
2011-2012
HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS AND
PARENTS

GERMAN SATURDAY SCHOOL BOSTON
DEUTSCHE SONNABENDSCHULE BOSTON



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617-201-9561

MISSION

The German Saturday School Boston's primary purpose is: to meet the need in the community for excellence in German language instruction, to introduce the cultures of German speaking countries to motivated students ages 4 to 17, and to keep tuition affordable for all families.

HISTORY

Founded in 1874 as the Sonntagsschule, the school operates under the auspices of the Boylston Schul-Verein, Post Office Box 207, 8 County Rd. (Rt. 109), Walpole, MA 02081 (www.germanclub.org). The school enjoys the support and cooperation of the German Government, the German Consulate, the Goethe-Institut Boston, the German International School Boston and Boston University.

ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS

All school operations and related activities are managed by a volunteer School Committee appointed by the Boylston Schul-Verein. The academic program is run by a Principal who reports to the School Committee. The school also employs a school administrator, who assists/supports the Principal and the School Committee and is on-site during school hours. For further information see section "Contact Information".

Faculty

The Principal heads up the faculty at the German Saturday School Boston, and is responsible for developing and overseeing the curriculum. The school has historically employed native German speakers as faculty members, many of whom hold academic credentials from Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, as well as from the US. Our faculty members attend regular educational seminars to familiarize themselves with the latest teaching methods and materials in foreign language instruction. The school maintains an active institutional membership in the Association of American Teachers of German (AATG), the German Language School Conference (GLSC) and the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association (MaFLA).

Unlawful Harassment Policy (Including Sexual Harassment)

Excerpt:

“The School expects all employees and non-employees to be treated and to treat others with respect. The aim is to provide a working environment free from unlawful harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form, which may affect the dignity of the individual or the individual's ability to perform their job. The School's policy prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, disability, genetic information, age, military status, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law or ordinance or regulation.”

For a complete transcript of the German Saturday School Boston's Unlawful Harassment Policy visit the school's Web site www.germansaturdayschoolboston.org or request a copy from the school administration.

Enrollment

The school is open to all students with the academic skills and desire to master the German language. The student body is made up of children of diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. A significant number of our students hear and/or speak German at home. Students range in age from 4 to 17 and come from many communities in the Greater Boston area and neighboring New England states. Enrollment numbers are limited to keep class sizes at a level conducive to a positive learning experience.

Pre-School

At the entry level, students must be at least 4 years old by August 31 of the enrolling year and toilet trained. It is recommended that the children have previous preschool, playgroup or daycare experience. Preschool applicants must provide the school with a copy of the child's birth certificate. This should be emailed to: registrar@germansaturdayschoolboston.org.

Kindergarten and Above

An interview and/or placement test may be required for admission.

As German is the primary language of instruction, children with no German language skills will not be admitted to classes above grade 2. The school evaluates the language abilities of first-time students interested in enrolling in grade 3 or above.

Children are placed in classes according to age and/or language ability. The school may combine children from different classes/ages to maintain a positive learning environment.

The school reserves the right to transfer a student to a different class if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the student. Parents will be notified in advance.

Registration and Tuition

Current / Returning Families

Current families are notified by e-mail in January about registration procedures. Registration for current/returning families for the school year 2012/13 is scheduled for March 1 - March 21, 2012. Registration and tuition payment must be completed online through the link provided in an email. To register parents must first fill out the registration form and then follow the directions to submit payment electronically through PayPal.

Once the registrar has received both the registration information and full tuition payment, the registration will be processed. Returning students and their siblings are given preference over new families until the end of the registration period for current/returning families (tentatively March 21, 2012).

New Families

The registration period (tentatively scheduled for April 1 through 14, 2012) for new families will be posted on our web site. To register a child, parents need to visit the "Registration" area on our web site www.germansaturdayschoolboston.org. Parents must first fill out the registration form and then follow the directions to submit payment electronically through PayPal.

Once the registrar has received both the registration information and full tuition payment, the registration will be processed. Timely registration is advised, as there is a high demand for some of our classes.

