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|  | **European Schools**  Office of the Secretary-General  General Secretariat |

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Original

Duties of the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary General - Reflections

**Board of Governors of the European Schools**

Meeting on 4-6 April 2017 – Berlin (Germany)

**Duties of the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary General - Reflections**

## Introduction

The Reform of the European Schools System (2009-D-353-en-4) enhanced the Secretary-General’s role.

Based on the Reform of the European Schools System, the duties, role and the responsibilities of the Secretary-General (SG) and the Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) were revised in 2010. A detailed description of the duties to be performed by the SG can be found in the document Ref.: 2010-D-362-en-3 annex 1 to this document.

## Duties of the Secretary-General

Pursuant to the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools, the Secretary-General’s role is to encourage and enable the schools to fill their purpose in facilitating the proper functioning of the European community institutions. This is achieved by providing for the children of their staff an education grounded in respect for their mother tongue and their cultural identity, with a distinctive European dimension. The role demands strong leadership qualities and highly developed management skills. In addition, the Secretary-General is accountable to the Board of Governors for the management and operation of the system as a whole. He/she must therefore set and display high standards of conduct in the administration of the system.

The Secretary-General must take account of the strategic objectives set by the Board of Governors in the context of the reform of the European Schools system approved in April 2009, with particular reference to governance and opening up of the system through accreditation of national schools providing a European education (European schooling).

The Secretary-General has overall responsibility for the duties listed below, which he/she will decide to divide between himself/herself and the Deputy Secretary-General according to the priorities defined by the Board of Governors appearing in the plan presented by the Secretary-General in his/her annual report. The Secretary-General will inform the Board of Governors of this division.

The Secretary-General is responsible for representation of the Board of Governors and management of the Office and of the system as a whole, the Deputy Secretary-General dealing more particularly with matters in the educational and pedagogical area, in liaison with the Boards of Inspectors.

The Deputy Secretary-General will assist the Secretary-General in his/her duties and may be called upon to perform the same duties as the Secretary-General by delegation or in the latter’s absence.

The duties of the Secretary-General can be divided into two main areas of responsibilities:

I. Representing the Board of Governors within the system and outside.

II. Managing and ensuring the performance of the European school system and promoting and supporting the development of European schooling, planning, setting objectives, implementing policies and evaluating the effectiveness of policies and activities.

According to the “Reform of the European Schools” document (2009-D-353-en-1):

“A consensus emerged in favour of enhancement of the role of the General Secretariat in the context of the reform of governance. Transfer of a number of decisions to the Administrative Boards of the schools, of which the Secretary-General is chair, would be one of the elements of this enhancement.

The Secretary-General:

* represents the Board of Governors outside,
* directs and organises the work of the Office, which performs executive management duties and provides the schools with advice and assistance in the following areas:
  + pedagogical development
  + the Baccalaureate
  + administrative and legal
  + budgetary and financial
  + ICT and statistics
  + internal audit
  + human resources

The Office also provides administrative assistance and services to the different organs of the system

* chairs the ABs of the schools and in that capacity coordinates implementation of the autonomy of European Schools,
* organises the accreditation procedure for Accredited European ~~Types II and III~~ schools,
* guarantees the coherence and smooth operation of the European schooling system and of the European Baccalaureate in accordance with the political decisions and policy guidelines of the Board of Governors, within the limits of the budget allocated,
* presents an annual report to the Board of Governors on the system’s operation and performance and formulates proposals as part of a multi-annual plan,
* ensures the transparency and efficiency of the procedures and the quality of the services,
* ~~chairs~~  chairs the selection and evaluation of management staff.

