

# Handbook

for Students and Parents



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## **Overview**

The German School of Monmouth County (GSMC) was formed in the spring of 2007 by parents with a commitment to international education and the goal to introduce children and adults to today's German speaking Europe. Our purpose is to provide affordable German language instruction for all ages while maintaining a high-quality German curriculum for native and non-native German students. GSMC is a cooperative program open to native and non-native German speakers.

## **Mission Statement**

The GSMC's mission is to provide an exceptional educational experience based on cognitive, creative, and social learning skills. By using these skills our students will enhance and advance their ability to speak, read, understand, and write the German Language at their individual skill levels in a German-speaking environment and gain a genuine understanding of the German culture, traditions and present-day life, in a friendly, safe, and open atmosphere.

The specific goals of the GSMC program are to develop the students' communicative proficiency in German and increase academic excellence; to introduce them to the cultural heritage of the German-speaking countries, and their modern achievements; as well as to offer an experience that helps increase international understanding.

## **Nondiscriminatory Policy**

The GSMC admits students of any race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and other school-administered programs.

## **Administration and Operations**

The School Board of the GMSC manages the school's operational and other affairs. A Principal and the Educational Committee run the academic program.

### **Faculty**

The Principal is head of the faculty at the GSMC, and is responsible for developing and overseeing the curriculum. The school has employed native German speakers as faculty member, many of whom hold academic credentials from Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Our faculty members have attended educational seminars to familiarize

themselves with the latest teaching methods and materials in foreign language instruction. The education of our faculty will be an ongoing process. The school is presently affiliated with the German Language School Conference (GLSC), Association of American Teachers of German (AATG) and the American Council of Foreign Language Teachers (ACTFL). We also enjoy the support of the ZfA Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen/Central Office for Schools Abroad Köln/Cologne Germany.

### **Enrollment and Academic Program**

The school is open to all students age 9 month to adults with beginner to advanced skills in the German language. Enrollment numbers are limited to keep class size at a level conducive to positive learning experience.

The program at the GSMC is designed to enable students to communicate in German, as well as to prepare older students for placement exams and college level German courses.

German is the primary language of instruction. Acquainting students with the cultures and traditions of German speaking countries is an integral part of our curriculum.

Please visit our school website for more information about our Academic and MusikGarten Programs.

### **Standardized Testing:**

#### **AATG (American Association of Teachers of German) Test**

In January the AATG National German Examination is administered to students in higher grades. This test is generally offered to high school students learning German. It measures a student's German proficiency in comparison to 26,000 others who take the exam, nationwide. The exam tests listening comprehension, reading and conversational skills, applied structure of grammar and idioms in context, and reading comprehension. There are three different test levels: Level 2 correlates to two years of high school German language classes, level # to 3 years, and level 3 to 4 years. The teacher determines the test level that is appropriate for each child. Our school is administering the test to qualified students.

#### **CEFR Niveau Deutsches Sprachdiplom (DSD) A2/B1, B2/C1**

It is the standardized new testing according to the Common European Framework of References (CEFR). The known "Zentrale Deutschprüfung" (ZDP), the "Sprachdiplom I und II" has been revised. Our students have been participating with great success in the past.

## **Registration & Tuition**

### **Tuition**

The School Board sets tuition annually. In order to keep tuition costs as low as possible, the school greatly relies on parent volunteers. For further information please see the section “Volunteer Commitment”.

### **Registration**

In order to plan for the school year 2010/2011, please register early in May of 2010, so we can select and train the teachers and adjust our curriculum accordingly. You will find our Registration Forms online under Registration.

### **Withdrawal**

In case of withdrawal, notification must be made in writing to the School Board. The withdrawal policy provides for refunds as follows:

- 100 % of the tuition prior to the first class
- 75 % of the tuition prior to the third class
- 50 % of the tuition prior to the fourth class
- No refund after the fourth class

Please note the Registration fee is non-refundable. Please allow 4 –6 weeks for a refund to be processed.

## **Students**

### **Schoolbooks**

Schoolbooks are the property of the GSMC. Students are responsible for returning books in good condition at the end of the school year. Students will be charged for the replacement of lost or damaged books. Students may purchase their own books at cost. Workbooks belong to the students.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance is integral to the academic program at the GSMC. Student should not miss classes for reasons other than illness or unavoidable emergencies. If classes are missed, it is the parent’s responsibility to inform the teacher. Attendance sheets are maintained, and attendance is noted on the report cards. Teachers are not expected to provide extra help to make up any missed work. Parents will get weekly brief emails of classroom activities and homework assignments.

### **Homework**

Students are expected to be prepared for class. Weekly homework assignments will begin at the Kindergarten level. In more advanced level classes this will also include reading assignments, essays and long-term projects. Practice with parental participation and encouragement is important at all levels.

