

Minutes ESCPH Board Meeting

Date: Thursday 25 September 2025
Time: 16:30-18:00
Venue: 214, 2nd Floor, European School Copenhagen
Members: Kira Peter-Hansen (MEP and External Member), Andreas Manville (EEA and External Member), Margo Rachat (ESCPH Parent), Stéphanie Horion (ESCPH Parent), Laure Conte (ESCPH Parent), Johan Lindell (ESCPH Staff), Rasmus Hornecker (ESCPH Staff), Helene Kristensen (ESCPH Staff), Eva Hatting (ESCPH Student), Rosa Bukowy-Duving (ESCPH Student), Øzkan Güleriyüz (Director ESCPH)
Guests: Helle Bjerre Degn (Deputy Director)
Apologies: Tinne Hoff Kjeldsen (External Member), Laura Rosenvinge (Copenhagen City Council and External Member), Christen Bagger (ESCPH Parent)
Minutes: Helene Kristensen

ESCPH Board Meeting

Agenda:

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

Annex 1.1 - Agenda ESCPH Board Meeting 20250925

The board did a round of introductions to welcome Eva Hatting and Rosa Bukowy-Duving.

Decision:

The board approved the agenda.

2. Approval of the minutes of the ESCPH board meeting 12 June 2025 (decision) - 1 min.

Annex 2.1 - Draft ESCPH Board Meeting Minutes 20250612

Decision:

The board approved the minutes.

3. L2 Danish (decision) – 15 min.

Annex 3.1 – L2 Danish proposal version 2

Purpose: Øzkan Gülerüz will present the updated version of management's L2 proposal that contains details regarding Danish lessons that the board has requested. The board decides on the proposal.

Øzkan Gülerüz presented the revised version of management's L2 proposal with more details on the Danish lessons that the school will provide if L2 Danish is removed. Points from the last meeting were summed up.

It was corrected that the proposal is intended to be valid for the P0s from next year and not P1s as initially written. The students who have L2 Danish now will continue as planned throughout Primary and Secondary.

The proposal introduced four categories for Danish lessons, catering to beginners and advanced learners in both P2/3 and P4/5. These lessons are scheduled to take place after classes, between approximately 14:00 – 15:00. We intend to keep this offer of Danish classes, but they will require a minimum of 7 students, adhering to the guidelines set for ordinary classes. It will be up to the board to evaluate the classes, and they cannot be removed without the approval of the board.

Øzkan Gülerüz emphasised that the school's mission is to provide multilingual and European education, and that this is our responsibility. There are plenty of other schools – Folkeskoler – in the municipality where Danish education is offered. The L3 Danish curriculum that we offer is sufficient for access to Danish higher education.

L2 Danish is not part of the budget for the school, which many board members agreed is a good reason in itself to accept the proposal. Discussion arose around possible extra funding sources, but sponsorship of that nature is not allowed.

It was suggested by multiple board members that the lessons be at least 60 minutes long and that there should also be homework for the students.

Laure Conte shared her concerns regarding the removal of L2 Danish. It is a concern that the students will not learn enough Danish or integrate sufficiently.

Rasmus Hornecker added that staff are concerned about the school losing its European identity due to L2 Danish, and that staff supports the proposal.

Eva Hatting added that most students, in her experience, speak a perfectly fine Danish if they have L3 Danish. There was general agreement on this.

Øzkan Gülerüz highlighted that Danish language education is not the responsibility or purpose of the school. There was general agreement on this. Margo Rachat added that the students will most likely integrate into society, not through L2 Danish, but through clubs and sports in Denmark.

Andreas Manville added that good communication about this to the parents is key.

Kira Peter-Hansen summarised the discussion. The board shows overall support for the proposal. It is agreed that management will strive to place the Danish lessons right after school. Communication to parents is important regarding this decision.

Decision:

The board approved the L2 Danish proposal put forward by management.

Laure Conte requested to have her opposition to the decision recorded in the minutes. She expressed concern that the school will lose attraction to the French section.

4. Overall objectives (discussion) – 25 min.

Annex 4.1 – Establishing new overall objectives

Purpose: The current overall objectives run until the end of 2025.

Therefore, the board will discuss their input for new overall objectives.

Øzkan Güleriyüz presented the current overall objectives that will run until the end of 2025. They were chosen for a 3-year period, so the board now needs to discuss their input for new overall objectives.

