

Interparents Annual Report, 2008

Presented to the Annual meeting by the Management Committee
Luxembourg, 16 January 2009

1. During the past year, Interparents has continued to engage positively with the Board of Governors and its related Committees, with the European Commission and the European Parliament and their Consultants. Our member Parents Associations have continued to fulfil their important functions with each of the European Schools, in the School Administrative Boards and in the management of critical services for the school population.

Interparents has held five plenary meetings in 2008: Brussels IV, Brussels III, Bergen, Mol, and Brussels III. Interparents Delegates participated in four meetings of the Board of Governors, together with the associated meetings of the Administrative and Financial Committee (CAF), the Teaching Committees, and working groups for Reform, Governance (“Attainment Contracts”) Religion and Ethics, Distance Learning, Careers Guidance, Special Educational Needs, Languages, Learning Support, Alternative Certificates and Libraries.

The time and effort of Interparents' Representatives and Delegates was shared between recurring and familiar issues on the one hand and on the negotiations for the preparation of the Reform of the European Schools system on the other hand.

2. Among the recurring issues one may mention particularly:

- Infrastructure problems in several schools, particularly the critical situation in Brussels and Luxembourg , and the participation of the APEEEs in the Central Enrolment Authority
- resources for special educational needs,
- problems associated with second language teaching
- issues arising from the growing numbers of students lacking their own language sections
- quality control in the schools
- the precise scope of the responsibilities and obligations of the parents associations in the management of canteens and school transport
- the financial resources of the schools
- concerns regarding the respect for the minimum 180 school days
- application and use of [ICT in the European Schools](#).¹

The issue of transparency and open process in the development of policy for the European Schools was raised in the Board of Governors and the CAF. Interparents [responded](#) to the substance of this matter both in the Board and in the CAF, with some success.

¹ . To open Hyperlinks in this text, use Ctrl.+Click.

3. Among the issues associated with the Reform of the European Schools, one may refer to:
- the creation of a new Reform Working Group, in which Interparents obtained membership
 - the proposed devolution of management of the schools from the Board and the Bureau in the context of the Attainment Contracts
 - reform of Central Governance i.e. The role of the Bureau, the Board and other centralised bodies such as the Inspectors and the Administrative and Financial Committee with respect to the role of the Administration and Board in each school.
 - the accreditation of Type II and Type III schools to offer European Education and eventually the European Bacculaureate in other European and National schools
 - the consequences of on going “cost-sharing” negotiations on the teaching in vehicular languages, notably in English, by non-native speakers
 - the reform of the European Bacculaureate
 - the transition of the Culham school to a Type III European School as an UK Academy

In this context, during 2008 Interparents presented several position papers to the Reform Working Group and to the Board of Governors. These included:

- Reform of the [European Bacculaureate](#)
- [Memorandum on Reform](#)
- The consequences of the application of the [Gaignage criteria](#)
- The [consequences of Cost Sharing](#) on teaching in the English language
- Interparents has also corresponded directly with the consultants of the European Parliament (study of the attainments of the [alumni of the European Schools](#)) and of the Bureau ([external evaluation of the European Bacculaureate.](#))

4. During 2008, in addition to maintaining our usual participation in the relevant Committees and Working Groups of the Board and the Bureau, the Management Committee has undertaken a significant strengthening of Interparents internal working methods. This has included:

- participation in the new Reform Working Group, subsuming the previous working groups on Cost Sharing and Accreditation, represented by the Vice President
- creation of a new Interparents Task Force on Reform, with representatives from each of the member Associations
- creation of a new [Website](#) and associated new mailing lists. Documents relating to most of the above developments have been published on the website.
- Developing contacts with the representatives of parents in new European schools.

At the same time, the formal [reporting on each Interparents meeting](#) has been completed by the Secretary, approved by written procedure before each subsequent meeting. The accounts have been kept up to date by the Treasurer, approved by the Auditor and by the Interparents meeting.

5. Looking to the future, the President has recently written to each of the thirteen member Associations inviting them to consider several specific measures with a view to further strengthening Interparents' capacity to fulfil its role as the principal interlocutor representing the interests and concerns of the parents and pupils of the European Schools with the Board, the Secretary General and the Bureau, and with the EU Institutions.

6. The Management Committee wishes to express its thanks to each of the member Associations for their active contribution to the work of Interparents in terms of the expertise and time of their representatives, and their financial resources.

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During 2009-2010, there will continue to be significant challenges and opportunities, not least arising from the proposed reforms. Indeed, much of the policy-related work undertaken by Interparents during 2008 will not bear fruit unless it is seen through during the next phases of the reform.

Interparents has clearly indicated that we support the opening of the European School system to a much wider range of pupils throughout the European Union, on the clear understanding and condition that the quality of the education, the recognition of the European Baccalaureate and the competences of the teaching staff will not be undermined or prejudiced in the process.

Christopher Wilkinson, President
Karin van Vrede-Leopold, Secretary

Carine Steen-Lingier, Vice-President
Marit Hololei, Treasurer