

**Minutes of the participation council (MR) meeting of
Wednesday, 9 September 2020
at Wolfert Bilingual**

Present: Maarten van Gulik, Freek Groeneweg, Jelle Meens, Philip Westra, Marthe Poot, Inger de Wit, Jurrien Cremers, Nisa Özen, Eveline Tan, Sara van der Woude and Eva Lindner

Executive Board: Rob Fens and Matthijs Ruitenbergh

Absent with notice: Marc Engels, Perry Nagelkerken, René Campo and Cynthia Christiani

Absent without notice: Esther Oosten

Observers: Piet de Zeeuw and Marijn van den Dool

	Participation council (MR) meeting	19:30
1.	Opening The meeting is called to order at 19.30.	
2.	Approval of the agenda Various questions have arisen in the wake of the coronavirus crisis and the reopening of schools. These will be discussed in response to the announcements by the central management team.	
3.	Minutes and list of decisions, MR meeting of 24 June 2020 Decision: the minutes of the MR meeting of 24 June 2020, with the list of decisions, are approved and adopted.	
4.	2020/2021 MR working groups: Elections / Staff / Finance / IT / MR 2.0 / Parent involvement / Quality of teaching Further information is given about the working groups. At the next meeting the new members will say which groups they would like to join. The elections working group has already put out a call for candidates for the newly vacant seat in the staff delegation. A candidate from Wolfert Lansing will have precedence. Other candidates will be placed by number of votes on the reserve list. Elections: Jurrien and Sara Staff: Marthe, Jelle and Inger Finance: Perry, Philip and Freek IT: this working group will be disbanded. MR 2.0: Maarten, Jelle, Cynthia and Eveline Parent involvement: Esther and Perry	

Focal points for the staff working group:

- Situation at Wolfert Dalton
- Safety at school in connection with coronavirus
- Provisions of the collective labour agreement (CAO) on relieving pressure of work

Focal points for the MR 2.0 working group:

Given the changes within the school group, it may be advisable to work at each school with sub-councils. The participation council would like to explore this option more extensively.

Training:

Every member of the MR may undergo training. Freek deals with the finances, so please send invoices to him. Last year, various courses were cancelled or postponed due to coronavirus. Go to www.aobscholing.nl for a list of courses [in Dutch].

Ambitions:

A discussion on ambitions for the new school year leads to the following conclusions:

- The MR wants to play a major role in choosing a new executive principal for the school group. As usual, two members of the MR will have a seat on the Advisory Appointment Committee (BAC).
- Communication between the MR and the people it represents continues to be an area of concern.
- More time is needed during meetings to move forward with the council's own ambitions. Representatives of more schools are requested to read documents prior to meetings.

5.	<p>Final proposal for expenditure of strike money from the school strikes on 30&31 January 2020</p> <p>Wolfert College: This money will be added to previous strike monies to refurbish the school yard.</p> <p>Wolfert Bilingual: The money will be spent on equipment to improve and facilitate online teaching, e.g. equipment to enable livestreaming of lessons.</p> <p>Wolfert Lyceum: The Wolfert Lyceum Staff Advisory Council (PAR) has still to come up with a proposal. For now, the strike money will stay in the bank. The proposal to spend it on drinks and a meal after a staff seminar cannot be approved, because this will not benefit teaching. The Staff Advisory Council has been asked to seek an alternative.</p> <p>Wolfert Lansing: The Wolfert Lansing Staff Advisory Council (PAR) has still to come up with a proposal For now, the strike money will stay in the bank.</p>	
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	<p>Wolfert Dalton: No one came out on strike.</p> <p>Wolfert RISS: No one came out on strike.</p> <p>Decision: The MR approves the proposals by Wolfert College and Wolfert Lyceum for expenditure of the strike money. Wolfert Lansing and Wolfert Lyceum need to come up with a proposal.</p>	
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6.	<p>Draft 2020/2021 annual plan</p> <p>Proposed amendment: to hold the next meeting at Wolfert Dalton instead of later in the year. The secretary will amend the plan accordingly, and will inform the various schools and MR members. This proposal was put forward because the school now has an entirely new management team and the MR wants to hold the meeting there as a token of its engagement with the school.</p> <p>Decision: The MR annual plan has now been finalised, with the next meeting at Wolfert Dalton instead of Wolfert College.</p>	
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7.	<p>Rob Fens' successor</p> <p>The MR should consider the qualities it would like to see in Rob Fens' successor. The MR asks to be provided with a sample job vacancy text, so that the members can add the qualities it would like to see in the school group's new executive principal.</p>	
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8.	<p>Preparatory discussions for the consultation round</p>	
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9.	Any other business	
	Consultation round	20:30
10.	<p>Feedback from the preparatory discussions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new MR member is introduced to the central management team. - Expenditure of strike money by Wolfert College and Wolfert Bilingual is approved. No one went on strike at Wolfert RISS or Wolfert Dalton. The Wolfert Lyceum and Wolfert Lansing Staff Advisory Councils have not yet decided how this money will be spent. The MR members will provide their heads of school with feedback on this if they have not already done so. 	
11.	<p>Introducing the new head of Wolfert Dalton</p> <p>Marijn van den Dool was appointed head of Wolfert Dalton as of 1 August 2020. He started with an entirely new management team. The first impressions are good, and that is encouraging. However, the timetable and annual working hours had not yet been finalised at the start of the school year. This could have been</p>	

