

Minutes of the School Conference Meeting on Wednesday, October 28th at 15:30, virtual via Zoom

In attendance:

Administration:	Hr. Schulz, Ms. Rolle
Teacher Representatives:	Hr. Schroeder, Hr. Neumann, Mr. Blessman, Ms. Geary-Müller
Parent Representatives:	Mr. Bespolka, Ms. Winkler, Fr. Albanese, Hr. Berger, Alternates: Ms. Vogel, Fr. Salewski, Fr. Tabachnikoff, Ms. Pedersen,
Student Representatives:	Mr. Delfs, Hr. von Kleist (later, 15:40), Mr. Kraft (later 15:40), Ms. Winger (16:00)
Verein:	Fr. Heyelmann,
Hort Guests:	Fr. Koerber

Agenda Point # 1: Approval of Agenda

Discussion and approval of the SK Geschäftsordnung has been postponed to another meeting. Agenda has been unanimously approved.

Agenda Point # 2: Approval of Minutes from September 2nd, 2020

Approval of the minutes has been postponed to next meeting so that the new reps can read it

Agenda Point #3: Approval of SK Geschäftsordnung

postponed, see above

Agenda Point # 4: COVID-19 Update, with the following sub-topics:

A. Update on the Covid-19 situation at school and impacts:

School has started with new rules after fall break. 11th & 12 graders have to wear masks during instruction per Senat Stufenplan level „gelb“.

Ms. Rolle on situation at ES: ES is restructuring all teacher meetings: No more than 10 people should be in a room, all should wear masks. Windows and classroom doors are open as

much as possible. Every teacher has seating charts. Every grade level in ES is separated. If students of two homerooms are part of one class (e.g. MT or PT), students from one homeroom sit together on opposite sides of the room.

Hr. Schulz on situation at HS: Two grade-levels are on one floor. In addition, on each floor, grades are kept separate as much as possible. Walkways are designed to avoid students passing one another as much as possible. During instruction in HS, time spent working in groups is reduced, tables are not moved.

Question from parents: How often do teachers change seating arrangements? **Ms. Rolle:** Not much, but if there is student conflict, or a rotation, the teacher then provides a new seating chart.

Question from parents: How are students who don't wear masks dealt with? **Hr. Schulz:** We are trying to remind everyone to comply. There will always be some who won't comply.

Question from parents: Is the school thinking about providing breaks in between instructions for students who have to wear masks during instruction to take off their masks briefly? **Hr. Schulz:** This is something we will have to think about. **Students:** Wearing masks continuously during instruction works well.

B. Update implementation of the distance learning policies and procedures

Hr. Schulz: Everyone has prepared their learning platforms (Most are using Google Classroom; a few are using Lernraum Berlin).

Ms. Rolle for ES: We have prepared several different distance learning schedules for a range of different situations, including a hybrid model and a full lockdown model.

Question from parents: Will parents receive those plans? Will they be made public? **Ms. Rolle:** Plans will be shared when the school switches to this model. The hybrid plan strives to have ES students in school every day, but for shorter times.

Hr. Schulz: The HS hybrid model plan works with A and B weeks for students.

Question from parents: Are standards for distance learning in place? **Ms. Rolle:** Teachers up to and including grade 4 are using Seesaw as their primary platform. Grades 5 and 6 are using Google Classroom.

Question from parents: Will the standards the school developed for distance learning be made public? **Hr. Schulz:** These standards for the HS have been developed, they will need to be approved in the next Gesamtkonferenz and will then be made public. The Roles and

Responsibilities of distance learning for all stakeholders is currently being translated and will then be posted to the website.

Students stated that the food and lunch situation is crowded and difficult, especially for 9th/10th graders. **Update on cafeteria situation Hr. Schulz:** The school is currently checking the number of students using Aula during lunch break, to give students more room for their lunch. The idea is to give 7th/8th graders the Aula for the first part of lunch break, 9/10th graders could then use the Aula during the 2nd part of lunch break and the 11/12th graders would then have the HS cafeteria.