Parents are expected to reinforce the learning process outside the classroom and encourage their child/ren to use supportive materials such as books, audio- and videotapes, DVDs and computer software. The library at the school offers a selection of these materials for all ages and language abilities. For further information please see the section “Library”.

**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 a temperature (A child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school)

has a severe sore throat

has pink eye

has just begun antibiotics (Any child with a contagious condition, such as strep throat, must be taking the medication for 24 hours before returning to school.)

**Student conduct**

Students are expected to comply with the following rules:

1. show proper respect to teachers, staff and classmates at all times.
2. be punctual when arriving for class and returning from breaks.
3. respect personal property, in particular “The Good Shepard Church” building and its property, as well as the property of the GSMC. Parents shall be held responsible for any damage caused by their children.
4. clean up after snack periods and help at the end of the school day to return the classroom to its original condition.
5. come to class properly prepared to participate fully in all classroom activities. This preparation includes bringing completed homework assignments, the class textbook and workbook, a notebook, paper, pen or pencil and any other materials required by the teacher. The teachers will hand out a list in the beginning of the school year.
6. please note: the following are not allowed during class:
  - eating, drinking and gum-chewing
  - listening to music (e.g. iPod)
  - telephone calls, games, etc.

**Disciplinary Measures**

Violations of the school’s rules are dealt with on an individual basis according to the specific incident. Teachers will resolve minor offenses, such as disruptive behavior in class. For continued offenses, teachers will work with the Principal. After consultation with the parents, the Principal will decide on a resolution.

The Principal will report serious offenses to the School Board for a final determination. Serious offenses include, but not limited to, physical violence, possession or use of weapons or other dangerous objects. Possession or use of drugs, including alcohol or tobacco, vandalism and triggering of false fire alarms. Such offenses constitute illegal behavior and may result in immediate expulsion.

## **Parent-School Communications**

The school provides parents with program information during the orientation and classroom visits at the beginning of the school year (See below). Throughout the year the school communicates with parents via e-mail. Parents can also obtain updated information from the website at [www.germanschoolmc.org](http://www.germanschoolmc.org)

### **Communication with Teachers/Principal**

Questions about your child's classroom, academic progress etc. should first be directed to your child's teacher. Parents may contact the Principal if a matter requires further attention.

### **Classroom Visit**

A brief classroom visit will be scheduled on the first day of school. Parents are encouraged to meet their child/ren's teacher and introduce themselves, as individual teachers can best answer questions about classroom procedures and goals, homework policies, unavoidable absences, academic concerns, parental support, etc.

### **Ongoing communication**

The Principal, and School Board Members will be at the School on School days. Everybody is also accessible by e-mail to respond to any questions or concern. See the section "Contact Information" below.

### **Report Cards/Student Portfolio**

Students will receive a Student Learning Portfolio once a year in May. The evaluation is based on the students self assessment as well as teacher observation and comments.

## **Instructions for MusikGarten parents**

1. Please try to get to class on time: it disturbs the class flow when latecomers arrive, and it's hard for the latecomer to get oriented.
2. Please participate in the class activities: you are a very powerful role model for your child. Your participation in singing, moving and listening cues your child is safe, enjoyable and important. We are really not concerned about your "language and musical competence". It's enthusiasm that sustains the energy and focus of the class!

3. Please don't carry on conversations with other adults during the class, particularly when your children are engaged in language and singing activities. Your focus and attention on class activities model attitudes of respect.
4. Please respect this special time with your child and leave your cell phone off, except under unusual circumstances.
5. Please let us know if you need to bring siblings to the class. We are planning to provide childcare for siblings, for you to enjoy this special time with your child.
6. Thank you for keeping individual bottles, snacks and toys out of the class area, since children sometimes irretrievably distracted by the idea that food or toys are present but unavailable to them.
7. Thank you for sharing this language and musical adventure with us! Having fun and feeling successful without pressure is a great motivator to continue learning languages and making music.

## Contact Information

### School Telephone Number: 1 888 368 5300

On School days, the school can be reached directly under this telephone number. On all other days, please leave a message, and a member of the school administration will return your call. Parents may also contact the school administration by e-mail at [info@germanschoolmc.org](mailto:info@germanschoolmc.org).

#### School Administration:

**President:** Heiko Rössle  
[president@germanschoolmc.org](mailto:president@germanschoolmc.org)

**Managing Director:** Dorothea Drew  
[director@germanschoolmc.org](mailto:director@germanschoolmc.org)

**Principal:** Michaela Greco  
[principal@germanschoolmc.org](mailto:principal@germanschoolmc.org)

#### School Board:

Heiko Rössle, President  
Tom Vorbach, Vice President  
Judy Musa, Corresponding Secretary/PR  
Rob McFawn, Treasurer  
Joseph Braun, Reporting Secretary/Registrar  
Dr. Beat Flepp, Trustee

All committee members can be reached at [info@germanschoolmc.org](mailto:info@germanschoolmc.org) unless otherwise noted.