managed better. Relations with staff and students are cordial. However, both staff and students have pointed out that the new management team is not yet sufficiently visible. The team is trying to remedy this.

In two weeks' time, the teaching team leaders will be attending a student council meeting. Wolfert Dalton's student council would also like to talk to the head of the school. Students were concerned at the arrival of an entirely new management team. The management team needs to take this on board.

Question (MR):

What role does the central management team play at Wolfert Dalton? Reports are highly positive, but that was also the case in previous years. How do we ensure that Wolfert Dalton doesn't derail again?

Reply (central management team):

We will continue to play the role we agreed with the MR before the summer holiday. We are making our presence felt at Wolfert Dalton, but we won't interfere in the management of the school, because that's the new school management team's job. However, we are actively asking colleagues for their impressions and experience to date. And the new school management team can count on the support of experienced people from the other schools.

The new head of school says that he has mainly been focusing on identifying the problem areas. The majority were already known, and have now been recognised by the new management team. The quality of teaching has the highest priority. The management team is certainly interested in initiatives from the bottom up, but if these are not adequately underpinned or thought through, they will not hesitate to reject them.

Question (MR):

How do you plan to continue focusing on interaction between management and staff? The school management may have all kinds of plans, but you need to get the staff on board. There have been many plans in the past, but each time good ideas came to nothing, or leadership and guidance fell short.

Reply (head of Wolfert Dalton):

In the past, the frameworks were not clearly established. This should be done better this year.

Reply (central management team):

In the past, there was too little clear leadership and harmony within the school.

Question (MR):

The analysis of the Wolfert Dalton's problems is clear, and yet the school has derailed several times in the past. What if things go wrong again? This is a major concern for the staff of Wolfert Dalton, and for the school group in general.

Reply (central management team):

	<p>The school's performance has been falling short for some time now. But that was also the case before the merger with the Wolfert school group, when it was still the Callant. It's essential to create a mix between mutual trust and clear leadership. This time, the new management team is receiving more support. There is a better prospect of high-quality teaching than before, and the central management team is spending more time at the school.</p> <p>Question (MR): Where do you want Wolfert Dalton to be in a year's time?</p> <p>Reply (head of Wolfert Dalton): I want the school to be in order in a year's time. We need to build harmony and trust, and teaching must be sufficiently high quality to enable us to make a clear sales pitch to the outside world. Our aim is 100 new enrolments. We will also be looking at throughput of students between the various schools. For example, the central management team wants to show that it is more logical for some students to opt for Wolfert Dalton – students transferring from one course to another, for example, and students in international top-up classes.</p> <p>The Wolfert Lansing staff representative recognises the problems encountered by Wolfert Dalton and extends an invitation to colleagues at the school to enter into a constructive dialogue with Wolfert Lansing staff.</p>	
12.	<p>Announcements by the central management team</p> <p>Everyone is happy to be back at school. Though online teaching was successful, it is no substitute for the classroom.</p> <p>Very few colleagues are actually staying at home. But more are likely to do so in the autumn and winter. There are both national and *BOOR guidelines. We have decided to be somewhat stricter than recommended in the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) guidelines – hence our additional recommendation to wear a face mask. Unfortunately, we cannot force people to wear one, and willingness to do so is dwindling. As yet, there have been no examples of outbreaks within schools.</p> <p>*BOOR = governing body of the public-authority schools in Rotterdam</p> <p>Questions (MR) in relation to the coronavirus measures: Now we can leave doors and windows open, but can we do that in the autumn? At some schools, students even have to go outside to change classrooms.</p> <p>Reply (central management team): That certainly calls for flexibility, otherwise we'll have to adapt the school rules. Students can now wear their coats in the classroom. But you also have to consider that we had the ventilation checked in every school, and it was found to be good. However, the safest is to keep the doors and windows open as much as possible.</p> <p>Windows could be closed during lessons if really necessary, as long as they</p>	

