

# PLENARY MEETING WITH THE APE BUREAU – SCHOOL YEAR 2024-2025

## Minutes of the Meeting on October 3, 2024

### PARTICIPANTS

Present at the meeting were :

- Ms. Dalila MESSEGHM, Headmistress,
- Ms. Lise TALBOT BARRÉ, Counselor for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs
- Mr. Isadore REAUD, School Manager,
- Mr. Blaise FENART, Primary School Director,
- Mr. Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance,
- Mr. Matthieu REYNAUD, President of APE Bureau,
- Ms. Nadia ALTAMIRANO-PANZANI, Treasurer of the APE Bureau,
- Mr. Pooripat PRUKSANUBAL, Member of the APE Bureau,
- Ms. Marisa PHIWKHAW, Member of the APE Bureau,
- Mr. Therdsiddhi HOPRASARTSUK-PELLAUMAIL, Member of the APE Bureau (via videoconference),
- Ms. Lalana SERMSUKSKULCHAI, Member of the APE Bureau,
- Mr. Laurent MOIGNE, Staff Representative,
- Mr. Axel GAUTHIER, Staff Representative.

Apologies from:

- Ms. Sirikorn MANEERIN, President of the FFE,
- Mr. Vincent ROUBINET, Vice President of the FFE,
- Ms. Juthaporn COWAN, Member of the APE Bureau,
- Ms. Geneviève FAMY, Member of the APE Bureau.

The meeting minutes were taken by Ms. Chanikan BUAKAEW, assistant to the APE Bureau.

### MEETING TIMELINE

Start : 3.15 PM

End : 4.40 PM

### AGENDA

1. Adoption of the meeting agenda, introduction of the meeting structure and the new APE Bureau Members.
2. Approval of the minutes from the June 25, 2024 meeting.
3. Meeting components and principles:
  - o Charter for Plenary Meetings with the APE Bureau
  - o Declaration of potential conflicts of interest by Meeting participants
  - o Scope of competencies of the meeting body (Agreement between FFE and AEFÉ, delegation of competencies, other institutional bodies)
  - o Organization and functioning of working commissions
  - o Follow-up on the LFIB 2032 working group

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4. Any other business
5. Date of the next Plenary Meeting with the APE Bureau

## 1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND INTRODUCTION OF THE MEETING STRUCTURE AND THE NEW APE BUREAU

Ms. MESSEGHEM, Headmistress of the Lycée Français International de Bangkok, congratulates all the newly elected parent representatives and thanks all members of the APE Bureau for attending this first meeting. Next, she presents the meeting's agenda, which is unanimously adopted by the participants.

## 2. VALIDATION OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 25, 2024 MEETING

The minutes from the June 25, 2024 meeting are unanimously approved. It is requested that the minutes should be prepared in both French and English.

## 3. MEETING COMPONENTS AND PRINCIPLES

### Charter for Plenary Meetings with the APE Bureau

Two copies of the Plenary Meeting Charter were distributed to each new member of the plenary meeting with the APE Bureau for signature.

The Headmistress suggests that the Plenary Meeting Charter and the APE Bureau Regulations should be drafted in both French and English.

### Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interest

No declarations of conflict of interest are made by the members.

### Scope of Competency of the Meeting Body (Agreement between FFE and AEFÉ, Delegation of Competencies, Other Institutional Bodies)

The Headmistress reminds attendees of Article 14 of the agreement between FFE with AEFÉ, which defines the competencies of the APE Bureau and outlines its areas of jurisdiction:

*“The French Foundation for EDUCATION (FFE), the managing body of LFIB, is the school's license holder. As such, the FFE is the legal representative of LFIB. In accordance with the law, the school must have a Board of Directors, a common decision-making body. This Board is composed of eight members: three representatives of FFE (the President, the Thai Headmistress, and the School manager), one representative from the Embassy, one representative from AEFÉ, two parent representatives (the president and the treasurer of the APE), and one teacher representative.*”