## New Developments since 2009

Over the last decennium, there have been developments in the System, which have to be brought to the attention of the Board of Governors, e.g. in the following areas:

* The impact of the enlargement of the European Union has been rather important in the everyday work in the OSG: new Member States, new languages, new language sections, new syllabuses, new SWALS pupils, new Inspectors, new Members of the Budgetary Committees and Board of Governors, etc.
* There are 14 European Schools in 7 member states[[1]](#footnote-1). Their Administration Boards have got more decision making power, as an outcome of the 2009 reform decisions. This has increased the importance of the Administration Boards meetings. This means in practise a real challenge to SG or the DSG because they have to manage at least 28 very important Administration Boards meetings annually.
* The amount of Accredited European Schools has grown to 12 in ten years and the 13th and 14th schools in Differdange, Luxembourg and Bruxelles, Argenteuil are on the point to get accreditation. In addition, there are a number of solid projects for new accredited schools. This development is crucial and beneficial for the System, at the same time very time consuming for the SG and his Deputy.
* The Central Enrolment Authority (CEA) is chaired by the SG. The role, importance and the volume of enrolments and appeals have increased significantly since 2009. CEA has been faced and will be faced with the major difficulties constituted by continuous growth in the number of pupils on roll in the schools in Brussels and consequent need for infrastructures.
* The extremely complex situation in the schools in Brussels has already triggered the attention of the Board of Governors, which has given mandate to the Secretary General to study long term viable perspectives.
* The increased collaboration with the Internal Audit Service of the Commission and the implementation of their cross-over recommendations have had a heavy impact on the work of the Secretary General.
* The SG and DSG are dealing with the administrative appeals and they prepare together with the lawyers the files for the contentious appeals. The number of these appeals has increased steadily year after year. Due to the decision of the Board of Governors (2015) to strengthen the legal protection of the pupils, parents, teachers and other stakeholders and due to the clarification of the Court of Justice with respect to the jurisdiction of the Complaints Board with respect to complaints of Locally Recruited Teachers, the amount the administrative and contentious appeals will surely increase in the future even further.
* During the last three years, the Secretary-General has been obliged to take a more concrete lead in the Security domain. The SG is a contact point between the national and Commissions’ security bodies. S/he is monitoring and coordinating the measures taken in schools and if needed, proposing the necessary action.

## Role of Deputy Secretary-General

The Deputy Secretary-General, dealing more particularly with matters in the educational and pedagogical area, in liaison with the Boards of Inspectors, has to assist the Secretary-General in his/her duties and may be called upon to perform the same duties as the Secretary-General by delegation or in the latter’s absence.

According to the Article 19 of the Financial Regulations: “The requisite powers for the implementation of the section of the budget relating to the Office of the Secretary-General shall be conferred upon the Deputy Secretary-General as authorising officer responsible.” (Annex 2)

The introduction of the new Financial Regulations, new workflows, new professional accountancy software (SAP) and the changes in the segregation of duties has considerably increased the workload of the DSG in this area.

The DSG is in charge of the coordination and follow-up of the work of over 60 different pedagogical Working Groups. On top, a number of WGs function on other areas, the list of these WGs has recently been provided. All these WGs are essential for the pedagogical, administrate, legal and financial development of the system. According to the recommendation of the Internal auditors “ the OSG - in cooperation with Chairs and the Quality Assurance WG - should consider developing a framework for management of WGs proportionate to the needs of the European Schools. “ In addition it was recommended “To enhance the oversight over the WGs, the OSG’s role in the management of WG could be strengthened with BOGES approval.”

The IAS recommended also that “the OSG could define together with Chairs of WGs a list of progress/performance indicators to be included in their work plan. Then the report by WGs should include the achievement of these indicators. A central point in the OSG could be set up in charge with monitoring the state of play of non- pedagogical WGs (e.g. the Deputy Secretary General).”

In the pedagogical areas plenty of very important decisions have been taken in the past two years:

* Pedagogical reform of the system is in progress.
* The Board of Governors has approved new competence based marking criteria, which creates a rather fundamental revision of all the syllabuses in the secondary cycle before September, 2017. All the syllabuses have been completed with attainment descriptors and assessment criteria. Once again, the implementation of the new decision will request rather intensive coordination, organisation of training and support from the Pedagogical Development Unit (PDU).
* Based on the proposal of the Quality Assurance working group it has been decided, that the PDU will monitor the systematic renewal of the syllabuses. This is a really challenging task in the multilingual school system which has all the syllabuses from early education to the Baccalaureate level option courses.
* Also based on the proposal of the Quality Assurance working group it has already decided a new structure of the teachers’ trainings organisation. Again the PDU will have to monitor the more systematic organisation of trainings. This is again a really challenging task in our multilingual school system.

