



GERMAN
HERITAGE
LANGUAGE
SCHOOL

Annual Report 2019-20

Message from the Chair

How can it be that this annual report feels more like the synopsis of a decade?

Thank you to everyone in our GHLS family: 2019-2020 was a challenging school year filled with roadblocks and obstacles. We successfully cleared them all, together, hand in hand.

This is due, in no small part to the “rainy day fund” that our predecessors and donors established. We know that many Not For Profit groups such as ours are far less fortunate. Thank you to each and every person who has donated to GHLS over the years and to the boards that left us in sufficient financial shape to weather this storm.

Through your donations, we have been able to hold events for children, for families and for our adult learners. From beautiful leaf art at the Dingle, our visit of Pier 21 to our most recent Laternenfest, the creativity and dedication shown by our Engagement Committee in providing at least one event each month is exceptional .

It’s important to take a moment, in the midst of this year to acknowledge just how much we have accomplished and, as importantly to take some pride in the resiliency that we have shown.

The teachers were willing and able to learn, react and excel at teaching remotely.

Our board met weekly throughout the spring and summer to find the best way forward for our students, teachers and friends.

Elke Ruehl, of the Central Agency for German Schools Abroad provided us with critical support as we embraced online learning.

Lennart Eisenträger, Second Secretary Communications and Culture of the German Embassy and of Isolde Winter, Kanadischer Verband Deutscher Sprachschulen (KVDS) helped to ensure that our dreams of a German Language Library for our school are coming to life.

Our parents, students and supporters shared ideas, demonstrated flexibility and patience and a commitment to working together.

A special thanks to our director Arne Martens for his dedication, patience, leadership and flexibility throughout the spring, summer and fall.

Thanks to the Engagement Committee we have a new email system and Zoom accounts and a refreshed web and social media presence. We are germanschool.ca. That proved true this year as the move to online learning meant that we welcomed students from outside of Halifax to our classes. Their presence enriches us and enables us to be more inclusive. This is truly the silver lining in this COVID cloud.

It is a privilege to have been given the opportunity to serve as the Chair of the Board of Trustees during this unique year.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to GHLS.

Paula Minnikin

Vorstandsvorsitzende, GHLS



From left: Paula Minnikin with Carol Grunsky

GHLS at a Glance for 2019-20

Education

4

Number of Kids and Youth Classes offered

NUMBER OF KIDS STUDENTS

35 
Kids/Youth Students (Fall Term)

34 
Kids/Youth Students (Winter Term)

11

Number of Youth Students who completed the DSD1 since 2015 at the GHLS

5

Number of Adult Classes offered

NUMBER OF ADULT STUDENTS

45 
Adult Students (Fall Term)

49 
Adult Students (Winter Term)

Community Engagement

4

Number of Community Events held

- Laternenfest
- Nikolausfest
- Karneval
- Exhibition: 30 Years of the End of the Berlin Wall

Financial Stewardship

87.3%

of total Expenditures were spent on Charitable Activities

DONATIONS & GRANTS

954 
Donations

5,843 
Grant (Sprachbeihilfe)

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School Year in Review

Children and Youth Classes

We offer classes for children and youth for various levels. Children start as young as age four and are encouraged to speak German through play and music. In the children 4 and 5 classes, students can prepare for the German Language Diploma (DSD = Deutsches Sprachdiplom). The curricula for our children classes are based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Our children's teachers worked for the first time with the new curricula, and the older children were provided with checklists where they could check off what they had learned. This year, we did not have a Children 5 class, and we did not have a Beginner youth class.

German Language Certificate (Deutsches Sprachdiplom – DSD)

The Zentrale Ausschuss für das *Deutsche Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz (ZFA)* has rejected our application to become a permanent DSD 1 school in November 2019. We can only conduct DSD exams until 2022. After this, the GHLS will have to reapply.

