



European Schools

Office of the Secretary-General

2011-12-LD-1 RCH/JG  
Brussels, 1 December 2011

**FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE HEADS OF DELEGATION ON THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE EUROPEAN SCHOOLS**

Dear Sir,  
Dear Madam,

Following the sending by some Brussels IV parents of a petition whereby they seek to have their children continue attending school on the Berkendael site at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year in September 2012, even though the Laeken site will have been made available to us by then, I wish to make a number of comments concerning the request and to provide you with additional information on the subject.

I would point out first and foremost that the analysis made by the parents of the potential cost of separation of the Brussels IV pupils between two sites does not take many elements into account and produces results which we consider to be far from the foreseeable reality if separation were to become effective. Please find enclosed, therefore, for your full information, the estimate made by the General Secretariat and the school's directorate at the request of the Commission, to which such a petition had first been sent.

This estimate takes account of the separation of the classes in the five existing sections and the gradual transfer of pupils, year after year, at the end of P5 (primary year 5) to the secondary school at Laeken, these pupils being pupils of the Brussels IV School and not of a possible Brussels V School, the potential sites of which are not even known. In this simulation, no new pupils are enrolled at Berkendael.

The estimated costs for the financial years concerned are as follows:

2012	€ 1,719,903
2013	€ 1,992,043
2014	€ 1,565,346
2015	€ 1,808,659
2016	€ 1,560,299
2017	€ 1,402,544
2018	€ 998,310

**Making a total of €11,048,103**

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I would also point out that right from the time of acceptance of the Berkendael School by the Board of Governors to accommodate the Brussels IV pupils, it was clearly decided that the site was a transitional one and that all the pupils who would have been enrolled at Brussels IV in the meantime would move to the school's permanent site at Laeken as soon as it was made available to us by the Belgian authorities. The Laeken School will be completed for the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year in September 2012 and everything has been planned so that the pupils and staff and all the equipment are transferred to Laeken for the beginning of that school year.

Apart from the financial aspect, which is of not inconsiderable importance in these times of budgetary restrictions, I would draw your attention to the no less important implications in the administrative, procedural and pedagogical area which separating the Brussels IV classes and keeping at Berkendael pupils who so wish would have. I will only mention here the impact on the policy on enrolment in the Brussels Schools, which has been in place for five years now, in so far as a few parents would be granted the privilege of choosing their school on the basis of a geographical proximity criterion, even though the distribution of pupils, on account of overcrowding in the other schools, formally rules out that criterion.

With reference to some of those implications, I invite you to scrutinise the reply which we have just sent to the Commission in response to its request that an estimate be produced in the event of acceptance of new pupils at Berkendael as from 2012, a scenario envisaged by the parents in the petition which they sent to you.

As for the presence of 21 Brussels I classes on the Berkendael site, to allow the Fabiola Building at Uccle to be renovated, it is unlikely that this will be effective as early as September 2012.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours faithfully,



Renée Christmann  
Secretary-General

EN-DE-FR-IT-NL sections

Extra cost associated with vertical division of the Brussels IV School\*

Infrastructure

	4 months 09->12/2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	8 months 2018
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AAS salaries and employer's social charges:							
-1 secretary							
-0,5 accountant							
-1 ICT technician							
-1 nurse							
-3 posts of nursery assistant							
-1 caretaker							
-1 workman							
-2 posts of supervisors	186.283 €	391.634 €	274.328 €	413.745 €	413.745 €	413.745 €	275.830 €
<b>Upkeep and maintenance of the building</b>							
Cleaning	80.130 €	114.732 €	74.302 €	153.850 €	123.080 €	98.464 €	52.514 €
Caretaking	38.725 €	55.447 €	44.886 €	116.175 €	77.450 €	77.450 €	51.633 €
Maintenance green areas	6.447 €	9.231 €	7.473 €	19.342 €	19.342 €	19.342 €	12.895 €
Miscellaneous (Waste collection site, hazardous waste, heating maintenance, lifts, repairs, communications, post, etc.)	21.193 €	30.345 €	24.565 €	63.580 €	63.580 €	63.580 €	42.387 €
Energy (gas, heating oil, electricity)	65.688 €	94.053 €	60.911 €	126.121 €	100.897 €	80.717 €	43.049 €
<b>Equipment</b>							
Furniture for classrooms, canteen, offices, library	- €						
Equipment for sports halls, library, music room, canteen, ICT, telephones, servers, tools, maintenance equipment, photocopyers	750.000 €						
Outdoor landscaping (play area, goals, etc.)	111.000 €						
<b>Transport subsidy</b>							
	25.000 €	75.000 €	75.000 €	75.000 €	100.000 €	100.000 €	150.000 €
	1.098.183 €	378.808 €	287.137 €	554.068 €	484.349 €	439.553 €	352.478 €
<b>Directorate</b>							
Deputy Director for the primary	33.337 €	100.012 €	100.012 €	100.012 €	100.012 €	100.012 €	100.012 €
<b>Teaching</b>							
Salaries Locally recruited teachers (general courses, L.S., SEN, Ethics)	289.624 €	806.310 €	646.573 €	530.342 €	403.631 €	322.334 €	193.718 €
Salaries Locally recruited teachers of Religion	9.090 €	26.904 €	24.900 €	20.014 €	14.015 €	11.396 €	7.597 €
Employer's social charges Locally recruited teachers	103.385 €	288.375 €	232.397 €	190.478 €	144.547 €	115.504 €	69.675 €
	402.099 €	1.121.589 €	903.869 €	740.834 €	562.193 €	448.234 €	270.990 €
<b>Total costs</b>	1.719.903 €	1.992.043 €	1.565.346 €	1.808.659 €	1.560.299 €	1.402.544 €	999.310 €
<b>TOTAL :</b>							

11.048.103 €

\*Extra cost associated with vertical division of the Brussels IV School. The calculation is based on the assumption that 350 nursery and primary pupils will remain on the Berkendael site.