For further information interested families may contact the registrar directly at: registrar@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

Application Fee

A non-refundable application fee of \$25 per child is due at the time of registration.

Pre-School Applicants

Please see section "Enrollment".

Tuition

The School Committee sets tuition annually. In order to keep tuition costs as low as possible, the school greatly relies on parent helpers. For further information please see section "Parent Participation".

Limited financial aid is available to families in need of assistance. For further information, please contact the School Committee in writing. See section "Contact Information" below.

Registration Deadline and Late Fee

The registration deadline, which is typically in April (tentatively scheduled for April 21, 2012), will be announced by e-mail to current families and will also posted be on our web site. Registrations received after the registration deadline will be subject to a non-refundable late fee of \$100 per family. Registrations from returning families received on August 15, 2011 or thereafter will be subject to a non-refundable late fee of \$200 per family.

Please note that on the first day of school no registrations will be accepted, and only registered students will be admitted to the classroom.

Waiting Lists and Late Admittance

If there are more applications than openings, the school will maintain a waiting list. Families with children who could not be accepted may opt to be placed on this list by notifying the registrar and submitting payment of a one-time processing fee of \$25.

Parents, who placed their children on the waiting list the year before are allowed to register their child for the upcoming year during the preferred registration period otherwise reserved for returning students.

Priority on the waiting list is given in order of the length on waiting list (FIFO Rule). This includes families, who were offered a space from the waiting list, but subsequently declined.

The waiting lists will be closed on December 31, 2011.

With the exception of the preschool class, students may be admitted at any time during the school year if space is available, pending approval by the Principal and the classroom teacher. In the pre-school class no placements will be made after October 31.

Withdrawal

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

- Prior to August 15 - 100% of the tuition
- Prior to the second day of school - 75% of the tuition
- Prior to the third day of school - 50% of the tuition
- After the third day of school – no refund

Please note: the \$25 application fee and the late fee are non-refundable. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for a refund to be processed.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The program at the German Saturday School Boston is designed to enable students to communicate in German, as well as to prepare students for German placement exams and college courses.

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

Please visit our school web site www.germansaturdayschoolboston.org for more information about our academic program.

Standardized Testing

AATG Test

In January the AATG (American Association of Teachers of German) National German Examination is administered to students in grades 6 and above. This test is generally offered to high school students learning German. It measures a student's German proficiency in comparison to 25,000 others who take the exam nationwide. The exam tests listening comprehension, reading and conversational skills, applied structure or grammar and idioms in context, and reading comprehension. There are three different test levels: level 2 correlates to having two years of high school German language classes; level 3 to 3 years; and level 4 to 4 years. Our teachers determine the test levels appropriate for each child.

Historically a number of our students have scored in the 90th percentile or higher on this test. These students are invited to the AATG Massachusetts Chapter recognition ceremony in early May. Parents who would like to have their child/ren's AATG scores reported to their schools may provide the School Administrator with a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Deutsches Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz A2

In April, the Deutsches Sprachdiplom A2 (DSD A2) der Kultusministerkonferenz is administered to students in 9th grade. It tests listening and reading comprehension, speaking and writing.

Deutsches Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz DSD 1 and DSD 2

In March, the Deutsches Sprachdiplom DSD 1 and DSD 2 (formerly known as DSD B1 and C1) are administered if there are eligible students. These exams provide the most advanced students with an opportunity to demonstrate foreign language proficiency at the highest level. Student eligibility to participate in the DSD 1 (A2/B1) and DSD 2 (B2/C1) preparation classes is subject to teacher recommendations which are issued to current students in April of the previous school year. Some American universities recognize the DSD 2 (B2/C1) by awarding college language credit and advanced placement. The DSD 2 (C1) diploma is an official certificate accepted by all German universities, which will then waive any further language entrance testing. In 2009, the German Kultusministerkonferenz introduced DSD 2 (B2/C1) and 1 (A2/B1) as “Stufenprüfungen”, thus allowing to test a student’s language proficiency within different levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

AP Test German and SAT Subject Test German

Interested students are also prepared to take the AP Test German and the SAT Subject Test German, which are offered at select area high schools. Students interested in taking the AP Test German have to apply directly at the respective high schools in March. Registration for the SAT Subject Test German can be made online at www.collegeboard.com. We recommend the students take these exams in 10th or 11th grade.