This year we did not have any DSD students. However, we are very excited to be offering the program again in 2020/21. Our successful DSD candidates from 2019, Tovah Clift vom Hagen, Benjamin Martens, and Maxwell Mitchell received their DSD certificated in December, 2019. At our Christmas party, they received gift cards and a huge round of applause. As a special treat, Suzanne Rix, appointed Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany, joined our Christmas party and congratulated our DSD1 graduates in person.



From left: Cornelia Lorenz, Maxwell Mitchell, Benjamin Martens and Suzanne Rix

Adult Classes

For adult students we offer German courses at various levels, where students with no prior knowledge in German are just as welcome as advanced students who want to put their German knowledge into use in the conversational classes. The GHLS Curriculum Committee has now created curricula for our Beginner and Intermediate, as well helpful syllabi for our adult students. The curricula for our adult classes are also based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

This year, the adult teachers worked together with our Curriculum Committee members to update the class descriptions on our website. In January, a survey was conducted in the adult classes for us to receive feedback from our students. We received much helpful feedback that we will consider in the future.

Scholarships

Every year the GHLS awards a scholarship to one of the children and one scholarship to an adult student to recognize their commitment. Sacha Devred received the Gerta-Josenhans Memorial Scholarship for the children and Zachary Sellers received the Eva-Huber Memorial Scholarship for the adults.



Sacha Devred (left), recipient of the Gerta-Josenhans Memorial Scholarship and Zachary Sellers (right), recipient of the Eva-Huber Memorial Scholarship

Teach the Teachers

We continue to put an emphasis on providing professional development opportunities to our teachers. GHLS teachers attend these workshops or conferences on their own time and we appreciate the commitments and dedication our teachers have shown over the past years.

Last school year's professional development highlights included:

Conference of German Language Schools in USA and Canada: "Overcoming limits, developing German language schools", November 8-9, 2019, New York

During this conference, principals and administrators of German language schools in North America came together to share their experiences on a variety of different topics such as developing competencies in strengthening culture and language within schools. School administrators were able to engage in the exchange of topics relevant to the overall administration of schools.

Additionally, the conference provided an opportunity for networking between schools represented by several umbrella organizations that provide support to German language schools in the USA and Canada. Christine Hoehne (Board member) and Arne Martens (Principal) represented the GHLS at this conference.

ACTG (Atlantic Council of Teachers of German Conference in St John's, October 4-6, 2019, St John's

This conference was attended by our board members Julia Pörtner and Cornelia Lorenz. The topic of the conference was "Advertising German". Ideas were exchanged about the future of German studies in Canada. Julia gave a presentation on "German and the Interdisciplinary Mindset".

GHLS Professional Development Workshop and Teachers' Appreciation Potluck, January 18, 2020, Dartmouth

Lynn Hoffmann conducted a workshop on "Integrating Games into your Lesson Plan" for our teachers. It was fun, hands on, and very informative. The workshop was followed by a teachers' appreciation potluck with delicious food which the board members had made at Christine Höhne's house (thank you Christine!)



From left: Tamara Frerichs, Annette Siebers, Marco Rönz, Lynn Hoffmann at the Professional Development Workshop and Teachers' Appreciation Potluck

Teachers' Resources

A folder containing resources and material for our teachers has been created by our Curriculum Committee. This way, teachers and board members can share useful teaching material.

Community Engagement

The 2019-2020 school year was again filled with many community outreach activities, which were well attended by students, parents and the larger community that we are fortunate to call come.

First Day of School

In response to feedback received from students, we organized our first day of school in a way that better guided students and parents through their experience of arriving, registering and meeting their new class. Board members and teachers all had new name tag buttons, were assigned to several stations and were easy to identify for students to get help with the orientation. A large format welcome poster with the first day's activities was placed at the main entrance. We believe the new way of organizing the first day of school was a success and look forward to further improving next year's event.



Laternenfest

Held at Christ Church hall in Dartmouth on November 11, 2019, this event is a staple in the long history of our school. As every year, we enjoyed the wonderful atmosphere and creative home-made lanterns. A group of some students from our school entertained the audience before the always amazing potluck buffet was opened.

