

PA General Assembly 17/10/2023, 6pm, ABIS Aula

Minutes

Attendees:

Giselle Nasser, Evi Ehrenreich, Chrissie Meyer, Elisabeth Zahlbruckner, Maggie Hühnmair, Siobhan Puschmann, Neil Luka, Christian Hell, Michael Tumpel, Stefan Schruckmair, Joanna Zhou, Nino Hofstadler, Nadia Perathoner, Amrutha Stallinger, Klaus Haslinger, Daniela Mur, Maria Rogova, Martin Leg, Shao Xo, Linda Scheinhart, Elke Litzlbauer, Vogiatzis Lambrini, Anton Goosen

Meeting Start

- *Giselle Nasser:*

Good evening everyone! It's so lovely to see you all here this evening.

Many of you know me, but for those who don't, my name is Giselle Nasser and I'm the deputy chairwoman of the ABIS Parent Association. My son, Sebastian, is now in MYP1, and this is our fifth year at ABIS. I've been an active member of the Parents Association since we joined the school.

Usually, the Chairperson would lead the General Assembly of the PA, but tonight that falls to me as deputy, because our lovely Chairwoman, Elisabeth Zahlbruckner, is no longer an ABIS parent. Following the graduation of her youngest daughter in July, she is no longer allowed to serve on our committee, according to our statutes.

She is, however, here tonight. Elisabeth, I know you hate this, but we want to recognise your hard work and dedication all these years. Thank you so much for everything you've done for ABIS and the PA. We will miss you!

In this year's general assembly, we want to remind you all of last year's PA events and activities, inform you of our plans for this year, and let you know about our main incomes and expenses. We will then ask you to release the current board of the PA, and we will vote in a new PA board.

Sitting here at the front with me from our current board are Evi as secretary and Chrissie as Treasurer.

We also have Maggie, Siobhan, and Neil, who we will hear from later. Maggie and Siobhan are also proposed to take places on the board for the coming two years.

What is the PA?

I would like to take a moment to clarify what the Parent Association does, and how it works. Many of you will have seen the video at parent information night during the first two weeks of term, and that is also available on our webpage.

The Parent Association at ABIS aims to support the educational goals of our awesome teachers and students, raise funds for projects and school equipment, provide a social and welcoming community for all school families, and strengthen and support our incredible international spirit.

We provide treats, events, supplies, and activities throughout the year for students and staff. We work to bring our community of ABIS families closer together through special events such as the Christmas Market, International Day, and the Walkathon. We provide opportunities for our parents to share their experience, skills, and time through volunteering on PA-organised occasions.

These are just a few examples of how the Parent Association is active in enhancing the school experience of our children. It takes many hours of volunteer work to make all this happen. It can take months to plan each event, and they simply wouldn't happen without the voluntary commitment of our active members. Thank you so much if you have helped in any way in the past year, and we hope you will be able to help, however you can, in the forthcoming one.

Recap of 2022/23

The year 2022 to 2023 was, as usual, a busy one for the PA.

We began with a Halloween party, saw an amazing Winter Wonderland, had a successful walkathon in aid of a school in Ghana and our own school library, and we held our very first Summer Party in the courtyard.

Healthy snack was served to the entire school, thanks to a wonderful parent sponsor who covered the shortfall between families who paid for Healthy Snack through their PA fee, and those who were not members.

We also introduced someone very special to the school - our new ABIS mascot. Our ABIS owl was a part of all our events, and has become an important part of our school spirit!

We, as usual, organised the weekly fruit basket, Krapfen for Karneval, a visit by St Nikolaus, and introduced the sale of preloved uniform at our events. We sponsor welcome bags for new students, and a set of ABIS green school wear for new teachers and staff.

We organised the Christmas party for our teachers and staff, with the money collected by our great class reps from parents, and from the PA. For teacher appreciation day, we organised special recognitions in the form of messages from every student to their teachers, as well as an amazing breakfast thanks to awesome parents who made and brought in an vast array of foods from all over the world.

We really consider last year a success, so thank you to everyone who contributed through fees, donations, and volunteer time!

Our treasurer, Chrissie, will now present the main incomes and expenses of the school year 2022 to 2023.

Financial Information

- *Chrissie Meyer:*

My name is Chrissie Meyer.

I am here tonight as the PA treasurer and would like to give you an overview of the income and expenses of the PA account for the school year 22/23.

As some of you might not know me, I would first of all like to introduce myself.

