



GERMAN LANGUAGE SCHOOL OF MORRIS COUNTY, INC.

“OVER 40 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY”

HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

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See our website at www.glsmc.org

for latest news and events



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HANDBOOK PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint parents and students with the salient facts and information concerning the School and the rules and regulations under which it operates.

OVERVIEW & SCHOOL PURPOSE

The German Language School of Morris County, Inc. (GLSMC) has been in continuous existence since 1968 as a non-profit organization affiliated with both the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) and the nationwide German Language School Conference (GLSC). Because of our achievements the school was selected in 2008 to be a PASCH-School (Schulen: Partner der Zukunft), a new initiative of the German State department. We are supported by and operate according to the standards of the German Zentralstelle für Auslandsschulwesen (ZfA).

The School offers students the opportunity, at modest cost, to learn German and participate in cultural events related to the language, culture and heritage of the German speaking countries. The School is a non-profit organization and offers classes appropriate for each level from pre-kindergarten to Advanced Placement (ages 3 to 18) as well as classes for adults. Starting first grade we offer two tracks. One track is targeted to meet the needs of beginners and intermediate students (German as a foreign language) with no or little prior knowledge of German. The second track is geared towards speakers with a strong background in German or native speakers (German as a first or second language). From Preschool through Kindergarten the children are taught in mixed classes. Additionally, the School offers adult classes throughout the year. Most of the School's teachers are native German speakers, some are German school teachers and all are college or university graduates.

The School prepares students for the German Language Diploma (Deutsches Sprachdiplom) and for the Advanced Placement Exam (AP) in German for college credit in the United States. It is one of the few institutions in the New York area that prepares students for the Sprachdiplom level I and II language exams which are a pre-requisite for entrance to German universities and can also be useful to meet language requirements at all other European universities. We also administer the AATG (American Association of Teachers) exams.

The School has become increasingly important to the community as German language programs have been discontinued by some public schools due to budgetary constraints.

The previous long-serving principal was instrumental in working with a sponsoring Assemblyman and other language schools in spearheading the successful initiative in the N.J. legislature to allow public high schools to grant credit for external language programs culminating in passage of the World Language Act.



MISSION STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

1. Teaching German as a first, second and as a foreign language to children in accordance with the highest standards of excellence based on cognitive, creative and social learning skills. Adult education also takes place if possible.
2. Providing instruction in the oral and written language in all aspects to advance the student's ability to read, write and speak German on their individual level.
3. Participating in the German language speaking cultural community.
4. Advancing German language speaking cultural awareness and knowledge about traditions and present day's life in German speaking countries among students and their families.

DISCLOSURES

The School believes in providing an equal opportunity education to all and admits students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, gender or ethnic or national origin. Similarly, it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, gender, or ethnic or national origin in the administration of its educational policies including equal opportunity employment.

The German Language School of Morris County, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation, incorporated under the laws of New Jersey and recognized for federal tax purposes as a tax-exempt charitable and educational organization in conformity with Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations net of goods or services received are deductible for tax purposes as allowed by current IRS regulations.

GOVERNANCE

The President leads an all parent volunteer Board of Officers and Trustees who are elected by the School membership at the Annual Meeting usually held in March of each year.

The by-laws are the framework for the corporate structure of the School and provide, in part, the following :

Membership

Section 1 – Regular members (voting) of this Corporation shall consist of:

- Parents of children attending the school
- Adult students of the school



Section 2 – Honorary members (voting), in recognition of their service to the School, shall be recommended by the Board of Trustees and Officers and approved by a majority of the voting members present at a membership meeting. The term of the honorary membership shall be for life.

Board of Trustees

Section 1 – The Board of Trustees shall consist of five (5) voting members.

Section 2 – The Trustees shall be elected by the voting membership at the annual meeting for the terms of three (3) years, the individual terms shall overlap so that no more than two (2) expire in any one year.

Section 3 – The Trustees shall elect a Chairman from among themselves.

Section 4 – Should a vacancy exist, a majority of the Board of Trustees and Officers shall appoint a voting member to serve as Trustee until the next annual meeting, at which time a voting member shall be elected to complete any unexpired term.

Section 5 – Officers and salaried employees of the Corporation shall not serve as Trustees.

Section 6 – The Principal of the school shall be a non- voting ex officio member of the Board of Trustees.

Officers

Section 1 – The Officers shall consist of the following voting members:

- President
- First Vice President
- Second Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Public Relations Secretary

Section 2 – Officers shall be elected by the voting membership at the annual meeting for a term of one (1) year.

Section 3 – Should a vacancy exist in any office, except the Offices of President and First Vice President, the President shall appoint a voting member to serve as acting Officer until the next membership meeting, at which time a voting member shall be elected to complete any unexpired term.