C. Accommodation and inclusion of students with special needs:

Question parents: Special needs kids felt lost and overwhelmed in the spring. They received the same amount of work as everyone else, they did not receive the extra help they needed. Is this implemented in the new distance learning models?

Ms. Rolle: We are trying to provide as much support as possible. It's a staffing issue. Reading Lab and Math Lab teachers are also needed for regular instruction. Kids with disabilities who have Special Ed teachers will continue to receive this support during distance learning.

Parents stated: Should the special needs students suffer to pull resources away for the larger group? Students with accommodation plans need extra time virtually, too. They need different work loads.

Hr. Schulz: We will remind everyone that the work loads for kids with accommodations has to be adjusted during distance learning, too.

D. Return to Class Policy:

Parents: It seemed that during the 4th grade quarantine some classes could have returned to school at least one day earlier because they were cleared by the Gesundheitsamt. The school had everyone return on Monday, when some students could have already returned on Friday. This created problems, especially for working parents, whose children were according to the Gesundheitsamt supposed to be in school on Friday.

LaTyia Rolle: The different Gesundheitsämter cleared kids for return to school for different days which created a logistical problem. ES wanted kids back on Friday but is also trying to keep school days as close to normal as possible for kids. It would not have been possible to provide one class that was able to return with a regular school day, so the compromise was to have everyone return on Monday. For two families, who had reached out, an arrangement with the Hort was worked out to look after children whose parents could not do so at home.

E. School Curriculum:

Parents: Why are the school curricula not published on the website?

Hr. Schulz: I was not aware they are not public. They should be made public on the website as soon as possible.

F. Celebration of key bi-cultural events and holidays

Parents stated that key bi-cultural events (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Advent, Nikolaus, etc.) should still be celebrated as much as possible within the limits of the hygiene plan.

G. After school activities in particular official school activities

Parents: There seem to be inconsistencies in regard to which extracurricular activities can be done and cannot be done. In particular, there were questions concerning the Odyssey of the Mind program. It was not clear whether kids could still represent JFKS at events that take place outside of the school campus. **Ms. Rolle:** A new teacher is taking over the OM program and there was some miscommunication.

Basketball Activity: Grades are not allowed to mix. BB will start as 5/6th grade activity.

Question from teacher: Is it okay to have one grade level in the AB part of the gym and the other in the CD part? **Ms. Rolle:** That is a good idea.

H. Implementation of „anti-COVID“ systems and equipment

Steffen Schulz: The school just received five CO2 measuring devices from the Senat. This is the maximum number the school could get. They will now be tested in class rooms to provide teachers with a better sense for when it is time to ventilate the room by opening windows. Independently from those devices, every room has to be ventilated by opening the windows after each period and once in the middle for 2-5 minutes. This way, rooms are ventilated at least every 20 minutes. Once it is too cold for the students to remain in the class room during ventilation time, they will have to step out.

Students: It happens that windows are not opened regularly. **Steffen Schulz:** Students are encouraged to support the opening of the windows and to ask for it.

Parents suggested that money from the Verein could be used to purchase a CO2 measuring system for every single room at JFKS. This would roughly cost 3,000 Euro.

Hr. Schulz: We should first see what the experience with the CO2 measuring devices we just received will be. One worry would be that too many devices might be purchased that will then not be used.

Question from parents: Is there a discussion about more sophisticated air cleaning systems?

Hr. Schulz: Air filtration systems are tested at 1 or 2 schools in Berlin. The results are not yet in.

Hand sanitizer Hr. Schulz: Stands arrived, there are 4 permanently installed stands, plus 7 portable towers. They are placed close to the entrances. Hand disinfection is required before entering the library. Students report that the sanitizers are used frequently.

Question from teachers: Is the hand sanitizer too easily accessible for young ES children? Hand sanitizer is hazardous material. **Ms. Rolle:** ES' first choice is hand washing. **Hr. Schulz:** It is the official duty of every school to provide health education.

Question from teacher: Many teachers are in favor of passing a voluntary commitment („**Freiwillige Selbstverpflichtung**“) for all students in HS to wear masks during instruction. One suggestion would be to have a written statement that should be passed by all the different school bodies (SC, PC, SK, ED). It's important to keep in mind that there would not and cannot be any punishment, if someone did not adhere to the voluntary commitment.

