

Summary of AMPA activities (January- May 2018)

Dear associates, as the school year is coming to an end, we would like to offer you a brief summary of the last trimesters' AMPA activities.

To begin with, we would like to thank all the parents' collaboration, as it is very important that the school recognizes the AMPA as a large group of parents concerned about all the aspects of our children's' academic life, and willing to offer them our help and support to improve them.

We appreciate the time you took for coming to the monthly meetings with the school leaders, where we deal with problems and offer help or new ideas for the school.

Likewise, we have created a group dealing with nutrition that already had their first meeting with the BSB Executive team and Mr. Dominik Anke, new Commerce and Community Director. They had an excellent chance to expose the doubts we have as parents about the quality and quantity of the food that it's being served at lunch time. They also talked about habits and the general ambience during eating time, aspects that should be taken into account. The school has committed to be open to dialogue and to show us the details about an improvement project related to the catering, that should be solved by three years from now. We have asked for more variety in the menus and to compliment what the Spanish Education Department states about the nutritional requirements for children of different ages, and to give special attention to healthy options of food. A group of AMPA parents will soon pay a surprise visit at lunch time to experience in first person how and what our kids eat every day.

Another great example of the fruitful collaboration between school and AMPA -one of our most active members is part of the National Police- are the improvements made as regards the circulation of cars around the school, the safety bollards set at the pedestrian path in front of the school and the handicapped parking space, also by the school entrance. It is being considered and evaluated the option of adding a new entrance to the school at Pitort Avenue to reduce the concentration of parents and cars on one point. By the end of the year it is planned to do a test pilot about this idea.

The matter about security and access to the school building is something that is being exposed month after month in the regular meetings.

Another important and significant issue for all the BSB community was stopping the raise of last years' fees, justified by the construction of the new Nexus Pre U building, which, in spite of the promise to be ready by September 2017, was inaugurated after Easter this present year. It is a modern and well-designed place, and we hope it will give our children the ambience to develop and improve their knowledge and personal abilities.

We've been working really hard but there's still so much to be done.

At the last monthly meeting, held in the new building, some parents presented once again the problems referring to ICT, this time concerning the technical problems with the school equipment during the

CGSE exams. They claimed the internet problem was the internet provider's fault, but as this is not the first time it happens, we demand actions and solutions as soon as possible because this is only causing extra tension to the kids in such important and decisive exams. The directives said they are in the process of recruiting a new Head of ICT who would be in charge of solving the problems that appear to be repeating year after years with no apparent solutions. And they have promised that new equipment will be installed in the Nexus building by September 2018.

As regards the concern of making public the teachers' academic CVs, that information was denied to the AMPA representatives. We ignore the reasons why this is being held in secret -most schools show this important information on their websites- but we will keep on asking until we get to know the academic background of the ones in charge of our children's education. We also asked about the IB certifications the teachers need to give that specific subjects, and they said all of them have them. Again, we were not provided with the copies of those certifications.

We brought up once more the problem of the teachers' absence and the lack of qualified substitutes.

We asked the school to create a curricula in advance (5 to 7 years) as regards the subjects they offer to the students - CGSE and A levels- so that they can have with time and responsibility, prepared and well-formed educators. At the moment, depending on the demand of certain subjects is when they look for teachers, and that doesn't benefit the students on their perspective for future studies. As an example: technical drawing is compulsory for Engineering and for architecture in Spain, and the BSB only offer twice a week additional classes, which is obviously not enough. There's a normal tendency among the Spanish students - more than 50%- to attend Spanish universities, and also ones from other European countries. Mrs. Consol Rodriguez, Spanish and Catalan teacher, is very helpful as regards the admission policies of Spanish universities. As parents we would like our children to be advised correctly on these matters.

Another concern of parents is about the publication of the official exams' grades. They claim they do it in a generic way according to the English system, and that they make improvements on the subjects in case of general low grades - what's happening actually in ICT.

In every monthly meeting, lots of topics are being discussed, from small -special homework for students absents for a long time, reports- to bigger ones - Russian kids being mean to each other at the patio and no adult to understand what they are saying- and a very important one we've been insisting for the last year, that is the insurance in case of one parent's death, to let the children keep on studying at the school. On this last matter they

said they were evaluating options and that soon they will inform about this to the community.

We had the opportunity to meet the new director Mr. Jonathan Locke, and talk with him and Mr. Anke for a while, exposing the recurrent and unsolved problems during the past years, why the AMPA group was formed and which are our objectives. It was a very positive meeting in which he was eager to listen to us and our suggestions, making a special remark about the wellbeing of teachers, very important for the quality of education. We offered him our help and support, and hope he will be able to make all the positive changes the school needs.

We would also like to inform that we count with the total amount of money collected from the membership fees as we didn't have expenses last year.

We appreciate and thank you all for your help and cooperation, and wish a happy end of school year for your families.

Kind regards,

BSB parents association

AMPA