



21 January 2022

RE: Update on the APEEE refund policy

Dear parents,

Please be informed of the APEEE Board's decision of 11 January 2022 concerning the reimbursement policy during the COVID-19 pandemic period. This decision is the result of a careful assessment of the finances during the last months, taking into account the effects of the security measures imposed by the Belgian authorities and the school management and the general consequences of the pandemic.

We would therefore like to present to the APEEE members a brief overview of the APEEE's current financial situation, prior to the Annual General Meeting to be held in February when the full financial report will be given.

In the last 2 financial years the APEEE has suffered deficits amounting to 775,000 euros. This is a direct consequence of the pandemic, which entailed top ups of salaries for unemployed staff in 2019-2020, refunds to parents since March 2020, unexpected costs and price increases since September 2021. These losses have ensured however the continuous operation of our services in constantly changing situations and under the highest possible standards.

Please note that as an independent non-profit organisation the APEEEs are not eligible for any Belgian Government, School or European Commission financial support. We have raised claims to all relevant stakeholders but at no avail, as our legal autonomy entails a financial one, irrespective of the circumstances (School decisions) generating this loss.

It has been a great achievement to have been able to look after our staff and APEEE members so far, thanks to the tight control of our budgets in previous years and the sound situation of our financial reserves and our successive positive results until August 2019. We are proud to have succeeded in being the only APEEE in Brussels to have managed to maintain operational services in an uninterrupted manner during the last two years.

Unfortunately, we are forecasting another loss in the current financial year (21-22), mostly due to forecast refunds & increased raw material costs resulting from the general economic situation.



Considering this difficult situation **the Board makes a point of maintaining the key principles of the refund policy implemented thus far during the pandemic but adapting its COVID-19 conditions to the changing school situation during this year. This means:**

- refunds in the event of suspension of services by the APEEE
- refunds in the event of rotation/hybrid teaching where there is classes' or level alternative closure on a wider scale enabling the APEEE services to take measures and save costs (on raw materials in canteen or cancelling classes in the extracurricular activities)
- refunds in line with current sector regulations (e.g. where a child is absent for more than 5/10 days and with a sick certificate)

On the other hand, **the situation does not allow room to cover all other diverse cases.** Thus, we will not provide refunds, when classes or close contacts of certified positive COVID cases are placed in quarantine at short notice, as the School together with our APEEE services remain open. Equally, refunds will not be provided when children are excluded from the bus or the line is suspended due to the existence of several positive cases.

Please find enclosed **an Annex with our updated refund policy implemented this school year by sector with retroactive effect as from September 2021.**

We trust parents will understand our extraordinary difficulties and the efforts taken to continue our operations albeit the abnormal environment since February 2020.

The APEEE Ixelles would like to thank its members for their continued support, and to confirm its commitment to continue providing a quality service during this challenging times.

The APEEE Board