	<p>are opened again between lessons. CO2 metres have been ordered through BOOR so that we can check the ventilation ourselves. We advise teachers to keep the doors and windows open as long as possible. Wolfert College is an exception to this advice, as the ventilation might be interrupted if the windows and doors remain open.</p>	
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	<p>Question (MR): Staff are concerned about safety within the schools in relation to implementation of coronavirus measures and compliance with them.</p> <p>Reply (central management team): Screens have been put up at all the schools and face masks are available for staff members. The ventilation systems are operating well. With these measures, we are complying with the RIVM guidelines.</p> <p>Question (MR): What's the policy for teachers who don't feel happy about being physically present at school, and opt to teach online?</p> <p>Reply (central management team): The school management teams will enter into dialogue with these staff members to get a clear idea of what they need to do and what adjustments will need to be made to get these teachers back at school. However, teachers mustn't feel that they are under pressure to return to school if they have well-founded reasons not to work on-site.</p> <p>Question (MR): Communications with staff on what is expected of them if students are absent from school could be clearer. In the FAQs on the website you can read that students who have to stay at home can follow lessons online. But there is no clear protocol for this, while one is needed. Teachers now decide for themselves how they will provide online teaching. Students who have to stay at home in the longer term need to receive as much support as possible.</p> <p>Reply (central management team): Wherever possible, students who have to stay at home need to know what they should be doing and how their mentor will help them. It is not possible to provide online teaching and classroom teaching at the same time.</p> <p>Question (MR): What is the policy if there are infections or possibly outbreaks within schools?</p> <p>Reply (central management team): The Rotterdam municipal health service (GGD) has drafted a clear protocol. The municipal health service must be notified of the infection, and they will then trace contacts and advise the school on the steps it needs to take.</p>	
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13.	2020/2021 norms for moving up a class at Wolfert Dalton In response to questions from Wolfert Dalton, the MR meeting of 24 June 2020 withheld approval of the norms for moving up a class. These norms have since been reviewed and discussed in consultation with the Staff Advisory Group and a working group within the Wolfert Dalton.	
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	Decision: The norms for moving up a class at Wolfert Dalton have now been approved and agreed.	
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<p>14.</p>	<p>Programme of Testing and Completion (PTA) at five schools (excluding RISS)</p> <p>The MR only looks at the general sections of the various schools' Programme of Testing and Completion (PTA).</p> <p>General remarks (MR):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are more similarities between the various schools' documents this year. - Some schools' documentation is very long. Is this really necessary? After all, the programme is meant for students, and should be accessible to them. - It might be advisable to add a separate heading for exceptions related to coronavirus, which are thus temporary, and can easily be removed from next year's PTA. <p>Wolfert Dalton: Page 2 – The section on extra resits at Wolfert Dalton should be worded more clearly. A sentence needs to be added to the effect that students in their final year cannot resit exams from the previous year.</p> <p>Aids and Cheating: It seems rather odd to put 'aids' and 'cheating' under the same heading. This point was raised last year too.</p> <p>First page - typo – 'Toetsen' should be replaced by 'Toetsing'.</p> <p>Wolfert College: No comments.</p> <p>Wolfert Bilingual: On page 15 dates have been listed under '<i>Let Op</i>' (N.B.) but these are not correct. On page 15, the second date for the IB examination can be deleted, given that students only need to sit one exam instead of two.</p> <p>The introductory letter gives a different deadline for the special subject project than the PTA. Which deadline is correct?</p> <p>Wolfert Lyceum: Page 4 refers to a 'PWS reader 2019/2020'. Shouldn't this be a PWS reader 2020/2021?</p> <p>Last year's deadlines have been given for handing in practical assignments. These need to be changed.</p>	
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	<p>Decision: The proposed changes will be made, and on the basis of these changes, the PTAs of all the schools (with the exception of Wolfert RISS) will be approved and agreed.</p>	
15.	<p>2020/2021 School prospectuses: all schools</p> <p>Wolfert Dalton: Point 2.3 – Norms for moving up a class. It says here that students are assessed at the end of the school year to determine whether they can move up to the next class. Shouldn't it also say that this assessment is also used to determine the level?</p> <p>Response (central management team): If a student doesn't move up, we automatically explore opportunities to transfer them to a different, more appropriate level.</p> <p>Point 7.4 – Parental contribution. Here, an explicit reference is made to a school camp for first-years, which won't be held this year. This should be changed.</p> <p>Wolfert Bilingual: No comments.</p> <p>Wolfert Lyceum: Point 5.3 – Student council email address has been omitted. Please insert.</p> <p>Request (MR): The photos used in the Wolfert Lyceum prospectus could be a better reflection of the school's current student population. The MR requests the school to take this on board in the next photo session.</p> <p>Wolfert RISS: No comments.</p> <p>Wolfert Lansing: No comments.</p> <p>Decision: the school prospectuses are approved.</p>	
16.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Question (MR): Last year the focus was logically on students in their final exam year. Will the schools also devote more attention to students in the pre-exam year, who may be lagging behind due to events in the last school year?</p> <p>Response (central management team): There are grants for catch-up programmes and for providing students with additional support – for example, extra exam training.</p>	

