

Minutes from the Parent Representative Meeting on Oct. 28, 2017

Next meeting: The 3rd of February

Feedback from work groups in the Parent Representative Meeting

Student welfare/community:

The recently completed user survey shows that 10% of the school's students experience problems of welfare based on the relationship between day students and boarders. An equally large percentage of students experience problems of welfare based on incidents between student of the same sex.

What can you as parents do to eliminate problems of welfare between boarders and day students as well as between girls at the school? Also, which ideas and actions could the school management start to work on?

What can the parents do?

Boarding and day student parents can do more to promote social activities outside school hours. This will be easier if there are fewer rules. See below.

What can Management do?

IB/STX

It is a challenge that there are different school systems (IB, STX, grade school) with different demands and different school cultures. IB students may feel excluded, among other things because of language.

The students come from different parts of the country and different social groups which may lead to different sets of values. The school has to work with different backgrounds and different types of schools. We have to work together across and in spite of such differences.

The boarding school

The boarding school teachers have to be more visible as grownups. This could possibly be included in the boarding school teachers' job description. Boarding students' welfare suffer if they are alone in a class. The classes should be mixed or the boarding students should be gathered in one class.

Boarders/day students

K The boarders keep to themselves from the very first day of school. They are very focused on life in the dorms and have many separate social activities.

It is important to break down the dividing lines between the boarders and the day students. This might be achieved by pairing up day students with boarders. This is made difficult by the many rules for boarders which prevent the boarders from going home with day students. The boarding students are 'tied' to the school during 'mellemweekends'. It would be great if the rules were more 'contemporary'.

Another option would be to make it possible for day students to stay overnight at the school, i.e. to make it a permanent option so that there are always empty beds for the day students. In general, it is difficult for the day students to stay overnight in the boarders' 'hummer'. Would it be possible for a day student to participate in a boarding student's everyday routine, or would it be possible to create part-time boarding student slots? The boarders are also very much on their own and the other boarders become their family. This may be lonely and not always easy.

Prefects have to be cultural ambassadors for the boarders and the boarding school section and strengthen the feeling of community. Another option might be the creation of prefects for the day students.

Café and sports events do not include everybody. A general sense of ownership could be established. In the instances when

the events are open to everybody, they often feel as if they are for boarders only. Socializing could be strengthened through the establishment of a common room where students could meet.

In this connection a study café for boarders and day students might be created.

Maybe one could create a motto: we wish you'd stay a little longer.

Girls/boys

Many girls are ahead of the curve with respect to everything. At the same time they are also in different place than the boys with respect to maturity. Even though there is an equal number of boys and girls, the school is still defined by its culture and history as a boys' school. (The boys were here first and make their imprint on the school)

Joint activities for all girls or groups of girls might be arranged. The school might work more purposefully with social media. Social mentor programs to further student welfare might also be established.

The teachers might also consciously work towards leveling gender differences in their classes and take such differences into account in connection with group work, etc.

Welfare in general

Inspiration could be sought from United World college.

The students could be taught 'rules of the game' and work with team building.

As part of the work, "The Award" may be made obligatory.

Another possibility is to create an anonymous hotline that the students can write to.

A further possibility is to arrange cooperation between parents across the classes.

Exchange program

As evidenced by this year's offering of conferences, Herlufsholm School has by now achieved a well-developed network of options to make it possible for our students to experience the world. How can we all work together to ensure that this is does not just become academic tourism? How can parents and teachers cooperate to make sure that our students achieve solid, personal de-velopment that reflects the great efforts put into the field.

What can parents do?

Participate in the planning of exchanges and study trips. Make their homes available.

What can management do?

Make greater use of Herlufsholm alumni (gammelherlovianere) and work with exchange on the existing study trips and have an explicit exchange theme. In particular with respect to the alumni's companies and professional connections. Whole classes could go on 2 weeks' exchanges. The students could go to places where they encounter a different reality/kind of life, including people who really need help (financially and socially)

It would be preferable if the school had a strategy to prevent the student from falling behind in connection with exchanges.

Work more with teacher exchanges - ideally up to a full year. There is also a lot of tacit knowledge amongst the students in the classes.

The trips could, for example, be integrated in the classroom teaching. Try to get different types of students to go on exchange trips. it would be advantageous if students and parents participated in the planning of the trips.

Change vs. development

Herlufsholm Skole is under constant development. Daily practice is constantly evaluated to ensure that we are up-to-date and change in accordance with the spirit and the values of the place. How do we ensure ongoing communication and trust between parents and school that are based on facts and not on rumors and fear? What do you as parents think of the processes at the school that lead to the constant development?

When and how does it happen that parents begin to talk negatively about the school when such talk takes place on an uncertain or incorrect foundation?

Parents

Contact the school and communicate about activities and points of view; support the school's decisions.

Management

More proactive information from management and more visibility in various situations.

In general, Herlufsholm is not so visible in the media. When you google IB in Denmark, Herlufsholm does not appear.

Be proactive with respect to information and communication when there is new management. Introduce the leaders and their ideas more clearly.

Tell about the good IB results on the school website and provide statistics of how the IB students succeed beyond Herlufsholm.

Greater communication with 'Herlovianersamfundet' (alumni association)

Headmaster

The headmaster was pleased with the work done and thanked the assembly for the great number of the suggestions received. Several of them fit right into some of the initiatives the school is about to launch or has under consideration.

Round Square - exchange

We continue to work on improving the exchanges, and great effort is taken to get the greatest number of students possible to participate in the exchanges. In connection with the high school's study trips, the school is trying to incorporate principles and activities from "The Award". Guide-lines that also are in line with the Round Square work.

Boarders/day students

The school is very open for arrangements that can further the closeness between day students and boarders and increase the number of boarders. One such solution could be a part time boarding student arrangement - or Flexi boarder - where the day students can sign in and out.

Day student prefects

It is a possibility but it is more difficult for a day student to work as closely with the other students as the boarders. The prefect function is obviously tied to the dorms where the students are very close with each other.

Guidance counselor - hotline

This year we have had a guidance counselor employed on a trial basis (time-limited project). The function has been handled by Flemmig Wagner who is here today. The evaluation of this arrangement has led to the decision to advertise for a permanent guidance counselor.

Proactive communication:

We are working hard to develop and optimize our communication. We have recently launched a new website, and we would like to get specific feedback on this site.

Closing remarks

The headmaster thanked the attendees. He looked forward to their joint cooperation in the future and pointed out the option of conducting meetings in the work groups created by the Board of parent representatives in the upcoming 'mellemweekend', Nov. 11 and 12.

Secretary MHA