



München, February 2nd, 2015

Dear parents please find attached news from the Parents Association:

New site:

After some (financial) turbulence the project is now continuing. Due to the political help from the General Secretary of the European Schools and with the support of the EPO, Germany has agreed to cover the additional costs for the new site, which occurred due to the delay. We now expect a start in autumn 2018 with a primary school at Fasanengarten.

Ferienkalender 2015/2016:

The issue of a Ferienkalender has developed to an increasingly difficult subject at the level of the European Schools. Europe has here not (yet) understood principles of subsidiarity nor seems to be enthusiastic to accept certain autonomy of a school.

This means that despite of a perfect agreement among the management of the ESM, their staff representatives and the parents representatives reached some months ago (September 2014) in the presence of the General Secretary, has now been set aside by his deputy.

The main issues are inflexibility with respect to start and end dates of a school year combined with "additional instructions" on days on which all European Schools must be closed.

This resulted in a plan imposed by Brussels for the Munich school, which does no longer foresee the vacation week in May, having at least on the 23rd of December off but almost 9 weeks of summer vacations.

We initially had suggested to shorten the summer vacation by one week and to use those days for compensating during the school year. Despite the requirement in the regulations that "all European Schools should end around the 8th of July" – this time - "about 8th of July" is interpreted by Brussels as meaning July 1st. In addition a further holiday has been generated by a central decision to close all schools on May 9th to celebrate the European Day. Whilst this seems to be no problem for the schools in Brussels, due to the significant less public holidays, for Munich it has consequences as mentioned in the above.

The school community has offered then as a compromise to use (again) one or two Saturdays (one for the European Day celebration and the other for the proclamation of the BAC). This however, has been rejected by new and different interpretations of the Rules.

The issue is now again with "Brussels" and we will be informed about any wise decision of a centralised administration as to when we are allowed to take vacations.

We remarked that delaying a decision on a Ferienkalender might have serious impact on the planning of work and vacations for parents and staff of the school.

Unfortunately, we feel not in a position to make public one of the draft versions which might (or might not) be decided at the end – since we as the parents representation would not like to be hold responsible later for needing to cancel hotels and or flights if "Brussels" comes up with again new ideas about our vacations.

We however, thank the staff of the Munich school for their valuable contribution and in particular also for their generous offer to plan the pedagogic day in such a way that it may help to get a full vacation week in May and/ or the 23rd of December off (which means that they have to be at work whilst others have their vacations – including their own children at the ESM).

Budget of the ESM for the school year 2016:

Financing the school and thus deciding its budget is the most important issue of the schools administrative board in January. The total costs of the school are around 25 million Euro per year, excluding the costs for buildings and transport which come separately from our host country Germany, Bavaria and the city of Munich respectively.

The biggest part of the annual school budget (around 85%) is paid by the EPO. The remaining part comes from so called category II (ESO is here the biggest contributor), category III and the European commission who is paying for "its" about 35 children at the school a fair share.

The presented budget of the school was, as in previous years, seen very critical by several of those being asked to pay for it. It is clear that we live in a time of savings and increased cost awareness, whilst expenses and demands are constantly increasing. In particular the creation of new posts is seen very critical.

After a long, hard but fair debate the main financial stakeholders of the ESM, in particular the EPO but also ESO and NETMA agreed to all new teaching posts requested by the school. The decision for an increase of posts for non-teaching staff (e.g. in the administration, housekeeping, technician) has been postponed. It has been made dependent on the outcome of a benchmark and efficiency study. As parents representation we understand this position of the EPO representatives, but very much welcomed the agreement to the financial budget of the school as presented by the bursar.

This means that the school will be equipped with sufficient resources to run its business including the various projects of the annual school plan. Being "short" in support staff might be a temporary issue for the coming school year, but at least in part compensated by the agreed possibility of payment for external help.

It remains to mention that the representative of the European Commission (as usual) and the Deputy Secretary General were against the budget, but outvoted by the majority of the voting members in the board. The EPO will now have to defend the budget for the ESM centrally and get the agreement of its own administrative board.

Yours

Georg Weber
(1st Chairman of the PA-EV-ESM)