S7.

The parents association is closely scrutinising the implementation of the new marking system in the school. It is doing so in particular in the Secondary education council, but also in the School Advisory Council and the School Administrative Board.

The parents association has raised the following points with the school in order to ensure consistency in the use of the new marking system across sections and subjects:

- We have received examples of differentiated application of new marks across sections and classes.
- We received information concerning diverging meaning of marks: in some first reports marks "B" were associated with "good" and "C" as "very good".
- The new marking system should not be used for a downward harmonisation of grades between sections.
- Having the second highest mark (9) in the previous system should not automatically mean a translation into the second highest mark (B) in the new system for S1-S3.
- The parents association also keeps an eye on the interpretation of the new marking grades by Member States e.g. for access to higher education institutions, in particular with a view to avoiding a "downgrading" of European School marks compared with that marking of the national school system.
- The parents association will continue monitoring the application of the new system based on statistics on marking (when they become available).

BAC issues

Our APEEE followed closely all problems occurred with the 2018 BAC exams. We received numerous complaints from parents and students via the specific Interparents' portal, which we shared with the School management and the General Secretariat. We organised two informal meetings with the Head of the BAC Unit in June and in December 2018, to whom we raised parents' concerns about the quality assurance of BAC papers and requested clarifications about the implementation of BAC Regulations.

During these two meetings, the following points were dealt with / explained:

1. The process of the BAC questions with the actions of drafting, proofreading and translating;
2. The role of the BAC Chair was made clear;
3. A collection of BAC question can be provided by the person responsible for the BAC in each school who is entitled to provide these questions, once the full BAC session process is over.
4. The communication of the European School secretariat on the new marking scheme and its impact on BAC (first time in 2021) is ready to be delivered at the beginning of 2019 and will be sent to Member States representatives.

In the last Secondary Education Council on 13 December 2018, we underlined the need for effective access from parents and students to pre-BAC exam papers.

It turns out that pre-BAC and BAC papers follow the same "BAC rules". The original paper can be viewed only by the student whereas a copy of it can be discussed with the teacher or temporarily handled to the student during a general correction by the teacher in front of the full class.

B-tests in secondary

The parents association has raised with the school management the issue that during this school year in S4 more than 1 test per day were organised in some cases. This is contrary to what was agreed between the school and the parents association during the previous school year. Furthermore the parents association raised the problem of the B test for the same subject in B-test period 1 (October) and B-Test period 2 (December), which implies too little time between these B-Tests. The parents association has requested to reinstate the approach as agreed last year, namely i) no more than one test per day; ii) no homework during test periods and; iii) no A-test in the same period.

Choice of options in secondary

Of all European schools in Brussels our school has traditionally been the most flexible with regard to the choice of options. The parent association has had regular informal meetings with the school management to ensure that this situation continues.

Support to several students' and teachers' projects

The APEEE supported strongly all various students' and teachers' projects in 2018 (Science Lab, TEDx, eebGreen, Serve the city, Movember, Music and Arts competitions). The financial contribution through our Springfest account complemented to an extent the coverage of expenditure agreed by the School.

Communication between the school and parents

The parents association has raised the point with the school that since the beginning of the current school year on several occasions communication on information meetings addressed to parents came very late (24 or 48 hrs before the meeting) or were not communicated to all parents. The school recently (Education Council for Secondary of 13th December 2018) promised that it will correct the situation by providing all information one week in advance and will ensure soon a better access of parents to the school calendar. A joint Communication WG has been set up, which is due to deliver results in 2019.

School trips in P5 in primary

In 2019 the P5 school trip for L2 EN will not take place in the United Kingdom. Instead pupils will go to a location in Germany, near Hamburg. Through the CE for primary the parents association has achieved that from the school year 2019-2020 onwards L2 trips for EN in primary will again have an English speaking country as a destination. Following parents' suggestions the School's policy regarding Primary school trips is currently under review. The results are expected in 2019.

Axado workshops for P5 students

In the framework of the Discover the World syllabus, the school management invited an outside organisation (NGO) which works in many Belgian schools, Axado, to organize workshops to P5

students on the physical and emotional changes that occur to students in puberty. Since the interventions were carried out in English and French without the presence of the class teachers, parents representatives have requested for a more active involvement of the teachers and a closer collaboration with the Axado personnel, as well as a translation of the interventions in the mother tongue of the students to facilitate comprehension. They also requested that the teachers discuss the topics with their students before the interventions.

Language Policy reform

The possible introduction of L3 in P4 was discussed within the WG and the Primary Education Council. The proposed introduction could lead to a reduction of the teaching time for mathematics and L1. no final decision on the proposal yet, the working group on that topic continues its work, but according to the Commission's targets for improving language learning by 2025, all students finishing upper secondary education should have good knowledge of two foreign languages and an earlier introduction of L3 could allow a better knowledge of the L3 for students.