I am originally from Linz and moved to the UK as a student. 18 years later I returned to Linz with a South African husband, 2 kids, 1 dog and a truckload full of stuff. So... if your child tells you that they would like to spend some months abroad to study, think very carefully about it!

I have 2 children here at ABIS. Both started in the ELC. Christoph is now in PYP5 and Rosalie in MYP3. They are certainly... growing up fast!

And now let's talk about the money side of things:

The first slide gives you an overview of the main income categories of income:

1. The main source of income in the school year 22/23 were the **PA fees**. We received just over 24 000 EUR from parent contributions. On behalf of the PA, I would like to thank each one of you for contributing this way to our PA and we really hope that we achieve the same amount this school year. Currently, about 40% of PA fees have been paid in, please keep it coming!
2. In second place is the money raised during our **Walkathon** event. A fantastic amount of just under 6 000 EUR! 2 000 went towards the school project in Ghana, the rest will be invested in our library.
3. We received a further 3 000 from a variety of **fundraising events** like: Sportsfield Sponsoring, Easter Raffle, Ice Cream Sale, Halloween, CPR, Coffee morning first day of school
4. Like the year before, instead of buying individual Christmas presents for teachers per class, parents donated money towards the **annual Christmas dinner**. 2800 EUR were raised.
5. Our main school events were the **Christmas market** and the **Summer Party**.
6. **Sponsor income or our yearbook plus adhoc sales** added up to EUR 1800
7. We are very grateful to have received a sponsorship amount of just under EUR 1300 for **Healthy Snack** which enabled us to offer Healthy Snack to ALL of our students.
8. Other income: sale of school wear items, partial refund of graduation gowns (1/2 paid by school, 1/2 by PA)

The next slide gives you an overview of the main expense categories:

1. We spent just under 7 000 EUR on our yearbook. Your children will receive it this week from school.
2. Healthy Snack costs amounted to just below 4600 EUR.
3. Next are the expenses for our 3 big events from last year. As you will see on the right, those events are not generating cash, they cost more than any money raised from them, but that is okay, because these events are for our students and their families and are partially financed by our PA fees.
4. I also wanted to highlight 2 additional expenses: the ABIS Mascot and the Paperwolves board.

5. Of course, there were many other expenses during the year, which are listed on this slide as well.

Now I show you the “treasurer’s report”, that needs approval according to Austrian law.

All expenses were allocated to the purpose of the Association in accordance to the Articles of the Association.

- *Giselle Nasser:*

Auditors

According to Austrian law, our auditors have to give a report on their findings on the accounts of the year 2022. I now ask our auditors Michael Tumpel and Christian Hell for their report.

- Micheal and Christian stepped forward and reported on the accounts. They found everything to be in order and approved the accounts for the school year 2022/23

Thank you very much Michael and Christian. We appreciate you taking the time to perform this role for us.

Release of Liability

We have now finished the reporting session about the school year 2022/23 and before we move on to this current year we need to release the PA Board from any liability, according to the Articles of Association and Austrian law.

For the minutes of the meeting: There were no motions tabled until the 9th October 2023.

The General Assembly:

received the reports of the PA board and auditors, and shall now release the board from any liability.

For the minutes:

According to the Articles of Association, the General Assembly has voting power regardless of the number of present members.

Votes at the General Assembly shall be by simple majority.

I do ask: Does the General Assembly release the Parent Association Board Members of all liability?
Yes

Are there any votes against? No

Does anyone want to abstain from voting? No

This is not the case - unanimous decision in favour. Thank you very much!

We all thank you for your trust and support.

Fees

We want to thank everyone for transferring the PA fee, we appreciate your support!

To clarify procedure - only new starters have to sign a membership form. Everyone else can just transfer the appropriate fee.

Last year, 74% of ABIS students' families were members of the PA, and so far this year 40% have joined by transferring their membership fees. Details are available tonight if you need a reminder of the amounts and account details. Thank you so much!

Submitted Motions

There are no submitted motions.

Election Proposal

The election proposal is as follows:

Chair: Siobhan Puschmann

Deputy Chair: Giselle Nasser

Deputy Chair: Magdalena Hühnmair

Secretary: Evi Ehrenreich

Treasurer: Chrissie Meyer

First Auditor: Michael Tumpel

Second Auditor: Christian Hell

The function period for the new board will be two years.

