

Report from The Joint Board by Chairperson, Carla Nielsen

Good evening, my name is Carla Nielsen. I am mum to Solveig in the 3rd year and Jens in year 0. I have been involved in the Board's work since 2021. For the first approx. 1.5 years as a substitute, and then in the second year for a longer period as board member, partly due to illness and eventually there was a change in the board due to a change of school, which is why I then stepped in.

I am the Chairperson of the current board, and have been since December 2023, but I will come to that further on...

Since it is our international department (KI) that has been the focal point during my time as Chairperson of the Board, it is also KI that characterizes this report.

In October last year, the board was made aware that it was difficult to live up to the original intercultural vision for KI, within the framework of the current law and regulations.

The Joint Board was called to an extraordinary meeting – the first of many. The Parents' Board then, together with the management and teacher representatives, began a lengthy process of investigating what possibilities there *could be* for an international department at Kochs School.

It is important for me to emphasize here that the Board did not start where we ended up. That is, the starting point was not to close KI but to find a solution so KI could continue after the summer holidays. This was the point of departure.

We therefore examined three different options for how an international department at Kochs School could operate within the law framework. On the Board, we worked very thoroughly and reviewed the possibilities for a KI in one model after another.

By December, we arrived at the conclusion that the only possible workable model was a purely international department, and we were therefore faced with having to transform KI into a purely international department. This meant that the original intercultural vision for KI should be overturned. It proved to be impossible to run a school the way we want to run a school, within the framework of the law for an international schools in Denmark.

Furthermore, we were also made aware of the fact that an international school offer in Denmark is aimed at children of parents who *do not* intend to stay in Denmark. The possible transformation of KI into a purely international department would therefore also be challenged on its student basis. So, in addition to the original pedagogical vision no longer being possible, the finances of the whole school would be challenged, as there would be fewer students in the individual KI class, as a transformed KI would not apply to those students who were already in KI.

Since the Board's task is not only to run a school for the children who are enrolled at the school this school year, which indeed it does, but also to run Koch's School properly, so that there is a Kochs School for children in 10, 20 yes, in 50 years' time.

The Parent Board made the difficult decision to close KI with effect from the school year 2024. In this connection, the current Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson resigned. The Board then summoned its deputies and reconstituted itself, after which I became Chairperson. That is why I am standing here today.

The Board was aware that the closure of KI would mean an unhappy situation for children, parents and teachers, and much effort was put into assessing each child's special situation. There should not and could not be one solution that applied to everyone; which takes time, so it became a longer process.

Kochs School has a foundation of values that reads:

At Kochs School, we believe that a strong and inclusive community consisting of children, parents and staff is a prerequisite in order for the individual child to thrive and experience success in school and later in life. We form viable children and young people who are academically strong, able to collaborate, communicate, problem solve, think critically and be creative, so that they can be and work in the world as democratically educated.

This still applies, and the Board is looking forward to focusing on our children's world affairs; being in and working in the world - with and without digitalization. A world relationship where our children have the courage and ability to open to the world – in their own and the world's diversity.

Sometimes the right choice is not always the easiest choice, and sometimes the unpopular, hard, and uncomfortable decision is what is best for the future. There are always special tasks at Kochs Skole, and the school year 2023/24 has so far been extraordinarily special. The Board is looking forward to the tasks the next school year will bring.