Students report that while many students would support wearing masks during instruction, there would be some students who would be against it. In the SC, the majority of students was for wearing masks during instruction.

Parents report that the question was not discussed during PC. Many High School parents would probably support it. The SK could also put out a statement.

Students suggest putting up posters reminding everyone of the importance of mask wearing. Hr. Schulz supports this idea.

Hr. Schulz said he will consult with Mr. Krupski on the matter.

Agenda Point #5: Dress Code Update

Hr. Schulz: The issue is not about a dress code. There will be no dress code. The issue is solely what is considered to be appropriate to wear. This was prompted by 2-3 events, one concerning a phrase on a sweater, another a short skirt and yet another a bra worn with nothing above. These prompted complaints. The administration wants students to talk about boundaries in the SC and to come up with suggestions.

Students: Students do not want a dress code. Students do not want to define boundaries. Students emphasize that it is their choice what to wear. There is understanding among students

that inappropriate language displayed on clothes might be problematic. But students strongly oppose defining boundaries when it comes to skirt lengths or similar. Defining common boundaries would be equivalent to dress code rules and is therefore opposed by the students. Students report that the issue has been discussed among the students in the SC, and, additionally, in most class rooms. The SC voted on a statement on this issue that was approved by everyone but one student. The SC has also conducted a survey of about 420 students the vast majority of which was against any kind of dress code.

Hr. Schulz wants to invite the student reps to further discuss this topic.

Agenda Point #6: High School Counselor Update

Hr. Schulz: A new person is on campus Mo, We, Fr for 10th/11th/12th grade Diploma students. A strong candidate for next school year has been found.

Agenda Point #7: Gender neutral bathroom Update

Hr. Schulz: There will be a gender neutral bathroom. It should have been up and running already after fall break, there seems to be some delay, but it should be there and be announced next week.

Agenda Point #8: Committee Reports

A. Food Committee:

Ms. Rolle: The food committee will be doing a trial, maybe switching caterers. There is a meeting planned for the end of November, our current caterer's contract is up at the end of the year. Ms. Rolle and Ms. Vaughan are still waiting to hear back from parents who may be willing to serve on the committee. The SK should approve the members in a future SK meeting.

B. Building Committee:

Hr. Schulz reports that many companies are currently working on the school grounds (assessment of electrical outlets, number of sinks and other) The gym will be getting a photovoltaic roof. Steffen Schulz explains that forming a building committee at this point is not necessary because the renovations under way are basic (repairing roofs, ground work, improving the electric wiring). There would be nothing to decide/discuss/alter. There is not yet any further information on the Blue Building. A building survey („Begehung“) has taken place, but there is no report yet.

Parents are asking to be involved early on in any process or decision concerning the buildings on campus in order to be able to bring in their ideas (green roofs, bath room renovation, for example). Parents noted that the Senate has promised a 15 Mio Euro investment in the school buildings.

Agenda Point #9: Anti-discrimination Statement

Teachers ask that the statement be made available again in the teachers' lounge so more people can sign it. The SK would like to do a virtual agreement on the final version of the statement to approve it and then make it public on the school's website.

Agenda Point #10: Religious Holidays

Hr. Schulz apologized that one of the days the photographer was at school taking class pictures was a Jewish High Holiday. The school tried but did not succeed in re-scheduling the photographer for that day.

Parents remarked that this has been a persistent problem. It has happened several times in recent years that school events (photographer, Fun Run) had been scheduled on Jewish holidays. Parents asked the administration to take Jewish holidays into consideration earlier and not to schedule anything special on Jewish holidays in order not to exclude children from Jewish families. In case any scheduling conflicts with Jewish holidays should nevertheless occur, parents asked the administration to contact the JFKS Jewish community in advance, before a decision has been made. **Hr. Schulz** thought this was a good idea.

Agenda Point #11 : Special Needs Update

Parents asked that accommodation plans in the ES be communicated early on in the school year to every teacher the child has, not just the homeroom teachers. **Ms. Rolle** said they are working on this for next year.