AP International Recognition and Entrance to German Universities

For further information about AP International Recognition and entrance to German universities, please visit the College Board website at www.collegeboard.com and look for “AP International Recognition” or go directly to <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/intad.html>.

STUDENTS

Attendance

Regular attendance is integral to the academic program at the German Saturday School Boston. Students should not miss classes for reasons other than illness or unavoidable emergencies. If classes are missed, it is the parents' responsibility to inform the teacher ahead of time. Attendance sheets are maintained, and attendance is noted on the report cards. If a student misses more than three Saturdays (or nine hours) per semester, a letter will be sent to the parents, warning them that the student's enrollment status at the school may be jeopardized. Teachers are not expected to provide extra help to make up any missed work; rather, it is the students' or parents' responsibility to obtain worksheets, homework assignments etc.

Homework

Students are expected to prepare for class. Weekly homework assignments begin at an early level. In the upper grades there are quizzes, compositions, reading assignments and long-term projects. Practice with parental participation and encouragement is important at all grade levels.

The general guidelines for homework each week are as follows:

- Grades 1 and 2: 1/2 hour
- Grades 3 to 5: 1 hour
- Grades 6 to 10: 1 1/2 - 2 hours

These guidelines do not take into consideration individual student motivation, efficiency or work pace.

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

Illness Policies

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

- has been vomiting during the past 24 hours
 - has diarrhea
 - has an oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher (A child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.)
 - has a severe sore throat
 - has pink bloodshot eyes with yellow or green drainage
 - 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.)
- has lice or untreated nits. A child must be checked by a medical professional before returning to the classroom.

Student Conduct

The rules of proper conduct apply to all students throughout the school day. Students are expected to:

1. Show proper respect to teachers, staff and classmates at all times.
2. Be punctual when arriving for class and returning from breaks.
3. Remain inside the building between 9:30 AM and 12:30 PM while classes are in session.
4. Not use the elevator.
5. Not leave their assigned floor without a hall pass (given out by the teachers).
6. Respect personal property, in particular the Boston University school building and its property, as well as the property of the German Saturday School Boston and the Boylston Schul-Verein. Parents shall be held responsible for any damage caused by their children.
7. Not enter or use the lobby of the school building at 871 Commonwealth Ave.
8. Clean up after snack periods and help at the end of the school day to return the classroom to its original condition.

9. 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.
10. Not run or play ball in the hallways, including during break times.
11. Also note: the following are NOT allowed during class:
 - Eating, drinking and gum-chewing
 - The use of electronic devices (e.g. iPod, cell phone)

Disciplinary Measures

Violations of the school's rules are dealt with on an individual basis according to the specifics of the infraction. 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 Committee for a final determination. Serious offenses include, but are not limited to, physical violence, possession or use of weapons or other dangerous objects (i.e. firecrackers), 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. The German Saturday School Boston also reserves the right to dismiss students due to poor academic performance, improper conduct and lack of regular attendance.

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 who do not receive e-mail notifications from news@germansaturdayschoolboston.org within the first two weeks of school, should immediately send a request to the before named e-mail address. Parents should also obtain updated information from the web site at: www.germansaturdayschoolboston.org.

Communication with Teachers/ Principal

Questions about a 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 to introduce themselves, as individual teachers can best answer questions about classroom procedures and goals, homework policies, unavoidable absences, academic concerns, parental support etc.

Orientation

The school holds an orientation on the second Saturday of classes. Parents are encouraged to come hear the Principal present important aspects of the academic program.

Ongoing Communication

The Principal, the School Administrator and most School Committee members are at the school on Saturdays and are also accessible by e-mail to respond to any questions or concerns. See section "Contact Information" below.

Report Cards

Report cards are distributed to families twice a year, in January and May. Grades are based on an evaluation of the student's performance in the areas of participation and written work in class, homework, attendance and achievement tests.

