

Agenda ESCPH Board Meeting

Date: Thursday 10 April 2025
Time: 16:30-18:00
Venue: 214, 2nd Floor, European School Copenhagen
Members: Kira Peter-Hansen (MEP and External Member), Margo Rachat (ESCPH Parent), Laure Conte (ESCPH Parent), Signe Severinsen (ESCPH Staff), Rasmus Hornecker (ESCPH Staff), Muskan Asim (ESCPH Student), Saanvi Parija (ESCPH Student), Özkan Güler (Director ESCPH)
Guests: Helle Bjerre Degn (Deputy Director), Hella Helvig Jensen (Head of Administration)
Apologies: Tinne Hoff Kjeldsen (External Member), Laura Rosenvinge (Copenhagen City Council and External Member), Andreas Manville (EEA and External Member), Christen Bagger (ESCPH Parent), Stéphanie Horion (ESCPH Parent)
Minutes: Helene Kristensen

ESCPH Board Meeting

Agenda:

1. Approval of the agenda (decision) – 1 min.

Annex 1.1 - Agenda ESCPH Board Meeting 20250410

Kira Peter-Hansen suggested the addition of a new item to the agenda between items 3 and 4 regarding the status on budget plans from the municipality.

There was a wish from the present parent representatives for management to elaborate on the school's actions on bullying.

Decision:

- The board approved the agenda with the addition of the new item.

2. Approval of the minutes of the ESCPH board meeting 20 February 2025 (decision) – 1 min.

Annex 2.1 - Draft ESCPH Board Meeting Minutes 20250220

Decision:

- The board approved the minutes.

3. 2024 accounts for Upper Secondary (decision) – 15 mins.

Annex 3.1 – Annual report 2024 - ESCPH Upper Secondary

Annex 3.2 – ESCPH - Statusprotokol 2024

Purpose: Hella Helvig Jensen will present the 2024 accounts for the Upper Secondary for approval by the board.

Hella Helvig Jensen presented 2024 accounts for the Upper Secondary along with the auditor's report.

Audit report:

- The auditors did not have any remarks to the accounts.
- The only thing they point out is the IT security of Lectio as the provider of our administration system. This is due to several requirements from UVM that Lectio does not meet. This remains an ongoing struggle with the company behind Lectio for most Danish gymnasiums. We are aware of this, and we work with the risk.

Annual report for Upper Secondary:

- The Upper Secondary comes out with a surplus in 2024 of DKK 892,781.
- The key numbers show that the Upper Secondary has a 5.9% increase in annual students (*årselever*) and that the numbers are consistent. Operations are more sustainable each year.
- Under-expenditure in some areas was affected by the change of Director and less teachers than expected.
- We have experienced a gradual increase in state subsidies since 2017 due to more students, as well as additional funding from the municipality as the national funding regulations are inadequate for the ES system.
- There has been an unexpected rise in energy costs which we do not know the basis of. The municipality covers 80% of the expense as per the distribution of shared expenses, while the Upper Secondary budget must cover the remaining 20%. We have an ongoing dialogue with the municipality to uncover the agreement and receive compensation for this excess cost.

4. Status on budget from the municipality (orientation)

Øzkan Güleriyüz informed the board about the municipality's budget plans.

From 2026, Borgerrepræsentationen (Copenhagen City Council) need to find 66 million to save within the municipality's school budget. We were targeted for cuts as part of this, with suggestions to reduce spending by 1 million from 2026.

We sent a letter of concern regarding the suggested cuts. An upcoming meeting will decide if the budget proposal will be dismissed or approved.

We suggest that the proposal be dismissed, as it was based on incorrect numbers due to miscalculations within our budget. The mayor has communicated no intention to proceed with these cuts in our area. We are under the impression that it is not a political wish, but that administratively, there is a push to reduce special grants (*særbevillinger*).

The procedures for the decision are still to be concluded. The final decision is yet to be made and there will also be a 2nd round of hearings in Borgerrepræsentationen (Copenhagen City Council).

We are under the clear impression that we are not to worry about these budget cuts.

5. Revised 2025 budget for Primary, Secondary, and After School Care (decision) – 10 mins.

Annex 4.1 – DA Revised 2025 budget for Primary, Secondary, and ASC

Annex 4.2 – EN Revised 2025 budget for Primary, Secondary, and ASC

Purpose: Hella Helvig Jensen will present the revised 2025 budget for Primary, Secondary, and After School Care for approval by the board.

The budget is being reopened due to administrative errors in BUF's finance department related to agreements made for a fixed number of students. The agreement was made in 2020.

This resulted in an overpayment of 1 million, which affects the payment calculations tied to the number of classes we have. The error occurred in Q1 of 2024, causing us to have an artificially boosted budget due to calculation mistakes.

The revised budget

The budget has been revised to correct the wrongful subsidy calculations. The revised budget posts a surplus of DKK 78,646. The pedagogical meals and the After School Care's afternoon food are included under the Culinary School.

Decision:

- The revised budget was approved by the board.

6. Strategic focus point 4 (discussion) – 20 mins.

Annex 5.1 – Strategic Focus Points 2024-2025

Purpose: Discuss updates and inputs for strategic focus point 4, ESCPH has an established identity as a European School.

Øzkan Güleriyüz presented ESCPH's work related to strategic focus point 4, ESCPH has an established identity as a European School.

