

The Minutes of The Board Meeting of 22nd Oktober 2024

The meeting was held on site at the ESM in Neuperlach from 18:30 pm until 21:00 pm.

Attendees:

Parents' Association (PA) Board Members: Sevil Tomur (Secretary and Minutes Writer), Karsten Röski, Michael Boelter, Vanessa Doublier Pritchard, Flavio Carsughi, Maciej Madalinski, Mihai Luca Bogdan, Katia Sittler (Chair), Antje Stoller, Magda Vecchi, Désirée Kandolo, Volker M. Berger, Panagiota Lazarou, Paula Galiana, Maria Mangeli

Absent PA Board Members: Narjess Kraiem, Esteban Hernández Castello, Susanne Herrnberger, Evert Küppers, Inés Lampreia, Fabrizio Marrone, Themis Toumpoulidis

Guests: Oliver Tonet

1. Approval of The Agenda

The Chair opened the meeting at 18:45 pm. The Agenda was approved.

2. Approval of The Minutes of The Board Meeting of 17th September 2024

The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on September 17th were approved.

Vannessa asked to correct that the EV-ESM organises BoG pre-meeting in Munich, not at the ESM.

3. Approval of The Minutes of The General Assembly of 16th October 2024

The Minutes of the General Assembly held on October 16th were approved.

4. Welcome of The New Members and Presentation of The Organisation

The new Members of the Board are welcomed by the Chair.

The Parents' Association Board and the Educational Council are briefly introduced to the new members.

The attendees shortly introduced themselves.

5. The Jour-Fix of 20.09.2024 (Karsten)

Services, Security, Katia and Karsten joined the meeting of the Jour-Fix.

Karsten summarised the topics of their last meeting held on the 20th of September:

The start of the year went well. For the school year 2025-2026, the ESM is planning to give a welcome ceremony for the S1 pupils, for a good start in the new school.

Furthermore, he gave the news of a compulsory one-week social internship called CAAP (Citizenship Action for All Program), which is one of the latest projects of the ESM for S.4 students.

Then, Karsten shared the information that on the 4th of November, the school is closed due to the Pedagogical Day for the teachers. At the secondary school, active learning and AI (artificial intelligence) will be in focus for that day.

The increase in the numbers of Cat II and Cat III students at the school and the huge gap between the fees for Cat II and Cat III are mentioned. The goal of the school is to increase the number of P.1 classes in the German Section from currently 2 classes to 3 classes in the next years.

Question: Maria asked if the aim is to grow, why this does not apply to the Greek Section.

It is probably because the EPO (European Patent Office) does not want to pay for all the teachers just for e.g. one student from the EPO-patents in one class.

The percentage of the students at the ESM whose parents work in the EPO decreased from 80 percent to 68 percent in the last few years.

Flavio clarified the situation that concerns the acceptance of Cat III students at the ESM. Due to the limited space at the ESM at the venue in Neuperlach, before the venue in Fasangarten was opened, the acceptance of the new Cat III students was exceptionally restricted to those classes with less than 9 students, by a decision of the BoG of the European Schools. Despite the venue in Fasangarten opened few years ago and since then the ESM has more space than needed, the EPO has continued to oppose to the removal of this limitation. Since the current school year 2024-25, this limitation has been removed and the rules of the European Schools entered into force, i.e. Cat III students are accepted when in the class there are less than 24 students.

Vannessa reported that the EPO calculates the cost per child, by simply dividing the total cost of the ESM for the total number of students, and the EPO uses this calculated total cost per student to demonstrate that the Cat III students pay much less than their costs.

Flavio commented that this calculation is deliberately specious, as Cat III students are enrolled in already existing classes and in very few cases new classes will be implemented due to the newly accepted Cat III students. This is clearly demonstrated by the simulation run by Enrico Fedrigo, that, in the investigated cases, the total annual fees paid by the Cat III students exceed the total additional costs necessary to accommodate them.

Vannessa said that the Cat III students are allowed the same support as Cat I and II students, and the costs of the support is quite expensive. If at the school, the Cat III students are not given the same level of support as the Cat I and II students, this is not fair and is against the European Schools' rules. Apart from this, in the cases of support request, a therapist assessment is mandatory, and their presence during the family with the school management is welcome. What's more, the Parents' Association Board Members or the Educational Council Members can also support the family during these meetings.

Additionally, Karsten explained that the school wants to stick to the rule of handling cases of student illnesses. Parents must continue providing a sick leave document signed by a doctor on the third day of the absence. Parents asked to cancel this rule due to problems of getting the document, but the school justified the rule with the risk of home violence against children. To help parents to get the sick leave document, the school is planning to provide a document easy to be filled by doctors.

Mihai stating that the parents at the school do not seem to fit the profile of home violence mentioned, questioned whether the rules in the ESM are stricter than the ones in a German school where a sick leave document can be requested by the school after 3 days of absence.

As a last point at the Jour-Fix, the school mentioned the current situation of the Physical Education lessons. From S.1 onwards, boys and girls are divided into separate groups. As there is an interest to continue the joint lessons until S.3, the situation is to be discussed in the next Educational Council.

Question:

Was there any talk about the new calculators during the Jour-Fix meeting? No.

6. The Administrative Board

Katia:

The Chair mentioned that there are 2 meetings, one is in October and the other one is in January.

Question:

Who is the responsible person at the ESM in relations to the EPO?

Not an exact answer.

Until 2 years ago, German families only had the possibility of sending their children to school free from charges at the ESM. The EPO did not cover costs of other schools, contrary to the employees from abroad. This has changed, and now the EPO up to a certain extent covers the costs of all families going to schools other than the ESM.