Section 4 - Should the office of President become vacant, the First Vice President shall become the President.

Section 5 - Should the office of First Vice President become vacant, the Second Vice President shall become the First Vice President.

Section 6 – Assistants to Officers may be appointed by the President at any time. Assistants to Officers shall not vote at meetings of the Board of Trustees and Officers.

Section 7 - Trustees and salaried employees of the Corporation shall not serve as Officers.



Annual Meeting

Section 1 – The annual meeting of the membership and election of the Trustees and Officers shall be held in March of each year. Newly elected Trustees and Officers shall take office immediately

Special meetings of the membership shall be called by the President, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, or by written request to the President by no less than ten (10) voting members

ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATION

Faculty

The faculty consists of the Principal and a staff of dedicated teachers and aides. Most of them are native speakers and have a background in teaching. The Principal is responsible for the establishing and implementing the academic program and for the hiring of the teaching staff.

Faculty attend and participate in workshops and programs in order to remain current with teaching methods, review textbooks and exchange ideas and experiences with representatives of other German Language schools nationwide. Some of them are organized by the school to meet our specific needs, some by the German government (Zentralstelle für Auslandsschulwesen), educational consultant based in Washington D.C. , some by the German Language School Conference (GLSMC) or other organizations like AATG (American Association of Teachers of German).

Enrollment, academic program and achievement

Enrollment

30 Saturday morning classes per year for children ages 3 to 18

30 Saturday morning classes for adults (optional).

Academic program

Classes are offered appropriate to the age and ability levels of the students and class sizes are carefully monitored to ensure that a positive learning experience is achieved. With the two tracks we are accommodating the different needs of the children. The foreign language track focuses on establishing first basic and later advanced language skills. The track for German as a first or second language meets the needs of those children who need to improve or broaden their already existing language skills. Depending on their individual progress children of both tracks have the same opportunities to participate in testing like the AATG, AP or Sprachdiplom. The intent is for German to be spoken in the classroom as much as possible in order to provide an immersion and accelerate learning.



Academic Achievement

The School prides itself on the academic achievements attained by its students, which are among the highest in the U.S.

The School has consistently received a Letter of Commendation from the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) for the outstanding achievement of its students in the German Achievement tests taken countrywide by 25,000 students as frequently over 50% of our students passed the German Achievement Test in the 90% percentile.

The School has achieved notable success in students passing the Sprachdiplom I written and verbal examinations and the Sprachdiplom II examinations, the eligibility requirements for which are 10 and 12 years of German study, respectively. This Diploma is recognized and accepted by colleges and universities in Germany similar to the Advanced Placement test (AP). Under certain circumstances it allows direct access to universities in Germany.

Further, the School prepares students for the College Board Advanced Placement tests (AP) each May and has achieved an enviable success rate which is usually accepted for U.S. college credit.

In 2008 the German Language School of Morris County was elected by the German State department to be a PASCH (Schulen, Partner der Zukunft) because of our achievements. As we do meet the standards of the German Government our school annually receives a grant from the Zentralstelle für Auslandsschulwesen (ZfA).

Registration and Tuition

Preregistration starts in March of each school year. The purpose of the preregistration process is to find out how many students will return or start next year so that we can start planning, especially with regard to the faculty. As we are a non-for-profit organization, we also appreciate you letting us know in which areas you can support our school as a volunteer. Parents are not obligated to make any payments at that point.

Registration usually starts three weeks before the end of the semester with a discount. After that the regular fee has to be paid. The School's enrollment forms each for children and adults may be downloaded from the website.

The tuition rates for children and adults are set by the Board annually and are available on the website. Early registration and multiple student discounts are offered.



Standardized testing

Student progress is monitored through regular tests and quizzes administered by the faculty in order to gauge advancement and understanding.

From the 5th grade level students are tested in accordance with the Achievement Tests established by the AATG and in the upper grades students are prepared for sitting the AP and DSD-1 and DSD-2 examinations.

Withdrawal

The withdrawal policy and refund of tuition paid is set by the Board and may be downloaded from the website. In the event of an uneconomic number of students registering for a particular class the Board reserves the right not to hold those classes and a refund will be made. This has never happened with children's classes, only adults.

STUDENTS

School books

School textbooks are provided each student and remain the property of the School and should be returned at the end of the school year. A charge will be made for lost or damaged books. Students may purchase their own books from the School at cost. Workbooks provided to students may be kept.

Attendance

Regular attendance is a pre-requisite for learning and advancement and parents are strongly encouraged to ensure that their students miss a class only for illness or other unavoidable good reason which should be advised to the teacher as soon as possible. Attendance lists are maintained by the teachers and recorded on the report cards.