For secondary S4-S5 students, the school management will organise for the first time this year certification of their language skills in English, German French (B2 CEFR level)

Transition from Primary to Secondary

The two cycles are currently collaborating on the transition through e.g. pedagogical projects, visits of S1 pupils in P5, or information exchanges during the class councils. In order to facilitate the transition between the nursery and primary cycle and between the primary and secondary cycle, the school introduce this year **the position of "transition coordinator"**.

Parents representatives have requested for more detailed information sessions for parents of future S1 students, in the form of an evening parents' information meeting with the presence of the primary and Secondary deputy directors according to the guidelines for transition nursery/primary/secondary. Several suggestions which could improve the transition between the two cycles were also made by parents: finding mentor pupils in the secondary school to help P5 pupils who change into S1, and, where possible, exchanges and information sharing between S1 and P5 teachers.

Social projects in primary (Shoe box and Arc en ciel)

Parents proposed and helped the school management with the organisation of two social projects, the Arc en Ciel project for the collection of school material for poor students and the Shoe box project.

Remixing of classes policy in primary.

The parents representatives requested a more transparent policy of the remixing of classes in primary and the setting and communication of clear criteria that are taken into consideration for the remixing. They have also requested a better communication to parents. The policy on this matter will be revised in order to make it more clear to parents.

Working Group on Prevention of Violence, Well-being, Drugs and Addiction at school

Ten members (APEEE Board, Education Council, class representatives), represent the three school cycles in the group, which met four times in 2018 with Directors of Nursery/Primary and Secondary as well as the School Psychology Teams. Results of the meetings:

Nursery/primary:

- The school management is currently working on a new layout of the upper yard and hopes to get it ready by next spring.
- Teachers have been informed that they can order for their classes a box with games that children can use during the break.
- The school now participates in “Kiva” (a school-based anti-bullying program) which already exists in other European schools (Munich, Luxembourg and Uccle) and which implies a broad participation of all stakeholders including supervisors and parents. A total of 12 teachers from all sections have volunteered to follow the special training in Finland to become Kiva trainers in 2019/2020. In 2019/2020, Kiva will be introduced to P2 and P4 students and in 2020/2021 to all primary classes as well S1 students. Each year, there will be focus on 10 Kiva themes, with two monthly sessions on different Kiva themes and actions.
- During the pedagogical day, the “Child focus” association organized a workshop for teachers on social media and their risks. A Cluedo type role play will be organized with one or two classes in S1. The WG asked for more workshops to be attended by P5 and to have larger involvement of S1 students. However since « Child Focus » material and games are drafted in FR and NL only, the WG proposed to launch an appeal to parent volunteers for translation in other languages.

Secondary:

- The school management promised to send to all parents the document on the procedure in case of harassment which can currently be found on the school website. The WG has asked the school to review the document in order to put place a sanctioning mechanism against student harassers. The WG also asked the school to get in touch with Brussels Ombudsmen for possible intervention in conflicts that cannot be resolved within the school.
- 40 teachers in S1 and S2 and ICT advisers and teachers were trained by “Child Focus” in conflict prevention and in the ethical use of social media. This operation should be renewed every year.
- Seminars in Drugs keep being organized by the Ixelles police in S3 and S5. They are useful and pragmatic and well received by students.
- The training given to teachers and students on first aid began last year and have been renewed this school year, according to the request of WG's members.
- A database on prevention of violence and harassment has been created in the library of secondary cycle. Books are also available in the office of the psychologist for the secondary cycle
- A permanent peer mediation (in FR / EN / DE) was set up at the initiative of two German-speaking teachers, who trained S6 students. These sessions are held during the lunch break next to the deputy director's office.
- The WG asked the school to look into possibilities for road safety organizations to address S6 and S7, and to do the same regarding organisations dealing with prevention of the use/abuse of alcohol and narcotics.

Other WG initiatives:

- Axado, a Belgian ONG linked to the young people support to their emotional and sexual life, has been active in P5 and S3 (see separate paragraph above).

- The WG has asked the school to contact the “Virages” ONG (association linked to the management of conflict resolution and harassment) for possible interventions at school, as it currently exists in the European School of Laeken.
- In March 2018, the inter-APEEE on "Well-being at school - Harassment – Drugs - Addictions" was created, bringing together the 4 WGs in the Brussels European schools on these topics and focussing on the exchange of information and experiences in a first stage.
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Use of free time - Students' exits during the school day

The APEEE stressed on several occasions the importance of well-being at school by suggesting the introduction of free-time activities inside the school. The School's decision to introduce Chinese lessons provided by the VUB Confucius Institute was meeting that concern.

In February 2018, the School decided to re-introduce the pre-existing cards' access/exit policy based on parents' choice as from year S4 onwards. This policy, although it reduced the number of students remaining at school, does not satisfy the need for more "quality time" being offered during breaks (e.g. in libraries, ICT rooms, gym).

