

Second Primary School Council Meeting held on 12th February 2015

MINUTES

Session opened at 18:15hrs

1. Nomination of the Secretary for the session:
Caroline GAY and Estelle RIGAULT (Parents representatives)
2. Approval of the agenda for the First Primary School Council Meeting:
Approved unanimously

3. Approval of the minutes from the First School Council held on 04th November 2014:
(Minutes approved electronically, circulated to families and posted on the Arthur Rimbaud School's website) It is preferable to release the minutes as soon as possible after a School Council has taken place.

4. School News:

Teaching news:

- School calendar 2015-2016:

It was elaborated by the Calendar commission which receives congratulations from all.

The versions of the proposed calendars all include the 6 official days off with a set date in Tanzania. The issue of the treatment during days off is a tough one. An AEFÉ (Agency for French Education Abroad) frame text specifies that the days off (exclusive of holidays) are considered as school days and therefore counted up in the calculation of hours, i.e.:

- 864 hours / year with 24 hours/week;

- 900 hours / year with 25 hours/week. For this very reason, our 2014-15 calendar counts only 870 hours instead of 900 hours: there lack the 6 Tanzanian days off that do not fall during the holidays yet remain counted up as working days.

Four versions (1, 1bis, 2 and 2bis) are appendices of these minutes and present the 4 proposals.

The 1bis and 2bis proposals are unanimously turned down.

A secret ballot takes place for the remaining versions 1 and 2.

Counting is made by France de Villard (Parent representative) and Christophe Vaillant (Teacher).

Results:

- Calendar 1: 16 votes
- Calendar 2: 9 votes
- 1 null vote

The Primary School Council therefore takes on proposal 1 and submitted for vote before the School Council with 16 votes against 9.

The School Council includes the Secondary School and the Administration, which will vote as well.

- Schedule of events for the Second Term 2014-2015:

-Tuesday 17 February 2015, 11:30-13:00, Carnival: the parents' help is kindly requested for food, the School will take care of the beverages.

Mrs Guillotin underlines that everybody can access the buffet and that nobody blocks the access to it by remaining in front of it. Moreover, garbage bins will be put at several places so that the garbage are not thrown on the ground as they were during the Christmas party.

-Francophonie Week (Friday 20 to Sunday 29 March 2015): the Arthur Rimbaud School takes place in the writing contest organized by the French Embassy and the French Alliances of Dar es Salaam and Arusha. This contest involves the pupils of Primary School Cycle 3 (CE2, CM1, CM2) and the Secondary School.

-Book Prize Award "Mille Pages" organized by the Librarians Caroline De Dobbeleer and Iris Tam Tsi as well as Laurence Declerck (French bookshop owner). Three books/3 authors were selected for each age group. They will be debated and awarded, after the pupils have read them, by the classes involved (CM2 and Secondary School).

-Friday 27 March 2015: families are handed over the school reports of the Primary School (GS to CM2).
End of Second Term 2015.

- Website www.frenchschooltanzania.org

Website created by Mr Roche and Mrs Guillotin. The School Council is particularly grateful to Mr Roche who worked on a volunteer basis for this task, paramount for the School. This website is being updated and gradually fills in. It already includes a good number of information and news such as:

-General information about the French education system and the AEFÉ (Agency for French Education Abroad) network;

-Current and upcoming recruitment: positions vacant for the 2015-2016 school year;

-Events supported by the School;

-Minutes of the Management Board meetings;

-Minutes of the Primary and Secondary School Councils meetings.

For the moment being, it is in French but planned to be bilingual. It will be translated into English by Mark Cottingham, bilingual French/English teacher of the School.

- Language Policy:

Mrs Guillotin explains that the choice of parents to enroll their children at the French School ought to fit into a conscious and willing project of school which purpose is to offer them a given path. It is then appropriate that they get information from the School regarding the education system and the way it runs, to consider inputs and benefits of the teachings in French for the child beyond the first obstacles it will generate.

It is neither wished for the child nor acceptable that the only arguments to join the French School that are put forward by the parents, shall be the school fees – 3 to 4 times less expensive than a neighbouring English speaking school.

The French School network worldwide – 494 approved French Schools throughout the world – is a substantial asset of our plan/system that can be advanced/featured.

Failure to set up a constant and regular monitoring by a number of parents constitute a big impediment for the related pupils: two non-French speaking parents, French only being spoken at school, requires an attention all the more particular and diligent – that will be bound, if implemented, to lead to positive results.

The School, from its side, wishes to develop an explanatory process for enrolment and support to teachings that would involve an initial interview with the parents to agree on a common project and even implement a memorandum school / family.

In order to best help the non-French speaking parents and to better involve them, a parents' representative offers to set up a specific workshop.

It proves indeed difficult to take in non-French speaking pupils in the middle of the school year, after the First Term, at Primary or Secondary levels. On this very topic, a parent asks what the policy of the School is. Without an existing procedure, a 2-3 day period of time in the classroom is currently proposed to the new pupils. This allows the school to observe the child and to assess his/her knowledge, including in Mathematics and usually in English. The admissions are dealt with case by case, in consultation with the family.

