

AES Position Paper

Introduction

The Accredited European Schools (AES) represent a core component of the future evolution of the European Schools System (ESS). The European Parliament's CULT Report (p.10, pt.36) calls for strengthened collaboration with AES, expansion to all Member States, and more transparent accreditation procedures to enable sustainable growth while maintaining high quality.

The report of IAS further highlights the importance of AES, emphasizing the need for more comprehensive representation and closer cooperation.

The Mission and Vision of the European Schools (ES) document provides a structured framework that is designed to explain the key elements of the ES system, its purpose, and ambitions for the future.

AES, through their fundamental purpose and inherent strengths, are fully committed to advancing the strategic objectives of the ESS and ensuring access to high-quality multilingual and multicultural education across Europe.

In this context, we present this official position paper underlining the purpose and strengths of AES and outlining a strategic call to action, as explained under point 3, aligned with the aims laid out in the CULT and IAS reports as well as in the Mission and Vision document. These actions are essential to securing the long-term success and evolution of the ESS as a whole.

1. Purpose of AES

AES embody the values, curriculum, and academic expectations of the ESS while operating within national systems. They extend access to European education, promote European values, multilingualism, and prepare students for responsible European and global citizenship.

AES serve the ESS by:

- Expanding the geographical reach of the European Schools curriculum
- Supporting sustainable growth of the system
- Strengthening multilingual and multicultural competencies
- Piloting innovations in pedagogy, digital learning, and inclusion

This aligns directly with the ESS Mission and MASP objectives on quality, access, inclusion, innovation, and system coherence.

2. Strengths of AES

Emerging from the same educational principles, objectives, mission and vision of the ESS, AES have many strengths, including, but not limited to:

- *Pedagogical Expertise:* AES uphold the ESS curriculum and EB standards, contributing to system-wide coherence.
- *Innovation Capacity:* AES offer agile environments for piloting new approaches in digital transformation, inclusive pedagogy, and alternative assessment.
- *System Expansion:* AES allow the ESS to grow sustainably, aligning with MASP priorities for access and Member-State integration.
- *Diversity and Local Anchoring:* AES combine national frameworks with European identity, reinforcing the ESS's multicultural mission.

3. Strategic Call to Action

To successfully achieve the aims laid out in the CULT resp. IAS reports and the mission and vision document, we call for:

3.1 Strategic Recognition

AES must be formally recognized as a pillar of ESS strategic development; AES must have equal participation in governance bodies affecting curriculum, assessment, and EB policy; and the structured cooperation mechanisms between AES and OSG must be extended.

Concrete actions to be taken by the governing bodies of ESS:

1. Grant AES full voting rights in JTC.
2. Include AES representation in BoG discussions on system architecture.
3. Integrate AES experts into EB reform working groups.

Concrete actions to be taken by AES Schools:

1. Produce annual quality development plans aligned with ESS indicators.
2. Contribute systematically to ESS monitoring and evaluation processes.
3. Participate in curriculum, assessment, and EB implementation reviews.

3.2 One Collective Voice

AES commit to acting as a unified network to support ESS governance processes.

Concrete Actions to be taken:

1. Regular exchange with all stakeholders
2. Submit annual collective priorities to OSG, JTC, and BoG.

3.3 Visibility & Awareness

AES must be visible contributors to the system's development.

Concrete Actions to be taken:

1. Create an AES Annual Policy & Innovation Forum.
2. Produce an AES Contribution Report.
3. Showcase innovations in multilingualism, digitalization, and inclusion.
4. Strengthen communication with ministries and EU institutions.

3.4 Unity in Diversity

AES demonstrate how European identity flourishes across national contexts.

Concrete Actions to be taken:

1. Organize European Identity & Citizenship Education Weeks.
2. Create student and teacher mobility opportunities.
3. Pilot inclusion and SEN frameworks aligned with ESS policy.

4. Vision for 2030 and Beyond

We envision an ESS where:

- Every Member State offers the European Baccalaureate
- AES operate as innovation hubs
- ESS growth is sustainable and high-quality
- AES and ES form a unified, coherent network delivering excellence

5. Our Commitment

AES commit to:

- Upholding multilingualism, inclusion, and academic excellence
- Contributing expertise and innovation to ESS governance
- Offering support to national schools wanting to implement the European curriculum
- Preparing students for European citizenship and future challenges

6. Conclusion

AES are neither an alternative, auxiliary nor supplementary track of the European School System—they are an essential and inseparable part of its strategic development, relevance, sustainability and long-term success.

AES are the strategic engine enabling the growth, relevance, sustainability and long-term success of the European Schools System.

Therefore, it is essential that the governing bodies of the ESS consider the strategic call to action laid out in this paper.