LEARNING GERMAN – AN INTRODUCTION TO A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

Dear Sixies / Sixie families,

Welcome to the Boston Latin School community and all the exciting things to be explored at our school! Hopefully you had a chance to become somewhat familiar with the new environment and feel a little bit at home by now. Believe it or not, the next big milestone in your life at BLS is not that far ahead and will come up early next year in the second semester. You will have to select a modern language to study in eighth grade and beyond. This is an important decision for the next 4 years of your education at BLS – and for life.

We are a group of committed students and parents who, based on our own positive experiences and insight, have recently formed the “Friends of German” initiative at BLS. Our objectives are to share with new families the great opportunities the German Language Program at our school has to offer, and to build a strong support structure to ensure its long term success. This program has a distinguished track record, which is in part reflected by its students’ consistently high scores in nationwide exams (e.g., the one administered by the American Association of Teachers of German). BLS has been the only public school in the greater Boston area offering a German program, thereby joining the ranks of prestigious prep schools such as St. Mark’s School, Phillips Academy Andover, and Concord Academy, who recognize the significant opportunities that arise from studying German.

Why do we believe that learning German will put our children at a competitive advantage for the future?

- German is a leading language of science, literature, art, philosophy, and history.
- German is the language with the largest number of native speakers in Western Europe, and is spoken in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein.
- Like Latin, knowledge of German is often considered a distinguishing academic credential by admission offices of the most selective US colleges.
- Tuition at world class German, Swiss, and Austrian universities is either free, or a fraction of that at American universities. Every year, a percentage of seats are reserved specifically for foreign students with knowledge of German.
- Germany is Europe’s largest economy and the 3rd largest economy in the world. It is the 4th largest foreign investor in the U.S., with German companies supporting about 570,000 jobs in the US. Job applicants with knowledge of German are highly sought after by these companies in an increasingly global market.

How does the “Friends of German at BLS” initiative support the teachers and students in the German program?

- We have recently initiated partnerships with leading diplomatic, cultural, academic, and business representatives in Boston, which is a hub of German language-based economic and higher ed activity. These partnerships will provide enrichment opportunities for students and teachers within the local German-speaking community, as well as information about study and career options facilitated by German language skills.
- We are currently establishing an exchange program with a German partner school which has a shared commitment to Latin curriculum. Mutual visits by students of BLS and its partner school will provide an immersion opportunity in an international environment.
- We will ensure that each student in the program who academically qualifies will have the opportunity to earn AP credits (at BLS, or through our extramural institutional partners in Boston).

Getting curious? We would welcome the opportunity to keep you posted on upcoming meetings with leaders of the international German-speaking community in Boston, who have offered to share first-hand information with interested students and families (e.g., about the MIT-Germany and Boston University Study Abroad programs, and initiatives at local universities to integrate German language studies with programs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

To get on our list for being invited to these events, or to request further information, please send your contact info to Marta Carney: martacarney@comcast.net or Martin Beinborn: blsgerman@gmail.com