Teachers are not expected to provide extra help to make up for missed work but can do so at your additional cost at their discretion and if it is convenient for them.

Homework

Homework is set by teachers to reinforce and augment the classroom learning and is usually provided at the end of each school day. Some teachers may prefer to email students/parents with the assignments. It is important that students come to class with their homework completed in advance. For those parents who are able to, speaking German with your student at home and practicing work already learnt will greatly facilitate progress.



Snack and breaktime

The students are expected to bring a snack and a drink for break time as they will not be provided by the school. It is highly recommended to avoid products with nuts as allergies are widespread. All allergies have to be reported with registration. In addition, severe food and other allergies have to be discussed with the teacher. The children are expected to clean up their own spot after break time. Please also bring a warm coat, hat, mittens etc in winter and fall as the break will be taken outside weather permitting. If recess is held inside, children are not allowed to run inside the building.

School materials

All students are expected to bring their school books, workbooks and other basic material like pencils, pens, paper etc. to school every week. The teachers will inform about the specific needs in each class.

In case of illness

Please keep your child home from School if he/she:

- has been vomiting during the past 24 hours
- has diarrhea
- has an elevated temperature
- has a severe sore throat
- has pink eye
- has just begun antibiotics within the last 24 hours

Should a child become ill while attending class a parent will be called using one of the contact numbers you have provided. This demonstrates the need to provide the School with as much contact information as possible at the time of registration and should that information change during the school year.

Student conduct

Students are expected to comply with the following rules:

- Show respect to teachers, staff and classmates at all times
- Arrive for class on time and when returning from breaks
- Respect personal property of others including the Morristown Beard School building and property and the property of the School (including textbooks). Parents will be held financially responsible for any damage caused by their children
- Clean up after snack periods and help at the end of the school day to return the Classroom to its original condition
- Come to class properly prepared to participate fully in the classroom activities. This includes bringing completed homework assignments, text and workbooks, pencils, tissues and any other materials required by the teacher. At the end of the school day make sure you take everything home with you.



The following are not allowed during class

- Any kind of dangerous object or weapon, including pocket knives
- Eating, drinking and gum chewing
- Listening to or playing music or games or use of any other electronic device including cell phones

Disciplinary measures

Violations of the School's rules will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the specific case. Minor violations such as disruptive behavior will be handled by the teacher &/or Principal who will advise parents if they consider it necessary.

The Principal will report serious violations, including any involving the risk of personal injury, harm or liability, to the Board for a determination and action. Serious violations include, but are not limited to, physical violence, possession or use of weapons or other dangerous objects. Possession of drugs, alcohol or tobacco products is strictly prohibited as is vandalism and the triggering of false fire alarms. Such offenses constitute illegal behavior and may result in immediate expulsion. In such circumstances and unused tuition fees will be forfeited.

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

The composition of the School Board is of fellow parents who are volunteering their time and energy and are interested in seeing our School prosper and succeed. They are no different from you and always welcome comments, suggestions and ideas to make the School even better. Several of the current programs have come from such suggestions and ideas.

In order to ensure quick and prompt communication, email is used extensively to communicate with parents and faculty so please make sure that you keep up to date the phone numbers and email addresses provided to the School.

As soon as possible, updated information, including any changes to the School Calendar, is posted to the School website – www.glsmc.org – so check it frequently and often.

Communication with teachers/principal

Any questions you might have concerning the classroom, academic progress or other class related issues discuss with your student's teacher first. Parents may contact the Principal if a matter requires further attention.

Classroom visit

Teachers always welcome parental involvement with their student's learning and a brief classroom visit on the first day of school is often helpful so all may become acquainted. Teachers often provide an information pack to parents at the start of the school year with details of the class curriculum expected to be covered during the School year; the teacher's expectations regarding homework as well as contact information should that be



necessary outside School hours. We also offer Open Houses throughout the school year where you are welcome to visit your child's classroom.

Parent Meeting and Open House

All –School Parent Meetings are held twice a year when you will hear from the President and other Board members and the Principal. All parents are encouraged to attend. The spring parent meeting coincides with the Annual Meeting when the Board is elected for the upcoming School year.

In addition Open Houses are held where parents and friends can sit in on their student's class and see first hand how their students are learning and enjoying their class.

Ongoing communication

The teachers are willing to talk with you about your child's progress and listen to your suggestions after school or during the week through e-mail or telephone, depending on the individual teacher. The Principal is at the school each Saturday and welcomes the opportunity to meet and talk with parents and can also be reached via e-mail or telephone during the week. Often, at least one Board member is there, too.

