

To the Members of the Board of Governors of the European Schools

Making the best use of the additional space available at Berkendael

(i) There are new developments, so please reflect on your decisions of the past.

You voted in your December meeting to confirm the transfer of all children currently enrolled in the European School BXL IV in Berkendael when the new school site in Laeken opens in September.

Since then, major new developments have occurred: it has been officially announced that the Berkendael site will remain in the hands of the European School system, at least for a couple of years. Moreover, 450 pupils from the European School BXL I will temporarily occupy the Berkendael site as of September this year (cf. attached note from the Director of BXL I) while the Fabiola building at the main site of BXL I in Uccle is being renovated.

In view of the reasons set out below, we call upon you to re-visit your decision.

(ii) There are several hundred empty places for pupils available in Berkendael

With BXL IV vacating the Berkendael site, which has a total capacity of almost 1,000 pupils (not counting the temporary prefabricated containers), there are several hundred available places for additional pupils on the Berkendael site in the next school year 2012/2013 which should be used. Otherwise half the site would be empty in September 2012. At the same time, 300 pupils currently going to school there have already expressed their interest in a petition not to move to Laeken but to remain in Berkendael.

(iii) BXL I will operate on two sites, which allows the integration of a large number of additional pupils on the Berkendael site and a limited number of additional pupils on the Uccle site

While operating on two sites, Uccle and Berkendael, i.e. for the estimated duration of 3 years that the renovation will take, the total number of pupils that BXL I is able to host is increased to around 3,800 pupils (3,200 places in Uccle minus 450 places "under renovation" in Uccle plus 1,000 places in Berkendael).

We know that BXL I is currently overpopulated and cannot take in additional pupils under the current set of circumstances since joint facilities, in particular the canteen, but also the gym, cannot cope with more than a certain maximum number of pupils frequenting these facilities – otherwise, for example, lunch would have to be served from 11.00 till 15.00.

However, it is evident that individual classes in BXL I are not overpopulated: according to the official projections of the Secretariat General of the European Schools the average class size in BXL I will be around 23 pupils in the next school year – 3,310 pupils overall divided into 144 classes – which is well below the maximum threshold of 30 per class.

With 15% of the school population being moved to Berkendael, and hence less pupils using canteen and gym, the Uccle site itself could also take in a limited number of additional pupils.

(iv) This is not about BXL IV any longer but about BXL I

The higher than expected enrolment figures for BXL IV in Laeken in this year's first enrolment phase demonstrate that the long-standing worry that it will be difficult to fill the Laeken site are unfounded. The new developments regarding the Berkendael site therefore do not put at all into question the opening of BXL IV at its new site in Laeken in September. However, they call for an opening to transfer to BXL I those pupils from BXL IV that do not want to move to Laeken in order to avoid that these – very young – children have to undergo a daily commute of between 2 and 3 hours.

(v) Transfer of children from BXL IV to BXL I at no additional cost

Transferring children from BXL IV to BXL I within the language sections existing in both schools (DE, EN, FR and IT) can be done in a cost-neutral manner.

You find attached a simulation based (1) on the results of the petition as far as information was provided about language section and grade, (2a) and (2b) the official figures of the school populations of BXL I and BXL IV last September and - (4a) and (4b) - the projected

number of classes in the two schools in the next school year based on European Schools document [2011-09-D-4-fr](#).

This simulation shows that the transfer of all of these children (221 from the four language sections DE, EN, FR, IT in all grades from MAT to S3) from BXL IV to BXL I, see tables (3a) and (3b), could be implemented at constant class populations with the creation of 1 single additional class overall, cf. tables (5a) and (5b).

Moreover, there are several grades in BXL IV for which the projections of the Secretariat General in view of the number of the petition children who would leave BXL IV seem too high, notably P3 and P5 FR, where an additional inflow of 19 pupils each would be needed before the projected third class could be created. This means that after the transfer of the 221 pupils from BXL IV to BXL I the overall number of classes in the sections concerned in both schools taken together could even be lower than without the transfer.

Of course, the simulation is tentative and neither includes the several dozen pupils whose parents have signed the petition with incomplete data nor does it take account of natural fluctuations of school populations within each school year. It is evident, though, that the transfer is both feasible and possible to implement for almost all pupils whose parents have signed the petition at no additional cost.

