



ETOILE EDUCATION

REPORT OF THE FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY 25 February 2005 – 7pm

1. Welcome by Leif Berg, President

Leif Berg thanked everyone for coming to what was our first General Assembly, including new members and prospective parents. He hoped the meeting would not last long as he felt that this was an opportunity to get to know each other better than “waiting for the bus” early morning allowed for. Meetings were important but at least with on-line communication we are able to quickly communicate and disseminate information to the group.

Etoile Education was a pleasure to work for as it felt more like a cooperative than an association with everyone pitching in and helping out as they could. It changes the spirit and atmosphere of the association and the work we do.

2. Nomination of new Bureau member – Stan Nysen

Leif Berg then ask the Bureau to introduce themselves although unfortunately, not all were present.

President: Leif BERG

Vice-Presidents: Madelena GROSSMAN and Valerie DU JARDIN

Secretary: Ana GOREY

Treasurer: Mark GOREY (excused)

Members: Gudrun THRASTARDOTTIR and Muriel RICHARDSON

Leif Berg mentioned that Stan Nysen, EuroCorps, had attended all the Bureau meetings as an observer and thanked him for all his work and effort and recommended that he be elected to the Bureau. There were no objections and the nomination was approved.

Leif Berg reminded everyone that a new Bureau needed to be elected at the next General Assembly and this brought him to the second decision that needed to be taken. The Bureau proposed that the activity/financial reporting year should run from September to September as is the case for many other parent/teacher associations. After a short discussion, where the merits of September were highlighted such as the fact that by then there would be more reliable information about new students/members, the decision to have the annual year corresponding to the academic year, 1st September to 31st August was approved.

The President took the opportunity to remind everyone that although our official Statutes which were in French we now had an English translation thanks to Werner Strobelt.

3. Discussion of the Interim Report 2004

The President stressed that this and the Financial report were interim reports and there was no need for the General Assembly to adopt them formally on this occasion. However, the final reports would have to be adopted in September. Since the writing of this report, there had been several developments. The President reported on these as follows:

a. Transport:

Lise Meyer, head of the ESK Transport Committee, sent out a letter to the group, 17 February 2005, reminding us of the need to be at the bus stop five minutes before the stated time, to and from school. She also restated the departure times from the school and pointed out that the bus will no longer wait for those continually arriving late.

In addition, the Upper School children were called to a meeting on Tuesday 22 February with the Director of the School, Mr. Hoyem, who reminded them of the need to respect the rest of the group, the driver and the bus by being on time, behaving correctly and by keeping the bus clean. Pupils not respecting these rules would be reported by the new bus monitors to the respective Headmasters. Etoile Education received a summary of what was said (see attached) and this was distributed at the meeting.

The President reported that the Bureau approved of the fact that disciplinary matters had been taken into hand by the Transport Committee and the school and agreed that they were indeed the proper authority to take action if necessary rather than Etoile Education. Parents were happy to see the report by Lise Meyer as many of them had the impression that the only problem on the bus was the food issue. This, in their view, was not as important as the other two points. The President asked parents to reinforce the whole message at home.

b. European School Board

In view of the meeting of the **European School Board of Governors** on 1-2 February 2005, Leif Berg had written again to Mr. Michael Ryan, Secretary General raising two items: School fees for officials of governmental and intergovernmental organisations other than EU and a European School or branch at primary level in the Strasbourg/Kehl area. The Board only noted the letter and the statements without discussion awaiting further development, most probably, Mr. Ryan's meeting, 1 March 2005 with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Terry Davis.

c. The Council of Europe

In relation to the above mentioned meeting, Leif Berg drew the meeting's attention to a press release issued that day which was circulated. He emphasised that the fact that this meeting was taking place at all was an indication of how keen an interest the Secretary General has taken, and is taking, to understand the schooling situation in the Strasbourg/Kehl area and to try to move ahead. The Bureau attached great importance to this meeting as it is only at this kind of high level that the necessary decisions can be taken.

d. European School, Karlsruhe

Other news regarding the school was the closing of the Dutch section. Etoile Education has been assured that measures are in place for a smooth transition and Etoile Education will be kept informed of developments. There will be an information evening on 3 March and Inge Baken would attend on behalf of Etoile Education and will keep us informed as to the situation and see if there is anything Etoile Education needs to do to support its Dutch-speaking members.