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*The FFE, as the managing organization, delegates its authority to monitor the budget execution and follow-up on expenditure commitments to the APE Bureau. The APE Bureau's composition and the selection process for its members are governed by the APE regulations.*

*The LFIB Board of Directors is assisted by committees responsible for examining financial matters or issues with financial implications. It determines the number, competencies, and composition of these committees. The APE Bureau sits on the Finance, Human Resources, Communication, Constructions, Canteen, Digital, and Transportation committees. It is represented in an advisory role within regulatory bodies. Under the agreement, the LFIB Board of Directors approves the budget proposal put forth by the Headmaster, which is reviewed by the finance committee and submitted to the APE Bureau to receive its opinion. It also approves the tuition fees and initial registration fees.”*

The APE Bureau regulations are available on the LFIB website.

## **Organization and Functioning of Work Commissions**

The meeting reviews the various commissions and explains their modes of operation.

### ● **FINANCES COMMISSION**

The Finance Commission is composed of:

- Dalila MESSEGHEM, Headmistress
- Isadore REAUD, School Manager
- Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance
- Matthieu REYNAUD, APE President
- Nadia ALTAMIRANO-PANZANI, APE Treasurer

The Finance Commission typically meets during budget formation and financial statement reviews, approximately every two months.

The Financial Director explains that the 2024-2025 school year is starting similarly to the previous one, with a slight decline in enrollment but otherwise stable, which means the 2025 projections will be based on this steady trend. Despite a slight decrease, the anticipated drop in students was not as severe as expected. The 2025 plan will follow this trend without major volume changes. Enrollment is down by 11 students compared to 2023-2024, but re-enrollment rates are steady, leading to a revenue shortfall of about 3 million THB, mainly due to decreased enrollment fees. However, attracting new students remains a challenge.

While revenue forecasts are mostly met, there has been a significant drop in AES, with a 600,000 THB loss compared to projections and over a million compared to the previous year. This is partly due to fewer school days impacting AES rates. Overall, revenue is in line with expectations, and expenses are following the projected budget. A detailed financial review for the last semester will be discussed in the next APE meeting.

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Mr. REYNAUD inquires if there are fewer AES hours and less parent involvement this year. However, Mr. MONIER pointed out that further analysis is needed to understand the drop in registrations.

Mr. REYNAUD adds that daycare fees should be included in AES revenue and asked why this hasn't been implemented yet, despite the set fee structure. Mr. MONIER clarified that daycare services are not yet in place and mentions changes in hiring contractors through a new company, ManPower.

Mr. MONIER also discusses plans to implement an online payment system, simplifying transactions for international newcomers. This system will allow credit card payments with a 2.8% fee, along with payment installments via Kasikorn Bank. A fee-free payment option, Prompt-Pay, will also be available to reduce common errors in bank transactions. This new setup is expected to ease administrative tasks and shorten delays related to payment follow-ups, thanks to automated notifications and verifications.

## ● HR COMMISSION

The Human Resources Commission is composed of:

- Dalila MESSEGHEM, Headmistress
- Chananao VARUNYOU, Thai Headmistress
- Isadore REAUD, School Manager
- Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance
- Supaluck TAECHAPONGSTORN, HR Manager
- Blaise FENART, Primary School Director
- Chamila BALBOLIA, Deputy Headmistress
- Matthieu REYNAUD, APE President
- Nadia ALTAMIRANO-PANZANI, APE Treasurer

The HR Commission meets formally at least twice per year. Meetings can be convened at the request of staff or to discuss specific issues, such as contract extensions ahead of retirements.

## ● CANTEEN COMMISSION

The Canteen Commission is composed of:

- Dalila MESSEGHEM, Headmistress
- Isadore REAUD, School Manager
- Blaise FENART, Primary School Director
- Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance
- Marisa PHIWKHAW, Parent Representative
- Juthaporn COWAN, Parent Representative

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Mr. REAUD reminds that the commission meets to address specific issues related to the school canteen and implements regular actions or activities. For instance, the annual canteen presentation for parents is likely to be the first Canteen Commission meeting topic of the year.