Much to our regret, we do not see any such cost-free solution for the NL children in BXL IV not wanting to be forced to Laeken as there is no NL section in BXL I but only in BXL III and, therefore, the news from BXL I that the school will occupy the Berkendael site does not provide a solution for the NL pupils in BXL IV not wanting to go to Laeken.

(vi) Conditions for transfer

(a) Temporary nature

You are undoubtedly considering what could happen to the petition pupils transferred to BXL I once the renovation is finished, and the Berkendael site empty once more. Parents of children transferring from BXL IV to BXL I would have to agree that the transfer to BXL I is only temporary. If at the end of the renovation (presumably in 2015) the Uccle site is still overpopulated, these children should be moved to the new 5th school which should either be at Berkendael itself or another site in the south of Brussels. As a last resort, i.e. if the 5th school is not yet available in 2015, these children would have to be moved back to BXL IV (Laeken), but even in this worst-case scenario, all the children concerned would be 3 years older and could therefore better cope with the long commute to Laeken than now.

(b) SWALS

Another issue would be how the Romanian and Bulgarian pupils should be treated. We suggest that the parents are given the choice to either opt for BXL IV in Laeken where their child can join the RO or BG language lessons and the RO or BG section (once created) or to choose to be transferred to BXL I into the respective language section the child currently attends (EN, FR, DE or IT), but without RO or BG lessons provided by the school.

(vii) Implementation

(a) No changes to ongoing enrolment procedure necessary

In order to implement this plan, no changes would be necessary to the ongoing three-phased enrolment procedure. You only need to decide in your April meeting that after the 3rd enrolment phase in the summer, an additional technical operation ("4th phase") is set up allowing the transfer from BXL IV to BXL I, for as long as places are available in existing classes.

(b) Survey among BXL IV parents

First of all, an official survey organised by BXL IV / the Secretariat-General should be carried out among all parents whose children are currently schooled in BXL IV (including the new enrolments requests for 2012/2013) so as to ascertain officially who would prefer to move

to Laeken and who would like to remain / start in Berkendael. The Commission has requested the Secretariat General to carry out such an official survey as soon as possible.

(c) Choosing intelligently the BXL I classes to move to Berkendael

The BXL I classes that would move to Berkendael in September should be chosen so as to restrict the number of physical moves of pupils to the absolute minimum. This means that only nursery and primary classes from the language sections that exist in both BXL I and IV, i.e. EN, FR, DE and IT, should move to Berkendael. In this way only the 51 BXL IV secondary pupils from the petition would need to move from Berkendael to Uccle to be integrated in existing classes there, while all nursery and primary BXL IV pupils could be integrated into BXL I classes moving to Berkendael. This solution would have the additional advantage that siblings in different nursery and primary classes in the same language section of BXL I would either remain together at the Uccle site or move together to the Berkendael site for the time of the renovation.

(d) What if not all requests can be satisfied at no additional cost?

Should it turn out in this 4th enrolment phase that not all children could be transferred without creating the one or other additional class overall, either these – relatively marginal – additional costs (approx. € 60,000 per year for a "chargé de cours", less for a seconded teacher) would have to be borne by the European Schools budget or the available places would have to be allocated via a lottery (as it has already been applied in the enrolment policy for a number of years).

(viii) Conclusion

This is a win-win situation; you have a new opportunity to take a decision in favour of the well-being of several hundred children, many of whom are only 4-6 years old, at no additional costs for the budget of the European Schools.

We would like to conclude by expressing our bewilderment that the cost estimations by the Secretariat General for using the Berkendael site seem to oscillate a lot depending on which school the children come from:

You might remember that in December the Secretariat General estimated the costs of the roughly 300 petition children remaining in Berkendael to be € 1.7 million for four months in 2012 and almost € 2 million in 2013 (cf. attached note from Ms Christmann to you entitled "rép Christmann_pétition Berkendael 3062_001.pdf").

At last week's meeting of the Budget Committee the Secretariat General estimated that moving 450 pupils (i.e. 50% more) from Uccle to Berkendael into a completely emptied school is supposed to cost nothing in 2012 and only around € 550,000 in 2013 (cf. attached document "2012-03-D-9-en-1 Additional costs entailed by renovation of the Fabiola site at Brussels I and occupancy of the Berkendael buildin (BXL IV).doc").

