

Annual Report

2018-2019

Participation Council

Wolfert van Borselen school group

Rotterdam, 16 July 2019

Dear Reader,

It gives me pleasure to present the annual report of the Wolfert van Borselen school group's participation council for the 2018-2019 school year. In publishing this report our chief intention is to give an impression of the participation council's activities in this period. If you want more information on any of our activities, our members will be pleased to give it.

The report is structured as follows. First you will find some general information on what the participation council is and does. You will then be introduced to the members of the Wolfert van Borselen school group's council and the delegations they represent. Finally, we will show how links between the various schools have taken shape.

We hope you enjoy reading this report as much as we enjoyed carrying out the participation council's work. We have included our contact details at the end of the report. Please do not hesitate to contact us. Communication with you is our rationale.

On behalf of the participation council,

Marjan van Parijs

Chair

Introducing the Wolfert van Borselen school group's participation council

What is the participation council?

Under the Participation (Schools) Act every school is required to have a participation council – a consultative body representing the interests of each stakeholder in the school. These stakeholders are as follows:

- students
- students' parents
- teachers
- support staff, e.g. office staff
- caretakers and classroom assistants.

Wolfert's participation council comprises members representing the various stakeholders, with votes distributed as follows: four votes for the students, four for the parents and eight for the staff members of the school group.

Rob Fens, chair of the Wolfert van Borselen management board, and Matthijs Ruitenbergh, the school group's financial, also attend the meetings of the participation council as our guests and as representatives of the competent authority.

What does the participation council do?

The participation council assesses and responds to the school leadership's policy plans on subjects such as the school plan, the budget, the staff establishment and the school holidays. The council may also initiate policy. In each case, the participation council possesses advisory powers, and in many cases powers of consent, i.e. the school may only introduce certain measures if the participation council has given its consent. The participation council can therefore exert a decisive influence on the school.

N.B. The participation council is responsible for monitoring procedures and general outlines, but not for assessing individual problems or disputes.

Who sits on the participation council?

Chair

Marjan van Parijs, hired in and thus no vote

Students

Moos Crebolder, Youssef Benabou, Nisa Ozen and Wing Hee Cheng

Parents

Veerle Naudts, Ingeborg Nefkens, Dennis Verbeek and Willemijn Lamoré

Staff

Inger de Wit, Freek Groeneweg, René Campo, Maarten van Gulik, Regnier Vreeswijk, Philip Westra, Marthe Poot and Jelle Meens.

An overview of the members and their term on the council is included in the annexe to this report. This was the last year on the participation council for Moos and the parent representatives. Inger's term also came to an end, but she was re-electable. Regnier decided that this would be his last year on the council. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their work, their commitment and their contribution.

The following have been elected to sit on the participation council as of the 2019-2020 school year.

Student

Sara van der Woude (Wolfert Bilingual)

Parents

Esther van Oosten (Wolfert Lyceum)

Cynthia Christiani (Wolfert College)

Paul Aertsen (Wolfert Bilingual)

Perry Nagelkerken (Wolfert Lyceum)

Staff

Jurrien Cremers (Wolfert Bilingual)

Inger de Wit (Wolfert Dalton)

The participation council in the 2018-2019 school year

As in previous years, the participation council again worked with an annual agenda (see annexe), so that certain subjects were discussed at set times in the year. These included the school prospectus, school plans, the management statutes and BOOR, the job mix, staff promotion norms, the staff establishment plans, the school holidays, the annual financial report, the budget and the parental contributions. As usual, we received feedback from the joint participation council, which represents all public-authority secondary schools in Rotterdam.

Main points

This school year, the participation council focused in particular on the following schools:

- Wolfert Lansing, given changes to the management team, falling student numbers and concerns expressed by the staff;
- Wolfert Lyceum, given concerns among the staff and changes to the management model;
- Wolfert Dalton, given falling student numbers;
- Wolfert Bilingual, given the GUTS¹ study and fewer new students enrolling.

Each school is discussed in more detail further on in this report.

Participation council membership

Since chair Marja van Sorgen was promoted from teacher to team leader at the start of this school year, she could no longer serve on the participation council (team leaders represent the competent authority and are thus not eligible for membership). The position of chair could not be filled from among the members, so that former chair Marjan van Parijs, a parent representative on the council three years ago, was hired in as an independent chair. Circumstances prevented secretary Inger de Wit from fulfilling her duties for part of the year. Marjan substituted for her. Circumstances also prevented Regnier from attending the participation council meetings during part of the year.