Agenda Point #12 : Homework policy discussion

Parents communicated that there are concerns about distance learning encroaching on weekends and free time. One teacher had scheduled a live meeting on a weekend, homework and assignments are sometimes given over holidays and weekends. This can put a lot of pressure on students and parents. Standards for when to schedule homework and distance learning work and expectations for time needed for the work should all be part of the official distance learning standards.

Students stated that some find it most helpful to have all assignments on Monday. Others said that meant they were flooded with work on Monday. Students report how difficult it is for them to separate their private life from their school time in distance learning. They consider a class on a weekend overstepping.

Students are asking that teachers familiarize themselves with some details of Google Classroom, in particular: Home work should be posted as an *assignment* on Google Classroom, not as an *announcement*. The latter is easy to miss. This has happened often according to the students.

Agenda Point #13 : Lockdown False Alarm: Update and lessons learned

Hr. Schulz apologized for the false alarm, which happened because of maintenance work on electrical cables. The false alarm showed that much of the lockdown procedure worked well, with the exception that children who were outside or in the Hort area did not know where to go. The announcement could not be heard at the Hort. This now requires reworking the lockdown plan.

Parents and the Hort representatives reported that some children cried and were terrified. Parents asked to be informed earlier via e-mail if a false alarm should happen again, so that they are already informed when children return home. This way, parents can alleviate the psychological impact of the false alarm by talking with their children about it in a timely manner.

Ms. Rolle said that the lockdown message is a very old recording and will be (or has already been) changed.

Agenda Point #14 : Miscellaneous

Elementary School German Principal: Teachers stated that the Elementary School still has no leadership on the German side. A German principal has been selected but no start date has been set. The situation is untenable for the ES. Teachers will draft a statement urging the Schulaufsichtsbehörde to quickly approve the new principal and provide the ES with leadership on the German side. The SK is hoping to approve this statement virtually to send it off as soon as possible.

Adjusting Workload in Distance Learning: The students emphasized that in a hybrid distance learning model, their learning capacity is significantly impaired. This is what the spring showed. They are asking that content and work load will be adjusted. Hr. Schulz reported that there will be accommodations for the Abitur. They are not yet official.

FU Survey: Hr. Schulz reported that the Freie Universität will be conducting a survey of some classes as to their experiences during the spring shut down. The survey has been approved by the Senatsschulverwaltung and involves several schools. It is not clear if JFKS will receive a result specific to the situation at JFKS.

SK Meeting Time: Students asked to start future virtual SK meeting later (at 16) so that they have time to return home to a computer after school. It should be announced earlier if a meeting is taking place virtually.

Teacher Training: Parents stated that they have heard that teachers would appreciate training for the distance learning platforms and systems. This should not happen outside of school hours. Parents support this.

The next SK conferences in 2020/2021 are scheduled on the following dates:

Jan 13, 2021

Feb 17, 2021

Apr 14, 2021

Jun 2, 2021

Meeting adjourned at 18:00.

Minutes submitted by Fr. Salewski

TO: MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL CONFERENCE
FROM: STEFFEN SCHULZ, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Agenda

For the School Conference Meeting on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 at 15:30, in room W309

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Approval of the Minutes
3. Approval of SK Geschäftsordnung (see Attachment)
4. COVID-19 Update, with the following sub-topics:
 - A. Update on the COVID-19 situation at school and impacts
 - B. Update on implementation of the distance learning policies and procedures
 - C. Accommodation and inclusion of students with special needs
 - D. Return to class policy
 - E. School Curriculum
 - F. Celebration of key bi-cultural events and holidays
 - G. After school activities, in particular official school activities
 - H. Implementation of "anti-COVID" systems and equipment
5. Dress Code Update
6. High School Counselor Update
7. Gender neutral bathroom Update
8. Committee Reports
 - A. Food Committee
 - B. Building Committee
9. Anti-discrimination Statement
10. Religious Holidays - Taking them into consideration
11. Special Needs Update
12. Homework policy discussion
13. Lockdown False Alarm: Update and lessons learned
14. Misc.