

German Language School Conference
(Umbrella Organization)

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Levels:

- PreK-K
- 1-5/6
- 6/7-8
- 9-12:
- Adults

Language: German

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: The German Language School Conference (GLSC) is the national organization for private German language schools in the United States. The organization was founded in 1977 with membership fees and donations. It represents its member schools and their interests concerning German language and culture and serves as a forum for pedagogical, administrative, legal, social, and other concerns. The program goals are

- To assist parents and other individuals as well as groups interested in establishing private German language schools
- To assist its member-schools in teaching the German language and culture on all proficiency levels
- To assist its member schools in promoting a positive image and furthering goodwill and respect for the heritage of German-speaking peoples
- To assist its schools in selecting and producing teaching material and official testing instruments for articulation into further programs in the US and Germany
- To offer a forum for a variety of topics concerning the German language, literature, and culture and to provide venues for the exchange of ideas and opinions
- To enhance the professional development of its members on the basis of close cooperation, academic collegiality, and fellowship

Type of programs

- Immersion
- Partial immersion
- Foreign language program
- Content-based
- Saturday academy
- Extracurricular club

Parents' and staff expectations for the program: To learn or maintain the German language and its cultural contents. To make friends with other children, parents, and families.

Students

First generation

Second generation

Children of international families (short-term U.S. residents)

Foreign language learners

Countries of origin: Germany, Austria, Switzerland, US

Many students are from South America, Asia, Eastern Europe, etc.

Total student enrollment: In all schools: approximately 5000 +

How the program identifies heritage speakers: The program separates learners into these categories: "Beginner in the language," "Students with previous knowledge," and "Students who have German as their mother tongue."

Testing and oral interview: Programs use official US/Germany-produced tests for older students (AATG's, AP's, SAT's, ZDP, DSD 1,2). We are presently working on producing an oral testing measure for very young and elementary school children.

Percentage of students who complete the program: Many students are with their parents on temporary assignment in the US. They leave when their parents need to leave. If there are high schools in the town where students come from they often switch at that level. Apart from that the retention rate is quite good.

Percentage of students who continue to study the heritage language after completing the program: Many students take German at the college/university level.

Possible reasons for students' withdrawal: conflicting programs, motivation of the students (or parents), moving away

Students' attitudes toward the language varieties they speak: very good

Teachers/Administrators/Staff

Number of staff in program: information not available – varies by year

Languages in which staff members are proficient: English and German, usually very good to native ability

Teacher's certificate or license: Many hold certificates.