Participation council evaluation

It is the participation council's ambition to do its work better each year. It therefore evaluates its activities. A national working group has formulated guidelines for participation councils, with a checklist containing 21 focal points, see <https://infowms.nl/content/21-gedragsankers-normen-afspraken-en-gedragingen> (in Dutch only).

¹ GUTS (Gedifferentieerd Uitdagen Talent op School) is an educational innovation project aimed at fostering individual talent.

Wolfert's participation council gave itself scores for all 21 points on the checklist. Nine out of 16 members identified three points on which we score well, and three where there was room for improvement. We take account of the views of the people we talk to and, where necessary, adjust our own accordingly (points 1 and 2). However, we need to devote more attention to points 4 and 17, i.e. informing our grassroots and operating with sufficient expertise. Expertise cannot always be gained by simply doing a course. Sometimes it needs to be outsourced – expertise on various schools' new building plans, for example. We will focus on improving these points in the coming school year.

Activities of the various delegations and working groups

The staff, the students and the parents each have advisory powers or rights of consent on various issues. To ensure recommendations were thoroughly prepared, we again worked with various delegations and mixed working groups. These working groups dealt with various subjects, fleshing them out and discussing them in the participation council.

Students' delegation

Moos was a member of the GUTS working group and commented on developments on behalf of the students. Moos passed his school leaving examinations this year and will no longer serve on the council. Nisa and Wing Hee were new to the council and, with their first experience of participation, took an increasing part in the discussions in the council.

Parents' delegation

This year, the GUTS programme, new building plans and norms for moving up a class were the major issues for the parents' delegation.

Staff delegation

Working group on the collective labour agreement and reducing pressure of work

In view of a change to the collective labours agreement, the working group attended a course on this subject. We then discussed measures both in the participation council and with the Staff Advisory Council (PAR) to reduce pressure of work at the schools in the Wolfert van Borselen school group as of the 2019-2020 school year.

For the reference of the readers of this report, the relevant article of the Collective Labour Agreement is cited below.

Article 8.2 of the 2018-2019 Collective Labour Agreement (CAO) for Secondary Education addresses pressure of work /time for educational development. The basic gist of this article is as follows:

- ✓ At schools where the maximum timetabled teaching time amounts to 750 or more clock hours a year, this will be reduced by 30 clock hours a year as of 1 August 2019. Time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) activities will be added, so that a total of 50 clock hours will be freed up.
- ✓ Time for educational development is intended for educational innovation and for broadening and strengthening teaching.
- ✓ The teaching staff will hold talks on use of the freed up hours. These talks will be held within teams, departments or other groups to be decided by the school.
- ✓ The reduction to the maximum timetabled teaching time referred to in article 8.2 of the CAO will be effected by adjusting the curriculum and thus the timetable, using the scope provided for this in the Teaching Hours Act.
- ✓ The talks referred to above need to have been held by 1 March 2019 at the latest, followed by agreement with the Participation Council (MR) on adjustment of the curriculum. The MR staff representative will ensure that this plan has the support of the teaching staff.
- ✓ Every teacher eligible for a reduction in teaching time should draw up a plan showing how they will use the freed up time for educational development. At the end of the year they will report on the results they have achieved.
- ✓ This measure does not mean less work, but a change in work. Teaching time will be exchanged for time for educational development, if a teacher's standard working year includes the maximum timetabled teaching time.

The Wolfert van Borselen school group ultimately decided to timetable five days at each Wolfert school on which staff will not teach, to be spread over the five days of the week to ensure equitable division of lost teaching time across all subjects and fair distribution among teachers working part-time. It is up to the individual schools to decide how these days will be used.

In putting forward this proposal, the management board explicitly stated that these days were being freed up to reduce the burden of work on teachers, and that the heads of department were responsible for accounting for their use. However, these days may also be used for cross-cutting projects and/or other tasks. The proposal applied to the 2018-2019 school year. Further follow up

will depend on the new Collective Labour Agreement for the 2019-2020 school year, and evaluation of the proposed approach.

Members: Jelle Meens, Marthe Poot & Inge de Wit (Wolfert College, Wolfert Bilingual and Wolfert Dalton).

