SUMMARY REPORT CONFERENCE STRASBOURG SEPTEMBER 2014

ASSOCIATED EUROPEAN SCHOOLS NETWORK

On 18 & 19 September 2014 the annual plenary meeting of the Associated European Schools (AES) Network was held in Strasbourg, France. The meeting was hosted by European School Strasbourg and chaired by the director Daniel Gassner. Participating AES schools were Strasbourg, RheinMain, Helsinki, The Hague, Tallinn, Heraklion, Parma, Copenhagen and Culham. AES Dunshaughlin and Manosque could not attend. Representatives of Europol, Eurojust (The Hague), ENISA (Heraklion), EU-LISA (Strasbourg & Tallinn), EU Ombudsman (Strasbourg) and EU Parliament (Strasbourg) also attended, as did representatives with an interest in future European Schooling from Malta and Ljubljana. For the first time this year teachers from the AES participated which added an important dimension to the Conference.

During the Conference discussions were held in plenary sessions as well as in separate sessions of the directors, parent representatives, teachers and agencies’ representatives. All four groups were given the opportunity to bring forward their priorities into the plenary sessions.

In the third year of the Network’s existence there was a clear development with regard to the representation of the AES not only in the Joint Teaching Committee but also in working groups where relevant (Pupil Exchanges, Physical Education/Eurosport, Careers Guidance).

The presidency had taken the initiative to organise a mini-conference and workshops with three guest speakers/experts - one MEP, one ES Type 1 director and one ES Type 1 teacher. The focus was on the subject of ‘European Schools and European Values’ and included historical, philosophical and educational aspects.

Following the tradition to have an annually rotating presidency of the Network of one of the AES (school management and parents’ association), Tallinn European School was elected for the school year 2014-2015. The September 2015 annual Network meeting will be hosted by Tallinn. Follow-up from the Conference with the Secretary-General regarding priorities for the school year 2014-2015 is one of the presidency’s tasks.

- **Key themes and priorities identified for the 2014-2015 school year:**
  1. Parma has ongoing problems with the completion of the new school buildings. The situation is critical and an urgent solution needs to be found.
  2. Participation of AES pupils in ES events such as MEC/MEP, Eurosport, European Schools Science Symposium are to be pursued.
  3. Creation of the role of a pedagogical counsellor for teachers is requested to answer pedagogical questions.
  4. Availability of a school year calendar for all in-service training at the beginning of the year is requested to ensure participation of AES teachers.
  5. Information is requested about inspectors, so that teachers know exactly who is doing what and how to reach them.
  6. With regard to in-service training there is still a need for improvement concerning the sending of invitations.
  7. There is no head desk support available for the SMS system. More support is needed.
  8. Access to Learning Gateway is still difficult. Clearer information is requested.
  9. Each AES and director should have access to the documents and regulations as validated by the Board of Governors.
  10. The request was made for the Secretary-General to ensure that the relevant inspector is aware of the AES representation in working groups. Ultimately representation should be across all AES groups (i.e. directors, parents and teachers), as is usually the case for ES Type 1.
  11. After ten years of opening up of the ES system the AESN proposes that the European Parliament be asked to undertake an evaluation. The focus would be on whether the integration of the AES into the ES system has succeeded.
  12. The AESN sends a clear message to the Secretary-General that it would be very much appreciated if he were to attend the Conference in Tallinn in September 2015.

December 2014 Karin van Vrede-Leopold, AES Network Co-ordinator vanvrede@aol.com