

Minutes from the European School Copenhagen School Board Meeting

Date: 18 May 2017
Time: 17:15 – 19:45 (2 ½ hours)
Venue: Sankt Annæ Gymnasium
Members: Jonas Christoffersen, Caroline Warner, Henriette Vollmers-Hansen,
Joel Samaha, Rasmus Hornecker, Anette Holst, Hanne Schmidt
Guests: Kaspar Hviid, Uri Harlam
Excuses: Poul Toftdahl, Hans Bryuninckx
Minutes: Stine Hvitved Leather

Minutes

1. Approval of the agenda (decision)

1.1. Annex – Agenda Board Meeting 18.05.2017 v2

The Board welcomed Kaspar Hviid, new Head of Department, and Uri Harlam, new Head of the school's After School Care, and there was a brief round of introductions. Kaspar has stepped into the role as Head of Department at least until 1 October. The job will be advertised in accordance with normal process. Hanne mentioned that Joel Samaha is moving back to the USA to study for an MBA so this will be his last Board meeting.

Jonas said that he would like some time at the end of the meeting to talk about the way the Board is working. It was also suggested that a date be set for the meeting for all parents in September and Henriette wanted to give some information about the end of year party organised by the Parents Association (PA).

With these points made, the Board approved the agenda.

2. Approval of the minutes from the last board meeting (decision)

2.1. Annex – Minutes Board Meeting 30.03.2017

The minutes were approved by the Board.

3. Development of ESCPH values (decision)

3.1. Annex - Draft Values for ESCPH

Hanne, Joel and Stine explained how the working group had generated a 'house' with a vision, mission and values for consideration by the Board based on the input received from staff, pupils and parents. Hanne stressed the importance of the next phase of implementation as the values must be 'lived' throughout the school to have meaning.



Jonas agreed that the school needs a vision, mission and values with a short explanation accompanying the values as per the written draft. Caroline and Henriette relayed feedback from members of the Parents Council regarding some of the value words, and Joel in turn explained the importance that the teachers place on some of the value words because they are necessary to support the children's learning.

It was decided to split the Board into two groups, who would each review the draft values, then come together to discuss their views and agree a way forward.

Following the group discussions, it was decided that the values working group would make a few agreed amendments to the draft and then send a final version to Jonas Christoffersen for sign off on behalf of the Board.

4. Strategic Focus Points (decision)

- 4.1. Annex – Status Evaluation of Focus Points 2016/17
- 4.2. Annex – Draft Strategic Focus Points 2017/18

The Board reviewed the draft focus points for 2017/18. Caroline suggested that the Parents Association (PA) could play a role and help under focus point 3 – New School at Carlsberg. Henriette added that the school could also promote community spirit by writing something about the school's relationship and collaboration with the PA and Parents Council. Jonas commented that it was good to see that the focus points for 2017/18 were new and strategic and that good progress had been made against the focus points for 2016/17.

The Board approved the focus points.

5. Relocation to Kirsebærhavens Skole (information)

- 5.1. Annex – Board Letter to ESCPH Parents
- 5.2. Annex – Board Letter to the Municipality of Copenhagen

Hanne informed the Board that the staff has visited Kirsebærhavens Skole and Rasmus explained that in many ways the space there is better for teaching than the space the school occupies now. The class rooms have not been renovated yet but they are big and open to little green yards. The school is currently being renovated and many of the areas are closed off so it is not a good idea to organise a visit for parents right now.

Efforts are being made to make it safer for school drop off and the school is waiting to receive more practical information regarding the move from the Municipality.

It was mentioned that information regarding the relocation is needed on the school's website. A letter has already been sent to new families explaining that the school is relocating to Kirsebærhavens Skole.

It was agreed that the school would update the website about the relocation and provide further updates on Intra with information about the move.

6. Admission criteria (submission to the Municipality of Cph)
7. ESCPH expansion (submission to the Municipality of Cph)

Anette explained that the politicians in Borgerrepræsentationen will be meeting in August to discuss and decide on the school's application for a shorter school year, third language section, admission criteria and Secondary/new language section expansion. To this end, the Municipality is asking for the Board's input to:

- a) Third language section
- b) Admission criteria (siblings)
- c) Expansion plan

a) Third language section:

While there is demand for another English section, Hanne and Anette explained that they think the school needs another language section to be truly a European School, and preferably either French or German as they are categorised language 2 in the European School system. It is also possible to have a mixed language section, e.g. English with French or German. It is not considered possible to fill a Spanish section. It was noted that the school currently has a few more French applicants than German.

Between French and German, the Board agreed to recommend a French language section. In case there are not enough pupils applying for a French section, it could be filled up with English.

b) Admission criteria (siblings):

The Municipality is suggesting a change to the admission criteria that takes siblings into consideration in all admission categories in the sense that they will be guaranteed a screening, and if they qualify in the screening, they will be given a space in Nursery. In the Primary classes, the same applies, but only if there is an available space in the relevant class.

