

Minutes of the School Conference

7. May 2025, um 15:30 Uhr im Quiet Study Room

Attending:

Administration:	Ms. Martin-O'Connor
Teachers:	Frau Diemer, Mr. Filipp, Frau Gothe, Mr. Kelly
Parents:	Ms. Vogel, Herr Kölling-Orb, Mr. Bespolka, Mr. Sullivan (ab 16:30)
Students:	Ms. Zoll, Mr. Simanowitz
Hort Guest	Frau Heyelmann
Guest:	Ms. Le Court (Student)

Voting members: 10 voting members present

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved unanimously.

2. Approval of the minutes from 29. January 2025

The minutes were approved unanimously..

3. Update on Principal Hiring

Ms. Kennedy-Salchow has been selected for the position of American elementary school principal and will assume this position starting in the fall. Mr. Kleinman will serve as acting American assistant principal for the elementary school.

The school conference and ED will interview candidates for the positions of High School German assistant principal and Elementary School German assistant on May 27, 2025.

4. Information on the Language Program

The elementary school team is continuing its work toward the introduction of the new language program in recent weeks. The plan is to initially introduce the program in grades 3, 5, and 6, starting in the 2025/26 school year. This also involves aligning the German and English curricula in new ways. The new concept depends heavily on team teaching, and the teams are being organized with input from teachers.

The lower elementary school (EC-2) team is currently discussing how the new concept can be introduced there as well. The challenges are different than in grades 3-6, but positive discussions have already taken place. As a first step, literacy will be expanded in the entrance class and taught for one hour each day, four days a week.

Several teachers from both the elementary and high school will be participating in a "German as a Foreign Language (DAF)" training course at the Goethe Institute in the coming months, to support the development of "fast track" German classes for incoming students with limited German. The course is funded by the Trust Fund. The German and English departments met to discuss how it could be possible to implement the

concepts being introduced at the elementary school (mixed language levels taught together in one class) at the high school. There are not enough teaching hours available to use the team teaching approach that the ES is using, so other approaches are needed. Administration and teachers are also working on how to quickly and effectively integrate new students without German language skills into existing JFKS program. ES and HS both want to cooperate to further develop the language program; a meeting on this topic is scheduled for May 21.

School representatives have met with Herr Schmidt to work on how the JFKS school law and framework can be adapted to accommodate the new language program, in concert with the resolution by the ED. Another meeting is to follow shortly.

Teachers and staff can contribute suggestions and ideas for the language program to Herr Bartz at any time.

5. Rules governing early release due to heat

In October 2024, the SK passed a resolution asking the administration to review the policies governing early release due to heat, in particular regarding to their impact on the lower elementary school (EC - 2). The overall concept of the new policy has been widely welcomed by teachers, students and parents. Administration has worked with teachers and Hort to adjust the schedule for lower elementary so that there is less "downtime" between the end of classes at 12:15 p.m. and the actual end of school at 1:25 p.m.

Vote: The changes to the heat-free days regulations were unanimously approved by the School Conference.

6. High school trip policy

The trip policy has been approved by the high school teachers. Minor additions have been made to sections 4 and 5.1 compared to the previous SK version. The SK discussed the addition made under 5.1 and determined that the German and English versions do not exactly match. The English version should therefore be aligned with the German version.

Vote: The trip plan is unanimously adopted by the School Conference, provided that the last sentence under 5.1 b) of the English version is aligned with the current German version.

7. Action Items

There are only two remaining items on the list (discussion of WebUntis use at the HS and the administration's report on security to the school conference). These should be discussed at the school conference on June 19, 2025.

All other items have been resolved.

8. Miscellaneous

Security:

Parents noted that there appears to be a new security team in place since the beginning of May, which is enforcing the existing rules much more "strictly." Ms. Martin O'Connor responded that the school administration was also informed only one day before the change in the safety team. In general, everyone welcomes the fact that the existing rules are being consistently implemented. As discussed at the October

meeting of the SK, a report on the current safety concept will be included on the agenda for the June meeting by the school administration.

Disciplinary measures for students:

The students asked whether it is true that consequences for violations of the electronic media device (EMD) rules are the same as for violations of the hate speech rules. The rumor is that consequences for hate speech are similar to those when someone is caught with a cell phone.

Ms. Hale replied that this is not the case. In disciplinary situations, the school operates in accordance with Sections 62 and 63 of the Berlin School Law. Violations of the EMD regulations only result in a misconduct (reprimand) after five warnings. After two further misconducts, a class conference is convened. According to section 63, a class conference can decide on further educational or disciplinary measures. Violations of the hate speech regulations result in immediate disciplinary action. Parents are informed immediately, and a class conference is convened. In each individual case, careful consideration must be given to determining the disciplinary action. Ms. Hale declined to provide examples for data protection reasons. Mr. Kölling-Orb noted that that according to Section 63, the school conference must be consulted before a student can be expelled from the school.

The meeting was adjourned at roughly 5:00 p.m.

Minutes (German) Holger Kölling-Orb, Translation Gretchen Vogel