

INTERNATIONAL SECTION COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, 9th of December 2024

Sitting MEMBERS :

- Mme la Proviseure, Céline ALLÂTRE
- The teachers' delegates: Mme Karen O'ROURKE (English Literature and Connaissances du monde), Mme Thérèse SEGUIN (Primary School), Mme Céline LECLERC (History and Geography), M. Renan CORFDYR (German)
- The students' delegates: Melle Noemi BURSIKOVA (Collège) and Melle Victoria DUGUAY (Lycée)
- The parents' delegates: Mme HAYES, Mme CIRLICOVA

Mme Allâtre reminds the council that 35% of the students at the LFP are enrolled in the international section. Of these, 66% are currently in CM1-CM2, 25% are in the Collège, and 23% in the Lycée. So far, there haven't been any extra fees, but a new fees system will be applied in September 2025 in order to start taking into account the extra cost implied by this section.

The Proviseure also reminds the Conseil of the conditions for admission to the section: currently, it is not possible to join in 4ème, 3ème, or Terminale. For each level, the opinion of the Conseil de Classe is considered, and there are also tests and interviews scheduled, which have led to some extra workload for teachers in charge, such as Mme O'Rourke. (see conditions of admission on the website : <https://lfp.cz/scolarite/section-internationale/>)

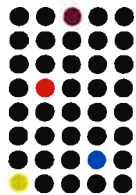
The Proviseure informs the Conseil that she and Mr. Corfdyr have conducted individual interviews with each student in Terminale BFI. The responses they received to the question about what the BFI program had brought them so far were extremely positive. Among the answers given, students highlighted the improvement in their language skills, the ability to cross information between subjects like HGGSP and History, the cultural enrichment offered, as well as the strong emphasis on writing analysis and oral skills. Overall, the students were happy with the strong bonds they made within the group and their good rapport with the teachers, who showed understanding regarding the extra workload and were eager to postpone deadlines or reduce the number of assignments when necessary.

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Mme Allâtre notes that, although some teachers were concerned about the number of hours taken by the pupils and the possible psychological consequences, it appears that the students have coped quite well. The students themselves admitted that it was mainly a matter of learning how to be better organized.

Mrs. Cirlicova asks about the students who dropped out. Mme Allâtre replies, saying that only one student dropped out between 1ère and Terminale. The Proviseure also points out that a certain level of English is required, and sometimes students are not suited for the section. The teachers comment that the student who left had an excellent level but was concerned about her grades in the BFI exam possibly affecting her chances of being accepted into the school of her choice.

Mrs. O'Rourke says that, in the case of younger students, they are often pressured by their parents, but after 4ème, there is a shift, indicating a more personal choice, leading to a significant drop in the number of older students continuing in SI.

Mrs. Hayes insists on how challenging the section is, specifically with the BFI, and emphasizes that it is not feasible unless the students are fully committed.

Mrs. Cirlicova mentions that the parents who gave feedback agree that the program provides a well-rounded education but complain about the extra workload. Some parents continue to carry the misconception that the program is merely advanced English learning. In reality, students who apply must already have a fairly good level of English in order to be able to follow and succeed (a minimum level of B2 is expected to enter 1ère BFI).

Mme Allâtre agrees, stating that the school needs to do more to inform students and parents.

The Proviseure informs the Conseil that the AEFE has already produced videos of former BFI students who testify about their experiences. Also, 99.8% of them passed their exam, with 95.7% receiving a mention (ranging from AB to TB). One out of two received a mention TB, and on Parcoursup, all their first-choice requests were satisfied. As for the acknowledgment of the program, no further test in English is required; students automatically receive a score of 20 in English Troncc Commun, which has a bonus effect. Regarding the Classe Préparatoire, there is also a higher acceptance rate for students who attended the BFI.

ASIBA (A not-for-profit association which supports the British version of the Baccalauréat Français International (BFI)) is creating partnerships with universities from Canada and the Netherlands, and they do not require an English test either.