## **Volunteer Commitment**

The GSMC depends heavily on parent volunteers to keep tuition cost as low as possible. An added benefit of the volunteer system is increased involvement of the parents in their children's educational experience at the school.

Each school year at the time of registration, parents may elect to sign up for a volunteer job or pay a non-participation fee of \$200.00 per family. This non-participation fee is payable in full at the time of registration.

Families joining the school during the school year are also required to complete a volunteer job or pay a prorated non-participation fee.

The school offers jobs with various time commitments. A complete list will be distributed after the registration via e-mail. Families selecting the volunteer option sign up for a job when they register their children. Please note that while the school makes every effort to assign families their first choice, jobs are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Families selecting no job preferences on their registration forms are assigned where needed.

The school notifies parents of their volunteer job assignments. On the second day of school, a brief volunteer meeting will be held to hand out any important information, set up schedules and verify contact information. All families who signed up for a volunteer job are expected to attend.

If families who signed up for a volunteer job do not come to the volunteer meeting or do not complete their job, will be billed the \$ 200.00 non-participation fee after February 1<sup>st</sup>. 2011. Nonpayment and/or non-participation as a volunteer will jeopardize the future enrollment status at the school. Please bear in mind that the school cannot provide the current level of education without support from the parents either by taking over a job or paying the non-participation fee.

## **Library**

The library will be a volunteer run service. The library is open to the students at GMSC and the public. The use of the library is free to GSMC students.

The library has a selection of books, magazines, videos, audiotapes, software and multi-media for all ages. Emphasis for acquisitions is placed on supporting classroom content areas and on multi-media title reinforcement (book, audio, DVDs and CD-Rom) whenever possible.

Operated by parent volunteers, the school library supports the work of the teachers as well as parents' efforts to continue the learning process between school days. A Parent Library Orientation is offered the second day of classes. Detailed information about

library materials, policies and procedures will be provided. The library will be open during school hours.

The library welcomes donations of any suitable material. In addition, parents can make contributions to the library in honor of their children's teachers by participation in the "Dankeschön" program, available twice a year (before the December holidays and the end of the school year).

### **Parents Reading Corner**

A German Parents Reading Corner (Eltern Leseecke) is set up each School day. Donations of previously read current German magazines, newspapers and other reading material are needed and welcome and can be given to any volunteer in the library. The Parents Reading Corner is available for the enjoyment of parents, teachers and the older students of the school.

## **General Information**

### **Calendar**

Classes are held thirty times per School year. The School calendar is tailored to the public school calendar and major holidays to accommodate families and keep absences to a minimum. The school reserves the right to alter the calendar if necessary. Please also see the section "Weather Cancellations".

The school calendar is available on the school's website. [www.germanschoolmc.org](http://www.germanschoolmc.org)

### **Hours**

Please find the 2010-2011 class schedule on the school's website [www.germanschoolmc.org](http://www.germanschoolmc.org). Students are expected to be punctual and to be ready to start class on time. Please arrive a few minutes early for pick-up, so teachers are able to dismiss the child/ren promptly.

Before and after class, parents are solely responsible for the well being of their child/ren.

During break students may eat snacks brought from home. Students must clean up after themselves to ensure that no food or drink is left in the classrooms or hallways. Please also see "Student Conduct." Teachers supervise the breaks and are aided by parent volunteers.

### **Special Events**

Join us in celebrating German, Austrian and Swiss festivals and holidays in the classroom, the school and the community throughout the school year. Select events will include presentations by students in German.

First School Day Welcome (September)  
Oktoberfest (September/October)

German Reunification Day (October 3)  
Austrian National Holiday (October 26)  
St. Martin's (November 11)  
Advent (November/December)  
St. Nikolaus Day (December 6)  
Weihnachten (Christmas)  
Fasching/Karneval (February/March)  
Ostern (Easter)  
Maifest (May)  
Sommerfest "School Year-End Summer Party" (May)  
Swiss National Holiday (August 1)

### **Weather Cancellations**

For weather cancellations check the website at [www.germanschoolmc.org](http://www.germanschoolmc.org)  
Decision to close will be made no later than 3 hours before school begins. Also, the school phone will have a recorded announcement that school is closed.

A "possible inclement weather make-up day" is noted on the school calendar in case of cancellation.

### **Class lists**

Class lists are emailed to the parents in the fall. Any parent wishing not to be listed should indicate so on the registration form. Please note that these lists are distributed solely for the purpose of assisting families in organizing car pools and facilitating contact with classmates and their families for homework consultation or social occasions. Any other use is prohibited.

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint students and parents with the rules and regulations of the GSMC. The handbook provides students with a better understanding of the school and its expectations. Parents will find useful information about the organization and operations of the school.

**Thank you for telling your friends about our school and classes!**