Working group on finance

The working group on finance works on the budget with Matthijs Ruitenbergh, the school group's financial director, and serves as a sounding board for decisions on financial issues. The working group focused on the following issues in the 2019-2020 school year:

- Budget and financial planning;
- 2017 financial report.

Members: Regnier Vrieswijk, Philip Westra & Freek Groeneweg (Wolfert Lansing, Wolfert RISS and Wolfert Lyceum).

Election committee

Elections were held for the participation council in the 2017-2018 school year, organised by two of the members of the council, to fill vacant seats for student and staff representatives. The participation council's objective is an equitable distribution of seats across the schools, and an equitable number of staff, parent and student representatives. For this reason, candidates from schools not yet represented on the council had precedence over other candidates. There were more candidates than seats on the council, so elections had to be held. They resulted in four new staff representatives and three new student representatives. Now all schools are represented by at least one staff member.

Members: Willemijn Lamoré and Ingeborg Nefkens

Communications working group

Unfortunately, this working group was inactive in the 2018-2019 school year. Next year, the council will again have a secretary to support communications. Our evaluation also shows that we want to improve our performance on communications, so that this will be focus issue in the coming school year.

Links between the participation council and the various Wolfert schools

Apart from maintaining contact through the members from the various schools, the participation council experienced the feel of the individual schools by holding plenary meetings at each school in rotation. The following is an overview of the subjects discussed during these meetings.

Wolfert Dalton (WD)

With the appointment of Danielle Wuisman as the new head, the school has settled down again, so that the participation council could confine itself to its organisational role. Wolfert Dalton has worked through the Staff Advisory Council (PAR), the student council and the participation council to generate support for its policies. The participation council monitored progress with, for example, the new building plans and recruitment of new students. Wolfert Dalton is represented on the participation council by both staff and parents. The election committee, comprising two Wolfert Dalton parents, organised elections for all delegations. The staff member from Wolfert Dalton was re-elected for a new term.

Members: Ingeborg Nefkens (parent), Willemijn Lamoré (parent), Dennis Verbeek (parent), Inger de Wit (teacher) and Nisa Ózen (student).

Wolfert Bilingual (WT)

Wolfert Bilingual is represented on the participation council by staff, parents and students. Subjects addressed in the participation council specifically relating to Wolfert Bilingual included the results of the GUTS survey and, in response, the criteria for moving up to the next class. The new criteria, no longer based on an average score of 7, were put to the vote in the participation council meeting of 19 June 2019. Wolfert Bilingual was also confronted with choosing a new head of school. In addition, the participation council met to discuss the introduction of measures to reduce pressure of work under the Collective Labour Agreement. This resulted in five timetabled days for personal and professional development spread over the school year.

Members: Veerle Naudts (parent), Ingeborg Nefkens (parent), Moos Crebolder (student) and Marthe Poot (staff member).

Wolfert Lansing (WLa)

Wolfert Lansing had no permanent representative on the participation council in the 2018-2019 school year. Various observers from this school therefore attended the meetings. The participation council made grateful use of their comments, since one of its priorities was to keep a close watch on Wolfert Lansing. In the new school year, the school will be represented by both a parent and a member of staff.

Major issues of specific relevance to Wolfert Lansing were discussed in the course of this school year, with, first and foremost, the follow-up to the provisions of the Collective Labour Agreement on reducing pressure of work. Lengthy discussions were held on how these should be implemented within the school group. The final decision was to timetable five days on which staff would not teach but work on their personal and professional development. Each school has incorporated these five days into their annual plan for the coming school year.

Another hot issue was the unexpected change to the leadership of the school, and the changes this brought about. The participation council has confidence in Wolfert Lansing's new course, but since the coming school year will be crucial, it is aware that it will bear considerable responsibility.

The tendering procedure for Wolfert Lansing's new building was completed this year, and will be a priority for the participation council in the coming school year.

Rotterdam International Secondary School (RISS)

RISS is currently in transition. Jane retired in 2017 and her place was taken by Mónica Gilbert-Saéz. She introduced several changes to policy, e.g. working with curriculum leaders and a block timetable. The first outlines of this new policy will be visible in the coming school year. A staff code of conduct was introduced this year, which was approved after two rounds of consultation with the participation council. Reconstruction work on the Senior Campus has now been completed and this will hopefully give the school more space and lead to more enrolments in the coming years. The Learning and Teaching Policy was approved by the participation council during the end-of-year dinner. This document, which sets out school policy and teaching objectives, is needed for NEASC accreditation. Major changes are expected in the next few years, with construction of the international campus and the possible merger of Blijberg International Primary School and RISS.

