In This Issue

- Message from the Principal
- Important news and updates
- A1 and A2 evaluations and DSD I exam
- Our online classes
- Message from the President
- Online resources

Keep Up With Us

🔗 Website
✉️ Email
👍 Facebook
🐦 Twitter
Liebe Eltern, dear parents,

The end of the VWGS school year is just around the corner, and I would like to extend a heartfelt ‘Thank you’ to all of you for supporting us during those crazy last months of German school! I cannot begin to express how much we appreciate your patience and your dedication while everybody was trying (and still is!) to keep things running and to juggle family, work, regular school and German school (and probably a trillion other things), all at the same time.

My gratitude also goes out to our teachers who were willing to sacrifice part of their well-deserved March break to familiarize themselves with Zoom and the online learning platforms for online classes to be ready to start right after spring
break. They had to deal with a lot of pressure, getting ready to teach in a way most of them have never taught before. You are fabulous, and I couldn’t wish for a better team to work with!

Unfortunately, we have to say goodbye to our long-time teacher Jana Hagspiel this month, who has been working at the VWGS since 2017. She is an excellent teacher and a wonderful colleague who enriched our school community with her enthusiasm, her professionalism, and her kind personality. She is preparing for her return to Austria as I type and will be deeply missed by students and staff alike!

On a lighter note, we have received the results of the DSD II (German Language Diploma II) exam, which enables successful students to study at most universities in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and all of our candidates have passed! Congratulations to Franziska Zeisler, Meghan Mitterer, Rosie Pryce-Digby, Maya Viel-Ytsma and Noel Steves! You all
did a fantastic job! A big ‘Thank You’ goes out to the students’ families as well because their success would not have been possible without your ongoing support!

You will find some important information about year-end events, exams, report cards and registration for the next school year in this newsletter, so please read on!

Ute Steves
VWGS Principal

IMPORTANT NEWS AND UPDATES

• Report cards

Report cards for all classes will be issued electronically this year during the last week of class (May 25th – 29th). Please make sure to check your spam folder if you haven’t received anything by the beginning of June.

**Important Note:** Report cards for DSD I exam students and A2 evaluation candidates have to be held back for now because the exam/evaluation results are an integral part of those report cards. They will be issued as soon as possible after all evaluations/exams have been done and we have received final results.

• Year-End-celebration
Please join us for our first virtual end-of-year celebration on **May 30th at 2 pm** (date and time to be confirmed). It will feature contributions of some of our students, the presentation of this year’s ‘Schülerzeitung’ as well as some fun Schuhplattler crash course.

More detailed information and a Zoom invitation will be sent out to everybody closer to the date.

---

**Book return**

Book return will be a little different this year given the special circumstances:

Our administrator and the principal will be available for book drop off at central locations in Vancouver on various dates. Empty boxes will be put out to drop off the books, and we will check off the names of the students who returned their books on our list. There will be no personal contact, and the necessary distance will be kept at all times.

First tentative dates: **Thursday, May 28th and Friday, May 29th**, details to follow.

---

**Schülerzeitung (school newspaper)**

As every year, we will put together a Schülerzeitung to commemorate our students' journey through this school year. Usually, primarily our Senior students contribute contents, but this year we invited both our Senior and Junior students to get creative and share their stories, drawings, quizzes, pictures, recipes and such. We will only provide an electronical version of our Schülerzeitung this year which you will be able to access for free on our webpage. If you have any contents you are willing to share with us for
the Schülerzeitung (like drawings your child created related to the German language, pictures showing your child during online German classes) we will be happy to include them. Please send them in an email to orgavwgs@gmail.com.

• **Registration for the upcoming school year NOW OPEN**

Our online **registration** for next school year is **now open**. In order to encourage early registration to make planning easier for us, the non-refundable administration fee will depend on the time you sign up.

- Registration before June 15th - $25 per family
- Registration before July 15th - $50 per family
- Registration on or after July 15th - $100 per family.

Due to an increase in our expenses, we found it necessary to raise our fees in order to provide the same level of quality and service. The tuition fee is $650 per student (incl. $15 classroom support fee and $25 book fee). The total tuition (including books and classroom support fee) is the equivalent of $19.70 per school day or $6.57 per 45-minute lesson, based on 33 school days per year. We hope to welcome and see you again next school year. To register your child/children, please visit the [Karelo registration page](#).

• **Summer school**

Summer school at VWGS is still on despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Please be reassured that we are taking all necessary precautions to ensure your child will be safe at all times while attending our program.
**Week 1: June 29th to July 3rd** (4 days, no camp on July 1st) (age group 5-8 years):
9:00 am-3:00 pm (30-min. lunch break): $240

**Week 2: July 6th to July 10th** (5 days) (age group 9-12 years):
9:00 am-3:00 pm (30-min. lunch break): $300

To register for summer school, please visit [this link](#).

---

**A1 AND A2 EVALUATIONS AND DSD I EXAM**

**A1 and A2 evaluations** for the school year 2019/2020 as well as the **oral DSD I exams** have been postponed indefinitely and will take place as soon as we can return to f2f classes. At this point, German authorities are not giving us the option of online exams but will hopefully extend the official deadline for the oral DSD I exam to be completed by to October 15th. We have not received the results of the written DSD I exams so far either.

**DSD II exams for the upcoming school year** are still scheduled as planned for now (written part: November 2020, oral part: January 2021).
I will keep you updated on any changes or additional information.

---

**OUR ONLINE CLASSES**
Which platforms/apps are VWGS teachers using outside of Zoom meetings? Here is a quick overview of our three main learning platforms/apps and how they are used in class:

**Senior classes:**

**pasch-net Moodle learning platforms**

Moodle is a learning platform designed to provide educators and learners with a single robust, secure and integrated system to create personalized learning environments. Pasch-net provides an ‘empty’ virtual classroom, and teachers bring it to live filling it with activities like polls, forums, quizzes, chats, assignments, just to name a few, to foster learner collaboration, communication, and knowledge creation and to provide information about learning goals, gather evidence of progress, and to give individual or group feedback to the learners.

