

INTERPARENTS REPORT

MAIN POINTS DISCUSSED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

The European School system has now been in existence for over 50 years. In the last few years the Member States (MS) and European Union (EU) institutions have expressed their intention to make the European School system more widely available. However, in order to achieve this objective, the system for governing the European Schools as principally laid out in the current Convention negotiated in 1994 and which came into force in 2002, needs reforming. The present rules provide for parents' participation at all levels, in particular parents are members of, and represented on, the Board of Governors and most related bodies. Following a decision of Board of Governors in April 2008 a working group was set up to look into the necessary "Reform" of the system. Interparents was invited to send a representative.

The main changes are:

- To reform governance at the central level through redefinition of the role and mission of the different organs of the system (**Central governance bodies:** Board of Governors, Troika, General Secretary, Complaints Board, Board of Inspectors, Budgetary Committee, Joint Teaching Committee- See Annex *)
- To reform the governance at local level (**local governance bodies:** Administrative Board, Director and Deputy Directors, School Advisory Council, Education Committees- See Annex *) through the granting of more autonomy to Type I schools (*Munich included*)
- To reform the European Baccalaureate to make it compatible with opening the system to type II and type III schools,
- To review cost sharing amongst the Member States, particularly in terms of the costs of secondment of teachers.

A/ Reform of governance:

Last April the BofG approved the final document on the "Reform" of the system. This document introduced some structural changes in the System to allow more autonomy in particular a shift in the delegation of powers from the top to the bottom in the different committees and in governance at the General Secretary level (*Please see document on the reform on the schools website: http://www.eursec.eu/fichiers/contenu_fichiers1/1256/2009-D-353-en-4.pdf*). Other changes were introduced in order to save costs. The system will reduce the frequency of meetings of the Board of governors (*twice a year instead of 3 before the reform*) of the Budgetary Committee (*twice a year- instead of 3*), and Teaching Committees (*A combined meeting for the Nursery/Primary and Secondary will meet twice a year and will have to deal with all issues for both levels in a single day instead of two separate sessions of 3 days in the previous system*). The number of working groups and the frequency of their meetings will also be reduced in the future.

A forum for internal consultation or School Advisory Council (SAC) will be set up in each European School (*since Munich was a pilot school the SAC has already been set up last year*). The SAC is chaired by the School Director (*presently Mr. Peryer*) and composed of representatives of all the partners and stakeholders in the school community, taking into account the local situation. As the SAC is an advisory body, 'decisions' are taken by consensus, responsibility for the final decision lying with the Director or the Administrative Board, depending on the subject. The school plan will be submitted to the approval and vote of the Administrative Board (AB) after the consultation phase in the SAC.

Under the new rules, decisions of the AB will be taken by consensus as far as possible. However, if the Chair of the AB finds that it is impossible to reach a consensus, he/she may put the question to the vote. The following members will take part in voting: the Director, the representative of the European Commission, the parents' representatives (**one vote instead of 2 before the reform**), the Staff Committee Representatives (**one vote instead of 2**), the AAS (*Administrative Staff*) representative, the Chair, the representative of the EPO (*in Munich*). Decisions will be adopted by a simple majority of the members present who are entitled to vote. The Chair will also have the casting vote in the event of a tie, effectively meaning that in some circumstances the General Secretary, who is invariably the Chair, has two votes whereas parents and teachers now only have one vote instead of two.

Interparents is at present contesting the decision to change the voting rights.

B/ Reform of the European Baccalaureate (EB):

At its meeting in January 2009, the Board of Governors mandated the Secretary-General to prepare, in liaison with the 'Baccalaureate' Working Group, proposals for reform of the European Baccalaureate.

The decision on reform will need to be taken in April 2010 and the adaptations to the regulatory texts will need to be approved in July 2010, with a view to their application from September 2010 for students expecting to be entered for the European Baccalaureate in the June/July 2012 session. (*See Annex *- Article 9.1 of the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools**)

The ongoing discussions cover all aspects of the EB (*assessment, syllabus, correction and marking, weight of the internal and external assessment, arrangements for Special Needs candidates, handling of complaints and appeals, recognition of the EB...*). All these points have been discussed in various working-groups of our Parents' Association and sent to the Interparents representative on the EB Working Group Reform in Brussels. During the last Teaching Committee, Interparents supported the request of the EB Working Group for a prolongation of its mandate.

C/ Sharing of the costs of seconded staff amongst the member states:

Until now the European education system was based on teaching provided by mother tongue teachers. However, with the recent enlargements of the EU, the system faced a surge in the number of pupils and, inevitably, in the number of languages to be offered. A large number of children do not have their own official language section and have to join another one. These pupils mainly choose either the French, German or English sections, depending on which country the school is in. Unfortunately, the schools themselves do not yet have the authority, budgets and resources to recruit the teachers that they need.