The DSG is also the President of the Educational Support Policy Group. In this function the DSG constitutes a point of reference for all the initiatives and activities conducted in the System in this area are performed according to the Board of Governors decisions.

The treatment of administrative and contentious appeals against the decisions of the Class Councils, pedagogical decisions and in the area of Educational Support falls also under the overall responsability of the DSG.

The DSG is also responsible for the organization of:

* Directors’ meetings;
* Management training sessions;
* Overall supervision on the General Rules;
* Supervision, update and collection of pedagogical rules;

The Board of Governors decided in the Copenhagen meeting to create a post of Head of Pedagogical Development Unit.

As a consequence, it is possible to redefine the roles and the responsibilities of the SG and DSG in the new light.

It would be possible to shift e.g. the quality control of the Accredited European Schools to the DSG, while the SG would remain in charge of the initial negotiations with the Delegations.

## PROPOSAL

In the meetings of the Presidency WG it was proposed to appoint two Deputy Secretary-Generals instead of one: one to support the SG on administrative matters (legal, human resources, finance, general administration), the second one to focus on pedagogical and ICT matters.

The proposal from the Financial Regulation Working Group is also proposing radical changes in the role and responsibilities of the SG; the SG is called to become the Authorising Officer for the whole System.

The necessity of the creation of a second Deputy Secretary-General becomes now even clearer.

The Presidencies Working group mandate should be prolonged, in order to take a deep reflection about the reorganization of the delegations of the responsibilities from the SG to his/her two Deputies, also in the light of the proposals prepared in the WG FR, in view of the appointment of a second Deputy Secretary general as from 1st January 2019.

**OPINION OF THE BUDGETARY COMMITTEE**

The Budgetary Committee expressed a favourable opinion on the proposal to extend the mandate of the ‘Presidency’ Working Group so that it could continue its reflections on reorganization of delegation by the Secretary-General of responsibilities to his two Deputies. The Budgetary Committee recommends to the Council to approve it.

**Annex 1**

Extract from Ref.: 2010-D-362-en-3

Orig.: en

Version: en

Profile, duties, rules for appointment and service regulations of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General

**Approved by the Board of Governors by written procedure (2011/12) on 4 April 2011**

**…OMISSIS ….**

**Chapter II**

**Duties of the Secretary-General**

Pursuant to the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools, the Secretary-General’s role is to encourage and enable the schools to fill their purpose in facilitating the proper functioning of the European community institutions. This is achieved by providing for the children of their staff an education grounded in respect for their mother tongue and their cultural identity, with a distinctive European dimension. The role demands strong leadership qualities and highly developed management skills. In addition, the Secretary-General is accountable to the Board of Governors for the management and operation of the system as a whole. He/she must therefore set and display high standards of conduct in the administration of the system.

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The Secretary-General is responsible for representation of the Board of Governors and management of the Office and of the system as a whole the Deputy Secretary-General dealing more particularly with matters in the educational and pedagogical area, in liaison with the Boards of Inspectors.

The Deputy Secretary-General will assist the Secretary-General in his/her duties and may be called upon to perform the same duties as the Secretary-General by delegation or in the latter’s absence.

The duties of the Secretary-General can be divided into two main areas of responsibilities:

I. Representing the Board of Governors within the system and outside.

II. Managing and ensuring the performance of the European school system and promoting and supporting the development of European schooling, planning, setting objectives, implementing policies evaluating the effectiveness of policies and activities.

