



Dear German ISD families!

March, 26 2019

Whether your child is a Koala at German ISD or has already moved up to become a Pre-K Lion, German ISD is planning for the future: for your family, our students, and our growing school. As with all things, there are always necessary adjustments, challenges, and changes to make something work at its best! With this in mind, I am excited to announce that we will start our new school year as a complete **GERMAN IMMERSION PROGRAM** for all of our students from 18 months old up to our Kindergarten and Elementary classes through 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

The German and American school systems operates differently. By looking at the different models we can immediately see one major difference: German students attend primary school (*Grundschule*, "basic school," for grades 1 through 4). Compulsory school attendance, "*Schulpflicht*," begins in Fall after a child has turned six, meaning all students from grades 1 through 4 are required to attend elementary school. With this being said: School starts with 1<sup>st</sup> grade, after a year of "*Vorschule*."

Just as practiced in Germany, German ISD's Kindergarten class will be designed as preparation for becoming a successful student following the academic year.

German ISD's Kindergarten program includes German language, writing and communication, personal and social development, and the development of values, just as experienced at German ISD since your child has begun. German ISD's curriculum will continue to incorporate and emphasize mathematics, natural sciences, fine arts, body and movement.

We believe in teaching these values through self-organized and independent, creative learning, teamwork-building activities, investigation, and experimental activities. The concept of the multi-grade/multi-age learning prepares your child to become not only a successful student, but happy learner and well-rounded young human.

### **German ISD's structure for school year 2019/20 for Kindergarten & Lower Elementary**

*We are still striving to enroll more students into our Kindergarten to 4<sup>th</sup> grade program. At this point, unfortunately, we can only count the students whose enrollment papers we have actually received. With the current enrollment numbers, we are planning as followed:*

#### **1. One Class**

Our Kindergarten and Lower Elementary class will share one classroom, but with different curriculums and schedules: Kindergarten will be designed as a "*Vorschulklasse*," just as in Germany, and will follow the same approach. The goal is to prepare the students for their start in the Elementary the following year. Lower Elementary will continue as the multi-grade class for grades 1 through 4. During the day, Kindergarten and Lower Elementary will spend several lessons and activities together as one class, including physical education, music, art, and recess.

#### **2. Curriculum**

Kindergarten will continue the "*Bayerischer Bildungs- und Erziehungsplan für Tageseinrichtungen bis zur Einschulung*" <https://www.ifp.bayern.de/imperia/md/content/stmas/ifp/bildungsplan.pdf>  
Lower Elementary curriculum is designed to follow the „Bayerischer Lehrplan Plus”  
<https://www.lehrplanplus.bayern.de/leitlinien/grundschule>

#### **3. English as a subject**

The daily English lessons will be separate and unique for both Kindergarten and Lower Elementary. Both classes will hold 45 minutes daily for not only English language arts, but to additionally receive instructions in English. Two days out of the week will be for Math.

#### **4. Teachers**

Both classes will have their own teacher. Mrs. Teresa Fowler will lead the Kindergarteners. She will not only be successful from her experience as a former Giraffes lead teacher, but additionally through her degree as "*Fachkraft für Vorschulpädagogik*."

Ms. Annegret Richardson will continue as our dedicated German teacher for our Lower Elementary students. Her focus is on "hands-on learning," interactive projects, self-constructed work ethics, and every student's responsibility for his/her German logbook.

We are hoping to keep Ms. Nia Ervins as our English teacher to teach English reading, writing, and Math for 45 minutes daily in both Kindergarten and Lower elementary, separated as two different classes.

#### **5. Costs**

In comparing German ISD to other schools, we must remember the fact that as a language school, our price is below market. Only German ISD offers teaching the German language approach, tradition, and culture with the strong belief in European teaching style: always based on child-directed learning in a global matter and mindset.

To keep in mind, the average cost of a private education in the United States is \$29,056 a year.

At German ISD, \$10,750 for an entire school year is a full day from 8 am to 3 pm with lunch, snacks, and material costs included. Compared to German ISD's Pre-K class, the yearly cost of \$8,000 offers a gap that is not too remarkable.

Contrasting with the International School (French) at \$18,450 and the DaVinci School with \$16,000 for Kindergarten and a decreased time of 90 minutes daily - German ISD offers an affordable education that remains private, non-profit, and personalized for each child and family. Please do take in consideration that we are always willing to work with our families' budgets to make it work.

#### **6. Additional Afternoon (Language) classes**

Our goal remains: your child should be ready for academic success no matter what your personal plans are and where they may bring you. To guarantee our students' best development in English, we will offer additional English afternoon classes (Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays) as an option if you wish to add it. We will provide English in reading, writing, as well as Math in addition to receive instructions in addition to the daily 45 minutes lessons in class during the school day.

With the goal of maintaining German Language knowledge for all, we will also offer German lessons for our alumni and extern student on Mondays and Fridays (more details will follow)!

We are in the process of creating an afternoon program for our older students where can participate daily after school from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. It is the goal to keep such a great variety including sports, movement, gardening, music lessons on a more age-appropriate level.

#### **7. Student-Teacher-Ratio**

Needless to explain, German ISD's student to teacher ratio, 7:1, is extraordinary compared to other schools. This ratio is designed to create relationships which benefit your child to grow as a person and learner! State law currently requires a 22-to-1 student-teacher ratio in Kindergarten through fourth grade.

Student-teacher ratio tends to be an afterthought when considering a school, but this ratio is more important than you may realize. A lower student-teacher ratio can guarantee that your child receives the attention and support he or she needs to reach their highest potential. Fewer students per teacher makes it easier for teachers to accommodate different learning and development styles. Some may learn better through hands-on activities while others learn through a more direct approach. With smaller class sizes, it's easier for teachers to utilize varying strategies to help students do well and succeed.

If you still have open questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact me. I would be happy to make extra time to meet with you to discuss your child's academic path. Additionally, we are always here to open our classrooms to you. Please let us know if you ever wish to have a glance inside our classes and we will be happy to schedule your visit!

I am truly grateful to the upcoming Kindergarten families, with their given commitment and remaining on board, even when I announced the change as a fully immersive German class to you. Your feedback is highly valued, and it helped us tremendously to go this path – with confidence and your parental support!

Best wishes,  
Michaela Ward