



Minutes from the European School Copenhagen School Board Meeting

Date: Thursday 7 February 2019
Time: 16:30 – 18:30
Venue: Meeting room 5 (2nd floor), European School Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Vej 99, 1799 København V
Members: Jonas Christoffersen (JC), Søren Nielsen (deputy for Hans Bruyninckx) (SN), Christen Bagger (CB), Rikke Karlsson (RK), Eskil Berg Kappel (EBK), Caroline Warner (CW), Suzanne Hampson (SH), Rasmus Hornecker (RH), Anette Holst (AH), Hanne Schmidt (HST)
Guests: Mette Sophie Skærlund (MSS)
Excuses: Hans Bruyninckx (HB), Poul Toftdahl (PT), Uri Harlam (URH)
Minutes: Stine Hvitved Leather (SHL)

Minutes:

1. Approval of the agenda (decision)

1.1. Annex – Agenda for the European School Board Meeting on 07.02.2019 v2

- **Decision:** The Board approved the agenda.

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

2.1. Annex – Final approved minutes from the European School Board meeting 27.11.2018

- **Decision:** The Board approved the minutes.

3. The Board's working methods and tasks and a discussion of competences on the Board (decision) – 60 mins.

Working methods and tasks

JC informed the Board of the Board's tasks based on the bylaws and rules of procedure. JC explained that due to the school's special structure, the Board's tasks differ from other school boards in Folkeskolen. The Municipality decided on a different Board structure for the school as it will also include a high school.

A list of the key tasks and competences was distributed to the members along with a diagram showing the tasks of the European School Board vis-à-vis the Campus Board, European Schools system, Municipality of Copenhagen and the Parents Council.



AH presented the diagram (see attached) and explained that the Municipality makes all the decisions about funding for the school, buildings, etc. As an Accredited European School, the school is subject to inspections by the ES system and must meet the ES programme/curriculum but is not part of the rest of the ES-system, e.g. Joint Teachers Committee, Complaints Board, etc.

RK proposed that the Parents' Association (PA) be included in the school diagram and separated from the Parents' Council (PC).

RK asked whether the Municipality hears the Board on important issues. AH explained that the Municipality generally hears the Board before making important decisions affecting the school but not always. RK noted that neither the parents nor the Board were heard in the new criteria for the upper secondary and that this was not satisfactory in light of previous concern and discussion amongst parents regarding the admission criteria.

CB suggested inviting representatives from the Municipality along to the Board to share our concerns/issues. RK also suggested that we invite some of the politicians in the City of Copenhagen along to a meeting.

JC observed that it is essential that the Board respects the limits to its power and focuses on matters of strategic significance. The board cannot step into the shoes of daily management, just as it cannot perform tasks that lie within the sphere of competence of e.g. the municipality. The Board shall be informed of significant day-to-day issues, but they are primarily to be discussed in the Parents Council. SN added that some of these issues might also be discussed in the Student Council. SN suggested strengthening the link to the Municipality and it was discussed whether there could be a representative from the Municipality or a politician on the Board.

EBK said that parents still had many day-to-day school issues/concerns that need to be addressed. JC said it was important to address these issues but also important to understand that they can't always be solved to the satisfaction of all parents and that it might not be for the Board to deal with the issues. JC invited the parents representative to submit a list of issues for his further reflection on the role of the Board in respect of the various issues. EBK and RK will produce a list of issues.

- **Decision:** The Board decided to
 - invite Tobias Stax and Kate Obeid from BUF to a meeting in due time,
 - review the list of issues produced by the parent members of the Board and identify issues that are within the sphere of competence of the Board,
 - review its rules of procedure to better reflect the Board's tasks and working methods.



Values

JC suggested that the Board members think about the school's values for the next Board meeting and discuss how they are relevant for the Board's working methods and tasks.

- **Decision:** The Board will at the next meeting discuss how the School's values are important to the Board's work.

Competences

JC informed the Board that PT has decided to step down from the Board and that a new external member must be appointed by the Municipality. The Municipality appoints external members, but the Board members can make recommendations regarding competences or suggest candidates.