Mr. Hoyem informed us that the French General Consul, Stuttgart, visited the school on 24 February. These kinds of visits were very important in terms of getting the message across to the French authorities as to the added value of the European Schools.

Leif Berg reminded the meeting of the school's **Project Days** from the 10-12 March 2005 with its **Open Day** on 12 March to which all parents were invited. These days were compulsory and he asked them to all note the modifications to the bus schedule which were now as follows: Friday 11 March is a long day (late return) and Saturday 12 March is a school day (morning pick up). Parents were invited to the school as of 12:30, so there will be no return bus as children can return with their parents. Anyone not able to go should let Etoile Education know so that their children could be brought back by one of the group. He also informed the group that there would be **no canteen** on the Friday 11 March.

Etoile Education is promoting the Open Day to prospective parents and the school is looking into the possibility of organising the Open Day as they did last year, which was a great success, especially having teachers available to take groups around the school. Ana Gorey would give more details later regarding other plans for this day with regard to fundraising for the school's Tsunami fund.

e. Media and Communication

With regard to media issues, Leif Berg thanked Muriel Richardson for formulating some media guidelines, which were distributed to the group and which he asked to be adopted. There was interest on the part of the media but he stressed that it was important that the image of the association be a positive one. As a group we should emphasis the positive reasons why we chose to send our children to ESK and refrain from putting down the French system. The meeting approved the media guidelines.

Another very important aspect of communication was to have a presence on the internet. The school had kindly agreed to host Etoile Education's website which was now ready to go live. The President thanked Ana Gorey and the school, and in particular Richard Gibbon for all their work, support and assistance. The address was <http://www.eskar.org/etoile/> and he invited everyone to check it out and feel free to make any suggestions.

4. Discussion of the interim financial report 2004

Unfortunately, Mark Gorey was in Berlin at the moment and therefore excused. His report was divided into operational costs and fundraising activities. Leif Berg reminded everyone that at this point no decision was needed on the interim report as such. The Bureau proposed however that a decision of principle be taken as to the use of any surplus transport-related funds after transport-related costs had been deducted.

There were several questions from the meeting regarding the exact nature of this surplus and what exactly was meant by "transport-related costs". The President remarked that the Bureau had had quite a long discussion already on exactly those points and that he had even had a meeting with the lawyer at the Maison des Associations. He assured the group that we were not speaking of a huge sum of money (possibly around 100 euros per child) and that it was certainly not Etoile Education's intention to have a surplus although some fluctuations were inevitable. This being the first year of activity, there were probably more additions to the bus than would happen in the future. These could not have been foreseen at the beginning of the school year and everyone, naturally, had been charged for the transport at the same rate. The Bureau was therefore proposing that the current financial year's surplus be used towards the down payment for next school year's transport on behalf of the current members of Etoile Education. This was approved by the meeting.

As for the “transport-related costs”, this was really only after school care for those children who are unable to get a bus home when they finish school earlier than the majority of the children. Bussing them separately would have been a considerable additional transport cost for the group. Therefore, in the interests of keeping the transport costs down, it had been decided at the beginning of the year that these children would have to wait at the school for the other children in the group to finish their day. Parents had gone up on a voluntary basis to supervise these children in the middle school library which the school had been obliging enough to allow. However, due to lack of volunteers (supervision mostly done by AnneMarie Smeets and Inge Baken) and lack of space (with the 2 extra DOW children joining the bus in April) there no longer would be any room for a parent to go up with the bus. The Bureau had therefore been looking to employ a local supervisor on behalf of Etoile Education. To that end, a contract with Claudia Gale to supervise the children on Wednesday afternoons had just been signed and the President thanked Brigitte Markert for her legal advice and for preparing the necessary paperwork in order that Etoile Education would fulfill its legal obligations towards the German authorities. The Bureau was very grateful for her time and expertise.