INTERPARENTS REPORT

Interparents (IP) is the umbrella association of the APEEEs (parents' association) of the 13 "Classical" European schools.

This association, based in Luxembourg, is the representative organ for the parents of all 13 European Schools and accepted as such by the Office of the Secretary General of the European Schools (OSGES), which is the governing body of the Convention of the European Schools.

This Convention is an intergovernmental Convention outside the Treaties of the European Union. (In addition to the 13 Schools represented by Interparents, there exists 14 "Accredited" European schools (soon to be 16). These schools have separate representative structures).

Interparents participates, often with voting rights, or as an observer, in the organs of the European Schools system (administration level), including in the Board of Governors (BoG), and the preparatory meetings which take place before the meetings of the BoG, i.e. of the Joint Teaching Committee (JTC) and the Budgetary Committee (BC). Working groups are preparing the subjects for discussion in the JTC and the BC.

IP can, with prior agreement of OSGES, participate also in Working Groups created by the OSGES on different topics. The positions defended by IP in the Board of Governors, the Joint Teaching Committee, and the Budgetary Committee are agreed by representatives of the schools in separate IP preparatory meetings, which take place before the meetings of the BoG, BC and JTC.

This year, our school (Brussels III) has been represented by Georges Spyrou, (EN class rep S5 and now S6) at the five two-day "internal" meetings of Interparents. These meetings are preparing the positions of Interparents for the above mentioned meetings of JTC, BC and BoG. (Three meetings took place in schools in Brussels, one in the school of Bergen (NL) and one in the school of Mol (BE)). In addition, our representative has participated, as IP delegate, in the Budgetary Committee meetings and in various Working Group meetings, often replacing other members of the IP.

The issues raised in the European school system have consequences, immediate or often in the long term, for the individual schools.

Below is a list of the main topics which have been of interest this past year:

Assessment reform (The new marking scale): The secondary school (for classes up to and including S5 this year) adopted a new assessment structure, from the start of the current school year. The most visible, but perhaps least important change, is that of "scale" from number (0-10) to letter (A-F) in lower secondary. The real change involves a fundamentally different approach to assessment that changes the criteria of the assessment itself.

The new structure is designed to be an opportunity to establish more common ground and a more harmonised approach to assessment across all European schools and sections.

This change may affect the conversion tables of European School grades into the national systems which are relevant particularly for entry into higher education, including universities.

Indeed, because the new marking scale has as its passing mark "5" instead of "6", there is a tendency among some teachers and national administrations to conclude that the European Schools are "lowering" their standards, (though this is not the case).

The consequence is that some Member States may envisage to lower artificially our marks of the BAC, when they convert our marks into the national marking scales. This would create negative and discriminatory effects for the access of our pupils to higher education.

Interparents is closely following the various aspects of the process at the level of OSGES, but for the proper implementation of the new marking scale, at school level, the engagement of the management, the teachers (and the national Inspectors) is crucial.

Baccalaureate (BAC): Since 2016/17, Interparents have been compiling concerns regarding the Baccalaureate examinations, and submitting these to the BAC Unit of OSGES. The aim is to enable potential remedies to be found for any deficiencies as soon as possible, and also to help parents and pupils to assess if they have a reason to raise a formal complaint.

Another issue is the increasing pressure to review the aspects of the Baccalaureate itself. In particular, the role of the pre-BAC examination has been again questioned. The IP does not oppose a reassessment of the BAC but has been advising strongly against changing the structure without proper analysis, planning and implementation periods.

BAC results: The overall (All Schools) success rate of the BAC this year (June 2018) was 98.16%, and the average mark 78.36. The results are slightly higher than in the previous year. Preliminary mark was 80.40 – written 74.03 – orals 81.65 & average 78.36. The number of candidates is increased – 2,116 candidates participated (30 abandoned often due to health issues); 39 failed. Some persons, familiar with national examinations, find the failure rate very low, but it should be recalled that our BAC is essentially an examination of knowledge and not a “competition” for a *numerus clausus*.

Of the 2,116 candidates, 323 were from Accredited European Schools (AES). 9 AES participated in the BAC exams – there will be 10 AES participating in 2019

Language policy: Language policy has been intensively discussed in the framework of aiming for a common language policy at all European schools. The critical issues concern the use of vehicular (L2) and L3 languages in teaching other subjects. It also aims to determine the fundamental basis for what is relevant for a pupil’s choice of language section.

The work on this topic is continuing in the OSGES, and IP representatives from many schools follow closely all developments, and participate in the relevant working groups and in all decision-making procedures.