Ms. MESSEGHEM expresses appreciation for the canteen's themed menu proposals and emphasized the importance of parents providing relevant feedback to the commission.

Mr. REAUD added that the commission also oversees the contract with Café Di Maria, which operates two kiosks. With minimal canteen issues reported, the commission plans to focus on supporting Café Di Maria in hygiene, food safety, and product selection, aiming to formalize a list of approved products for sale.

Ms. MESSEGHEM insists on the importance of integrating sustainability into the commission's work.

The Administrative and Financial Director mentions a significant upcoming task for the commission in 2025: the planned renovation of the cafeteria space.

The next Canteen Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 10, at 10:30 AM.

## ● CONSTRUCTIONS COMMISSION

The Constructions Commission is composed of:

- Isadore REAUD, School Manager
- Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance
- Pradya KHEMMASAKYOTINM, Technical Manager
- Therdsiddhi HOPRASARTSUK-PELLAUMAIL, Parent Representative
- Pooripat PRUKSANUBAL, Parent Representative

The Constructions Commission operates mainly in project mode, meeting according to project timelines. For example, during the cafeteria renovation project, the commission will meet to draft specifications, launch a call for bids, review proposals, and monitor project progress.

## ● COMMUNICATION COMMISSION

The Communication Commission is composed of:

- Dalila MESSEGHEM, Headmistress
- Isadore REAUD, School Manager
- Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance
- Blaise FENART, Primary School Director
- Alice CHAMBON, Communications Manager
- Pooripat PRUKSANUBAL, Parent Representative
- Lalana SERMSUKSKULCHAI, Parent Representative

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The commission recently completed a major project to redesign the school's website, which is now operational. They will continue monitoring its functionality and impact on users. Following this, the commission may shift its focus to new communication strategies, particularly outreach to the Thai community.

Mme TALBOT BARRE, Counselor for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, suggested enhancing collaboration between the school and the French Embassy on joint projects, with the communication teams from both institutions working together on specific initiatives.

## • AES COMMISSION

The AES Commission is composed of:

- Blaise FENART, Primary School Director
- Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance
- Narumol SIRISOPONSUK, AES Manager
- Juthaporn COWAN, Parent Representative
- Geneviève FAMY, Parent Representative

An initial meeting was held earlier this week to oversee the competitive football program. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled to assess the beginning of the school year and discuss available spots for the current year.

## • DIGITAL COMMISSION

The Digital Commission is composed of:

- Dalila MESSEGHEM, Headmistress
- Isadore REAUD, School Manager
- Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance
- Blaise FENART, Primary School Director
- Chamila BALBOLIA, Deputy Headmistress
- David MATTA, IT Manager
- Therdsiddhi HOPRASARTSUK-PELLAUMAIL, Parent Representative
- Geneviève FAMY, Parent Representative

The Digital Commission has agreed to meet twice a year, at the beginning and end of the school year, to review activities and investments, especially in preparation for the next school year.

Mr. MOIGNE suggested the possibility of PIX certification for staff, to which Ms. MESSEGHEM responds that this could be discussed in greater detail.

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## ● TRANSPORT COMMISSION

The Transport Commission is composed of:

- Dalila MESSEGHEM, Headmistress
- Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance
- Isadore REAUD, School Manager
- Blaise FENART, Primary School Director
- Marisa PHIWKHAW, Parent Representative
- Lalana SERMSUKSKULCHAI, Parent Representative

The commission recently held a meeting to review the implementation of the new school transportation contract. Last year, the commission managed the call for proposals, developed the Terms of Reference (TOR), and evaluated submissions from different companies.

Their role is not to manage daily transport services but to ensure the contract's terms are met, especially regarding safety standards. Families can reach out to the transport commission with any transport-related issues involving the Montri service provider.