It was discussed how siblings could take up very many of the spaces available, but at the same time there was great understanding for the needs of the families to have their children in the same school, particularly international families who are new to Denmark.

The Board agreed to the proposed wording in principle, where siblings are considered in all admission categories, and there was agreement that siblings must pass the screening to get admission to the school.

c) Expansion plan:

Anette explained the Municipality's proposed plan to expand the English and Danish sections with Secondary 1 and 2 in 2018 and Secondary 5 in 2019. The reason for introducing Secondary 5 (corresponding to the first year of Gymnasium in Denmark) is that this is typically the time that Danish children change schools (very few would be likely to change schools at the end of 8th grade in Denmark).

The third language section would start in 2019, when the school is in the new school building at Carlsberg, with Nursery and Primary 1 and possibly Secondary 1 and 2.

Some concern was expressed regarding the available space for the expansion in 2018 given the new school will not be ready until the autumn of 2018.

Caroline asked what children do when they move to another school system and they don't have a certificate from school, and Hanne and Anette responded that they are working on a certificate for such situations.

The Board had no objections to the proposed expansion plan, but noted that they look forward to seeing the Municipality's plan for the logistics and practicalities of the expansion.

8. Municipality of Cph Employee Satisfaction Survey 2017 (information)

8.1. Annex – Københavns Kommunes Trivselsundersøgelse 2017

Hanne briefly presented the survey results for the school, which are very good overall. The few areas that need improvement are: the physical working environment and learning and development. Hanne explained that the challenge is that the school has highly skilled teachers, who need very special quality training.

One case of bullying was reported in the survey but no one has come forward and raised a concern. Rasmus, who is the union representative, mentioned that staff can raise concerns at union meetings but concerns are almost never reported and this makes it very hard for the school to do anything about it. Henriette suggested that the definition of bullying and harassment be clearly explained in a policy. The AMR (work environment representative) will look at this issue and the survey results in more detail.

The Board expressed appreciation for the information and commended the school on the result and good work in this area.

9. AOB

• Annual school meeting for all parents

It was agreed at the last Board meeting that an annual meeting for all parents, staff and the Board should be held at the beginning of each school year and a date needs to be set. The Board should welcome everyone and present the new values and focus points of the school. The PA will also use this opportunity to encourage all to be a part of the school community. Following the meeting for all parents, the parents will attend meetings in each class.

It was agreed that the school administration should agree a date for the meeting with Jonas Christoffersen.

• End of year party organised by PA

Henriette informed the Board of the PA's plans for an end of year party on 16 June. The party will be in the style of a carnival and parents will coordinate the activities. Everyone is invited and anyone who wants to participate or help can but it is organised by the PA.

It was agreed that Rasmus Hornecker would help the PA book the canteen area and the BBQs for the party.

- **Cooperation on the Board**

Jonas explained that he would like the Board to be a bit more disciplined and focused on the agenda items, and that he would like to have a copy of the presentations in advance of the meetings. Henriette said it was important with structure but also important to respect different personalities and leave room for discussion and new ideas. Caroline called for a balance and Joel raised the concern that part of the Campus meetings and Strategy Seminars are in Danish and if this continues non-Danish speaking members of the Board should not have to attend.

Summary actions and decisions

Agenda Item	Actions
1. Approval of the agenda (decision)	<i>The Board approved the agenda.</i>
2. Approval of the minutes (decision)	<i>The minutes were approved by the Board.</i>
3. Development of ESCPH values (decision)	<i>Following the group discussions, it was decided that the values working group would make a few agreed amendments to the draft and then send a final version to Jonas Christoffersen for sign off on behalf of the Board.</i>
4. Strategic Focus Points (decision)	<i>The Board approved the focus points.</i>
5. Relocation to Kirsebærhavens Skole (information)	<i>It was agreed that the school would update the website about the relocation and provide further updates on Intra with information about the move.</i>
6. Admission criteria (submission to the Municipality of Cph) 7. ESCPH expansion (submission to the Municipality of Cph)	<p>a) Third language section: <i>Between French and German, the Board agreed to recommend a French language section. In case there are not enough pupils applying for a French section, it could be filled up with English.</i></p> <p>b) Admission criteria (siblings): <i>The Board agreed to the proposed wording in principle, where siblings are considered in all admission categories, and there was agreement that siblings must pass the screening to get admission to the school.</i></p> <p>c) Expansion plan: <i>The Board had no objections to the proposed expansion plan, but noted that they look forward to seeing the Municipality's plan for the logistics and practicalities of the expansion.</i></p>
8. Municipality of Cph Employee Satisfaction Survey 2017 (information)	<i>The Board expressed appreciation for the information and commended the school on the result and good work in this area.</i>
9. AOB	<p>Annual school meeting for all parents <i>It was agreed that the school administration should agree a date for the meeting with Jonas Christoffersen.</i></p> <p>End of year party organised by PA <i>It was agreed that Rasmus Hornecker would help book the canteen area and the BBQs for the party.</i></p>