We note that this new estimate from the Secretariat General is now very much in line with the figures we had calculated and communicated to you last November for 300 pupils in Berkendael, i.e. additional costs of up to € 400,000 per year (cf. (xiv) Conclusions in the attached note "2011-11-29_Berkendael_cost_estimate.doc"). At the time our calculations were described by the Secretariat General as follows: "*l'analyse faite par les parents du coût potentiel de la séparation des élèves de Bruxelles IV entre deux sites ne tient pas compte de nombreux éléments et aboutit à des résultats que nous considérons comme très éloignées de la réalité ...*"

Eva Schriever & Claudia Hahn



Uccle, 5th March 2012

Re: Renovation Fabiola Building

Dear parents,

For several years now the renovation of the Fabiola building has been discussed with the *Régie de Bâtiments*, in order to make it comply with modern standards. The building, with several intermediate floors and staircases, is not well adapted to young children. Furthermore, it is not accessible to people with reduced mobility.

Certain rooms, originally intended as storage rooms, have been turned into classrooms, despite the lack of light. Windows are placed high up and some of them cannot be opened which makes it difficult to air the classrooms adequately. In other places, the windows do not have sun blinds. Common areas are not well designed and have bad acoustic conditions (e.g. the mezzanine) which render them difficult to use.

The building must be rewired and new plumbing installed. There are unpleasant smells coming from the pipes, both in the classrooms and the canteen. Despite cleaning the toilets thoroughly several times a day, the smell persists. Furthermore, there are not enough toilets for the adults or for the children.

Following discussions which took place during the meeting of the school's Administrative Board of 31st January 2012, the General Secretary obtained a mandate to officially request from the *Régie des Bâtiments* the renovation of the building. The request is currently being examined by the relevant authorities but we have not yet received an answer.

Around 450 pupils from 11 nursery classes and 11 primary classes use the Fabiola building every day. This number of pupils does not allow us to relocate them in other school buildings during the renovation period.

Therefore, in the region of 20/22 classes (levels to be decided) will have to be moved to school buildings outside our campus. Given the fact that Berkendael will be empty as from September 2012, when the European school Brussels IV moves to Laeken, it has been requested that those premises be temporarily available for Brussels I-Uccle whilst the renovation takes place.

We are fully aware of the disruption that this would cause for a considerable number of families. A steering group, with representatives of all parties concerned, will be created to analyse in detail all pedagogical and practical aspects related to the move, bearing always in mind the best interests of the pupils. Please rest assured that we shall make every effort to ensure that this temporary move is carried out without detriment to the children's education.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'ARE 2'.

Antonia Ruiz Esturla

Dear Vice-President Šefčovič,

We, the parents of more than 300 pupils (cf. list below) currently enrolled in the European School Brussels IV (Brussels IV), request political action from you as European Commissioner in charge regarding the move of the whole school from its current site in Berkendael to its new site in Laeken foreseen for September 2012.

While many parents and children are looking forward to the move to Laeken the parents listed below would like their children to remain in Berkendael.

Throughout Europe the principle "the younger the children the shorter the distance from the residence to the school" is applied, not least for environmental reasons and in order to avoid unnecessary traffic congestion. Most of us live much closer to Berkendael than to Laeken and for most of our children the move to Laeken would entail having to spend between 2 and 3 hours in school buses 5 days a week. We believe that this is an untenable situation in particular for 4 to 11 year old children in nursery and primary school. In several European countries the obligation for public authorities to ensure nursery and primary schooling as closely as possible to the children's residence is imposed by administrative courts or even by law. It is surprising to say the least that with this background the Board of Governors of the European Schools has decided for years on end to adopt for the four Brussels schools an enrolment policy which does not take into account any geographic criteria whatsoever.

We are aware that, from the very outset, Berkendael has been declared as a transitory site waiting for the renovation of the Laeken site which would be closed with the move to Laeken. However, many of us did not choose Brussels IV for our children, our children were only offered a place in Brussels IV as there were no places available in the other European Schools in the neighbourhood (Brussels I - Uccle, Brussels III - Ixelles).

