

**Meeting minutes
For the School Conference Meeting on**

19 April 2023 at 16:00 in the Quiet Study Room

In attendance:

Administration: Hr. Bartz, Ms. Rolle, Mr. Fritzenschaft, Ms. Hale

Teacher Representatives: Hr. Witte, Ms. Moser, Fr. Evers, Ms. Martin
Alternates: Ms. Callahan, Fr. Freytag

Parent Representatives: Mr. Bespolka, Hr. Berger, Ms. Winkler, Fr. Albanese
Alternates: Ms. Vogel, Hr. Erlbaum, Ms. Ewert

Student Representatives: Ms. Wilhelmi, Hr. Bordet, Mr. Winkler (via phone), Hr. Eberstein

Hort Guests: Fr. Heyelmann

External Member: Fr. Mattig-Krone

Voting members: 14 voting members present

1. Approval of Agenda

Students requested that the homework, electronic devices and Leistungskurs availability issues be moved up. With that change, the agenda was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Approval of Minutes from 12 December 2022 and 1 March 2023

Both sets of minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Review of Action Item List

Code of conduct:

--Ms. Rolle distributed an outline of the school's process for developing a child protection policy. She noted that JFKS needs a specialized program that bridges the cultural differences between the American and German approaches and is in English and German. After discussions with the Berlin authorities, the school has received permission to develop this. Teachers will be offered PD credit. The training will be implemented by JFKS staff and will offer 3 or 4 sessions for everyone on campus (including, for example, custodial and security staff). The child protection team is still working on reviewing several components, including the process for how students can report incidents, making sure the documents are accurately translated, and making the documents more readily available to everyone.

The goal is to start the trainings at beginning of next school year. A pilot training may be offered this school year.

--Question from students: How does this protect students from cyberbullying and online threats?

Answer from administration: That's a good point. We can discuss adding that.

--Question from parents: As has been mentioned before, the reporting form is potentially intimidating and could discourage reporting. Is there an alternate way to submit a report, perhaps anonymously?

Answer (Ms. Rolle): The form has gone through a few new revisions with the new counselors. We have more clearly defined who receives emails and who distributes reports from there.

Students have access to the form in their drive. It was suggested that it could also be distributed in student lounges or the library.

(Ms. Hale): There are alternatives to the form, such as talking to a teacher or counselor. However, students had requested a paper form so that there would be a paper trail for each incident. Things were getting reported but weren't going anywhere. We wanted to have a single point person so that one person can see if there's a pattern. Mr. Kelley is the point person at HS. Ms. Faber at ES. They then pass the issue on to the appropriate person.

Spider web: New equipment has been delivered. Construction is expected to begin in early May.

Water fountains: Senate has apparently (again?) approved water fountains for the school, but says technical issues still need to be solved.

4. Homework policy

The revised homework policy proposal was distributed before the meeting.

--Discussion point: Do homework assignments HAVE to be posted online?

Hr. Bartz stated that the school can't require teachers to put things online. The policy can encourage teachers to not assign homework at the last second in class and can encourage them to put assignments online.

Fr. Mattig-Krone suggested adding to the policy that homework should be put online "whenever possible."

Hr. Berger emphasized that the school should have a central place where parents can see all homework assignments.

Fr. Mattig-Krone said that the law is clear: Teachers can't be required to put homework or other assignments online.

Students: Teachers then need to understand that some students won't have the assignment.

Hr. Erlbaum noted that the wording about amounts in the high school is vague. Students responded that this is deliberate, as discussed at the 1 March meeting: The homework burden depends too much on which classes students are taking, so it is not helpful to set specific limits. Individual classes should have discussions about homework expectations.

The version stating that teachers are "strongly encouraged" to put homework assignments online was put to a vote: It received 8 yays, 6 nays. The measure failed to receive a 2/3 majority, so did not pass.

A new vote was taken on the measure, this time with the wording that teachers were "encouraged" to put homework assignments online: It received 13 yays, 1 nay. The measure passed. The final version is included below.

5. Electronic media device (EMD) policy

The students proposed several changes to the current policy:

For grades 7-10, EMDs would be prohibited on campus during regular school hours, from 8 am until 3 pm. Grades 11 and 12 would be able to use their EMDs on campus. EMDs would continue to be allowed for all students for educational purposes in the library.

Teachers questioned whether this would lead to complicated enforcement by staff, since 7-10th graders would try to use their devices as well. Students responded that the policy makes clear that a student will need to show their ID upon request, and 11/12th IDs are easy to identify because of the green stripe. Regardless of grade level, disruptive use of phones may result in confiscation.

The proposal was put to a vote: Yays: 9; Nays: 3; Abstentions: 2. The resolution, needing a simple majority, passed. The final version is included below.

6. Minimum number of students for Leistungskurse (LKs) or Advanced Placement (AP) classes:
Student representatives had received concerns that at least five AP and LK classes would not be offered to next year's 11th graders because of low enrollment.

Administration replied that the minimum enrollment for AP and LK classes has always been 10. Exceptions have been made in the past, but this year that wasn't possible. The LKs that won't be offered are French, Spanish and History, which 3, 4 and 6 students had requested.

