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GERMAN LANGUAGE SCHOOL

Enrolments

This year we have reduced our number of classes from eight to six to endeavour to facilitate a more financially viable and sustainable community language school. I am confident that we have made the right decision without compromising the quality of teaching, although more mixed classes do provide a challenge to our teachers.

In Bayswater, we currently have 16 students enrolled in two, now parallel classes on Tuesday evenings: one quite mixed Extension Class (Year levels 3 to 7) and our Primary Class (Year levels 1 to 4).

At our Bentleigh campus, 46 students are currently attending four classes: two on Monday (*Muttersprachler* or background language learners) and two on Wednesday (*DaF – Deutsch als Fremdsprache* or second language learners). Our numbers in Year levels 1 to 4 in Bentleigh seem to be developing particularly well.

Staffing

Our current teaching staff comprises Madeleine Sim, Katrin Schneider, Bernhard Henger and Monika Christof. Nathalie Schuett has stepped in on a number of occasions as replacement teacher and she has expressed interest in joining our teaching team in 2018.

Josefine Hennel retired at the end of 2016. Sigrid Schweiger is spending this year in Germany. In 2017, we were unfortunately unable to accommodate Stephanie Iwanowicz. During Term 1/2017 Daniela Tymms helped out teaching

the Middle/Senior Years class in Bentleigh on Wednesday. Two of our teachers, Bernhard Henger and Monika Christof, are presently instructing two classes each. It is essential and my aim to make sure that we employ sufficiently qualified, experienced and committed teachers. I also plan ahead for new or replacement teachers, such as in the case of Monika Christof, who will teach only one class in 2018 after the birth of her second child.

We continue to improve our curriculum planning and documentation. As Principal, I regularly visit both campuses and oversee special events such as Easter activities, the poetry competition and our Winter Concert/School Fest.

A special thanks to our volunteers Dot Ware and Erika English. Together with the assistance of some parents, Dot continues to coordinate our reading program for students in Bentleigh and Erika English takes care of the reading program in Bayswater.

Professional development

Two to three times per school term, all teachers from Bayswater and Bentleigh meet in Bentleigh on a Wednesday night. We share resources, information and important documents such as curriculum plans on Google Drive. We have attended conferences held by the Association of German Teachers of Victoria (AGTV), Modern Languages Teachers Association of Victoria (MLTAV), Ethnic Schools Association Victoria (ESAV) / Community Languages Australia (CLA). In addition, teachers have participated in a variety of workshops run by these organisations as well as by the Goethe-Institut Melbourne.

I am proud of our school's commitment to genuine and ongoing professional learning and am grateful

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that the TSA supports and partially funds these activities.

I regularly attend the *German Forum*, a meeting of all German educational institutions in Melbourne, together with representatives from the Department of Education & Training (DET) and the German Embassy in Canberra.

Activities, events, competitions and prizes won

- Winter Concert 2016: Our annual main school event and mid-year celebration took place in Bentleigh on Sunday, August 28. The theme was *Wiener Winterzauber* (Viennese Winter Magic).
- The Bayswater Primary Class (teacher Stephanie Iwanowicz) won first prize in the AGTV competition 'Choir of The Year 2016' in the Primary section. Also, Joshua Fischer from the same class received a special Honourable Mention certificate in the 2016 Australian national SBS competition.
- *Adventsfeier* celebrations at both locations concluded the 2016 school year.
- For a fourth year our school has taken up the offer from the Goethe-Institut in Melbourne together with the German Embassy in Canberra of awarding German Language Merit Awards. The school selected one student – not necessarily the best academically, but one who had shown particular interest in learning and improving their German – from each class to receive this award. Certificates together with a book were presented to these students at our *Adventsfeiern*.
- Easter celebrations in Term 1/2017 involved making baskets, cards or other colouring activities, colouring eggs in the German tradition and an Easter egg hunt.
- AGTV Poetry Competition 2017: For the second time, our school held its own Regional Poetry Competition, but in a reviewed format and as a single school event on Saturday, July 29. Josefine Hennel and Josef Berger were invited to be judges. It was a perfect opportunity to bring students and parents from both campuses and all classes together. We received very positive feedback. Six students attended the State Final on August 19 at the Austrian Club in Heidelberg. Marlo Taylor won third prize in Year 5 *DaF*; Liliana Mayer won silver in the Open section Years 7/8 and Alexander Grant came sixth in the Open section Years 5/6. It was great to see our school's name in the final State tally three times; such public and good results are the best form of promotion.
- Goethe-Institut School Film Competition: The Bentleigh Monday *Mittelstufe* Class (teacher Katrin Schneider) has created two short films – *Tausend Jahre* and *Zurück in die alten Zeiten* – for the competition. This year's theme is *Germany in the Year 3017*. (At the time of this report, results were not yet known.)
- Our two Primary *DaF* Classes from Bayswater and Bentleigh (teachers Madeleine Sim and Monika Christof) have participated in the AGTV competition *Kunst und Poesie* (Art and Poetry) for students in Years Foundation (Prep) to 6. The theme is *Wald* (forest). (Again, at the time of this report, results were not known.)

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- *Winter-Schulfest* (Winter School Fest) 2017:
This year's main school event took place at a packed Bentleigh hall on Sunday, September 10. The 2017 theme was *Film ab!* (At the movies). We welcomed as special guests Irina Herrschner and Peter Krausz from 'German Cinema Melbourne', the new festival of German films in Melbourne. Almost all our students from both campuses attended, bringing their families with them. The *Winter-Schulfest* delivered a wonderful account of the many talents of our students and the hard work our teachers put in to provide engaging class activities. It demonstrated that our classes use "new technologies" and are integrated in a meaningful way, without abandoning traditional aspects and ways of teaching in learning the German language.

Our funding sources (apart from student fees) have been:

For 2017 we received \$12,355.20 from the DET per capita grant for 54 students enrolled in Term 1. Initially funding was rejected for two of our students; neither their names nor any reasons were provided. After several weeks of considerable effort, arguing and mail exchanges, I am pleased to advise that they agreed to fund all our students and offered their apologies.

Child Safety

Since January 1, 2017, all community language schools must have implemented new strict and comprehensive Child Safe Standards. TSA and the German Language School have been working closely together on this matter.

Stefan Mummert
Principal