



Luxembourg, 23 January 2014

Dear parents,

Shortly before Christmas I was elected as the new President of "Les Mots de Zaza" (MdZ) and in this function I would like to introduce myself to you. For those of you who do not know the association, it is active in both Lux I and Lux II, and its main aim is the acquisition of new books for the nursery and primary school libraries, together with the promotion of reading for enjoyment and study. MdZ is not active at the secondary school, but it has links with another association there, "The Friends of the Secondary Library".

At the beginning of each school year a contribution of 10 euro per child is collected, for which I would like to cordially thank you in the name of the pupils. The buying of books is organized within each language section of Les Mots de Zaza, and the acquired books are administered by the school in the libraries, with one library for the nursery and one for the primary school. The MdZ association, whose board I am chairing, is responsible for all its own accounts – one for each language section and a central account. "Les Mots de Zaza" is officially registered as a charitable association ("asbl") in Luxembourg.

For several years now, Les Mots de Zaza has been organizing a book fair at both schools, normally in the spring term. At our book fairs, pupils bring some money on the day and come with their teachers and classes to choose a book (or several books) for themselves to keep at home. This year we are planning the fairs for Monday 24 March in Lux II and Wednesday 26 March in Lux I. Parents are also very welcome to come. Please keep these dates in mind, and if you would like to get involved, please contact us. We would like to ensure that as many language sections as possible have a stand, and to do that we need volunteers!

Les Mots de Zaza also organises a stand at the school summer fêtes, with a traditional balloon race and other attractions. The money raised goes into our central account and has been used in the past towards paying for authors or illustrators to visit the school. Some money has also been used for setting up new language sections in the libraries, as new countries have joined the EU, or in helping language sections which need extra money that year for new or replacement books.

Why are books so important for children?

Renowned child psychologists are of the opinion that looking at picture books as well as being read or told stories by adults are among the most important long-term forms of language promotion. Children love being read a story or looking at a picture book together. It stimulates their fantasy while at the same time helping them acquire knowledge. With regular reading, children acquire a sound command of language and school results benefit.

We offer our children a lot of important things: they learn to swim, engage with arts, music and go in for sports. Nevertheless the importance of reading - especially in the era of smartphones and the ever more natural usage of the internet - is of inestimable value. When adults take the time to read to children or encourage them to read books themselves, this cannot be overestimated. Libraries can be central to this, contributing to equal opportunities for all pupils and offering a greater range and choice of books beyond those at home.

Many people contribute to realising these ideas at our schools: I thank all teachers who accompany their pupils to the library. My gratitude also goes to all parents who get involved with buying books, act as treasurer for their respective language section, help at the book fair or who are active by other means for the school libraries - be it by accompanying the children or by helping to cover the books. Last but not least, I also thank the school administration and the librarians for their support and involvement.

Now to myself: I started my engagement at Les Mots de Zaza only recently, being elected President at the first meeting I have ever attended! By taking over this honorary position I would like to contribute to securing the future of the association. I am of German nationality and apart from my German mother tongue I speak English, French and Spanish. This is my second school year as a parent at the European School, having a daughter in the German section at nursery school of Lux I who loves books. While this is certainly my main motivation for this voluntary engagement, you can be assured that I want to be committed to all language sections in both schools, with the support of my board colleagues.

Our Board consists of six persons - besides me as President, we are:

- Mrs Gretel Sardiñas, Secretary
- Mr José Coimbra de Matos, Treasurer
- Mrs Teresa Majus, Vice President for Lux I
- Mr Csaba Herbaly, Vice President for Lux II
- Mrs Andrée Regnier, Communication and contact with APEEE1 and APEEE2.

We can best be reached by e-mail (new address: [motsdezaza@gmx.net](mailto:motsdezaza@gmx.net)). You can also find us on the school webpage of Lux I<sup>1</sup> (page on Lux II school webpage will follow) and on our new Facebook page<sup>2</sup>.

I am looking forward to many interesting encounters in the context of my new function and to lots of opportunities for inspiring children's joy of reading. Should I have awakened your interest and you consider contributing on a voluntary basis to the activities of Les Mots de Zaza, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Stefan Kohler  
- President -  
Les Mots de Zaza (MdZ)

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.euroschool.lu/primary/School\\_projects/Les\\_mots\\_de\\_Zaza/School\\_library/School\\_library.html](http://www.euroschool.lu/primary/School_projects/Les_mots_de_Zaza/School_library/School_library.html)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/mots.dezaza>