Nikolausfest

Our Nikolausfest at Christ Church hall in Dartmouth, December 7, 2019 was again very festive. 2 of the 3 DSD-1 graduates received appreciation cards. Our annual Lebkuchen raffle raised funds for the school. Our new (and old and known to many as long-term) Santa has already confirmed his availability for 2022!

Projekttag: 30 Jahre Mauerfall – 30 Years of the End of the Berlin Wall

These well-attended events were co-organized with Dalhousie University. Our school provided logistical support to Dalhousie to install a week-long poster exhibition and helped promote a very well attended panel discussion at Dalhousie University. On November 21, 2020 our board members set up the poster exhibition at the school. Both children and adults took great interest in viewing the exhibition and learn about this important time in recent German history. Our teachers prepared special classes with engaging activities about the Berlin Wall.

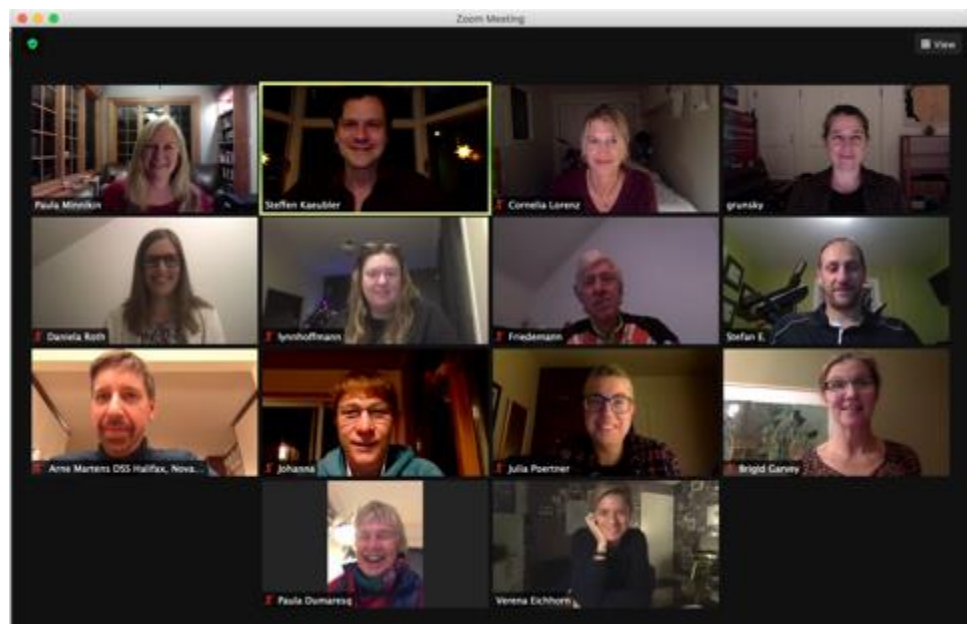
Upcoming Events

Since we are continuing to teach all of our classes online this term, we will again host monthly in-person German Heritage Language School social events as opportunities for teachers, children, adults and families to meet and reconnect. We plan to celebrate every month an event and we invite you to join us. Please stay tuned to our Facebook Page, our website for updates or email engagement@germanschool.ca

Our Board

During the 2019-20 school year, the following volunteer board members were pleased to serve our school community: Paula Minnikin (Chair), Arne Martens (Principal of the School), Stefan Eisebraun (Treasurer, Vice-Chair), Friedemann Brauer, Johanna Campbell, Verena Eichhorn, Brigid Garvey, Carol Grunsky, Lynn Hoffmann, Steffen Käubler, Cornelia Lorenz, Julia Pörtner, Daniela Roth, Paula Weste Dumaresq.