The BofG in April adopted a "structural solution" to rebalance the cost sharing. This solution proposes basing the cost sharing on proportionality between the number of detached staff and the native pupils of each MS. It has been agreed that Member States are free to exceed this indicative reference on a voluntary basis and second more staff. This opens up the possibility of teaching by non-native speakers in certain limited cases.

Quality control of linguistic competence will be carried out prior to recruitment.

D/ General information:

The process of opening up the system is ongoing. Type II & Type III Schools are national schools providing European schooling. Pupils of the Type II School in Parma took their first European Baccalaureate examination this year.

As part of the Type III schools pilot project, the Board of Governors accepted the General Interest File of the International School of The Hague (*secondary years 6 and 7*) and considered that it met the requirements of the first stage of the accreditation procedure.

Conclusion

As you can see the past school year has not been short of issues demanding our full attention and vigilance. In coping with this, I have been very fortunate in receiving help and advice from parents and representatives across the school who, in the interest of our children present and future, have spent a lot of time to keep abreast of these complex issues and the problems they raise. They have proven to be both innovative and constructive in their contributions. In particular, I'd like to express my gratitude to those colleagues who agreed to commit themselves in our different pedagogical activities (*working group on legal issues for the EB and SEN, working group on pedagogical issues in the ESM, working group ESM on the Reform of the BAC*).

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2009-D-353-en-4 22/24 GOVERNANCE OF THE SYSTEM

Organs and actors: composition and delegated decision-making powers ANNEX IV/20/24

***Central Governance Bodies:**

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Intergovernmental organisation: Member States + Commission + parents + Teaching Staff Committee + EPO
Strategy and general policy/Decision-making power provided for by the Convention

TROIKA

Three heads of delegation of the Member States+ European Commission + Secretary-General
Supports Presidency and ensures its continuity/Monitors progress of priority issues.
Support SG in his/her role of coordination within the system
No decision-making power

SECRETARY GENERAL

- Secretary-General and DSG
- Pedagogical Development Unit
- Baccalaureate Unit
- Accounts Unit
- Administrative and Legal Unit
- ICT and Statistics Unit
- Human Resources Unit
- Internal Control/Audit

Decision-making power of the Secretary-General according to the statutes and regulations
Chairmanship of the ABs of Type I schools

COMPLAINTS BOARD

6 judges
Registry/Jurisdictional organ of the ES

BOARDS OF INSPECTORS (BI)

Two inspectors per Member State BI (Primary) /JBI (Join BI)/BI (Secondary)
Decision-making power on pedagogical questions not entering into the scope of Article 9.1 of the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools, European Schooling, Type II schools/ Type III schools ...

BUDGETARY COMMITTEE (*Replacing the Administrative and Financial Committee*)

Representative of all the Member States +European Commission + EPO + parents +Teaching Staff Committee
Decision-making power on questions coming within the framework of implementation of the budget
Opinions on administrative and legal questions requiring a decision of the Board of Governors

JOINT TEACHING COMMITTEE

Joint Board of Inspectors + parents' representatives + Staff Committee + EPO + Secretary-General + Directors + two Deputy Directors + students' representatives

Decision-making power on pedagogical questions pursuant to Article 9.1 of the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools

(In view of the decentralisation of decision-making and in order to take account of the voting rights of the parents and of the Staff Committee on a number of pedagogical questions, pursuant to Article 9(d) of the Convention, decisions concerning these questions are taken at JTC level.

Decisions shall be adopted by a 2/3 majority of the voting members as follows: one vote for each Member State and one vote each for the Commission, the parents, the EPO when appropriate, the Staff Committee, the Directors and the pupils. In the case of pedagogical questions with financial implications, the JTC will express an opinion for the benefit of the BC or, where appropriate, the BofG).

***Local governance bodies/School Intern organisation:**

Administrative Board, Director and Deputy Directors, School Advisory Council, Education Committees
Decision-making power of the AB
Decision-making power of the Director

***Article 9.1 Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools**

I. Save in cases where unanimity is required by this Convention, decisions of the Board of Governors shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the members comprising it, subject to the following provisions:

- (a) Adoption of a decision affecting the specific interests of a Member State, such as the significant extension of the premises or the closure of a School established in its territory, shall require a favorable vote by the representative of that Member State;
- (b) The closure of a School shall require a favorable vote by the Member of the Commission;
- (c) The representative of an organization governed by public law who has obtained a seat and a vote on the Board of Governors pursuant to an agreement based on Article 28 shall vote on all matters relating to the School covered by such agreement;
- (d) **The right to vote of the representative of the Staff Committee mentioned in Article 8 (1) (c) and the representative of the pupils' parents mentioned in Article 8 (1) (d) shall be restricted to the adoption of decisions on educational matters under Article 11, with the exclusion of decisions concerning adaptations to the European baccalaureate Agreement and decisions having financial or budgetary effects.**