**I. As representative of the Board of Governors, the Secretary-General shall:**

**1.1.** **Within the system**

(a) be responsible for relations between the contracting parties (Member States, the Commission and bodies signatory to the European Schools Convention);

(b) ensure effective chairmanship of the Administrative Boards of the European Schools and coordinate the implementation of autonomy in these Schools, ensuring that the system’s coherence is maintained;

(c) arbitrate where appropriate in disputes between members of the school communities leading to complaints or appeals;

(d) ensure the Board of Governors isrepresented in the proceedings of the Complaints Board.

(e) be responsible for the proper management of all the staff employed in the European Schools system through the application of the appropriate staff regulations and personal policies.

**1.2.** **To outside bodies**

(a) promote and maintain good relations between the schools system and the local, regional and national administrations;

(b) promote good relations between the schools system and the Institutions of the European Union, in particular the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Court of Auditors;

(c) create conditions favourable to the extension of European schooling and, as such, designed to attract interested parties, taking care to ensure that the system’s unity is maintained and respecting its fundamental principles;

(d) conduct negotiations with a view to the conclusion of agreements with outside bodies, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools;

(e) ensure representation for the European Schools in legal proceedings.

**II. Managing the system**

**2.1.** **General**

To ensure the proper and efficient operation of the system, the Secretary-General directs and organises the work of his/her Office, which performs executive management duties and provides the schools with advice and assistance in the different areas coming within its field of competence: pedagogical development, European Baccalaureate, administration, legal, budgetary and financial questions, ICT and statistics, human resources, internal audit.

To that end, the Secretary-General is charged in particular with:

(a) maintaining high standards in the performance of duties and in human resources management, promoting efficient work methods and use of resources, including the use of ICT (information and communication technologies), at the Office and in the Schools;

(b) ensuring the development of staff to meet the requirements of the European school system;

(c) coordinating and supervising the general and financial administration of the Schools and the Office;

(d) ensuring the efficient organisation, coordination, follow-up of meetings of the Board of Governors, the Boards of Inspectors, the Budgetary Committee, the Teaching Committee, Directors and other groups including the quality of the documents;

(e) organising the procedure whereby national schools delivering European schooling are accredited by the Board of Governors;

(f) ensuring the transparency and efficiency of procedures and the quality of services;

(g) ensuring the effective administration and appropriate preparation of the European Baccalaureate examinations for the European Schools and accredited schools and ensuring that the production, presentation and organisation of papers are of a high standard;

(h) facilitating the work of the Financial Controller and of the internal auditors.

(i) chairing the Management Committee of the Sickness Fund of the Schools;

**2.2.** **Planning and Objective setting**

**2.2.1.** The Secretary-General is responsible for overall planning, which should include the periodic preparation of long-term strategic plans and their review. In addition, taking account of the Schools’ activity reports and of the reports of the chairs of the Boards of Inspectors and of the Budgetary Committee, the Secretary-General prepares an annual plan for the Board of Governors, making recommendations about the direction of future policy. To that end, the Secretary-General is charged in particular with:

(a) maintaining and improving teaching and learning quality standards;

(b) management of the Schools and of the Secretary General Office;

(c) requirements for staff, resources and accommodation, including possible new schools;

(d) development of European schooling.

The Secretary-General must also ensure that a proposed calendar of meetings scheduled during the following school year is produced.

**2.2.2.** In order to facilitate decision-making by the Board of Governors, the Secretary-General prepares, with the incumbent President, the two annual meetings of the Board of Governors and any extraordinary meetings. In preparation for these meetings, the Secretary-General will:

(a) ensure the organisation and coordination ofthe meetings of the Boards of Inspectors, the Teaching Committee and the Budgetary Committee and their subsidiary working groups and submits their proposals to the Board of Governors with a view to decision-making.

In addition, the Secretary-General ensures the transparency of sharing of information amongst the different organs of the system, in particular by disseminating the decisions taken by these organs and also documents, with the exception of documents of a confidential nature.

(b) ensure effective, efficient and rational preparation of appropriate applications from the Schools for staff and other resources, as part of the drawing up of the annual budget procedure.