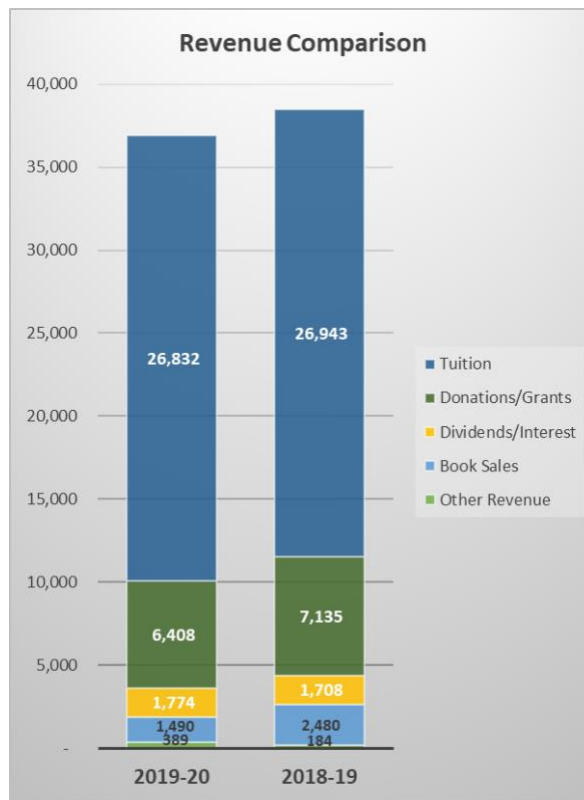
We always welcome new members to our committees. If you are interested to join, please contact: info@germanschool.ca



Financial Accountability

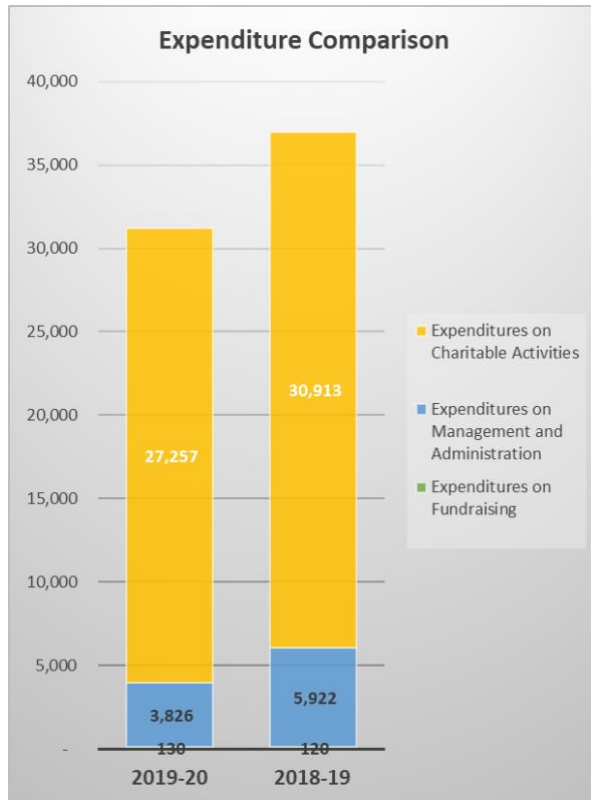
A summary of financial information for the year ended April 30, 2020 is provided below. Detailed Financial Statements are available on the school's website at www.germanschool.ca/reports.

2019-20 Financial Summary



The GHLS generated a total of \$36,892 in revenue during 2019-20 compared to \$38,451 in the prior year. The majority of revenue is generated through tuitions (73%) and donations/grants (17%).

The GHLS received a grant of \$ 5,843 in support of the DSD from the German Embassy ("Sprachbeihilfe").



Overall, total expenses of \$31,213 are comparable to the prior year (\$36,955). Thanks to the many volunteers and the hours they put into supporting the school, allowing the GHLS to keep the administrative costs low. For 2019-20, only 12.3% of the total expenditures were for management and administration.

The majority of expenditures (87.3%) were for charitable activities, which is the operation of the school and offering events.



Our School Year in Pictures