More importantly, since the decision to close Berkendael upon the opening of Laeken was taken many parameters have changed:

(i) the Belgian authorities have not announced any plans what to do with the Berkendael grounds in September 2012.

(ii) it has always been stated that the Berkendael site is too small to host a fully fledged European School. However, in the meantime the Belgian authorities have taken the decision that the women's prison next to the Berkendael site will be closed in the near future. If these adjacent grounds were added to the current Berkendael site the plot of land and the existing buildings would be sufficient to host a similar number of pupils as the other European Schools in Brussels.

(iii) an official request for a 5th European school has been submitted to the Belgian authorities with projections that the number of pupils will require the inauguration of this 5th school in 2015, at the latest. Taking into account the experience with the negotiations for the 4th school it seems highly unlikely that between now and September 2015 any other site than Berkendael could be identified and renovated in time in order to host this European School Brussels V.

In view of the above a revision of the decision that the Berkendael site be closed upon the opening of Laeken is indispensable. The parents listed below therefore call on you,

Vice-President Šefčovič,

(a) to officially ask the Belgian authorities to permanently give the Berkendael site (enlarged by the grounds of the current women's prison) to the European Schools in order to use it for the 5th Brussels school and

(b) to ensure that the site of Berkendael remains open beyond this school year for children currently enrolled in Berkendael and any other children whose parents might want to enrol them there on the basis that the Berkendael site becomes permanent.

We are aware that maintaining two sites (Laeken and Berkendael) open will require some additional resources possibly going beyond what is budgeted for in 2012 and certainly going beyond what is planned for 2013. This would have to be taken into account in the budget negotiations for 2013.

However, in our opinion the additional costs could be limited if

- for the time being, the two sites continue to be managed administratively by one school administration (Brussels IV);
- the classes of pupils currently enrolled in Berkendael are split according to geographical criteria in a way that in both Berkendael and Laeken classes of sufficient size could be formed.

In such a scenario the number of additional teachers needed is likely to be relatively small, supplementary administrative costs would be limited to security, heating/electricity and cleaning for the second site. Buildings, grounds and furniture will have to be provided by the Belgian authorities in accordance with the Convention on European Schools. Transport costs would need to be calculated, but are likely to be lower given that the children would be schooled closer to home.

It is clear that in the current difficult economic context any increase in expenses has to be duly justified, but we believe that limited extra expenses are defensible as otherwise unnecessary stress is put on a large number of parents and, more importantly, many (very) young children for many years.

Dear Vice-President, please take action so that a reasonable solution to this unsustainable situation is found. Time is pressing, if nothing is done, and no further resources are budgeted in the 2013 budget, the Berkendael site will definitely close upon the opening of Laeken, to the detriment of our children.

We would be grateful if you could receive a group of us to further discuss the matter at your earliest convenience.

For the petition signatories:



Eva Schriever



Claudia Hahn

I) Facts and considerations on the Berkendael site

(i) According to the Board of Governors' conclusions a 5th European School in Brussels (Brussels V) is needed at the latest for the school year 2015/2016.

(ii) There should be hope (in particular with a view to environmental and urban planning concerns) that in the discussions on the site of Brussels V the place of residence of the children with a right to be enrolled (priority 1 children) will be a major criterion, i.e. Brussels V will be situated somewhere in the southern suburbs of Brussels where there already currently is a severe shortage of places in the existing schools of Brussels I and Brussels III.

(iii) The Berkendael site (which is in the southern suburbs) has been given by the Belgian authorities to the European Schools for an indefinite duration and will therefore not have to be returned in 2012 when Brussels IV opens in Laeken.

(iv) The womens' prison next to the Berkendael site will be closed in 2015; following a renovation this building and its grounds could enlarge the Berkendael site sufficiently to host at least 2,500 pupils, the size of the other European Schools in Brussels.