Brussels IV and Brussels I will occupy all the premises, which will entail expenditure equivalent to that presented in the 2012 budget for maintenance, services and AAS. The schools will defray this expenditure on a pro rata basis, according to occupancy of the premises. For Brussels IV in 2013: 48% and in 2014: 39%.

Cost shared with Brussels I (assumption - 460 pupils at Berkendael for the period 1.1.2013-31.12.2014)

**GULLICK Jacqueline**

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**From:** GULLICK Jacqueline  
**Sent:** jeudi 1 décembre 2011 13:30  
**To:** BARDOUX Christiane  
**Cc:** SODER HINGIS Marie; 'Dietmar.Pettauer@ec.europa.eu'; MORICCA Umberto; 'bertrand.saint-aubin@ec.europa.eu'; 'Rolando.Putoto@ec.europa.eu'  
**Subject:** Estimate Berkendael  
**Importance:** High

Dear Mrs Bardoux,

Please find below our response to the request made in your email of 18 November.

Apart from the fact that it is not possible to make a reliable estimate on a highly hypothetical basis, namely the number of new pupils who would wish to be enrolled at the Brussels IV School on the Berkendael transitional site and the classes which they would join, I would draw your attention to other aspects which go far beyond the strictly budgetary and financial impact, of which I nevertheless wish again to reiterate the importance.

The guidelines for the enrolment policy for 2012-2013 have been approved by the Board of Governors and the Enrolment Policy has been finalised by the Central Enrolment Authority. It will be published in mid-December. The correct procedure has been followed. The representatives of the parents and the Commission are members of various committees within which the policy was prepared. They had every opportunity to express their views during the process. Due to the very tight schedule of the enrolment process, restarting the discussions from scratch is not a conceivable option.

The line of argument behind the petition is based on the geographical criterion. However, the criterion of the location of the parents' place of residence for a child's admission to one or other school was expressly ruled out by the Board of Governors, having regard to the need to distribute pupils equitably amongst the different schools. Similarly, according to the established and consistent case law of the Complaints Board of the European Schools, which since the creation of the Central Enrolment Authority in 2006, has heard dozens of direct appeals lodged against enrolment decisions every year *"the European Schools system is not comparable with national education systems, having only a limited number of schools located in cities which are the seats of EU institutions or bodies, with the agreement of the national authorities, and not a network allowing all the pupils concerned within these cities, whatever the location of their home, to be allocated a place in a neighbourhood school"* (see in particular decision No 08/09 of 17 July 2008 of the Complaints Board of the European Schools, its decision No 09/21 of 17 August 2009, its decision No 10/24 of 27 May 2010, its decision No 10/36 of 14 July 2010, etc.).

It follows that since its creation, the Central Enrolment Authority, which, it is worth pointing out, is composed partly of representatives of the parents, of the schools' managements, of the Commission's Local Staff Committee and of a representative of the European Commission, has systematically disregarded practical considerations connected with the organisation of travel and with the length of the journeys to and from school which are invoked by parents as particular circumstances in order to secure their child's enrolment in one school rather than another.

In that context, there is every reason to fear that this type of consideration might be taken into account at this juncture to justify keeping a proportion of the pupil population of the European School, Brussels IV on the Berkendael site, something which would be tantamount to jeopardising, if not ruining, the

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efforts made over the last four years to ensure balanced distribution of pupils amongst the four Brussels European Schools and to fill the new school. In addition, it would be impossible not to widen the same geographical criterion to encompass all the schools. I must draw your attention to the difficulties of implementation of such a criterion and to the risk involved of creating an explosive situation, in terms of overcrowding, in the other schools, particularly Brussels II and Brussels III.

The proposed division of the language sections will also have a pedagogical impact, something which should be discussed by the Joint Teaching Committee before the matter is presented to the Board of Governors.

Returning to the financial aspect, it would be very expensive to divide the current nursery and primary classes of Brussels IV into two. We have produced simulations showing that the additional costs would be around €11 million for the period 2012-2018 (see the table sent to you on 17 November). The initial division costs would be the same even if we were to fill the empty classes with new pupils. Even though the cost per pupil would be lower, some additional costs could be foreseen in the creation of L2, religion, European Hours and other special subject groups.

The division of Brussels IV would not only run counter to sound and rational management of resources but would also entail a significant extra cost which could not be borne within the limits of the total budget which it is planned to allocate to the Schools in the future years.

This action has not been foreseen in the 2012 Budget and no additional appropriations, amounting to almost €2 million, are available.

The Budgetary Committee should be consulted on this issue, which will significantly increase the budget for the coming years.

Best regards,

Renée Christmann  
Secretary General of the European Schools