According to the bylaws, the Board's competences should include leadership, organisation, finance, education and international school experience. The Board members discussed which competences would be most useful on the Board and suggestions included a French or German speaker, pedagogical/educational/professional sector experience e.g. a person from DPU, links to the Municipality or politician. The matter will be discussed in more details at the next meeting.

- **Decision:** The Board decided to further discuss the competences of candidates for the Board for the next meeting in April.

4. Phasing plan and update on the start of Upper Secondary and French section (information) - 15 mins.

- 4.1. Annex - Phasing plan from the Municipality of Copenhagen 18.05.2017 and status 30.01.2019

AH informed the Board that the planned start of the Upper Secondary in August 2019 has been postponed because the Municipality of Copenhagen and the Ministry of Education have not been able to agree on the funding. The school is very disappointed, especially for those who had hoped to apply for admission this spring. The parties are trying to find a solution and the expectation is now that S5 will open in August 2020. We do not expect further news until budgets are being presented in September.

Hans Bruyninckx, Executive Director EEA, has sent a letter to the Mayor of Copenhagen and Minister for Education, expressing the EEA's deep disappointment and dissatisfaction with the decision to postpone the start of Upper Secondary. RK requested that the EEA letter be shared with the Board members. The school will keep the Board informed of developments.

- **Decision:** The Board took note of the update from Anette Holst and the letter from the EEA and expressed its deep disappointment that the opening of the Upper



Secondary had to be postponed because the Municipality and Ministry for Education could not reach agreement.

5. Accounts status (information) – 5 mins.

AH gave a brief status on the budget. The school is waiting for the budget to be finalised by the Municipality but is expecting around DKK 0,5 million to be left over in the budget. The school will be able to carry up to 4 % of the overall budget into next year's budget.

RH suggested that staff be given more notice to buy materials when there is money left in the budget to do so. AH said a wish list could be prepared in advance as it is hard to give an earlier budget estimate.

- **Decision:** The Board took note of the accounts update and is looking forward to seeing the final accounts at the next meeting.

6. Employee satisfaction survey by the Municipality of Copenhagen (information) – 5 mins.

HST informed the Board that the Municipality's Employee Satisfaction survey, conducted every two years, will commence mid-February and close mid-March. The results are expected at the beginning of April and will be shared with the Board either at the April or June meeting.

CB asked if the school had considered shorter but more regular surveys. HST explained that the school also undertakes an APV survey (Arbejdspladsvurdering) every two years; the last one was in spring 2018. AH said the school did not have the resources to conduct further surveys, and JC proposed that the Board wait to see the results of the survey.

- **Decision:** The Board thanked HST for the update on the Employee Satisfaction survey and is looking forward to reading the results.

7. School Year 2018/19 (information) – 20 mins.

- Recent school events and activities

HST informed the Board that the month of January has been focused on the work in the class rooms. The school has had one planned and two involuntary fire drills and the teachers have spent some time in the classes reassuring some of the children, who were upset by the fire alarm.

In the next months, there will be rehearsals for the school's first musical Aladdin, which will be performed in May. Representatives from the European School in Tallinn will visit the school in relation to the Nordplus collaboration project.

MS added that in Secondary, there has been a focus on integrating the ESCPH and SAG students through speed dating and other initiatives.



- Road safety (information from the parents)

EBK: Last week, EBK and Henriette Vollmers-Hansen met with Jens Nyhus, CEO Carlsberg Byen, about the parents'/Board's road safety concerns, particularly by the crossing at Pile Allé. They support the wish for a safer solution and suggested that we talk to the Municipality. The parents subsequently spoke to the Municipality of Copenhagen, who said that the concern had to be addressed to the Municipality of Frederiksberg.

- **Decision:** The Board decided that a letter be written to the Municipality, signed by RK and EKB as parent representatives, JC as Chairman of the ESCPH Board and Jens Kramer Mikkelsen as Chairman of the Campus and SAG Boards. EKB will send information to SHL, who will draft the letter.

- Admissions

HST informed the Board that the school has received 280 applications for the new classes opening in August 2019.

