

Parents' Association Annual Report 2018

Introduction

The Parents' Association (PA) is an active association representing parents' interests within the European School Karlsruhe. The Association is a non-profit organisation and membership is voluntary. Members of the PA committee (henceforth committee) represent the parent at every level in the school system and in the various committees in Brussels. They all work voluntarily for the benefit of all pupils and parents in the ESK and can influence the decisions made by management, locally and at the system level of the European schools. The role of the PA is unique for the European Schools and it is therefore very important that the PA is active and parents take advantage of this rare opportunity. The membership fee is currently €30 per family per school year. All details can be found on the ESK PA website: www.esk-eltern.de

Year's review

Last year the ESK PA Annual General Assembly (AGM) took place on 22 February 2018. The members of the Association present approved the previous year's Annual Report and the new PA Committee was elected during the AGM. The financial accounts had been audited and the assembly approved them. The full General Assembly minutes can be found on the PA website.

The newly elected PA Committee held their first meeting on 28 February 2018. Elected were for President – Debjani Basu, Vice-president – Ilka von Bauer Monteiro de Paula, Treasurer – Brynn Thompson-Renz.

The other 14 Committee members are - Pierre Brun, Cristina Chinese, Letizia Dalle Donne, Caroline Diebold, Tatjana Grepp, Annika Koltjes, Eleonor Kutzner, Felicitas Martens, Alice Salza, Bill Scott-Stewart, Anke Maria Thorbruegge, Magdalena Toma, Olaf Walter and Gessica Zublena.

Thorsten Reineke has agreed to remain and participate as an observer to the committee. Aaron Gilbee and Mohammad Shanawaz Babu Sheik expressed their interest to participate in the committee as observers too.

The other responsibilities on behalf of the Committee are:

Communications: Thorsten Reineke

After-school Activities: Brynn Thompson-Renz

Canteen: Eleonor Kutzner, Magdalena Toma, Caroline Diebold, Felicitas Martens

EuroBoutique: Eleonor Kutzner, Magdalena Toma

Interparents: Alice Salza, Cristina Chinese

SWALS: Letizia Dalle Donne

Transport: Olaf Walter, Anke Maria Thorbruegge

Website: Felicitas Martens, Annika Koltes

Events Coordinator: Eleonor Kutzner

Anke Maria Thorbruegge had to step down from the PA committee due to personal reasons. After she stepped down, Mrs Basu joined the steering group of the Transport committee. In addition, Mrs von Bauer Monteiro de Paula went on maternity leave and Mr Scott-Stewart took over her tasks. Members of the PA Committee represent each Language section in the secondary and primary school.

Additionally, Anja Bühner, Amy Chia-Gaess and Cristina Chinese are in-charge of the organization and coordination of after-school activities.

PA Objectives

In 2018 the priorities of the PA were in the following area –

- Favor ongoing communication between the school and the parents.
- Support in building and maintaining a positive school spirit
- Promotion of pedagogical projects and sustain ongoing projects.
- Close monitoring and involvement re- intended changes of the marking system and curriculum of Secondary.

Some of the activities that we have successfully supported were:

- Organizing and sponsoring book prizes for the OS pupils
- Provide financial support to
 - DELF – French Language Diploma
 - various projects during project days e.g. both in the primary and the secondary
 - class trips for children of families, who are undergoing financial difficulties
 - and various other class trips

The members of the committee represent parents in meetings such as –

- Monthly PA committee meetings
- Adhoc meetings with the management
- Biannual PA/Parents' representative meetings
- Biannual ESK statutory Administrative Board meetings
- Biannual Educational Council meetings (Secondary and Primary)
- School Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting

Please send us an email, in case you would like full details and minutes of the various meetings.

Website (Annika Koltes & Felicitas Martens)

In 2018, many changes to the communication platform, the website had taken place. The old Java system was converted to a modern WordPress system. After the frame and structure were set, content had to be updated and transferred.

For the purpose of better readability and retrieval of information, the homepage of the parents' association was given a completely new appearance.

Advantages are now multilingualism, integration of an online shop for the extracurricular activities, and several possibilities to optimize member administration and financial accounting.

The shop went live at the start of the school year 2018/19, allowing members to conveniently book extracurricular activities online. Even non-members can now register their children for extracurricular activities with on-site payment of their membership fees. As with any conversion of systems, there were of course some uncertainties or problems for us. Our team, including our financial officers, extracurricular organizers and our accompanying programmer, was always available and eager to find a quick fix.

Since the introduction of the online shop, it is no longer possible to attend a course without paying for it or the membership fees.

Furthermore, it is important to us to improve the communication with our members and our potential members. We have developed an information sheet for educating the school community about the work of the parents' association. In the future, we also plan to reduce the "flood of e-mails".