Financing: The so-called cost sharing agreement determines which part of a school’s and the school system’s costs are financed by the Member States, and which by the EU institutions, and on what grounds. Member States’ contributions fundamentally consist of the provision and financing of seconded teachers to the schools. This contribution, relative to the need, has decreased during the current agreement because, first the UK, and then other Member States reduced the number of their seconded teachers.

This, as a result, increased the need to hire locally recruited teachers (fully paid by the Institutions). The remuneration, and in general the contractual conditions of locally hired teachers, are not very attractive. This makes it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain teachers, particularly in Luxembourg, and in Germany, notably in cities like Karlsruhe or Frankfurt, where salaries are high, but also in Brussels.

In Luxembourg, the situation is exacerbated because of the existence – side by side with the two “classical” European Schools – of three (soon to be 4) Accredited European schools offering much better conditions for the teachers.

Recently (Nov 2018), OSGES presented proposals aiming to modify and improve the situation. The aim is to increase the detachment of teachers by MS in order to reach soon a ratio of 70% Seconded teachers – 30% Locally recruited. Also, the working conditions and the remuneration of the Locally Recruited Teachers were examined, and measures to improve their current situation are under discussion in the BoG.

Brexit: OSGES created a Working Group where the effects of Brexit on our schools have been extensively discussed. The Group examined possible scenarios depending on a “soft” or a “hard” Brexit. Particularly, but by no means exclusively, the question of the UK teachers, both seconded and locally recruited, the UK personnel, and the access of the European school graduates to the UK universities, were addressed.

The working group is also trying to find solutions in order to help the pupils of an Accredited school located near Oxford (Culham) in the UK. This school will lose at one moment its accreditation because of Brexit. The conclusions of the working group, in the form of a report, were presented to the meeting of the Board of Governors (BoG) in December 2018. IP asked kindly the BoG to explore ways to enable the students in Culham to present the BAC exams in June 2019 (and if possible the year after).

Brussels Schools: Recently IP was informed that a fifth (5th) school is planned to be constructed by the Belgian authorities on the former site of NATO. This school, if the plan goes ahead, this school, with a capacity of 2.400 pupils will be ready at the earliest in 2024.

(Note: This is a positive perspective, but if the usual increase of the pupils population in Brussels continues (until now we have a minimum of 300 new pupils per year) the new school could be full on inauguration day).

In parallel, IP was informed regarding a plan, to transfer, possibly at the beginning of the school year 2020/21, all our S6 and S7 classes (from Ixelles, and also the Woluwe school, a total of 1.000 pupils) to a former administrative building (A building without the usual school facilities) near the Arts- Loi Metro station, as a “temporary” site.

IP expressed reservations about this plan, reflecting the unanimous position of the parents’ associations.

The only reason advanced for this unusual solution is to make room for more enrolments in the European schools in Brussels, because otherwise it is said there is a risk of stopping new pupil enrolments in two or three years. This would result in a political problem.

For the present, this plan is presented as the only possible solution to the overpopulation problem, it is difficult to believe that other options cannot be considered.

OSGES promised recently to associate the parents with the feasibility study planned for this “temporary solution”. However, there is a fear that, in practice, the decisions are already taken.

Next year all the above-mentioned topics are likely to remain on the agenda.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE REPORT

The library committee has two main tasks that Charlotte SUZON HILL has taken charge of since September 2016:

- Recruitment, training and coordinating parent volunteers for “lunchtime hours” at the library for the primary classes, and
- Organising and coordinating 8 language sections at the annual book fair

With regard to “lunch hours”, parent volunteers ensure children are welcomed during lunch hours on Mondays and Tuesdays, and read them books according to their requests. If necessary, they also carry out tasks to help Annick Tasiaux, the librarian.

Other parents of Greek, Slovak and Czech nationality help to encode the books for their section, given that their alphabet is specific.

The annual book fair is an event that has been organised for years at the European School, Brussels III (EEB3). It has two objectives:

- Its main objective is to bring together pupils from all linguistic backgrounds of the school around a cultural event. So, there are eight different stands, one per section and one for the Slovak language.

The book fair actually takes place on one day, 16th November 2017, but it also includes other activities specific to each section, which take place over several days around the day of the fair: exploring books selected for them during a presentation in their class or at the school theatre, older pupils reading books to the youngest ones, organising book creation competitions by the pupils themselves and inviting authors.

- The second objective of the fair is to raise funds for the primary school library. Each bookstore presented at the school for the fair will, therefore, give books for an amount equivalent to a percentage of their sales, a percentage that is specific to the particular condition of each of the sections.

The table below shows what the library is going to receive this year. No money is given to the library. It receives the equivalent directly in books.

Language Section	
Czech	100 euros
Spanish	229 euros
Dutch	131 euros
German	241 euros
Greek	671 euros
French	498 euros
English	257 euros
Slovak	69 euros

This year again, enhanced security measures accompany both managing the presence of volunteers each week and organising the book fair.

Charlotte SUZON HILL