Hr. Bartz noted that such small LKs are very expensive for the whole school in terms of teaching hours. The school will receive roughly 5% fewer teaching hours next year, and so needs to find ways to use the remaining hours more efficiently.

One option is to combine years, so that 11th graders could join an existing LK with 12th graders and do the 3rd and 4th semester curriculum in the first year. That is a risk, however, because it isn't certain that there will be enough students to make a full class in the next year.

Hr. Berger expressed concerns that not offering LKs in the key subjects like French, Spanish or even chemistry was not up to the standards of an academically ambitious school. He emphasized that the administration should make every effort to offer LKs in key subjects.

7. Miscellaneous

--Due to time constraints, several remaining agenda points will be moved to the next meeting.

--Baupiloten: The initial report is available in English and German, which Hr. Bartz will forward to SK members. Hr. Schulz is receiving feedback on the report. There will be a meeting on 10 May.

--Elementary principal hiring situation: Hr. Bartz noted that because the SK lacked a 2/3 majority to endorse one of the candidates, the decision on who should be offered the job fell to Fr. Orgis and the Senate staff. Their decision will hopefully be approved at the ED meeting on Tuesday. A public announcement will follow as soon as possible.

--Fr. Mattig-Krone noted that she had not been informed about or invited to the principal interviews. Hr. Bartz apologized and said he would investigate what went wrong.

The meeting adjourned at 18:10. Minutes submitted by Gretchen Vogel

Homework policy:

The School Conference has the authority to decide on the principles of homework, including maximum amounts of homework per day, according to the regulations of the Berlin school law.

Students should be able to complete their homework without the help of a parent, guardian, or other person. Time and effort spent on homework has an impact on the quality of work turned in and therefore on the grade received on the assignment. Both the quality and quantity of homework accomplished is important when determining grades.

Homework should be review material that has already been taught or is unable to be completed in class. Students should preferably have more than one evening to complete assignments. Homework as a punishment or as a disciplinary measure is not pedagogically sound and therefore not allowed.

Students may not be asked to work on homework or projects over school holidays, school vacations, or weekends in grades EC through 10th. Homework may be assigned on a Friday if it can reasonably be completed on the same day.

In the high school, all homework must be assigned verbally in class, and teachers are encouraged to post on WebUntis to ensure transparency and clarity for students. Google Classroom may be used as an alternative to WebUntis.

After being ill, students have the same number of school days to make up any missed homework or class work as were originally missed due to illness. Students are encouraged to contact classmates to receive information about missed assignments. These assignments should also be posted on WebUntis or Google Classroom by the teacher or provided to students upon their return.

For elementary school, homework may not exceed the amount of time noted below per day/week per grade level for ALL subjects combined. This time includes reading in both languages. Studying for tests and homework of practicing a musical instrument is not included. Teachers and students should communicate to ensure that levels are not being exceeded. Times should be adjusted for special needs students in accordance with their accommodation plan.

Entrance Class	None
Grades 1 and 2	10-20 minutes per day, 100 minutes per week
Grades 3 and 4	20-40 minutes per day, 200 minutes per week
Grades 5 and 6	50-60 minutes per day, 300 minutes per week

For high school, all students should be able to complete their homework within a reasonable timeframe. Teachers and students should communicate to ensure that this level is not being exceeded.

For diploma students in the 11th and 12th grade, the amount of time spent on homework may vary depending on the number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses taken. AP classes are college level and require additional individual student preparation and study time.

For students requiring additional assistance with their homework, homework help is offered in both the elementary school and high school. Students and parents are encouraged to communicate with the subject teacher, homeroom teacher, and administration if a student is struggling greatly with the amount of homework.

Electronic Media Device (EMD) Policy:

An EMD is defined as any device that has access to the internet, including but not limited to smartphones, laptops, tablets, watches, and desktops.

In grades 7-10, no EMDs shall be used by any student on campus between the hours of 8am and 3pm on a day of regular instruction.

In grades 11-12, EMDs may be used on campus and in the student lounge. When asked by a teacher, students must demonstrate their grade by presenting a student ID with a green band.

EMDs are not permitted to be used in class. However, teachers may specifically allow the use of EMDs to aid instruction.

All students may use EMDs for educational purposes in the library.

It is inappropriate and not permitted

- a. to use EMDs for uploading or otherwise distributing photographs and/or personal information about other students, teachers, administration, and parents without their explicit permission and
- b. to use EMDs for obtaining or distributing in any fashion restricted information for tests, quizzes and other school work and
- c. to play games without educational purposes or access a website banned by the school.

Permission to use a specific EMD in class may be granted by the teacher conference in the official accommodation for a special learning need.

The use of EMDs is prohibited during tests and Klausuren. Teachers may collect all EMDs at the start of a test or Klausur. For any student seen using an EMD during a test or Klausur, even during a break, their test or Klausur is graded as a "6" (0 points) or an "F".

Any EMD that is used in violation of this policy will be confiscated by a member of the staff and given to the administration. The student is allowed to pick up their EMD at the end of their school day. Three violations of the EMD policy will result in a misconduct. Continued violations may result in a Class Conference.

Regardless of a student's grade level, disruptive use of an EMD may result in its confiscation.