We look forward to future challenges and welcome any ideas that you may have for the website. We offer our continued support in all your concerns at all times.

Financial report (Brynn Thompson-Renz)

A tax return was not filed in 2018. The next tax declaration, for 2017-2019 must be submitted in 2020.

The income from membership fees amounted to €10,590 in 2018 (€8460 in 2017 and €8070 in 2016). The increase was due to the launch of our EV Website for the extracurricular activities and being able to make sure that all families using the courses are paying their fees. Another important source of income was the summer fest, which was €1882.68, slightly more than the €1822 earned in

2017 but significantly less than the €3114 in 2016. This is possibly due to the Summer Fest taking place during on a World Cup Sunday while England was playing.

In 2018, the largest expenditure was for school projects at €5230.19, the majority of which were school trips and project week projects. The PA was more invested in funding school projects this year in comparison to the € 3434 funded in 2017 and the € 4321 in 2016. Other expenses amounted to €16,039.18 though this must be adjusted by €5928 transferred to the Extracurricular Curricular Activities account from August to December 2018 (€5719 in 2017 and €2402 in 2016). The significant expenses in 2018 were the completion of the website at €5514.88. Considering the loan to the AA account and the website, the expenses were €4596.3.

As every year, we supported the school trips to Baden-Baden, annual Kangaroo Math competition, DELF, a concert in the primary in French, choir festival in Karlsruhe with tram tickets, purchases in KG/Primary and end of school year book prizes.

Open Day expenses were 265.80 compared to €1386 spent in 2017 and €833 in 2016. Open Day was separate from Project Week this year. We funded projects to the tune of €2492.50. Our overall income from the Open Day was 1299.34€ not including the 798€ from the Euroboutique, which was calculated with the Euroboutique to account for expenses without allocating them per event.

The Euroboutique generated earnings of €334.64 in 2018 (compared to -€535 in 2017 and -€830 in 2016). Hoodies, Polos, and Caps were purchased to be sold. 2018 was a good year for the Euroboutique.

In 2018, the annual contribution to InterParents was €1680. Travel costs of €2189.88 were received from Brussels; to be noted is that the costs for 2018 will be refunded in 2019.

Funds were not drawn from the SAP donation for this reporting year.

The social fund was used in 2018 for 9 trips, for a total of €1295 (in 2017 a total of 6 trips were financed with €727). The PA received donations of €1432 for this reporting year.

The guest pupil left the school in summer 2017. So, no school fees were incurred for the new school year 2018/2019. However, a request was made and approved to fund his Abitur Book for €33.85 with some of the remaining funds. A balance of €1945.80 remains.

The account for extracurricular activities closed in 2017 at -€57.39. In 2018, the year end result was 1190.62€. The adjusted result for amounts loaned from the EV account to the AA account would be -4737.38€.

On 31.12.2018, the account balance was 28,518.12€ in the plus. This amount will be used to pay fees and expenses till June 2019. The EA account closed at 22,278.50€ in 2017.

The result for 2018 is negative at -6039.86€. This was due to extraordinary expenses of 5514.88€ for the implementation of the website. The website has already helped to bring in 2130€ more in membership fees in 2018 and has allowed the Extracurricular Activities to earn 6218.05€ more than in 2017. Further income not yet credited to the EV account is approximately 1141.48€ from the sale of ID cards.

Many internal transactions were delayed due to a drawn out handover of the treasurer position and not having access to the bank accounts from July to October 2018 and then not having access to those bank statements until the second week of January 2019 to reconcile the FIBU. The Interparents refund of 1257.20€ was also delayed due to Brussels reimbursements having been made during the inaccessible period. The refund was made in January 2019.

An adjusted earnings for the overall parent association would be a negative 6,155.58. Adjusted for unusual expenses of the website it would be a negative 640.70€.

The financial statements have yet to be audited.

It is proposed to continue with the membership fee of €30 per family per year.

After School Activities (Anja Bühner, Amy Chia-Gaess and Cristina Chinese)

This year, we again offered various courses like past years; art, cooking clubs, chess, superb language clubs (German, French, English, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Greek, Italian, Romanian and Dutch) and French theater and Mathjogs. New to us are Korean, early music education, yoga for kids and Zumba.

Additionally, this year we can again offer courses on some musical instruments: piano, violin, flute, guitar and harp (new is classical singing and children's percussion).

Furthermore, sports activities (capoeira, football, basketball, yoga, ballet, gymnastics, ball sports and athletics) were also popular. Parcours was one of the new ones and swimming lessons in Fächerbad were still in demand. We also worked with the sports club SSC for basketball.

The DFJW (German French Youth Office) again gave us a big grant for our French courses, which can therefore take place with fewer children.