Key points

- Erasmus accreditation: We received a high score in the recent accreditation round, despite limited spaces this year. We intend to apply again next year with more experience.
European citizenship: S3 have planned visits to schools in Germany and France.
- E-twinning: Online exchange programme, supported by UVM, allows classes to collaborate across Europe on educational projects. There is potential to expand this into study trips.
- Mobility programme (S5): Students have the opportunity to study at another European School for a semester. We use this initiative to attract new students, but the application procedure is difficult as it begins in S4.
- CoSEEA: Our students are actively involved in the council and discuss themes and concerns of the Accredited European Schools.
- Eurosports 2026: We hope to participate in the European Schools' biannual sports competition expected in spring 2026 in Bruxelles.
- Study trips: Focused on academia and sustainability.
- ES and AES forums: Recent training session in Cyprus concentrated on teacher and student well-being, with upcoming sessions planned in The Hague.
- French community: Strengthening ties and expanding knowledge of ESCPH within the French community in Copenhagen. We have had successful visits from Institut Francais and the French Embassy, promoting cultural exchange and collaboration.
- EEA: EEA are inviting us to further collaboration, for example through sustainability projects.
- Language certifications: We already offer our students the Deutsches Sprachdiplom, and we are becoming the first certified DELF (Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française) school in Denmark.
- European events: We celebrate European Day of Languages and Europe Day every year.
- Professional development: The European Schools are working on a new common portal to facilitate staff collaboration and development.

The board discussed and contributed with ideas as to how the school can be promoted in connection to the Danish presidency of the Council of the European Union from 1st of July. The school supports the general European vision and we should aim to participate in different events connected to the presidency.

7. Admission (orientation) - 10 mins.

Nursery

Helle Degn informed the board about the status of admission to our new Nursery classes. We have screened around 250 students for the 3 sections, where the Danish and English sections are more popular than the French section.

The Danish and English Nursery classes are assembled and full, with a reserve list as a backup. We are aiming for 20 students in our French Nursery class by school start.

It was brought up that parent representatives hear from parents who have children at school but whose siblings have been rejected.

Helle Degn informed the board about the admission of siblings in the different sections. We admit 70% of siblings.

DA: 11 siblings admitted, 6 rejected.

EN: 9 siblings admitted, 4 rejected.

FR: 5 siblings admitted, 2 rejected.

The criteria for admitting siblings have been set by the municipality. The admission regulations are important so the school can keep a high language level and school maturity level.

It was commented that the school start age can be problematic for the French class, as it is common to start school earlier in the French school system than in Denmark.

Helle Degn commented that we are in dialogue with the municipality regarding this challenge, but that the age for when children start in school in Denmark is determined by compulsory school attendance (*undervisningspligten*) in the Danish Folkeskole Act (*Folkeskoleloven*).

It was commented that the board should trust that the screenings of all students are always conducted at the highest level of professionalism by our staff.

Upper Secondary

Øzkan Güleriyüz informed the board about the status of admission to our new Upper Secondary classes. We received 32 first priority applications, with 75 available spaces in our three classes. Soon, we will receive those who have selected us as their second priority. We are hoping that more students will apply in the upcoming period. There is also a screening process for the Upper Secondary.

It is still important that the school, and the Upper Secondary in general, is visible in the landscape.

8. Various updates and information – 15 mins.

Information from students

Lower Secondary

Lower Secondary are currently planning their student gala. The Student Council is currently focused on creating an environment that ensures S1s and S2s also feel safe in Secondary. The stress that has surrounded B-tests has become much better for the S4s.

Upper Secondary

The Student Council had their general assembly recently where the bylaws were adjusted and new positions were added – school coordinator, SoMe organisers, and DGS representatives. The Student Council is now publishing a monthly student update.

ESCPH are represented in CoSEEA, and they are working on strengthening the position of the accredited European Schools. They have recently attended a meeting with the JTC (Joint Teaching Committee) where they brought up the issue of the syllabus' vague description of the A-marks.

Information from staff

Primary and Lower Secondary:

Allocation of hours is a work in progress, and it is going well.

Upper Secondary:

Working on allocation of hours which is going well.

Information from management

The school will hold the annual Easter assembly tomorrow before the holiday. We celebrate that we are lucky enough to be able to go to school and gather here every day. We also host the egg rolling competition.

During the holiday, renovations will take place around the school. The staff lounge, Secondary library, and the Upper Secondary hub should be ready when we come back.

We are currently looking forward to the School Saturday/Spring Fair on 24th of May. We will be celebrating cultures and have a wide variety of activities around the school. Primary will be displaying their products from theme week, Lower Secondary will sell drinks, and Upper Secondary will sell food. There will be a flea market and lottery. Staff, students, and families will join from 9 – 12.



9. AOB – 5 mins.

Management gave a status on the Secondary 1 French class, as it is the first class of the French section to move into Secondary. The class is thriving and parent meetings have been held successfully. The class is younger than the rest of the year level which reflects in maturity and creates different dynamics.

Øzkan Güleriyüz addressed the parent representatives' wish for management to elaborate on the school's actions on bullying. He explained that Rikke Nielsen and Helle Degn presented our new anti-bullying policy at a board meeting earlier this school year, where they thoroughly went through how bullying is addressed and handled at the school. The school follows the general guidelines from the municipality.

Øzkan Güleriyüz stated that there is no need to create unnecessary statistics to bring to the board, as this subject is the concern of the school's management team and not within the board's sphere of competence.

He urged the board to have trust in the professionalism of the school's staff and the management team.

Margo Rachat commented that we could address the different action items on the strategic focus points for Primary vs Secondary.

Øzkan Güleriyüz informed the board that he has found a candidate to facilitate a board seminar. The seminar will be in the nearest future.