Mme Leclerc explains that the students are currently preparing for the writing exam with two different types of exercises: the Document-Based Question (DBQ) and the essay question. She also mentions that she will be training the students for the oral exam during the second term. Additionally, she explains that since the syllabus

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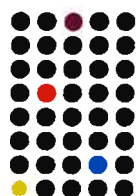


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is taught by two teachers, it makes things quite complicated at times. It is much harder than in the other grades because it follows a clear and structured approach with divisions between French and English through chapters. She underlines the necessity of coordinating effectively. She also wants to highlight that students miss classes quite often, especially on Fridays from 4 to 6, which makes it harder to teach from one week to the next, as she doesn't see all the students. Mme Allâtre insists that she does not approve of the habit of skipping classes, particularly those scheduled at the end of the week. However, she wants to point out that during the interviews, the students praised the coordination with M. Legros in French History, who has agreed to assign essays and DBQs following the BFI format.

Mrs. O'Rourke speaks for Mr. Pinos, who is in charge of the ACL syllabus. As an examiner last year, he emphasized the expectations for the English essay format and the importance of time management. His class requires a lot of reading and personal work. Mme O'Rourke highlights his professionalism and how well the students are being prepared.

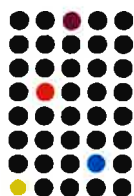
The parents' delegates would like to know if there is any freedom in the choice of books for the literature class. Mrs. O'Rourke replies that there is almost none, and that the books studied are similar to those seen in the first and second year of literature in the UK. **Victoria insists** that the workload is definitely considered very heavy. Mrs. O'Rourke points out that the English team and Mr. Pinos only discovered last year what the expectations were, and he is extremely dedicated and committed, aiming for every student to receive honorable grades on the day of the exam, not just the high achievers. **Victoria agrees**, stating that the whole class is unanimous in saying that Mr. Pinos has been very helpful and understanding, especially with rescheduling some deadlines.

As announced at the beginning of the meeting, the SI and the BFI will now incur a cost, in order to gradually take in account the actual extra cost of the section for the school (which represents the equivalent of 4,5 full time teachers from CM1 to terminale). Until now, no additional fees were charged, meaning families whose students were not enrolled in the program were subsidizing the section's existence (some classes have fewer than 10 students).

In September 2025, parents of students in CM1-CM2 will pay an additional 12%, while the extra fee will be 11% at both the Collège and the Lycée for SI and BFI students.

The parents' delegates comment that the extra fees do not seem excessive overall, and they understand the need to ask for this additional contribution.





QUESTIONS (Parents' delegates)

Some parents are considering withdrawing their children from the section due to the potential extra fees. Mme Allâtre insists that the LFP is the only school to have offered the program for free for 7 consecutive years, but this cannot continue. A survey conducted by the parents' delegates showed that while the program is highly regarded and the teachers are excellent, there are concerns about the long hours and the intensity of the workload.

QUESTIONS (Students' delegates)

The students ask if it is possible to avoid attending the English class in the tronc commun, especially if they are aiming for the trilingual program. They argue that instead of additional English hours, they would prefer to have extra hours of German. Mme Allâtre explains that a certain number of hours is required and that the tronc commun is part of the curriculum. As a consequence, this rule cannot be changed. The school has the obligation to respect the prescribed volume of hours. If it did not, it would lose its accreditation by the French Ministry of Education.

QUESTIONS (Parents' delegates)

Mrs. Hayes mentions feedback from staff members who have told students that the SI program is not worth it. Mme Allâtre dismisses this, stating that she heard about it but that it was just one student wanting to change paths, so it seems to be a misunderstanding.

Parents inquire about Mr. Thomson, who has been advising students wanting to study in the UK. Mme Allâtre explains that he has been doing this voluntarily, but he will likely stop soon. She reminds the parents' delegates that Mme Gendras, the librarian, and M. Barthélémy, the philosophy teacher, are the ones responsible for helping students with their questions regarding higher Education in the Czech Republic. Mme Leclerc asks if Mme Gendras is also informing students about the programs taught in English at Czech universities. Mme Allâtre replies that she believes she is.

The parents' delegates note that 45 parents responded to the survey they sent out, showing a real interest in the international section.

The meeting concludes at 7:30 PM.

Secretary : Kathleen Hayes

Céline Allâtre
Proviseure / Headmistress

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