Mrs Guillotin reminds the Council that the AEFÉ has re-assessed its language policy: the setup of bilingual classes has been suspended to give again priority to French. Arthur Rimbaud has decided to open the high school (Senior Secondary): the possibility given to its pupils to prepare the French exam of Baccalauréat (IB) and thus to have a satisfactory level of French to attend high school at ease.

FLE (French as a Foreign Language) and FLScO (French as a School Language) classes have begun in January 2015, taught by a French university intern student specialized and researching in FLE, so as to help the pupils who need it to develop their French at school:

-the MS and GS children benefit from 30 minutes twice weekly;

-the other grades from 45 minutes twice weekly.

Along with it, a partnership project between the French School Arthur Rimbaud and the French Alliance of Dar es Salaam will be implemented in the 2015-2016 school year. The French Alliance shall use the

French School's premises outside the school hours, to offer French lessons for children and adults on the peninsula. The French School Arthur Rimbaud shall continue to benefit the contribution of Teachers specialized in FLE, to diversify its input and its French remedial classes for its pupils.

Communication: communication means between School / parents

Communication must be implemented in the best possible way: written communication shall always be level-headed and polite. Emails are a communication tool that is used to update parents with information from the school administration.

The link book, yet, remains the key and formal tool regarding communication between parents and teachers.

It is nevertheless brought to everybody's attention that a face-to-face meeting is often the best way to communicate well: this can avoid a good number of misunderstanding and some mishap / dysfunction which can be detrimental to a good quality relationship among adults that is so essential to the thriving of children.

School Life:

- Internal rules:

The new text fully re-examined by the commission in charge of writing the IR is unanimously adopted.

It is suggested to create along with it a document that would sum up the core values and main regulations of the school's rules. This could be done with posters.

The teachers notify once more the School Council that some parents still do not pick up their children on due time. These children remain in the school although they are not enrolled in any activity.

On the Msasani campus, some children who are supposed to be picked up at 13:00hrs sometimes happen not to be picked up until 14:00hrs, which is not acceptable for the School in terms of liability.

The children who do not get picked up sometimes fall asleep.

Mrs Guillotin reminds the parents that no child is allowed and can stay within the School's premises without being enrolled in an activity.

The internal rules was clear about the topic: the school declines any responsibility in case of an accident involving a child in the school outside school hours or activity hours.

The School Council as a whole agrees in a paying nursery service to be created for the pupils. The applied fees must logically be at least as high as an extra-curricular activity.

Regarding the bus arrival time at 13:15hrs to the Oysterbay campus, it is recommended to the parents to stay inside the school's premises while waiting for the bus – for security reasons but also, with the coming rainy season, to be under cover.

Campaign for scholarship applications (for French citizens only - CLB 1, Thursday 23rd April 2015 14:00hrs, Consular service of the French Embassy)

Library: Unipresse society / school and family subscriptions

The Librarians who have offered families to subscribe to French magazines have been facing continuous issues with the UNIPRESSE agency. This year, their service has been deplorable and the persons in charge have had to undertake many actions – direct contacts with publishers, registered mails sent to Unipresse, etc – so as to find a solution to Unipresse's failing to send the individual subscriptions taken by families. It is clearly specified that the difficulties come from Unipresse and not from the School.

This service is important for the parents, who wish to thank, despite it all, the efforts produced by Caroline and Iris.

Next year, this type of subscription will be likely to be made directly with the publishers.

Teachers' turnover 2015-2016:

-Creation of a resident position in Earth and Life Science / Physics and Chemistry / Technology

-2 positions created for the high school (Senior Secondary)

-3 vacant positions for the Nursery School

-2 vacant positions + 1 position created for the Elementary School

Running and Investment:

-Construction / need in classrooms: 2 classrooms for the 2015-2016 school year.

-Annual orders for school supplies and furniture for which a stocklist will have to be made.

There has been a shortage of staff, especially of administrative staff, to address the rapid growth in the number of pupils and classes at the French School in the past few years.

Effective release of the offer for an Administrative and Financial Manager position (this task is currently taken on by the Treasurer of the Management Committee and by the Director).

Extra-curricular activities (AES):

The coordinator reminds the parents that the AES are not compulsory. This service is provided for the families outside school hours. The teaching staff however recommend the families to enroll their children in no more than three (3) activities a week. Some children (CP level) have activities every day of the week, which is far too many. All the teachers witness an early exhaustion of some children in the middle of the Term: they remain at the school for too long in the day.

Following a received mail condemning a crowded activity, the coordinator checked the information and rectifies the wrong information in the message and assures the parents representatives that the jewelry creation workshop is not over-numbered.

As for the judo activity, it is explained that the Sports Teacher who is in charge of the activity is a qualified judo teacher in France, used to training groups with over 30 children. As an instructor for sports trainers as well, he is qualified and able to manage a big group of pupils in this activity.

Lastly, the coordinators wish to remind the families that any enrolment to an extra-curricular activity induces/means abiding by the rules that apply, as much on the education level for the children as regarding the necessity to settle payment for the AES within the set deadlines.

i **School Life** = it must be brought to everybody's attention that this administrative service in French refers to the following: pastoral care, discipline, behaviour and conduct, late arrivals, and absences.