(v) Until now, the Belgian caretaker government could not pronounce itself on the site of Brussels V. With the new Belgian government taking office in the next couple of weeks negotiations on the site of Brussels V are likely to intensify very soon. In view of the above it is far from excluded that the Belgian authorities will propose the Berkendael site as the grounds for Brussels V. Moreover, it is highly improbable in the context of the current economic crisis that the Belgian authorities will be willing to spend as much money for Brussels V as they currently do for the Laeken site; the cost issue is likely to be the main determining factor for choosing the site of Brussels V. In this respect Berkendael is the ideal choice: the buildings currently occupied have already been renovated to host Brussels IV temporarily and the renovation costs for the womens' prison should be very limited compared to what is currently being invested in Laeken or what would otherwise have to be invested to turn a completely different complex into a European School.

(vi) In any case, the more time passes without a decision on the future site of Brussels V the more pleads in favour of keeping Berkendael open and functional in the bridging period between now and the opening of Brussels V in 2015: it is getting ever more unlikely that another site can be identified and renovated in time for 2015 whereas the Berkendael site is renovated and could host 1,100 pupils as it stands which is amply sufficient in the first couple of years of Brussels V. Of course, closing the Berkendael site down until 2015 and letting it decay until then will lead to increased renovation costs in 2015.

(vii) In this context, there are apparently quite far advanced plans to use the Berkendael site in the school year 2012/2013 and beyond for roughly 400 pupils in nursery and primary classes of the Brussels I school whose building "Reine Fabiola" needs to be renovated (the Secretariat-General might be able to confirm this). However, this would occupy less than half of the Berkendael site temporarily for a couple of years with the rest remaining empty (and decaying) if all current pupils of Brussels IV indeed move to Laeken next year as planned.

II) Advantages of keeping Berkendael open for a part of the current Brussels IV pupils

(i) Several hundred young children starting at 4 years of age currently enrolled in Berkendael who live in the south of Brussels would not have to undergo the long commute of a total of around 3 hours per day which would benefit their well-being and learning capacity. The negative consequences of such long commutes on young children should be avoided wherever possible.

(ii) Children living in the south whose parents have refrained from enrolling their children in a European School for fear of being sent to Laeken could enrol their children in Brussels IV, Berkendael site, awaiting the opening of the 5th school in 2015.

(iii) Some of the pupils currently enrolled in Brussels I (Uccle) or Brussels III (Ixelles) might ask for a voluntary transfer to Berkendael provided the site is confirmed to serve at least as transitory site prior

to the opening of Brussels V as this would mean a shorter way to school for them. This in turn could help to somewhat alleviate the overcrowding of those two schools. Some parents with children currently enrolled in Brussels I have already manifested their interest in this respect to us.

(iv) The site in Laeken would start with less pupils which should make the transition easier for pupils, teachers and parents alike in the first year and will prevent that Laeken becomes just as overcrowded as the other European Schools as quickly as possible.

(v) Keeping open Berkendael would also provide the necessary margin of manoeuvre to put in place over time an enrolment policy that takes into account geographical criteria for the 8,000 pupils (= 80%) of the Brussels European Schools that are enrolled in language sections that exist in several or all Brussels schools.

(vi) The overall satisfaction rate is likely to go up if newly enrolled pupils will be allocated according to geographical criteria to either Laeken or Berkendael and that without a need to change the guiding principles for the enrolment policy for 2012/2013 which the Board of Governors has already endorsed in its September meeting (cf. [2011-09-D-4-fr-1](#)),

(vii) The number of buses which transport pupils to and from European Schools in Brussels and hence the carbon footprint could be somewhat reduced (which would also mean less transport costs to be borne by the EU budget – cf. in more detail in the following section).

III) Potential costs of keeping Berkendael open for Brussels IV pupils from 2012-2014

(i) It is clear that in the current circumstances a decision to keep Berkendael open cannot be justified vis-à-vis the Budgetary Authority, nor the European public at large, if it incurred high additional costs. Therefore, the calculations follow a minimalist, no-frills approach, i.e. what would be the minimum supplementary costs for keeping the Berkendael site open, taking account of any savings that could be made by not moving the whole Brussels IV school to Laeken, while maintaining the minimum standards of the European School curriculum. The emphasis here is on additional, i.e. only costs are taken into account for this calculation that come on top of what would need to be spent if the whole school moved to Laeken.