CONTACT INFORMATION**617-201-9561****School Telephone Number:**

On Saturday mornings during the school year, the school administration 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@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

School Administration**Principal:**

Claudia Bonmassar
principal@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

School Administrator:

Heike Hrinishin
info@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

School Committee Members:

Heri Sontgerath, Chair
committee@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

Dr. Thomas Thuene, Treasurer

Roland Bizanek, Registrar
registrar@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

Thomas Ringler, Library Liaison
library@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

Dr. Ulrich Heintz, BU Liaison

Michael Teufel, Event Liaison

Dr. Martin Beinborn, Parent Liaison
parentjobs@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

Emily Westhoven, Communication
news@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

PARENT PARTICIPATION

The German Saturday School Boston depends heavily on parent helpers to keep tuition costs as low as possible. An added benefit of parent participation is the increased involvement of parents in their child/ren's educational experience at the school.

Each school year at the time of registration, parents may elect to sign up for a parent job or to pay a non-participation fee of \$300 per family. This non-participation fee is payable in full at the time of registration. The money helps defray costs associated with administrative operations of the school.

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

The school offers jobs with various time commitments. A complete list is provided during the online registration process and is also available on the school's web site. Families opting to participate indicate their job preferences when they register their child/ren. Please note that while the school makes every effort to accommodate these preferences, all positions have to be filled in order to maintain the quality of the program. Families who stated no job preferences on their registration forms will be assigned where needed.

The school notifies parents of their job assignments with the acceptance package. Any requests for possible adjustments should be emailed as soon as possible to the following address:

parentjobs@germansaturdayschoolboston.org

Parents with jobs in the library will meet on the first day of school (after the Library Orientation). All other parent helper meetings will be held on the second day of school after the Program Orientation. In all meetings team coordinators will hand out important information, set up schedules and verify contact information. All families who signed up for a parent job are required to attend.

It is expected that parents (or close family members who regularly bring a child to school) fill their assigned jobs *in person* (no nannies or substitutes, please). This policy has been developed over the years to ensure that the school runs as efficiently and safely as possible.

Families who signed up for a helper job and do not come to the initial team meeting or do not complete their assignment will be billed an administrative fee of \$50 in addition to the non-participation fee of \$300 per family. Non-payment of the fee and/or non-participation as a parent helper will jeopardize the student's 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 school has a German lending library for students, parents and teachers. The library was founded in 1992 as a parent initiative, and in 2005 endowed its sizeable collection - along with its newly designed and implemented automated computer system - to the German Saturday School Boston. In 2008 the library was renamed the "Krisjann VanOpdorp Library" in honor of its founder and long-time director. Library privileges for school families are included in the tuition.

The library has an extensive 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, DVD *and* CD-Rom) whenever possible. Weekly exhibits include an introduction to reading by level of difficulty, books and companion tapes by author, and, when requested by teachers, current classroom themes (Thema der Woche).

Operated by parent helpers, 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 on the first Saturday of classes for new and returning parents. Detailed information about library materials, policies and procedures are provided. This information is also posted on the school's website for ongoing reference. New families will receive their library cards during the orientation. If a card is lost, a replacement card can be purchased for a nominal fee.

Beginning the second week of classes, library hours are 9:00 AM to 11:15 AM Saturday mornings when school is in session. The library is closed on the day of the "Weihnachts-/Nikolausfeier".

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 participating in the "Dankeschön" program, available twice a year (before the December holidays and at the end of the school year). A flea market (Flohmarkt) is held in the spring. Proceeds are used to defray non-acquisition expenses in the library.

Parents Reading Corner

A German Parents Reading Corner (“Eltern-Lesecke”) is set up across from the administration desk on the lower level of the school building. Donations of previously read current German magazines, newspapers and other reading material are needed and welcome and can be given to any helper 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 on thirty Saturdays from September to May. In order to accommodate families and keep absences to a minimum the school calendar is tailored to public school calendars and major holidays as best as possible while keeping the Boston University calendar in account. The school reserves the right to alter the calendar if necessary. Please also see section “Snow Cancellations”.