I now ask: Does the General Assembly accept the proposal and elect the candidates? Yes

Are there any votes against? No

Does anyone want to abstain from voting? No

This is not the case - unanimous decision in favour. Thank you very much

The General Assembly agrees unanimously in favour.

For the next part of our evening, I would like to hand over to our new chair, Siobhan.

- *Siobhan Puschmann:*

Plans for 23/24

Thanks Giselle! Good evening everyone. I know lots of you, but if we haven't been introduced, I'm Siobhan, but you can call me Shevi, and my son Alex is in grade 4, and has been here since the start of Grade 1. I've helped support ABIS through after school clubs, and now with the PA, setting up the preloved uniform initiative and helping with events last year.

I know we've already officially thanked Elisabeth, but I just wanted to say that she has been really gracious in spending time helping us continue after her departure - she did so much, and for such a long time, that it really was automatic for her and she's had to answer a lot of stupid questions from me. I apologise, and I thank you again, and if I do half the job you did, I'll be happy. ABIS has been very lucky to have had you.

So, this year! We're going to continue with all the things we always do, such as organising the staff Christmas party, teacher appreciation, and larger whole-school events, which Maggie will tell you about shortly. We will support the annual visit from St Nikolaus, and organise the graduation reception, and support requests from the teachers as far as we can. We'll continue to sell preloved uniform so all donations of outgrown ABIS clothes are welcome, and we have some parent coffee times in the diary - the next one is going to be on the first day back after the Autumn break, so we hope to see some of you then.

The main areas of the PA activities are organised into teams, and I'm happy to hand over to the team leaders for an overview of 2023/24.

First up, is Healthy Snack.

Healthy Snack

Last Thursday saw our first healthy snack of the year. We are planning to continue to serve this to the entire school, regardless of whether children are members of the PA or not, as long as enough families pay their PA membership fee for this year. Last year the whole school enjoyed healthy snack thanks to a kind donor, and this year we are delighted that this donation will hopefully continue this year too. It is really very kind, and having seen how the kids all come together over the amazing healthy snack that's served, I can't overstate how lucky we are if this can continue, so it is very important that everyone who can pay their membership fee does,

We have thirteen dates in the diary for our usual healthy snack, then there will also be a healthy snack at the Walkathon, and sometime near the end of summer, for our fifteenth Healthy Snack, we will prepare some delicious fruit or yoghurt ice as a treat in the hot weather.

The Healthy Snack Team is led by Leza, Katarina, and Elke, and at least six additional volunteers are needed to prepare the snack for each session, and you can sign up online via the form that has been circulated, and join the WhatsApp group for updates.

The snack varies according to season, but is usually made up of fruit and veg, fresh bread with spreads, and yoghurt and muesli.

The PA also provides a weekly organic apple basket, which is sponsored 50% by Agrar Markt Austria, so ABIS students have access to fruit during all breaks.

I'm now handing over to Maggie, who is going to tell you about the big events we are planning for this year!

- *Maggie Hühnmair:*

Events

Thank you. Hello everyone, I am Maggie, part of the special Events Committee and mom of 3 children (Maxi attending PYP3, Lilly PYP 1 & the youngest not yet in ELC), we have been part of ABIS since 2021.

With our bigger school events, the PA aims to support engagement as a school Community - bringing together parents, students and their teachers to strengthen the bond by making memories outside of the classroom. Giselle already gave you a quick recap of what the Events Committee organised last year, this is what we have planned for this year:

Halloween: This year we will replace our annual Halloween Parade with a Halloween Surprise on October 25th happening in school. More details via toddle will follow at the end of this week.

One of our two biggest events, the Christmas Market is scheduled for December 1st and will take place in our school courtyard after school. We will have Christmas stands run by students and families that choose to sell crafts and other things. Last year we also had the ABIS band perform and a student choir sing. We will be sending out information about this after fall break. The PA will be selling food and drinks that day. Thank you in advance to all dads joining the DOGS, because they always take over the barbecue. We even had an ABIS Family construct our own ABIS stainless steel grill - designed to keep veggies and meat apart- thank you for that donation!

On February 13th (Faschingsdienstag) the PA will help organise a Carnival Dance Party for MYP and hand out Faschingskrapfen to all students - kids can come to school in their costumes that day.

The second big event is our traditional ABIS International Day planned for April 19th. Here we come together to celebrate the internationality & diversity of our student body / its a lovely opportunity for parents and students to represent their cultures with onstage performances and/ or culinary specialties to be served at the international buffet. An authentic taste and experience of our multicultural ABIS Community. This will take place in the Festsaal at the Neues Rathaus near by.