Member: Philip Westra (staff member).

Wolfert College (WC)

Wolfert College is represented in the participation council by both staff and students. For Wolfert College, Article 8.2 of the Collective Labour Agreement on reducing pressure of work and its implementation were the main issues. In consultation with the PAR, the decision was finally taken to timetable five days on which staff would not teach, spread over the school year. The freed up time would be used for personal and professional development.

Members: Jelle Meens (staff) and Youssef Benabou (student)

Wolfert Lyceum (WL)

Wolfert Lyceum is represented in the Wolfert van Borselen school group participation council by three members of staff and one student. In the past school year, we discussed the changes to the school's management structure. The participation council and the PAR regularly discuss matters with the head of school, including the staff establishment plan, the budget, financial reports, and progress with the other subjects on the participation council agenda.

Members: Maarten van Gullik (staff), Freek Groenweg (teacher), René Campo (IT) and Wing Hee Cheng (student).

Contact details:

You can contact the participation council by sending an email to:

mrvoorzitterwvb@wolfert.nl or

mrsecretariswvb@wolfert.nl

ANNEXE 1 MEMBERS OF THE PARTICIPATION COUNCIL

TEACHING/ SUPPORT STAFF	School/subject	Task	Working group	Member from	Current term ends	2nd term ends
Inger de Wit	WD/ English		Staff	09.2015	2019	
Freek Groeneweg	WL/Geography	Treasurer	Finance	09.2014	2018	2022
René Campo	WL/IT		IT	09.2016	2020	
Maarten van Gulik	WL/History	Deputy chair	Participation Council 2.0	09.2017	2021	
Regnier Vrieswijk	WLa/Economics		Finance	09.2018	2022	
Philip Westra	RISS/Economics		Finance	09.2018	2022	
Marthe Poot	WT/Engels		Staff	09.2018	2022	
Jelle Meens	WC/Physical Education		Staff	09.2018	2022	
PARENTS						
Veerle Naudts	WT		GUTS	09.2012	2019	
Ingeborg Nefkens	WD&WT		Elections & Participation Council 2.0	09.2015	2019	
Dennis Verbeek	WD		IT	23.03.2016	2019	
Willemijn Lamoré	WD		Quality of teaching Parental involvement Elections	10.2016	2019	
STUDENTS						
Moos Crebolder	WT		IT GUTS	03.2015	2019	
Nisa Ozen	WD		Participation council 2.0	09.2018	2022	
Youssef Benabou	WD			09.2017	2021	
Wing Hee Cheng	WL		Quality of teaching & Parental involvement			
Chair						
Marjan van Parijs		Chair		09.2018		

ANNEXE 2 2018-2019 ANNUAL PLAN

	Date	location	Subject
1.	18.09.2018	WT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for moving up a class • 2017 financial report • Participation council aims • Working groups • Training for council members • 2018-2019 school plan (approved)
2.	15.10.2018	WLa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 budget • RISS Staff Code of Conduct • Job mix • Evaluation of elections • Criteria for moving up a class at WT • Communications with grassroots
3.	19.11.2018	WD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019-2020 annual plan • 2019-2020 special needs plan • 2019-2020 refresher training plan • Professional development plan • Spending parental contribution and parental contribution in 2019/2020 • School holidays
4.	23.01.2019	RISS Senior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation council evaluation • Participation council annual report (new version) • School prospectuses • Groundwork for elections • Building projects
5.	19.02.2019	WL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation council budget • Elections
6.	18.03.2019	RISS Junior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation based on various indicators (LTP, OTP and PTP assessments, sickness absence etc. compared to previous years, impact of cutbacks • 2018 annual report • Enrolments (current status)
7.	15.04.2019	WL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolments (current status/update) and consequences for staff establishment • Preview of staff establishment plans • Update participation council internal regulations & school rules • Draft participation council annual report
8.	14.05.2019	WD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for moving up (preview) • Staff establishment plan • Findings GUT survey & policy response • Participation council annual report • Evaluation WT and WD student recruitment strategy • 2019-2020 participation council agenda • Consultation cycle findings
9.	19.06.2019	Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval staff establishment plan

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Election results• 2019-2020 agenda• Rules of conduct
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