**Junior classes:**

**Anton.app and alfons.westermann.de**

**Anton.app:**

ANTON is a free learning app co-financed by the European Union and widely used in schools in Germany, especially since the start of the pandemic. Students can study German, Math, Biology, Science and Social Studies, and Music for grades 1 through 10. It offers more than 100,000 tasks, 200 interactive exercise types, explanations and educational games. Students are being motivated through rewards and games: They collect stars and trophies and can play exciting educational games, all in German of course.

**Alfons.westermann.de:**
ALFONS is linked to ANTOLIN, the well-known reading program that VWGS students have been using in all levels for many years now. ALFONS is a virtual learning program for German, Math and English for grades 1-4. Teachers can pick topics and specific exercises for the whole class or assign them to single students. Individual learner protocols and statistics allow for continuous progress tracking and individual support for all learners. Students collect medals and points and can use them to ‘buy’ furniture and decorations for their room in the Study Villa.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear VWGS Family,

We are almost through our weeks of lockdown and I wanted to check in to let you know where we stand as an organization. First and foremost, thank you for the extraordinary effort by Ute Steves (Principal), Susanne Freitag (School Administrator) and all of our teachers to find ways to keep our kids engaged by utilising new resources and reaching learning objectives through online class time. Parents, particularly those with younger kids, you are also doing an unprecedented job acting as facilitators and de facto teaching assistants for students un-used to the world of virtual activity. It has not been easy for any of us, but I am proud to see so many of us staying positive and continuing to learn. BRAVOS to you all!

Each week, sometimes days at a time, we get new information about what the move out of lockdown may look like and what it will entail. The board and the teaching staff (many of us parents and students as well) watch the news and share ideas, but the information remains pretty vague. In order to move
forward, we should all understand that uncertainty will remain a significant partner to how parents, teachers and students deal with the next 12 months.

It is unclear, for example, when and how the German government will authorise us to complete this year’s DSD1 exams and A1, A2 evaluations. It is also unclear when, or if the VSB will begin to consider the prospect of hosting outside educational organisations, such as ours, for facility and classroom rental. There’s little doubt that it will eventually happen, and we will get everyone tested and seated as soon as it is feasible to do so.

In the meantime, we are taking the measured approach of hoping for the best but planning for the worst, which in our case looks very, very good. We are lucky to be a by-choice educational organisation that has a very simple mandate for a relatively small group of committed families. Being such, we were able to pivot quickly, engage with new resources, and transition onto remote access platforms so that students had class time available to them after Spring Break.

Right now, we are working out contingencies based on what may or may not be available over the summer and into the fall. We may have to stay virtual, prioritise face to face time with the junior school students, or develop a few combined real/virtual options. We could use some help: from parents who are trying to solve the problem of too much screen time, to those who may have experience with Learning Management Systems (LMS), or even those who can facilitate access to alternate venues.

We are facing a time for imagining the extraordinary. I remain confident that we have the collective resources, flexibility and creativity to provide enriched learning opportunities for families invested in language and cultural education. If you have ideas or would like to help form a task force to find solutions to the challenges of the coming year, please send an email to introduce yourself and how you would like to help to info@vwgs.org.
Vielen Dank und Alles Gute!

Tracey Dye

ONLINE RESOURCES

Here is a selection of useful links:

**Lesejule** - Learning material for reading and writing for the little ones
**Grundschulkönig** - Fables, fairy tales and blanks, level A1 and up
**Kahoot** - Free quiz tool for e-learning
**Ticket to Berlin** - Accompany 6 German learners who travel across Germany; includes exercises on vocabulary, grammar and regional knowledge
**Onilo** - Animated children's books with competence-oriented teaching material (free 1-month trial)
**ARD Kinderprogramm** - TV, books, radio and more for children age 3 and older
**ARD Kinderfilme & -dokus** - movies and documentaries for children
**ZDF tivi** - the German TV station's broadcast for children
**Deutsche Welle** - learn German with Deutsche Welle (different levels offered)
**Step into German** - a great variety of videos, music, podcasts, and worksheets (Goethe-Institut)
**Averting psychological consequences of Corona** - 3-minute video for children aged 6-12
**Pixi Wissen TV** - videos to gain knowledge in different areas
**Eduthek** - school supplies for different ages
**Diercke** - The famous world atlas for free (2 months access)
Duden Learnattack - free 2 month trial for Duden's learning portal for students from 4th grade to high school

4Kids Learning Videos - videos for young children to learn the alphabet, numbers, astronomy, flags or professions

Lesestart zum Lesenlernen - Visit the library with the reading kangaroo and immerse yourself in five exciting books

GEOlino Podcast - "Together against Corona" provides an overview of the topic along with further information

Kids at home 2020 - Audio and children's songs, videos, handicraft, and live concerts to combat boredom

Youtube Germany #westayathome - a temporary platform with information and resources during the corona pandemic

Amazon Germany - free children's videos, currently due to Corona no Prime membership necessary

KiKaNinchen - App with which children can immerse themselves in the lovingly crafted world of snippets

BR Kinder - bedtime stories and news for children

Schlaudino - worksheets for printout, level A1 and up

Coloring pages - many different designs, calendars, quizzes

iernox - a great collection of DaF and Daz materials, different levels

Einfach vorlesen - stories to read aloud

Learn German with worksheets or a German music blog

Visit the zoo from home - watch elephants, koalas, panda, penguins and more live on your screen. Simply click on "Videos and cams".