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APEEE Services' Solidarity Fund internal rules

Article 1.

The Solidarity Fund (SF) of the APEEE Services may provide financial assistance to members of the APEEE who experience exceptional difficulties in meeting the costs associated with their children's education in EEB1.

Article 2.

1. A Solidarity Fund Committee (hereafter called "the SFC") is established. It will comprise between three (3) and five (5) members.

2. All members must be on the Board of the APEEE Services, with the cessation of Board functions implying the immediate end of the SFC mandate.

3. The APEEE Services Board shall appoint one member of the SFC as the Chairperson and one as Treasurer. SFC members are appointed for a year, an appointment made by the APEEE Services' Board on its first meeting after having been elected by the APEEE Services General Assembly. Members of the SFC may be re-appointed.

4. All members will sign a confidentiality disclosure and data protection agreement (as will any members of staff of the APEEE Services who handle data concerning any applications and transfer of funds), and are prohibited from disclosing any personal data to non-SFC members.

5. Members of the SFC will declare any potential conflict of interest to the Chairperson before or during the handling of a financial assistance request. The Chairperson will decide whether this Member is allowed to participate in the process or not. If not, the Chairperson may invite another member of the Board on a temporary basis to participate in the proceedings (in compliance with Art. 2.4).

6. The SFC will meet on the invitation of the Chairman, provided that applications have been made. Proxies are allowed. Written procedures may be launched to decide on an application.

7. The SFC will not issue guarantees or loans. Voluntary reimbursements may however take place.

8. The SFC will report to the Board and provide minutes and accounts (with the exception of personal data or other identifying information on recipients of support).

Article 3.

1. The SF budget shall be submitted to the General Assembly within the APEEE Services' annual budget.
2. The funds available for the SF budget shall include an annual contribution of fees received from each service, together with voluntary contributions which may be confined to one category of eligible costs, such as zero-emission busses.

Article 4.

1. The SFC shall propose decisions on applications for financial assistance for specific activities outlined in article 8 up to a maximum of 80%. In exceptional circumstances the SFC may award financial assistance up to 100%. The SFC takes into consideration the family situation, available income, the importance of the expenditure from a school perspective and any other relevant special circumstances. Only one assistance request per individual beneficiary may normally be granted per school year. In a family of siblings, each child counts as an individual beneficiary.
2. The SFC shall not propose the award of funding exceeding the total amount available in its budget. It shall establish objective criteria for the acceptance of applications, and for the percentage of the admissible costs to be covered, taking account of the funds available.

Article 5. Majority decisions

Decisions within the SFC are taken by an absolute majority of its members, who may only vote in favour or against an application. In case of a split vote, where votes in favour and against granting an application are equal, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote. The SFC's proposals are referred to the APEEE Services Board for decision, after due anonymization of personal data. This decision will be final.

Article 6. Application procedure

1. Applications must be submitted to the dedicated electronic mailbox, solidarityfund@apeee-bxl1-services.be, using the form provided by the SFC. All applicants must provide the reasons for applying, including supporting documents, in order to receive financial assistance from the Solidarity Fund. Each application will be opened by the Chairperson or by a person designated by him or her, allocated a number, and thereafter be treated anonymously.
2. Confidentiality regarding the applicant will be guaranteed by the SCF and the APEEE Services in relation to any parties outside the SFC and the APEEE Services' staff in charge of payments. Applicants will be deemed to have waived their right to confidentiality with respect to SFC members and the afore-mentioned APEEE Services staff.
3. The SFC will adopt its proposals taking into account all the information available to it. It may request further information and supporting documents.
4. Applications should normally be submitted at the beginning of the school year, and in any event in good time before funds are required.
5. After the first school year in which the SF is in force, retroactive financing is not allowed except in duly justified circumstances.
6. Applications shall be stored electronically and shall be accessible only by SFC members. All personal information shall be destroyed once the Administrative Board receives discharge for the financial year in which the decision on the application for financial assistance was made.

Article 7. Financial Assistance

1. Financial assistance may be provided in cases of clear and objective financial difficulty, having regard to the applicant's family income and number of dependent children. Currently, the allocation refers to the maximum family income of the basic salary at grade AST/SC 1.1.
2. The applicant must confirm that no other possible and reasonable sources of financial assistance is available.
3. APEEE Services' board members may not submit an application unless they resign from their position.

Article 8. Eligible costs

1. The assistance may cover the cost to the parent, after any contribution from other sources, of the following services up to the maximal amount mentioned in article 4.1:
 - (i) School transport, in priority the increase in fees attributable to the transition to no-emission busses
 - (ii) School canteen meals
 - (iii) Extracurricular educational activities (périscolaire)
 - (iv) Garderies

The assistance may exceptionally cover:

- (v) part of other costs necessary to support the educational development of EEB1 pupils

2. The assistance shall not cover costs which are eligible for assistance from the EEB1 school (including school fees and the cost of mandatory school trips) or from APEEE Bruxelles 1 ASBL.

Article 9 False declarations

Wilfully false declarations or omissions will lead to a rejection of the application. If the false declaration or omission is discovered after disbursement of the financial assistance, the money may be claimed back from the beneficiary. Authors of such wilful false declarations or omissions will be barred from applying for financial assistance from the SFC for a period of five years.

Article 10. Reporting

1. Summary minutes of SFC meetings are sent to the APEEE Services' Board for information. The summary minutes shall not include any personal data which could lead to identify those requesting financial support.
2. The progress on fund activities shall be reported to the APEEE Services' Board on a quarterly basis.

Article 11. Revision

The internal rules of the Social Fund may be revised at any time upon decision by the APEEE Services' Board. They shall be published on the APEEE Services website.