We have expanded our German and Italian language courses for parents and teachers with an additional Spanish course.

There are currently 69 different courses with 267 registered children. 490 course slots were booked. Most children are from the primary school.

All cost will be covered for the school year 2018/2019

Transport (Olaf Walter)

The future of the transport:

- on the 20.11.2018 there was a meeting with the KVV the outcome of which is
 - that actually the financial situation of the transport of our children is more relaxed. The rules for public funding had been changed at the start of 2018, affecting us positively. The reduction of support from the city of Karlsruhe is compensated by an increase of financial support from the State Baden-Württemberg. This means that for the next years (2021 included) our service can be kept at the same level. This is quite a good news.
- on the 26.11.2018 the transport committee met for one of its assemblies. It was decided
 - that from now on the only accepted way of paying the transport service fee is direct debiting.
 - that only children are allowed to use the school busses and trams who have registered with us online
 - that you will not get a stamp/signature from "Transport" for any ticket (ScoolCard, ABO-Plus, BuT etc.) if your child is not registered and we did not receive your direct debit authorisation.

This was found to be the simplest way to ensure that all children using transport are registered with us, as about 15% of the children are not yet registered in our online database; and of course, the service fee for these children is missing in our yearly budget and has to be covered by the others. In case your children are going to school by bus or school tram you have to be a registered client otherwise your child is not supposed to benefit from these services. In case you forgot to register, please do this now on our homepage. Occasionally we will make checks on this during the year.

Interparents (Alice Salza)

Pedagogical issues:

- Preparations for roll-out of **the new 'marking scale' for secondary**. IP will continue to monitor the situation, including the issue of continuing training for teachers and the related matter of the impact of implementation of the new marking scale.
- During 2016-2017, a new system was set up by IP for drawing attention to issues experienced locally during the BAC exams. This system continued to provide the APEEEs with a more immediate way to seek recourse on such problems from the Office of the Secretary General. Parents and pupils in S7 should keep the possibility of **getting in touch with our Parents Association on any issues with the BAC**, which may arise.
- Work in the context of the Pedagogical Reform Working Group continued at a very slow pace until late in 2017-2018 when a number of packages relating to discussion of two elements, a Key Competencies framework and a Language Policy, were put on the table. The packages include

points, which IP is supporting. Amongst these are the introduction of the Host Country Language as L2 e.g. Spanish in Alicante and Italian in Varese, and extension of the possibility of joining mother tongue classes to Category III pupils from SWALS countries. The idea of offering an Early Education Language Awareness programme in Nursery also met with support. Other proposals, particularly that of introducing the L3 to pupils in Primary, but also the issue relating to testing of pupils, particularly young ones, in order to establish language dominance prior to placement in a language section, continue to be problematic.

Financing and resourcing of our schools:

In many of the schools, not least ours, **difficulties with recruiting and retaining teachers** persisted.

Educational Support:

The aim of this WG is to continue to bring about improvements to the Educational Support Policy and its implementation. One important and very welcome recent development in this area has been a declaration on the matter of compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The IP Educational Support WG is actively involved in this development.

Other:

IP is represented on a relatively large number of other Working Groups in areas as diverse as Career Guidance/Orientation, IT-Pedagogical and Sustainability of our Schools.

Brexit:

Whilst the issue with Brexit continues unresolved, IP has continued to monitor developments, in particular in relation to any action, which may need to be taken in order to ensure continuation of both the English section and English teaching and learning in the Schools.

Conclusion

The PA gladly supports school events such as the Open Day and organizes the Summer Fete, providing parents with an opportunity to mingle and socialize in an informal atmosphere.

The work of the PA has only been possible through the help and support of parents volunteering their time and effort towards the running of the office and commitment to follow up on issues discussed at the administrative and pedagogical meetings. The generous donations for the PA Cafe and Summer fete together with the membership fees (50% of ESK families are at present members) means that it is possible for the PA to finance many student activities and projects. All parents are therefore urged to become members so that the volunteer work of the Committee can continue effectively.

We foster a good working relationship with the school directors, teachers and staff, keep continuous flow of information and maintain regular communication with the parents.

Thank you

We would like to offer our thanks to everyone from the PA Committee for their hard work and commitment throughout the year. Our heartfelt thanks also go to all the teachers, and staff of the

school and to the management for their support, help and involvement and to the parents for their dedication and enthusiasm.

The PA tries its best to achieve the objectives set each year, which is designed to make this an exciting and outstanding school for our children. As always, we hope for your active support.

Karlsruhe, February 2019

Debjani Basu (President)

Ilka von Bauer Monteiro de Paula (Vice-President)

Brynn Thompson-Renz (Treasurer)

On behalf of the Parents' Association of the European School Karlsruhe