(ii) The calculations are only based on the Brussels IV nursery and primary school population as the costs for running two secondary cycles in both Laeken and Berkendael with such a low number of pupils (projections foresee around 400 secondary school pupils in 2012/2013 in classes S1-S4) are prohibitively high; in any case, long commutes are less harmful for older children in secondary school at 12 to 18 years of age. Hence, for the time up to the opening of Brussels V in 2015 primary pupils of Brussels IV schooled at the Berkendael site would continue their secondary school education in Laeken upon the end of primary school.

(iii) It is assumed that half of the current school population in nursery and primary as well as half of the additional pupils enrolling in nursery and primary classes in September 2012 will stay in Berkendael. Out of a projected total of 1,600 pupils in Brussels IV in September 2012 according to the document adopted by the Board of Governors last September – cf. [2011-09-D-4-fr-2](#), page 22 – some 600 would consequently remain in Berkendael, around two thirds would be current pupils and the rest newly enrolled nursery and primary pupils in September 2012. This seems a valid assumption in view of the number of petition signatories, taking into account that possibly not all parents whose place of residence is closer to Berkendael than to Laeken have signed the petition. This would mean that around 1000 pupils would start the school year 2012/2013 in Laeken (600 nursery and primary and 400 secondary pupils).

(iv) For the budget 2012 the figures refer to the four months of September till December 2012. There is no need to project beyond 2014 as for 2015 the 5th school would in any case have to be budgeted. Of course, our calculations are made without any detailed knowledge and can therefore only be rough estimations based on what is publicly available. However, we trust that our assumptions are solid and can stand your scrutiny.

(v) The calculations presume that around 400 pupils from the Brussels I nursery and primary will be temporarily hosted in a part of the Berkendael site during the renovation of their building "Reine Fabiola" in Brussels I. This renovation is supposed to take a couple of years and would bridge the time

until 2015 when the 5th school is supposed to open. This would mean that the Berkendael site would be almost fully exploited (1000 pupils, 400 from Brussels I and 600 from Brussels IV) during that period.

Under these circumstances there would be no additional infrastructure costs (heating, electricity, cleaning, garbage, lift maintenance, security, nurse, concierge, etc.) for Brussels IV as these costs will have to be budgeted in the Brussels I budget anyway. Whether the 600 Brussels IV children in question occupy space that needs to be heated and lit in Laeken or in Berkendael should not have an impact on the overall budget – either a part of the Laeken site or a part of the Berkendael site will remain unused in 2012/2013 and will consequently not have to be heated and lit. Therefore, the only sizable additional cost factor when keeping Berkendael open for Brussels IV pupils beyond 2012 would be the few additional teachers needed for classes that would not have to be split if all pupils moved to Laeken.

(vi) Teachers – how many more?

1) The projections in the document endorsed in September (cf. [2011-09-D-4-fr-1](#)) foresee a total of 56 classes (and hence teachers) in the school year 2012/2013 for nursery and primary classes in the 5 language sections.

1) Current projection	DE	EN	FR	IT	NL	Total
Maternelle	2	3	6	2	1	14
P1	1	2	4	1	1	9
P2	2	1	3	1	1	8
P3	1	2	3	1	1	8
P4	1	2	4	1	1	9
P5	1	2	3	1	1	8
Total	8	12	23	7	6	56

2) Splitting the nursery and primary school population of Brussels IV in half and distributing the pupils roughly evenly to Laeken and Berkendael would mean that an additional 4 classes (and hence 4 additional teachers; in P1, P3, P4 and P5) would be needed for the DE language section, 1 additional class (and teacher) for EN in P2, none for FR and 5 and 6 additional teachers respectively for IT (in all but the MAT class) and NL (in all classes). Hence, a total of 16 additional teachers would be needed:

2) Sections split in half	DE (Laeken)	DE (Berkend.)	EN (Laeken)	EN (Berkend.)	FR (Laeken)	FR (Berkend.)	IT (Laeken)	IT (Berkend.)	NL (Laeken)	NL (Berkend.)	Total
Maternelle	1	1	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	1	15
P1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	12
P2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	11
P3	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	11
P4	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	12
P5	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	11
Total	12 (+4)		7 (+1)		23		12 (+5)		12 (+6)		72(+16)

3) However, in a minimalist approach it could also be envisaged to split only the DE, EN, FR sections, i.e. those that would most likely also be opened in a 5th school or at least to let the NL section move in its entirety to Laeken as the section is very small in any case (58 pupils in 2011/2012). Keeping Berkendael open for only DE, EN, FR and possibly IT pupils would lead to the number of additional teachers to decrease to 5 or 10 respectively instead of 16:

3) w/o NL in Berkend.	DE (Laeken)	DE (Berkend.)	EN (Laeken)	EN (Berkend.)	FR (Laeken)	FR (Berkend.)	IT (Laeken)	IT (Berkend.)	NL (Laeken)	Total
Maternelle	1	1	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	14
P1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	11
P2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	10
P3	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	10
P4	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	11
P5	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	10
Total	12 (+4)		13 (+1)		23		12 (+5)		6	66 (+10)

4) The number of additional teachers could be even further reduced to 2 (if only DE, EN, FR were to stay) or 4 (DE, EN, FR, IT) if in the Berkendael part of the DE and IT sections several classes were taught together (e.g. P1/P2 and P3/P4/5) as is currently already the case in the NL section. The absolute minimum number of additional teachers needed can therefore be assumed to be either 2 or 4, depending on whether you exclude or include the Italian section in the splitting:

4) Combined classes in Berkend.	DE (Laeken)	DE (Berkend.)	EN (Laeken)	EN (Berkend.)	FR (Laeken)	FR (Berkend.)	IT (Laeken)	IT (Berkend.)	NL (Laeken)	Total
Maternelle	1	1	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	14
P1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	11
P2	1		1	1	2	1	1		1	8
P3	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	10
P4	1		1	1	2	2	1		1	9
P5	1		1	1	2	1	1		1	8
Total	9 (+1)		13 (+1)		23		9 (+2)		6	60 (+4)

(vii) Teachers – additional costs

Since the large majority of current teachers in Brussels IV is seconded and paid by their respective member state the additional salary costs only concern the top-up paid by the European Schools and are therefore rather limited for the European Schools' budget. For the budget 2012 (4 additional months, September till December 2012), the total supplementary costs for 4 additional teachers would not be very high (rough estimate: €2,000/month on average x 4 teachers x 4 months = €32,000). This would raise to approximately €80,000 if classes were not combined and 10 additional teachers were needed. For the following two years (2013 and 2014) the costs would consequently be around €96,000 – combined classes – or €240,000 – separate classes – per year while for 2015 the 5th school would in any case have to be budgeted. These costs would increase if contrary to current practice these additional teachers were not seconded but hired as “chargé de cours” – in that case estimated costs would of course go up but would still be reasonably low (less than €100,000 for 2012) if the option with combined classes in Berkendael and only 4 extra teachers were retained.

(viii) Other staff

In a minimalist approach the entire school administration (Director, financial assistants, secretaries, etc.) would be based in Laeken. However, it should be assumed that at least 1 additional full-time secretary will be needed on site in Berkendael for administrative issues and coordination. No additional support staff would be needed as concierge, IT expert, nurse and librarian would in any case have to be provided for the Brussels I pupils. Any costs for further Brussels IV teaching staff (chargés de cours for SEN, etc.) would be distributed between the Laeken and Berkendael sites according to the identified needs of individual pupils. Rough estimate for 1 additional secretary: €60,000 per year, i.e. €20,000 for 2012; some additional costs for supplementary Religious Education courses will be incurred as these already regroup several classes in each language section and would have to be doubled; on the other hand, some of these could be held together with Brussels I primary classes present on site in Berkendael – very rough estimate: also €60,000 per year, €20,000 for 2012.

(ix) Deputy Director on site: During the presence of the Brussels I nursery and primary the overall supervision of the Berkendael site could be ensured by a Deputy Director from Brussels I so that no additional Deputy Director for Brussels IV would be needed on site in Berkendael. Should no Deputy Director from Brussels I be placed in Berkendael, one of the two Deputy Directors of Brussels IV could – if needed – be placed in Berkendael as overall supervisor for both the Brussels I and the Brussels IV populations. In view of the relatively small size of the Laeken school site population (around a thousand pupils in 2012/2013) no additional Deputy Director post would have to be created in the Brussels IV school. In this latter case, and always with a view to reducing costs for Brussels IV, there could even be an arrangement that Brussels I reimburses Brussels IV a part (half?) of the salary costs for the Deputy Director as this person would supervise pupils from both schools.

