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**For the Attention of the Members of the
European Schools' Community**

Dear Members of the European Schools' Community,

Today, we are entering into a new school year and as Secretary-General of the European Schools I wish all of us a good start by welcoming, in particular, our new pupils and staff members and their families.

This school year, we are celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the European Schools. It all started in October 1953 on the initiative of officials of the European Coal and Steel Community with the opening of a small primary school with 70 students and seven teachers. Since then, the system has grown significantly with nearly 29.000 this school year and around 3.100 staff members in the 13 'traditional' European Schools in six EU Member States. Moreover, the system has opened up, and we currently count additional 23 Accredited European Schools with more than 13.000 pupils within the 'family' of the European Schools. With the European School Tirol, the first Accredited European School in Austria will open its doors today.

Since 1953, the system has developed a lot while maintaining its mission *"to provide all pupils with multilingual broad education of high quality from early education to secondary school, and to equip upper secondary students to adult life and form a basis for further learning"*.

However, the time has come to review the mission of the European Schools and to have in-depth reflections on the vision for the system which could become a more visible element within the European Educational Area. Most likely still in September, the European Parliament will vote on a Report of the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT Committee) on *'The system of the European Schools: state of play, challenges and perspectives'*.

This report together with already started discussions on the level of Heads of Delegations at the Board of Governors will be the basis for intensive and certainly inspiring discussions with all stakeholders under the chairmanship of the Italian Presidency to the Board of Governors which succeeded the Irish Presidency on 1 August 2023.

As Secretary-General, I am confident that this reflection process will be for the benefit of the entire European School's system but will also have a very concrete and positive output for our staff members and - most important - for current and future pupil's generations.

You are invited to participate in this process either in person or via your representatives and we will keep you updated over the school year.

Coming back to today's start of the 2023/24 school year, I would like to finish by wishing all of us a good (re)entry and a successful and inspiring new school year!

Yours sincerely,



Andreas BECKMANN
Secretary-General