It was proposed, and the meeting agreed, to distinguish, in future financial reports, between “pure” transport costs and transport-related costs (under “Operational costs”).

On a last point regarding finances, Etoile Education, after discussions with the bank, Soci t  G n rale, will open a savings account at 2% interest rate.

5. Questions relating to European School, Karlsruhe, ESK

Leif Berg felt that most of the items had been covered already. He took the opportunity to stress the excellent relations with the school and Mr. Hoyem in particular and how much had been achieved in such a short space of time. There were already several children registered for next year and many more potentially interested parents. This definitely meant we would need a larger bus. No decisions have been taken as yet but Lise Meyer will be responsible for looking into the matter.

In addition, Fran oise Lecuyer of the SCOT relocation company came to speak to the Bureau, 10 January 2005 meeting, about the possibility that DOW might be prepared to help with the transport situation in some way or other, maybe even sponsor the bus. Previously DOW had refused to assist its employees with the transport costs (as was the case at the beginning of the year) but now seemed to be reconsidering this. Fran oise Lecuyer is in charge of negotiating on their behalf. However, we have not received any further information since then.

The Bureau had agreed that if DOW were to be interested in greater cooperation, Etoile Education and Lise Meyer, head of the ESK Transport Committee, would look into the extra cost in money, time and convenience for our bus and the modalities of an arrangement with DOW before making any proposals concerning next year. The Bureau had made it clear to Ms Lecuyer that possible cooperation with DOW should not lead to children having to depart for school even earlier than now.

The other news was that for the second term there are two new bus monitors democratically elected by the children. They are Marc Richardson and Kelly Hosten. They will report directly to the School and Lise Meyer.

6. Fundraising events for 2005

The next fundraising event would be the **School Open Day on 12 March 2005** which is also the last day for the school's fundraising efforts for the Tsunami Disaster. Any money made by Etoile Education that day would be for the school "Srilanka-Aktion" fund. The idea is to hold a bric-a-brac table and also a hair styling and make-up table. The group was asked to contribute any second hand-things which could be sold on the day as well as to volunteer some time on the stall. Rolf, the bus driver, has willingly accepted to allow bags of stuff to be handed in at the various bus stops in the morning and these would be stored in the bus luggage compartment until the actual day. Pricing and organisation would be done the morning of the 12 March.

Quite a lot of progress had been made with regard to the **Sponsored Bike Ride on the 22 May 2005** during the preparatory group's meeting, 26 January 2005 (see report) and the school's response was very positive. An organising committee needed to be set up and Ana Gorey made a call for volunteers. They should get in touch with her as soon as possible and another meeting would take place mostly likely at the Open Day so as to involve the school. Only a couple of months to go.

Valerie Du Jardin explained that she had the idea of selling artisan made **Belgium Pralines** on that day. Orders could also be taken in advance. There was also a suggestion of selling flowers as apparently one of the parents at the school sells flowers imported from Holland and might be interested in cooperating. All good ideas were welcome and anything could coincide with the final event after the bike ride.

A family weekend retreat, **Weekend in the Vosges**, with various organised activities was one of the first ideas to raise money (see proposal). However, members had felt that this would be a fun activity for us and our friends rather than run it for strangers. The only dates are 8-10 April and members and friends are invited to let us know if they are interested. Members will get priority.

Another idea which we could start thinking about is **Fruit picking and jam making**. There were many occasions to pick fruit during the summer and it could be a fun picnic day out. Ana asked for a volunteer to organise this fundraising activity and also for everyone to start saving jam jars. There was also other suggestions like marinating cherries in vodka.

We had no date yet for the **ESK summer Fete**, but naturally, Etoile Education would like to have a fundraising event then. One suggestion was for a Basket ball activity with a ticket a shot competition with prizes.

