

## INTERPARENTS

**ALICANTE BERGEN BRUSSELS I, II, III & IV CULHAM FRANKFURT  
KARLSRUHE LUXEMBOURG MOL MÜNCHEN VARESE**

*- THE ASSOCIATION OF THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN SCHOOLS -*

Strasbourg, 20 October 2010

José Manuel Barroso  
President of the European Commission  
1049 Bruxelles, Belgique

Dear President Barroso,

During the meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools of 14-16 April 2010, the draft budget for the European Schools for 2011 was discussed. It was agreed that the Secretary-General of the European Schools would present to the Board of Governors, during its meeting in December 2010, concrete proposals for a number of items, namely the salaries of seconded personnel, the "Special Educational Needs" program, and the creation of courses, including mother-tongue courses for Students Without Language Section (SWALS). At this meeting, the Board of Governors also approved by a large majority (against the Commission's negative vote) the discharge on the implementation of the 2008 budget.

With a letter dated 29 April 2010, the European Commission formally began procedures for the reimbursement, by individual European Schools, for mother-tongue courses for SWALS allegedly being offered in contravention of applicable rules. The Commission also expressed its intention of recovering costs incurred by the schools in 2008 and 2009 of amounts totalling 465,289.68 Euros. Even though the budgets have not yet been discharged on all these years, they have been approved at Administrative Board level at which the Commission attended and scrutinised all budgets.

Without entering into the complex issue of how this decision affects the schools' pedagogical program or their ability to fulfil the legitimate expectations of pupils and their families, the fact that the European Commission is unilaterally imposing these retroactive budget cuts should be seen as a serious threat to the governance system of the European Schools, since it contravenes both the decision of the Board of Governors granting discharge to the 2008 budget, and its decision to examine the proposals of the Secretary-General for a number of budget items in December 2010.

In acting as it has, the Commission is not only by-passing the Secretary-General and the Board of Governors of the European Schools, but also undermining the autonomy of the school Directors – one of the pillars of the reform of the system – and potentially exposing them to costly and damaging litigation.

Interparents considers that, quite apart from the question of cuts to the European Schools' budget, which it opposes, the issue at stake is the authority of the Board of Governors as the ultimate decision-making body in the European Schools system, and indeed the governance of the system itself. We appeal to you, President Barroso, and the representatives of the Member States in the Board of Governors, to take immediate and decisive action to correct this unacceptable situation.

Enclosed you will find an example of one of the letters sent by the responsible Director in the Commission's Directorate-General for Human Resources and Security, Mr Marco-Umberto Moricca, to the Directors of the European Schools in question and a letter that the Secretary-General of the European Schools, Mrs Renée Christmann, sent to the Commission.

We remain at your disposal to discuss any issues in this regard, and thank you in advance for your attention and support.

Yours sincerely,



Ana Gorey  
President  
Interparents

cc: Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-president, Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration  
Marco-Umberto Moricca, Head of European Commission Delegation to Board of Governors

Dana Culáková, Chair of the Board of Governors + Board of Governors' members  
Renée Christmann, Secretary-General of the European Schools

Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament  
Chairs, Political Groups of the European Parliament  
Alain Lamassoure, Chair of the Budgets Committee of the European Parliament  
Doris Pack, Chair of the Education and Culture Committee of the European Parliament

### Relevant Documents:

An example of the letter sent by Mr. Moricca to the schools



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Mme. Christmann's reply to Mr. Moricca



2010-L-569-Moricca  
.pdf (75 KB)...