Management suggests that the overall objectives should last for 4 years instead of 3 years to better align with the 2-year strategic focus points. Management wants to collect the boards input today and work on new overall objectives that are ready to be approved at the upcoming board meeting. This ensures that we have a new set of objectives ready when we begin to work with new strategic focus points in the spring.

Input from the board:

- Evaluate how much we focus on high academic standards – while acknowledging that some parents choose the school for its high academic standards.
- Proposal to enhance the European educational perspective and highlight the school's connections with other European institutions and efforts in projects across Europe.
- Aim to position the school as the best international school in Denmark emphasizing democratic engagement and values.
- Suggestion to remove hierarchical numbering in current objective to avoid attaching more importance to some than to others.
- Emphasize objectives that resonate with the student body, reflecting well-being, growth and achievement.
- Consider differences from other schools within the municipality that could be advantageous.
- Stronger emphasis on well-being. Well-being is the key to high academic standards.

The board agreed that overall objectives should last for a 4-year period aligning them with our strategic focus.

The new overall objectives will be presented and discussed at the board meeting in December.

5. Upper Secondary (discussion) – 20 min.

Purpose: Øzkan Güleriyüz will update the board on the current situation in the Upper Secondary.

Øzkan Güleriyüz updated the board on the current situation in the Upper Secondary. The school is working hard on attracting more students to the department. Unfortunately, we only accepted 50 students for S5 at the beginning of this school year. There was a decrease in applicants from our own S4s. This is something we want to work on internally.

It is important to note that we have plenty of applicants, but that many are unfortunately rejected due to our language criteria.

The small classes and decrease in student intake are a cause of concern for teachers in the Upper Secondary.

Management has initiated a working group with Upper Secondary teachers focusing on both internal and external aspects to address the current challenges of student intake.

Board members contributed with valuable input that the school will consider in their work with attracting students.

Øzkan Güleriyüz emphasized that we will continue working hard on improving the situation.

6. Various updates and information – 10 mins.

- Information from students

Upper Secondary

Last year we discussed the lack of A-mark criteria. This year, the school has provided an A-mark overview which has been a great help to students. There are new S5s and S6s in the Student Council and student engagement is going really well. COSEEA and DGS involvement is still going well. The student council want to work on a student handbook.

Secondary

Students in Secondary want more clubs and socialising across year groups and classes. We currently have a popular debate club that is almost fully class-sized.

We would also like more after school activities to strengthen the community in Secondary. The workload is okay for students right now.

- Information from staff

Primary and Secondary

It has been a quiet start to the school year and everything is going as planned.

Upper Secondary

We have had a nice introduction trip to Glumsø for the new S5s. The S7s are currently preparing for pre-bacs.

Technical and administrative staff

It is going well in the TAP department, and we are finally settling in after a busy start to the school year.

- Information from management

Skoleudviklingssamtalen

Each year, the school must be part of a Skoleudviklingssamtale with the municipality. Özkan Güleriyüz has suggested to the municipality that the school would like to focus on our Audit results and development points from the European Schools instead of taking on the double workload of an extra developmental dimension – and, consequently, seek to be exempted from participation in Skoleudviklingssamtalen.

The board supports that the school moves to solely work with the Audit results.

Board seminar

Øzkan Güleriyüz suggested that we hold the board seminar as a direct extension of the December board meeting. The board agreed.

Other information from management

- We are currently in the process of hiring a new kitchen manager.
- We have recently hosted an AES directors meeting where Øzkan worked with other directors to strengthen the accredited European Schools.
- Management and other representatives from ESCPH will attend the AES conference in The Hague in the beginning of October.
- We have decided to call the Lower Secondary department Secondary from now on – Primary, Secondary and Upper Secondary.
- We have an update on the last announcement regarding swimming. It is correct that we are not obliged to provide swimming lessons according to the Municipality of Copenhagen. However, we are obliged to provide swimming lessons according to the Primary PE curriculum for the European Schools. This means that there are no changes to swimming lessons in Primary.

7. AOB – 5 mins.

Stéphanie Horion informed the board that ESCPH, the municipality and Carlsberg Byen's homeowner's association will have a meeting on 8th of October to discuss traffic safety issues. Stéphanie Horion and Øzkan Güleriyüz will represent the school and the board.

Øzkan Güleriyüz asked the board for ideas on how we can involve the school more in the current EU presidency.