Later in the Handbook you will find the contact details of the Principal and each Board Member with their specific roles.

We are trying to foster a spirit of community so while your children learn stay and socialize!

Report cards

Report cards are distributed to parents twice a year.

VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

Only the Principal and teaching staff are paid employees and the School depends on dedicated volunteers from among the parents to ensure that the School functions smoothly and efficiently. You have the opportunity to let the school know in which areas you can help out on your preregistration and registration forms. The roles assumed by Board members are posted on the website but there are many other opportunities for parents to give of their time, talents and enthusiasm to make the School an enjoyable learning experience for students and a social community for adults.

If you have talents or ideas that could benefit the School please speak to any Board member, the Principal or member of the teaching staff. At present, we are particularly underrepresented on the Board with people in the legal and accounting areas and would welcome any assistance. Ideas for fundraising and corporate donations or knowledge of corporate teaching opportunities assist in order to keep tuition as low as possible. We also always appreciate help with our events as well as helpers to craft little presents for the children like the "Schultüten" at the first day of school.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Calendar

The School starts on the first Saturday in September after Labor Day and runs for a total of 30 classes usually through until mid-May. Two snow days are built in to the calendar.

As we rent our space, the calendar must be agreed upon with the landlord in order to accommodate their activities and events which sometimes preclude our use of the facilities. Should that be the case we try and go elsewhere as we must hold 30 sessions in order to qualify for the Federal German grant that provides a substantial percentage of the total School revenue and holds down costs to members.

The preliminary School Calendar will be send out via e-mail at the beginning of the school year, is posted on the website and will be given out as a hard copy. Any changes will be communicated via e-mail and through the website. Check the website frequently to be up to date.

Hours

Details may be found on the website but the Saturday classes commence sharp at 9.00 a.m. and end at 12.00 noon. Please be punctual to not interrupt the lessons as there is always a lot of work to be covered in a relatively short space of time.

Special events

The School organizes cultural events like Nikolaus day, Fasching and others and participates in events organized by German cultural organizations like the German American Steuben Day Parade in New York City. Details will be sent to parents by email and are posted on the website.

School cancellation

Should it be necessary to cancel School for any reason we do our best to communicate with parents as early as possible. In the case of inclement weather usually the teacher will call your home in addition to an email that you will received from the School. If possible, a notice will be posted on the website but we recognize that parents are not necessarily checking emails constantly.

The School Calendar usually has 2 cancellation days built into the schedule so as to limit any disruption to the overall School year to as little as possible.

Class lists

Class lists may be provided to parents and any parent not wishing to be listed should advise the School. Please note that these lists are distributed solely to be used to facilitate such things as carpools and contact with classmates for out of School homework consultation or social activities. They should not be used for any commercial purpose.



Library

Books

Unfortunately, do not have access to storage space at our facility which precludes our maintaining a permanent library at the moment. But parents are encouraged to buy, read or borrow books in German and share them with your children. Parents are also encouraged to circulate and exchange suitable reading matter amongst fellow parents.

DVDs

The DVD library was one of the ideas from a non-Board member parent and has been a very popular and well-used resource and service at a nominal rental cost. It is available each Saturday from 11.45 am to 12.15 pm (volunteer staffing permitting) in the Lobby area of the School.

Privacy

The School takes privacy seriously and the information you provide to the School will be kept in confidence and not shared for anything other than School purposes.

In this connection, parents and relations do use camcorders and cameras at School events and, in order to provide suitable protection, as part of the registration process we ask parents to consent to the following Electronic and Paper Image Approval Form:

“I understand that when participating in German Language School of Morris County, Inc. (“GLSMC”) activities, the registrant may be photographed for print, video, or electronic imaging. I understand the images may be used in promotional materials, news releases, the GLSMC web site and other published formats for the GLSMC. Please note that the GLSMC will not publish the name with the picture on the website without an additional separate and explicit approval from a parent or legal guardian.

Please sign below to consent to your child’s image being used as described above.”



CONTACT INFORMATION

School telephone (Principal) - 973 586 3639

School website - www.glsmc.org

Email: principal@glsmc.org

The Principal

Dr. Christiane Reves

The Board of Trustees and Officers (until March 2009)

President - Dr. Gerhard Mayer

1st Vice President – Imke De Lanversin

2nd Vice President – Claudia Schoenig-Diesing

Secretary – Nils Weimann

Treasurer – Lars Knorn

Public Relations Secretary – Andreas Lorentz (and Webmaster)

Trustees

Barbara Alstede

Giulia Fitzpatrick

Helena Bould

Renate Bresko

Roland Buchholz

THANK YOU FOR READING THE HANDBOOK AND TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE SCHOOL AND OUR CLASSES!!!!