Leif Berg reminded the group that prizes and sponsorship are needed for all fundraising events. He asked everyone to let Ana Gorey know if they were prepared to get involved or had any other ideas.

7. Any other business

Cees Paul brought up the fact that the children had been stuck on the motorway on Wednesday 23 February for approximately 5 hours due to an accident further up the motorway. Although this was the first time such an incident had occurred, he felt that it had demonstrated the fact that we needed a procedure in place for informing the school, parents, local police etc. Everyone agreed, and suggestions were made for a telephone cascade to be set up and possibly providing the bus monitors with some kind of training. Maybe the bus could even have been escorted off the highway by traffic police, which would have avoided some children having to leave the bus to go to the toilet. Leif Berg thanked the meeting for the suggestions and promised that the matter would be raised with Lise Meyer at the earliest possible opportunity to see what procedures ESK might already have in place for other buses serving the school.

8. Date of next General Assembly – September 2005

Leif Berg said that it was not necessary to set a date right away but that it would be in September after the school year had started.

He noted that the meeting had lasted an hour and a half and felt that we were now ready to eat some of the feast awaiting us.

He thanked everyone for all their goodwill, hard work and effort, and in particular Ana Gorey for her diligent work while he had been in Kosovo.

The meeting was declared at an end.



ETOILE EDUCATION

1st GENERAL ASSEMBLY
25 February 2005 – 7pm

LIST OF PRESENCE

Etoile Education Bureau

President: Leif BERG

Vice-Presidents: Madelena GROSSMAN and Valerie DU JARDIN

Secretary: Ana GOREY

Treasurer: Mark GOREY

Members: Gudrun THRASTARDOTTIR and Muriel RICHARDSON

Members of Etoile Education

Danny + Inge Baken

Kiera Berg

Marc + Josepha Bigaignon

Gerda Bultinck

Madelena Grossman

Ivan + Rossitza Koedjikov

Ludwig Kreitz

Thomas + Brigitte Markert

Stan + Jeannine Nysen

Cees + Elske Paul

James + Murielle Richardson

Gunther Scheske

Daniel + Kim Lieu Schnieder

Alain + AnneMarie Smeets

Werner + Elisa Strobel

Jakob Thomsen

Gudrun Thrastardottir

Félicia Voltzenlogel



POLICY ON MEDIA RELATIONS
Adopted by the 1st General Assembly
25 February 2005

A. General

Because dealing effectively with the media requires special knowledge and skill, the Bureau should be consulted and/or serve as intermediary in all dealings with the press. The Bureau serves as liaison in evaluating the benefits and risks of media contacts, determining the form and content of information to be provided to the media, assuring that only individuals with the authority to do so speak on behalf of the Association, and assuring that all interaction with the media is conducted in a professional manner consistent with the Association's mission and goals.

B. Speaking for Etoile Education

While Etoile Education does not restrict the right of members to communicate with the media as individuals, such contacts carry the potential for misrepresentation, and the misinterpretation of the comments of an individual as being representative of the policy or viewpoint of the entire Association. Therefore, members are advised to consult with the Bureau prior to contacting members of the media, arranging an interview or to any other coverage by the news media, and all members should refer media inquiries directly to the Bureau.

Only those individuals expressly authorised by the Bureau to do so may speak for Etoile Education. All media requests for contact with an Etoile Education spokesperson, as well as all questions on matters of policy, procedure or operations should be referred to the Bureau.

It should be noted that unless limitations are agreed upon and specified (preferably in writing) in advance, once an interview has taken place, the content of the interview as well as any and all notes, photographs, and audio/video recordings become the property of the individual or media organisation that conducted the interview, precluding either interview participants or the Association from exercising any control over the use of the material.

C. Spokespersons

The Association's president and secretary are designated as spokespersons for Etoile Education. Other members of the bureau or the association may be asked to act as spokespersons on a case by case basis.