(x) Infrastructure 1 - material that can be shared out between Berkendael and Laeken: given that a large part of the population remains in Berkendael it is assumed that consequently the same proportion of the equipment also remains, i.e. library, gym equipment (there are currently two gyms in Berkendael, hence the equipment of one would be moved to Laeken while the equipment of the other would remain in Berkendael), music room, playground, computers, chairs, desks, teaching material, etc., so that only marginal additional costs would be incurred in Berkendael. Rough, but rather generous estimate: €50,000 additional costs to start off in 2012, the same amount (for the whole year) in 2013 and 2014.

(xi) Infrastructure 2 - material that cannot be shared out: For those parts that cannot be divided, e.g. the canteen kitchen (if it is foreseen to move this to Laeken despite the occupation of part of the Berkendael site by the Brussels I nursery and primary) the least costly solution would be to start off in September 2012 with lunch on delivery rather than a preparation on site as this would entail no additional costs for the school's budget but would be entirely financed by the parents. In any case, costs for any potential equipment would have to be shared between Brussels I and Brussels IV.

(xii) Savings in removal costs: A bit less than half of the school's equipment would remain in Berkendael which should significantly reduce the removal costs for moving the school to Laeken. No valid estimate is possible without knowing what has been budgeted for this in the 2012 budget and/or having some reliable quotes. Total removal costs are unlikely to much below €100,000 for the whole school; to assume savings of **€20,000** does not seem unrealistic, probably more.

(xiii) Savings in transport costs of pupils: bus transport costs for priority 1 pupils with parents working in a European Institution are paid out of the EU budget (more than €1,000 per pupil per year). While this is not budgeted in the European Schools' budget it is nonetheless money taken out of the overall EU budget and therefore needs to be taken into account when calculating the additional costs for keeping Berkendael open next year. It is assumed that at least 50% of those 600 pupils projected to remain in Berkendael would (i) have to use the bus and (ii) get their transport paid out of the EU budget if they were sent to the Laeken site. This would mean that a total of 300 (50%) x €1,000 = **€300,000** could be saved per year, or around **€100,000** in 2012. This is probably an underestimation, the percentage might be higher which would also increase savings to the EU budget. Of course, a decision would need to be taken and communicated to parents that no bus transport will be offered and reimbursed for pupils in Berkendael during the bridging period until 2015 as it is assumed that they live close enough to be brought to school by other means.

(xiv) Conclusion:

Rough estimate of <u>additional</u> costs Split of DE, EN, FR, IT sections	2012 (4 Monate)	2013	2014
10 additional teachers (seconded)	80,000	240,000	240,000
Other staff (secretary, religion)	40,000	120,000	120,000
Additional Equipment	50,000	50,000	50,000
Savings removal	-20,000		
<i>Savings transport</i>	<i>-100,000</i>	<i>-300,000</i>	<i>-300,000</i>
Total	50,000	110,000	110,000

The above estimate shows that even with 10 additional teachers the additional costs are very limited and easily justifiable in view of the positive effects on the well-being of the children concerned.

Rough estimate of <u>additional</u> costs (combined classes) Split of DE, EN, FR, IT sections	2012 (4 Monate)	2013	2014
4 additional teachers (seconded)	32,000	96,000	96,000
Other staff (secretary, religion)	40,000	120,000	120,000
Additional Equipment	50,000	50,000	50,000
Savings removal	-20,000		
<i>Savings transport</i>	<i>-100,000</i>	<i>-300,000</i>	<i>-300,000</i>
Total	2,000	-34,000	-34,000

In the most minimalist approach (combining classes in the DE and IT sections) there are no overall additional costs for letting half of the Brussels IV nursery and primary pupils in Berkendael in the next school year and beyond. Over time even some minor savings could be generated taking into account the reduced transport costs.

Even when assuming that the additional teachers are hired as “chargé de cours” rather than being seconded from the Member States the costs for keeping Berkendael open until the 5th school opens in 2015 remain relatively marginal in view of an overall budget of around €160,000,000 per year and could certainly be financed.

Finally, it is important to underline that no reinforcement of the 2012 budget is necessary to implement any of the options presented in this paper.

Eva Schriever + Claudia Hahn