A copy of the calendar is mailed to families along with the acceptance packet to help families plan for vacations, school related events and activities. The calendar is also available on the school's web site: www.germansaturdayschoolboston.org.

Hours

School hours are from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Students are expected to be punctual and to be ready to start class at 9:30 AM. Please arrive a few minutes early for pick-up, so teachers are able to dismiss the child/ren promptly at 12:30 PM. Before and after class, parents are solely responsible for the wellbeing of their child/ren.

For organizational reasons, break times vary from class to class. Please check with the teacher at the beginning of the school year for the specific times. During break students may eat snacks brought from home. They are not allowed to leave the building during breaks or at any time while school is in session. Students must clean up after themselves to ensure that no food or drink is left in the classrooms or hallways. Please also see section “Student Conduct”.

Teachers on each floor supervise the breaks and are aided by parent helpers.

Location and Parking

Most classes are held at the Boston University College of General Studies (CGS) at 871 Commonwealth Ave.. A few classes for the older grades are held in the nearby “Fuller Building” at 808 Commonwealth Ave (on the corner of Essex Street) as well as at 750 Commonwealth Avenue (“General Classroom Building” or also known as Guitar Center. Parents should be advised that the street level main entrance to the CGS building is closed on Saturdays – the building can only be accessed through the side and back entrances on the lower level. The Fuller Building is located adjacent to our parking lot (see below) and should be entered through the Essex Street entrance.

Free Parking for Families

Boston University has given the parents permission to park free of charge at its large 808 Commonwealth Ave. (Fuller Building) parking facility while school is in session. To reach the parking lot, enter the driveway at the right of the Fuller Building; the lot is behind the building. (Should the front entrance to the parking lot at 808 Commonwealth Ave. be blocked, please try accessing the lot through its rear entrance via Dummer Street.) Parking permits will be mailed out with the acceptance package. Permits must be visibly displayed on the vehicle dashboard.

No Access to Parking Lot Behind School on Buick Street

Please note that German Saturday School families may not access the parking lot behind 871 Commonwealth Ave. for drop-off, pick-up or parking. The lot is accessible by special permit only, and is reserved for BU and German School faculty members. Violators will be towed at the owner's expense. Repeat violations may result in disciplinary action by the school.

Free parking may not be available on days when Boston University or the Agganis Arena has events during school hours. Once notified, the school will make every effort to alert parents of these dates in advance and to provide information about alternative parking garages in the vicinity. In some instances the school may not be aware of concurrently scheduled events at BU or the Arena and it may therefore be impossible to give advance notice to school families.

Subway Access

Boston University West is the closest subway stop, accessible via the B train on the MBTA's Green Line.

Special Events

In December the school holds a seasonal celebration (usually a Weihnachts- or Nikolausfeier). In May a celebration to mark the end of the school year (Abschlussfeier) takes place at the Boylston Schul-Verein in Walpole. Both of these events count as school days and include presentations by the students in German. All family members are encouraged and welcome to attend.

Snow Cancellations

For snow cancellations, tune into Channel 7 WHDH or check the web site at www.germansaturdayschoolboston.org. The decision to close will be made no later than 7 AM on Saturday morning. If the school is closed for inclement weather, the school phone at 617-201-9561 will have a recorded announcement.

Weather conditions can vary greatly from locality to locality. Parents should therefore use their own discretion and best judgment in making the decision to travel in bad weather. If the calendar allows a snow make-up day is scheduled in case of snow cancellation. For the 2010/11 school year there is no snow make-up day scheduled.

Class lists

Class lists will be distributed to students in the fall. Any parent wishing not to be listed should have indicated so on the online 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 consultations or social occasions. Any other use is prohibited.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items may be retrieved from a bin outside of the library labeled "Fundsachen." Items not claimed after one month will be donated to a local charity.

“The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint students and parents with the rules and regulations of the German Saturday School Boston. 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.”

The term "parent" as used in this policy includes legal guardians.

The German Saturday School Boston does not discriminate by race, color, religion, sex, age, country or ethnic origin.