**2.3. Implementation**

The Secretary-General ensures implementation of the decisions of the Board of Governors, and of those of the other organs to which the Board of Governors has delegated decision-making power, by:

(a) ensuring efficient dissemination of such decisions;

(b) promoting high standards of management at the Office and in the Schools, in particular by chairing the Administrative Boards;

(c) promoting the performance of European school system and high quality of education

(d) providing the different organs of the system with the administrative support required for performance of their duties, by managing, in particular, planning and organisation of the activities of the inspectors and of the Boards of Inspectors;

(e) performing the duties required of him/her by the statutory and regulatory texts in force, in particular: the General Rules of the European Schools, the Regulations for Members of the Seconded Staff of the European Schools, the Conditions of Employment for Part-time [locally recruited] Teachers and the Service Regulations for the Administrative and Ancillary Staff (AAS), the Implementing Regulations for the Appointment [and Evaluation] of Directors and Deputy Directors and the Arrangements for implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate;

(f) encouraging the links between the different European Schools and with accredited schools and national schools with a view to promote the quality of European schooling;

(g) supporting and ensuring the dissemination of good practice and of procedures conforming to the internal control standards;

(h) chairing Selection Committees for the appointment of seconded management and supervisory staff and, where appropriate, and according to the provisions of the regulatory texts applicable, making recommendations to the Board of Governors;

(i) promoting and organising the in-service training and professional development of staff at the Office and of management staff in the Schools.

**2.4.**  **Evaluation**

The Secretary-General promotes the culture of evaluation in European school system and evaluates the performance of the system by preparing an annual activity report for the Board of Governors, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the Court of Auditors. The reports should focus on how far the aims of the system and the objectives of the annual plans have been achieved. In general, the Secretary-General shall:

1. evaluate the performance, effectiveness and efficiency of the system as a whole;
2. promote the culture of evaluation in schools and on a system level;

The Secretary-General shall ensure the regular evaluation of staff, in accordance with the various sets of regulations, and of the Schools and the system in general, and is charged in particular with:

(a) confirming the successful completion, or otherwise, of the probationary period by teachers new to the system;

(b) carrying out evaluations of Directors and to organise the evaluation of Deputy Directors in line with the Regulations for the Appointment and Evaluation of Directors and Deputy Directors;

(c) carrying out evaluations of the staff of the Office;

(d) supporting Inspectors and Directors in their role of assuring quality and promoting a climate conducive to evaluation, including self-evaluation, in the Schools;

(e) evaluating the system as a whole.

The performance of Secretary-General and of Deputy Secretary-General will be evaluated in the context of extension of the term of their contract.

**Annex 3**

**Tasks of the Pedagogical Development Unit**

One of the main areas of action of the Pedagogical Development Unitconsists in accompanying the activities of primary and secondary level inspectors.

The Unit principally deals with the preparation, organisation and follow-up of the meetings of the Board of Inspectors, of the Pedagogical Committee, of working groups, of in-service training for the benefit of all teachers, and for working out pedagogical reports and documents of the European schooling system.

**1) Meetings of the Preparatory Committees** (Inspectors’ Board primary level, Inspectors’ Board secondary level, Mixed Inspectors’ Board and Mixed Pedagogical Committee)

Currently the Boards of Inspectors and the mixed Pedagogical Committee meet twice a year.

The Board of Inspectors secondary level meets additionally in the month of June, to deal with questions related to the European Baccalaureate.

Two and an half secretaries are in charge of these meetings.

Their tasks mainly consist of:

* preparing sessions ;
* establishing the agenda in co-operation with the chairs of the meetings and the Deputy Secretary General;
* preparation, translation and publication of all pedagogical documents for these meetings;
* organising protocols for the debates;
* follow-up of documents (recommendation and decisions of the various Boards and/or Pedagogical Committee for the Budgetary Committee and/or the BoG, or others).

**2)** The **Working Groups** (+/- 60 working groups organising some 145 meetings per year) are guided by the inspectors and administratively organised by a half time secretary under the supervision of the assistant.