Question (MR) about school fees

What will happen with the school trips that are paid from the school fees and will probably have to be cancelled this year?

Response (central management team):

The money was returned to the students whose trips were cancelled in the last school year. We'll be pursuing the same policy this year. The various schools will decide later in the year whether there will be any trips at all.

Question (MR):

Is there any idea how students' results in the current situation compare to those in the situation before the coronavirus outbreak? The MR would like to receive feedback on this.

Response (central management team):

It's too early to draw any conclusions. We should have a better idea by Christmas. The departments will be asked to investigate this as it applies to their own subject. We should then have a clear overview, and on the basis of this information we can decide which students need more support, and where.

Question (MR):

There is considerable concern at Wolfert Dalton about the future of the school. If this year the school again fails to attract the requisite number of students, what impact will this have on its future?

Response (central management team):

The situation was extremely precarious – Wolfert Dalton's continued existence is also the responsibility of the Rotterdam municipal authorities. Of course, student numbers will have to rise in the coming year. No school can survive if it attracts too few students for several years running. The central management team and the management team of Wolfert Dalton will devote attention to the concerns of the staff.

Question (MR) about norms for moving up a class at Wolfert Lyceum

Community service is no longer a requirement for moving up a class at Wolfert Lyceum. This is not what was agreed within the MR. How does this work, exactly?

Response (central management team):

In view of the exceptional situation, the norms will indeed be changed. This will probably apply to several schools. The head of school can always invoke the provision allowing them to change the norms in exceptional situations or in the event of an 'en bloc' decision.

Wolfert Dalton:

A questionnaire has been distributed among the staff on expenditure of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science budget. This has resulted in a clear preference. The results will be used in determining the allocation of these funds for Wolfert Dalton.

	End no later than The meeting ended at 22.05.	22.00

The next MR meeting will be held on Tuesday 6 October at

Wolfert Dalton,

Argonautenweg 55 Rotterdam

	Date of meeting	List of decisions
1.	09-09-2020	The minutes of the MR meeting of 24 June were approved and adopted.
2.	09-09-2020	The MR approved the proposal for expenditure of freed-up strike money submitted by Wolfert College and Wolfert Bilingual. Wolfert Lansing and Wolfert Lyceum need to come up with a proposal.
3.	09-09-2020	The MR approved the norms for moving up a class at Wolfert Dalton, on the basis of changes discussed in the meeting of 24 June.
4.	09-09-2020	The proposed changes will be introduced, and on this basis, the PTAs of all schools (with the exception of Wolfert RISS) were approved and agreed.
5.	09-09-2020	The MR approved the prospectuses of all the schools.