## FOLLOW-UP : LFIB 2032 PROJECT WORKING GROUP

The LFIB 2032 Working Group includes:

- Vincent ROUBINET, FFE Vice President
- TALBOT BARRE Lise, Counselor for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, Embassy Representative
- Dalila MESSEGHEM, Headmistress, LFIB Representative
- Isadore REAUD, School Manager, LFIB Representative
- Therdsiddhi HOPRASARTSUK-PELLAUMAIL, APE Representative
- M. Laurent VIRELLO, School Council Representative
- Christophe MONIER, Director of Administration and Finance

Mr. REAUD provides an overview of the situation: LFIB currently leases its land, and the lease will expire in March 2032. Discussions with the owners on lease renewal terms have been ongoing for several years. The FFE is responsible for the decision and has formed this working group to guide the project. A progress update is provided at the end of each monthly meeting with the APE Bureau to keep parents informed.

The working group is exploring several options simultaneously:

1. **Lease Renewal:** Follow-up on negotiations with the owners. A formal renewal offer was submitted to the family in December 2022, but despite multiple follow-ups, no clear response has been provided. The owners appear to be delaying their decision.
2. **New Land Search:** Considering a relocation of the school by purchasing land rather than signing a new lease to avoid recurring lease renewal issues. Several potential

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sites have been identified, studied, and visited. At this stage, no final decision can be made, as options are limited due to high real estate prices in Bangkok.

3. **Co-location with Other Institutions:** Co-location with other institutions, such as a university or another international school, was considered but has not yielded any concrete options.

In terms of financing, the school has been gradually building a fund over the years, but it will still be insufficient for a purchase and construction project by 2032. A bank loan will be required, but actions on this front can only begin once the repayment for the kindergarten construction loan is completed in 2025.

Ms. MESSEGHM insists on the urgency of this project, as 2032 is fast approaching.

Ms. PANZANI shares her experiences with two similar situations in Myanmar, where a new French lycée was eventually built with significant support from the Ministry and Embassy, partly due to strong collaboration between the schools, the Ministry, and the Embassy. She highlighted the importance of diplomatic support in acquiring suitable land at feasible prices. Mme PANZANI also stresses the need to anticipate protective clauses in contracts to avoid financial issues in case of unexpected difficulties and suggested setting up emergency measures.

Ms. TALBOT-BARRE, COCAC, confirms the ambassador's close involvement with the project. She underscored the need to establish a firm timeline, as multiple deadlines have already been postponed. A clear choice of action is essential to move forward, and she recommended communicating with other partners, such as the French Foreign Trade Advisors (CCEF) in Thailand, to explore viable options.

Mr. REAUD responds that once a concrete project is defined, engaging in discussions and seeking contributions will be essential, with an emphasis on the urgent need for progress.

Mr. REYNAUD expresses concerns about the aging infrastructure and the necessary investments. The slow pace of decision-making affects not only families and school fees but also the entire school. He stressed the importance of making quick decisions to secure the school's future.

Mr. MOIGNE inquires whether any sufficiently large land plots near a BTS or metro station in Bangkok might be within the budget. In response, Mr. REAUD explained that travel distance isn't the only selection criterion for the land search, as commuting time also needs to be considered.

Mr. REYNAUD insists on conducting a market study led by professionals to avoid making decisions based on preliminary estimates alone.

Mr. MONIER mentions architectural options like building vertically to minimize land usage, which might allow the acquisition of a closer site. He also notes the importance of an impact study on families, as a distant relocation could lead to a drop in enrollment.



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Mr. REAUD pointed out that legal constraints limit the height of school buildings and require space for emergency vehicle access around buildings. These factors must be considered in the analysis of the required usable area.

Ms. PANZANI noted that other international schools have more active marketing and communication strategies and suggested that LFIB consider a similar approach to support the transition to a new site.

The next working group meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 7, following the plenary meeting with the APE Bureau.

### **ANY OTHERS BUSINESS**

Mr. REYNAUD commented on the presentation and discussion of this first meeting, emphasizing the importance of familiarizing new APE Bureau members with completed and upcoming projects.

The dates for the meetings of each commission will soon be informed with the commission members.

### **NEXT PLENARY MEETING WITH THE APE BUREAU**

The next Plenary Meeting with the APE Bureau is scheduled for Thursday, November 7, at 3:00 PM.