Last but not least the PA helps in the annual Fundraising School Event the Walkathon. Also an ABIS tradition - a student charity run on the big sportsfield near to our school planned for 21st of June.

As you can see we have a lot of great events lined up for your children and you as family, we hope to have you on board as volunteers to help out- we cannot do it without you. Please approach us at any time (via Email, whatsapp, or in front of school doors at pick up) There will be a message going out in our volunteer chat shortly calling for a kick off meeting for the events committee, which takes place on 8th of November at 6pm. So please join our chat!

I'm now handing you over to Evi, who will share information about the yearbook and Paperwolves with you.

- *Evi Ehrenreich:*

Yearbook

Paperwolves was founded in early 2020, aiming to create a place for our pupils to express themselves by writing. Paperwolves aim to create a student-led press, with different formats for them to express their thoughts and feelings and report about daily school life. This might be done in a blog, by a Newsletter or by the Paperwolves Info-board/TV in our marketplaces to broadcast short term events like bake sales or poetry competitions. And of course via our Yearbook.

By 2022 Paperwolves became an enrichment class for MYP students under the lead of Ms. Meghan Jones. Students would have one period per week during school hours where they would leave their class and join as a group to work on paperwolves projects such as the yearbook, Blogging, photography etc.. As the involved students needed to cope with missing classes by showing the academic strength, organisational and communication skills to compensate and manage it, not every student could join the Paperwolves - hence "enrichment-Class" for strong students.

We are very lucky to have a professional Photographer at ABIS who shares his expertise about reporting by pictures. We are also looking for Parents with expertise in journalism, online writing, editing or any other form of the written word, to support our kids in their journey of writing. If you are interested, please approach one of us, we are looking forward to working with you!

This semester, after Ms. Jones moved back to America, Paperwolves are still in the process to reorganise. Our aim stays the same: to give the students a platform to express themselves, to be the "voice of ABIS".

I'm now handing you over to Neil, who will tell us about the D.O.G.S!

- *Neil Luka:*

D.O.G.S

Woof woof woof woof.... I still seem to be the only one that barks... DOGS stands for dads of great students— all dads are welcome even if your student isn't technically... great

DOGS is a great way for dads to get involved in school events, whether it's building Booths for the winter market to grilling sausages and sauerkraut to be enjoyed at our hand built booth. What's great about it is that it's not a strict schedule, you only need to help when you can.

Outside of helping out at the school and being more of a present force in our kids day to day lives I think it's a great way to make friends— I've doubled the amount of friends I have... from 2 to 4... we'd love to see you at the next DOGS meeting, we are having an informal get together this Thursday at 6:00 at the Chelsea pub. Feel free to approach me whenever you see me around school even if I have a confused look on my face... that's pretty typical.

Hope to see you there! Woof woof woof woof woof!

- *Siobhan:*

Thank you everyone! The volunteers all work so hard and, for the team leaders, it is such a lot of work that we really appreciate any additional assistance or time that members have.

So, just to remind you, our next major event is the Christmas Market on the first of December and before that, we are also planning coffee in the courtyard or the Aula on the first day back after the October break to come join us then.

I encourage you to please get in touch by email or chat with a member of the board, if you have any suggestions or comments. We will be advertising regular volunteer responsibilities on the website - for example we are looking for someone to take over the weekly planner chalkboard out by the Aula - and you are welcome to contact us any time about those jobs. We will also announce our planning meetings in the volunteer chat - as Maggie mentioned, the first one will take place after the Autumn Break, and anyone who has time to join us for those is more than welcome. Please do join our WhatsApp chats - the codes are on the posters up tonight.

Are there any questions?

- *Klaus Haslinger and Elke Litzlbauer asked for clarity about annual membership fees:*

Results of discussion - details were included in the end of year letter in July, and were available on the four parent information nights, and were re-circulated with the reminder about the general assembly. It is not possible to automatically take payment from member accounts due to regulations - the money has to be actively transferred to the PA by members each year. It was decided that a reminder will be circulated this week and Chrissie will see if a QR code can be generated with the PA account details.

- *Siobhan:*

So that's it! Thank you so much for attending. We really appreciate your interest and support. Anyone who has given us their time or money is helping us make ABIS even more wonderful for our children, and the PA team sincerely couldn't do it without you.

We will see you soon! Thank you.

Meeting End