

Brussels American School Advisory Committee/Installation Advisory Committee (BASAC/IAC)

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes for BASAC/IAC Meeting, 8 October 2009

1. Opening Remarks and introduction of the new BASAC/IAC members
 - a. The Chairman called the meeting to order. Voting members present included three parent representatives, three faculty representatives, and the Student Representative. Liaison members present included the Principal and the USAG Brussels Commander. Others in attendance included the School Liaison Officer, Vice-Principal, School Counselor, USAG Brussels DPTMS Director, ACS Director, PTSO President, and 18 parent/community members, 3 students and 2 teachers.
 - b. The Chairman reiterated the goals of the BASAC, an informal meeting environment, and the use of Robert's Rules as the guide for the conduct of the meetings.
2. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.
3. Old Business
 - a. 6th Grade Homework Levels – A parent, Beth Burchfield, met with Mr. Goldman to discuss issues and to provide recommendations. Many of the recommendations are going to further explored and possibly implemented. Concerns on homework levels and coordination thereof, test scheduling, and new school year orientation will be addressed. On 8 OCT 09, the Principal met with a cross-section of 6th and 7th graders (approximately 1/3 of the students at that grade level. The students were surveyed on various homework issues and the findings were shared with the relevant faculty. Takeaways include 1) students should realize that they have the option of talking with their teachers when they feel too many tests are scheduled at the same time, 2) teachers will work with the Principal on homework levels to limit to 20 minutes per night, 3) the Principal will hold regular meetings with the 6th and 7th Grade teachers on homework and tests, 4) A Study Skills class will be offered. The Town Hall meeting held in September with Middle School students was a success. The goal of any adjustments is to make the transition to Middle School easier, but without reducing the standards. There was a discussion on the use of Agenda Books, improving the first days of school, and making the Study Skills class more widely available. The Chairman encouraged the

parents to speak with teachers on the issues and if the issue is not resolved, to discuss with the Principal. The Principal encouraged the use of Agenda Books. The Student Representative offered to approach his classmates about tutoring to see if there was interest in them helping that way. There was some discussion on the quality of homework, with the outcome being that parents are encouraged to speak to teachers about these concerns. **[OPEN]**

- b. Quality Assurance Review – The QAR is now scheduled for April 2010. **[OPEN]**
- c. Transportation – The hiring of a Transportation Officer has eliminated any urgent transportation issues.
- d. Sterrebeek Annex Curfew – No new information. To be discussed at later BASAC meetings. **[OPEN]**
- e. Foreign Language Opportunities – CYSS is still working to offer a French language class for 6-12 year old students. The sessions will be two-hours long and occur over 8 sessions. The goal is to offer this class before the end of the year.
- f. New Middle School Student Concerns – Addressed during the 6th Grade Homework agenda item.
- g. Extra-Curricular Activities – This is a funding issue, but activities are now starting to be offered to the students as the budget becomes clearer. A community member asked about cheerleading. The uniforms were ordered, but the decisions on what activities to offer for Winter have not been made yet. Cheerleading is on the table, but it has not been decided yet. Students present did express interest in the squad. Amberly Bland offered her assistance to make cheerleading a reality. A parent stated that she believed BAS to be the only small school without a cheerleading squad. Funding and student numbers are the issues. **[OPEN]**
- h. BASAC Goals and Objectives – Approved
- i. By-Laws - Approved

4. Principal's Report

- a. Enrollment Status – 278 Students
- b. Budget Update – Still in flux. **[OPEN]**
- c. Mid-Quarter Progress Reports – Encourage the use of Gradespeed. Students with a current D or F average in a class will receive a written report. Soon written reports will be phased out. A student raised the issue that many students do not know how to use Gradespeed. Information on Gradespeed will go into the Daily Bulletin. A parent raised the issue that some teachers are not utilizing Gradespeed. It was announced that Scott Labelle is a National Merit Student. The Military Family Life Consultant was introduced. His services are part of a DoDDS program available for free to parents and students.
- d. SAT Testing – The School Counselor provide information on why BAS as a SAT testing site would not be favorable when compared to ISB. A parent suggested that students should arrive about and

hour early before testing. Information about ACT and SAT was made available.

- e. The Principal thanked the community for the positive support.
- f. A teacher asked about the bussing option to the SAT testing site.
- g. Very impressed with the recent school dance.

5. Student Report

- a. The students are investigating community service activities.
- b. Trying to improve communication between the students.
- c. Students are working for a compromise on the locker lock policy.
- d. School Dance went well.

6. Garrison Commander's Report

- a. Construction – The Gym/Arts Building is about 40% complete. The Youth Center is 100% complete with the design phase. Construction for the Youth Center will start late in the FY.
- b. New Gym Layout – Questions and Answers to questions on the Gym Layout are attached.
- c. MILCON Project Manager is scheduled to be at the next meeting.

7. School Liaison Officer's Report

- a. Parent Education Dinner is to be offered on 21 October, with the topic for this session: "Successful Homework Strategies." Additional information will be in the Daily Bulletin.

8. New Business

- a. Graduation for K, 5th and 8th Graders – A BASAC Issue Form raised the issue of a graduation ceremony for Kindergarten, 5th and 6th Graders. The Principal likes the concept and will confer with Cece Ockenfels to further develop these events. **[OPEN]**

9. Open Session

- a. A parent made the comment that there has been much positive change in the school so far this year.
- b. The Chairman attended the District Advisory Council. The BAS has relatively minor issues when compared to some of the other DoDDS schools in the district.

10. Closing Remarks – The Chairman thanked community leaders and community members for coming and participating in the meeting. The next meeting will be on 5 NOV 09.