Due to the large number of applications for the new classes in the English and Danish section, the school will only screen applicants in the B1 category, who speak the language of the section fluently. Siblings will also be invited to a screening as per the admission criteria.

All the applicants in the French section will be invited to a screening. If there are not enough applicants for the new classes in the French section, the school may open combined French/Danish classes in Secondary and combined French/English classes in Nursery/Primary 1.

RK asked about the class sizes and AH explained that the school adheres to the rules set by the Municipality which is 28 students in a class. However, as category A students are entitled to admission, the number is sometimes slightly higher. It's not possible to keep classes below 28 for budgetary reasons. RK suggested that the rules be mentioned on the webpage.

- After School Care (ASC)

HST provided an update on behalf of Uri Harlam. The ASC has hired a new pedagogue. Some of the pedagogues are taking French classes in preparation for the opening of the French language section.

- Recruitment committee and process
7.1. Annex - Recruitment committee and process 30.01.2019

AH informed the Board that the school has written a document to clarify the recruitment process and role of the Recruitment Committee (Annex 7.1. Recruitment committee and



process 30.01.2019). EKB suggested that with so many applications it would be good to have a process for narrowing down the list before selection.

- French L2 status

HST provided after the request of RK an update to the Board regarding concerns expressed by parents about the French L2 classes. The school is currently advertising for a French language teacher. The application deadline is 17 February and interviews will be held the following week. While it has been hard to find French substitute teachers, the school does currently have a fluent French speaking substitute. To address the concerns of parents, the school will ensure that the new French language teacher assesses the level in the classes. It is important to note, however, that L2 will always be a mix of levels in a European school. The school will consider offering a catch-up afternoon class if this is required for some students.

RK said that she and other parents are concerned that the curriculum is not met and that the school's accreditation is under threat, e.g. the school is not using the required textbooks. HST informed the Board that the school is not required to use "Les Loustics" textbooks. RK asked if French teachers from Sankt Annæ could step in as substitutes or other French speaking teachers at ESCPH. AH and HST said this was not possible.

- Nationalities

Some parents at the school have raised concern about a lack of diversity at the school. AH explained that the school does not differentiate based on nationality. Admission is based on the admission criteria set by the politicians in the City of Copenhagen, language competences and maturity. JC said the school is not allowed to discriminate and assess applications based on nationality and that it would run squarely counter to the school's values to do so. EKB underlined that the general diversity was a concern; not the attendance of particular nationalities.

- Marketing budget

AH explained that the school does not have a specific marketing budget, but Sankt Annæ Gymnasium does publish a year book each year, which includes a few pages about ESCPH. RK and EBK asked why ESCPH had been underrepresented in the yearbook. AH explained that it was a matter of general priority and that ESCPH may create its own year book or have more pages in next year's SAG year book.

- [SAG Årsskrift \(SAG Year in Review\)](#)

See previous point.



8. Staff information - 5 mins.

The staff representatives informed the Board that staff have a major concern that they would like to address with the support of the Board. They are concerned that some parents do not communicate in an acceptable way. There are examples of inappropriate, rude and intimidating behaviour and emails, which impact the work of staff, cause stress, etc. If it continues, staff may leave. Staff are working on a communications policy to ensure that communication/behaviour is aligned with our values. CB suggested that the parent representatives write to parents to address inappropriate communication.

JC stressed that it is not primarily the teachers' responsibility to ensure that the school-home/teacher-parent-relationship is respectful, but that it is the responsibility of all. The parent members also shared the teachers' concern and would communicate to the parents the need to maintain a respectful relationship with teachers.

- **Decision:** The Board decided to further address the issue of communication at a later meeting based on the teachers' paper, including by considering whether a policy should be adopted to address the issue. The Parents Council shall be included in the process in order to secure ownership.

9. AOB - 5 mins.

CB asked what the process is if you leave the school but wish to re-enrol again at a later stage. HST explained that re-enrolment is subject to availability of spaces and the admission criteria. CB requested that we talk through the admission criteria some time.

- **Decision:** The Board will receive further information on the admission criteria at a future Board meeting.