

MR Update

May 2025

Dear ISH Community,

Greetings from the Medezeggenschapsraad (MR), your Participation Council! We're back with another update to keep you informed about the key topics discussed during our recent meetings in April and May. As always, we're here to represent the ISH community—parents, students, and staff—and support the ongoing development of our school. Here are the latest updates.

What's Been Happening?

Cleanliness of secondary toilets

Following ongoing concerns about toilet cleanliness at our secondary location, the Student Council is now leading peer discussions around the responsible use of facilities. Although regular cleaning is in place, issues like toilet paper waste and odour continue to be raised. To help build awareness, students are exploring ways to make the issue more personal and impactful—such as creating a short video highlighting the cleaners' perspective or even interviewing cleaning staff. They hope this will encourage more respectful behaviour. There have also been requests to provide larger bins under the dispensers to better manage waste.

Outdoor space and bike parking

We've received some great suggestions from parents about improving the outdoor area at our secondary location, particularly by rethinking the space currently used for bike parking. These ideas have been passed on to the Student Council, who are now exploring possibilities. Students in MYP 1–3 have expressed a strong interest in more space for football, while MYP 4–5s and DP students would like additional seating during breaks. To support planning, we're continuing to track bike usage, especially now that more students are cycling in the warmer weather.

Our MR student representative, Trisha, is also gathering feedback from younger students and exploring a student-led approach to managing sports equipment. The MR and Student Council are working together to find a balanced solution that reflects student needs and remains feasible within available resources. Options being considered include new football goals, a basketball hoop, and seating acquired through donations.

Lower primary gate congestion

While the morning drop-off has already improved, thanks to longer traffic light timings and recent sidewalk adjustments, we've received additional helpful suggestions from parents on how to ease congestion further. In response, both main gates at Lower Primary will now be opened during drop-off.

However, the small middle gate (adjacent to the pavement) will remain closed, as previously communicated. Following consultation with the school board and municipality, it was agreed that this gate cannot be safely monitored and must not be used. Please also note that the gate leading to the staff car park will stay closed to students, as the area is unsafe due to vehicle traffic.

School timing & bus schedules

We've heard from both students and parents about ongoing challenges with public transport at the secondary location. Currently, the morning bus arrives around 20 minutes before school doors open, and in the afternoon, the school day ends just after a key bus departs—leaving students waiting up to 30 minutes. This often means waiting outside, which can be especially difficult during the winter months.

To help address this, a proposal has been made to slightly adjust the school day's timings for **secondary students only**, with the goal of better aligning with local bus schedules. Before any changes are considered, the Heads of School and MR are preparing a short survey to understand the potential impact on families and gather your views. Keep an eye out for the survey, it will help guide the next steps and ensure that any changes genuinely support our secondary students without creating new challenges.

School fees update

In line with trends across Dutch international schools, a modest school fee increase of 2.5% is planned. There will also be adjustments based on exam fees. Importantly, yearbooks will now be included in the school fees by default, with the option for families to opt out. Leavers who transition before a major school phase will be refunded for any yearbooks not received.

Career programme accreditation

ISH is now officially an approved BTEC Centre, a key milestone in the CP roll-out. As mentioned in a previous update, the CP offers a great alternative to the IB Diploma, especially for students interested in business-related studies. More information sessions will be organised for MYP4 and DP1 families soon.

Satisfaction survey

Every school in the Netherlands is required to carry out a satisfaction survey for parents, students (from Group 6 and up), and staff. These surveys are an important tool to help schools understand what's going well and where things could be improved, aiming to enhance the experience for everyone in the school community. The full parent-student-staff survey cycle takes place every four years, with the next one planned for the 2025–2026 school year. In the meantime, some groups may still take part in smaller or more focused surveys each year.

Our next meeting

Our next MR meeting is scheduled for **Monday 30 June**. If you have any questions, thoughts, or suggestions you'd like us to bring to the table, please don't hesitate to get in touch at mr@internationalschoolhaarlem.nl

Warm regards,
Your ISH MR Team

Stay connected!