– It has been announced that the SMS system will be replaced with some other systems in accordance with other European systems, and until 2026 the contract will be finished.

- Social Internship: CAAP (Citizenship Action for All Program) project for S.4 students is again mentioned. The general idea is that children are too young to do this internship.

Vannessa briefly explained what this CAAP project is.

- BAC Problems: It is informed that syllabuses are checked by universities. But still, Maths results are especially very low, and the results of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects are below the average. The school is currently working on how to improve teaching. One reason might be that the syllabuses are hard. The tasks of the JTC (the Joint Teachers' Committee) is introduced.

Vannessa explained the observations of the Committee. It is realized that students have problems with STEM. As regards the teachers, some of them even do not know how to teach the STEM subjects especially in primary schools. All classes do the same syllabuses, but the teacher can choose his/her books in secondary schools. This means how s/he teaches is not dictated.

It is mentioned that Intermath, which is a teaching tool used by the European Schools, is very good for primary school students.

Question: Flavio brought into question the quality of the locally recruited teachers in secondary schools. They are checked locally, but not by the European Schools. They have a 3-years' period of contract where they can be fired. Once the contracts exceed 3 years, they have a permanent job and cannot be fired, but their working time can be reduced by maximum 30 percent.

It is known that there are some documents for the locally recruited teachers. He asks how many of them are locally recruited to understand whether there are local issues or not.

The Board Members are informed that there is a Working Group for Maths on a higher level (OSG/Teachers/Interparents).

It is said that, in the Administrative Board, only the Spanish Section was mentioned. There is an urge from Brussels to open it because it is a big section (3rd biggest of the ESM). Should this happen, parents will be included to prepare the opening of the section in the secondary school.

7. How to Deal with The Observers (Katia)

Since 2 of the Board Members, Flavio, Information Policies, and Vannessa, Interparents, are planning to leave at the end of the next school year, the importance of clarifying the presence of the Observers in the PA Board is stressed by the Chair. The Board Members agreed on this.

The Guest, Oliver Tonet, is kindly asked to leave the meeting temporarily during the discussions to provide the confidentiality.

It is mentioned by Flavio that the Confidentiality Agreement is already being signed. It is planned that Oliver, one of the Observers, takes over the position of Flavio next year.

Vannessa's position will probably be taken over by the second planned Observer, Amal Benzina. Vannessa explained what Interparents do. She summarised the role of the 2 official Interparents' Representatives in the PA Board, herself and Themis Toumpoulidis, and their possible Substitutes in the Interparents' meetings. She also explained the tasks of the Observers.

8. The Preparation Meetings of the BoG in November 2024 (Vannessa)

Vannessa told the Board Members that preparation meetings for the BoG (Board of Governors) meeting, where Interparents' Representatives will take part in, are going to take place in probably both Fasangarten and Neuperlach campuses on the 28th and 29th of November, 2024. The general meetings will be in this December and in the next April in Brussels. The idea is that if possible each year there is a rotation of the place of these meetings that take place in April among the presidencies of the European Schools, and this year, it will take place in Cyprus. Later, the Representatives will share the decisions of the BoG.

9. Any Other Business

- **Calculator Topic at The High School (Magda)**

Magda summarised the mandatory new calculator issue to the Board Members:

There is the concept of BYOD (bring your own device) from the year level S.5 at the ESM. From this school year on, the pupils cannot use their smart phones at school. The school has 233 calculators, and it seems that they do not have money to buy more. The previous ones have been working well, but students cannot now use the old ones because they can be programmed. We cannot do anything about this as the PA. The school now asks parents to pay for a calculator for each student. The topic is to be discussed in the Educational Council.

- **The ER (Educational Recouncil) Representatives Within The Board (Katia)**

The idea is that there is 1 representative for the Primary School and 1 representative for the Secondary School within the Board, and they can substitute among themselves.

The vote is in favour of this.

- **Canteen (Katia)**

It is addressed that there is very low satisfaction from caterer services at the school. The new planned caterer is a family enterprise, and the initial contact was quite positive. The price would be around 6 Euros. In the Secondary School, kids can only for instance choose salad and dessert and pay just for them. So, there is the possibility of separately priced foods. The whole menu would cost less than the total amount of the separately priced foods. There can be biological and local food, but still not 100 percent biological.

Question: Flavio asked what the reason of changing the caterer is.

The current one, Organic Garden, is a big company. There is no good communication with them, and there seems to be no improvement. On the 6th of November, there is the visit of the new caterer, and in a short time, the contract will be signed. As far as they said, they have enough personnel to serve.

- **IT (Flavio)**

Flavio explained that the IT portal is renewed. It is also reminded that the passwords of the new Board Members should be reset due to the data protection. Marcel Wolf's hiring as the System Manager is announced. There is the maintenance contract of 4000 Euros.

The vote is in favour of this.

- **Transportation (Maciek)**

The shuttle costs were discussed. For the month of September, there was a coverage gap of 1100 Euro. The income from parents did not cover the cost of the shuttle bus and the expenses for the Office staff. After the autumn holidays, if the number of the reservations is sufficient, it will be possible to use the morning shuttle bus to school. To decide if the booking numbers can cover the shuttles, the reservations will be possible until November 15th and the operation will be from December 1st. The company had 3 buses to offer from the 15th of October, but we do not know the numbers for other months.

10. The Next Board Meetings

The next Board meetings will take place on the 19th of November at 18:30 pm (face-to-face, Neuperlach) and on the 10th of December at the same time and place.

The meeting ended at 21:00 pm.

Minutes Writer: Sevil Tomur