These tasks consist in:

* sending official invitations and the agenda;
* sending documents to various members;
* planning and inventory of working groups and follow-up of the various reports of these meetings.

**3)** **Stages for in-service training**, (23 stages in the year 2011), of which the inspectors are the initiators and organisers, are equally organised administratively by a half-time secretary under the supervision of the Assistant.

This task consists of:

* sending official invitations;
* sending the programme ;
* receiving list of participants from schools;
* planning and inventory of these in-service training sessions and follow-up of the various reports of these training sessions in co-operation with the Pedagogical assistant.

**Besides these three major areas, the PDU also works in the administrative organisation:**

* of school inspections (WSI) ;
* of administrative and contentious appeals against Class councils’ decisions;
* of administrative and contentious appeals against pedagogical decisions;
* of meetings and training courses of Head Teachers;
* of some permanent working groups and/or mandated by the BoG chaired by the DSG;
* of the General Regulations on the pedagogical area;
* …

**The Pedagogical Development Unit also deals with:**

* planning and budgeting of all inspectors’ tasks:
  + planning and budgeting of statutory inspections ;
  + planning and budgeting of syllabuses revision;
  + planning and budgeting of all other initiatives of the inspectors;
* drawing up statistical analysis reports;
* supplying an annual statistics report of the costs related to inspectors’ tasks ;
* supplying regulations and pedagogical procedures also related to inspectors’ tasks ;
* supplying regulations and administrative procedures related to the PDU ;
* establishing a follow-up as to statutory rules and procedures related to the tasks of inspectors (ex: in the frame of setting up new programs, pedagogical tools…)
* the follow-up of pedagogical matters for accredited Schools
* technical specifications for all call for tenders related to pedagogical matters

The task list of the Pedagogical Development Unit set out above is not exhaustive.

Activities related to the Baccalaureate, carried out within the Pedagogical Development Unit have not been taken into account in this document.

**Annex 4**

**Desired profile of the Head of Unit**

* University degree in education
* Experience in educational organisations in responsibility positions
* Solid knowledge of the European Schools System
* Experience in assessment
* Experience in production of statistical data analysis
* Experience of school administration
* Experience of syllabus development
* Knowledge of languages:
  + Very good command of English, French or German and good command of one of the other
* Very good ICT skills
* Very good communication skills

Assets

* Knowledge of other languages
* Experience in the European Schools System
* Experience in organisation of teachers’ training on a large scale
* Experience in production and update of syllabuses on a large scale
* Experience with pedagogical quality assurance at schools

**Duties of the Head of the Pedagogical Development Unit**

The Head of the Pedagogical Development Unit (HPDU) will take the lead on all the activities conducted by the PDU, under the overall responsibility of the SG and of the DSG and in close cooperation with the Board of Inspectors. Activities of the PDU concentrate mainly in these three areas in cooperation with the Boards of Inspectors:

1) Preparation of the meetings of Board of Inspectors (Primary), Board of Inspectors (Secondary), Joint Board of Inspectors and Joint Teaching Committee and their follow up.

2) Overall management of pedagogical working groups

3) Overall management of in-service training courses

In addition to these three main areas, the HPDU is also lead these other activities of the PDU:

* planning, budgeting and reporting on all the inspectors’ activities;
* planning and budgeting of statutory and extraordinary visits of Inspectors;
* whole school inspections (WSI);
* production of statistical analysis reports for the areas of competence;
* drawing up of sets of rules and of administrative procedures associated with the inspectors’ activities;
* drawing up of sets of rules and of administrative procedures associated with the PDU;
* handling of follow-up with respect to rules and procedures;
* planning, budgeting and maintenance of the set of syllabi for all subjects and levels;

The treatment of administrative and contentious appeals against the decisions of the Class Councils and pedagogical decisions is also a duty of the HPDU.

1. If it is true that the European School, Culham will close as from 31st August 2017, it is also true that the opening up of European School, Brussels 5 is expected by September 2019 at the latest. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)