

# Welcoming Speech for the 40th Anniversary of the German Language Courses

Students, parents, teachers, employees and administration, friends and supporters, in the name of the Central Agency for German Schools Abroad, I would like to congratulate you on the 40th anniversary of the Deutsche Sprachschule Washington.

For 40 years, the Deutsche Sprachschule Washington has built a cultural bridge that connects Germany and the United States. Its students do not just learn the German language, they also get to know Germany. In turn, they become bridge builders and ambassadors. Their special educational experiences connect them throughout their lives to both countries and simultaneously connect Germany and the United States.



In English, the Deutsche Sprachschule Washington bears the modest name *German Language Courses* (GLC); it is the largest part-time language school for the Deutsches Sprachdiplom in the United States. Since 1976, the school has offered demanding, varied German instruction for children and adults on all levels. More than 500 students currently attend the GLC on Saturdays and Wednesdays on the campus of the Deutsche Schule Washington. For many families in the Washington, D.C. area, the GLC presents an outstanding opportunity to maintain their connections to German language and culture.

With the Deutsches Sprachdiplom II (DSD II), the Deutsche Sprachschule Washington offers an examination that prepares students to study at universities in Germany. More students here than at any other German educational institution in the United States take and pass this examination. A broad portfolio of German and American German language examinations, as well as a wide variety of extracurricular activities round out the offerings of the Deutsche Sprachschule Washington. The Central Agency for German Schools Abroad assists the Deutsche Sprachschule Washington in securing and enhancing quality standards.

Your school is an official member of the PASCH partner school initiative of the German Federal Foreign Office. In this context, your students regularly participate very successfully in competitions and international meetings. With the online magazine *GLC-Wortspiel*, the school makes regular contributions to the website of the PASCH initiative. Exemplary too is the work of the Deutsche Sprachschule Washington with its alumni. Again and again, this work demonstrates the school's long-term connection to its "Saturday students."

As part of the PASCH network, your school is one of the mediators of the foreign cultural and educational policies of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Deutsche Sprachschule Washington blazes paths to understanding, encourages exchange and networking, and thus also fulfills a cultural-political function.

In a time of many crises and conflicts, cultural and educational policies are devoted increasingly to social questions. They provide help to humanity. The concern is to understand and bridge differences and also to learn and teach how to assume responsibility. The PASCH schools play an important role here too: The intercultural encounters and dialogue at your school are a valuable basis for a joint transatlantic future! All of you contribute to the success of this exchange.

In this spirit, I wish the entire school community well on the school's 40th anniversary and great success in the future!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joachim Lauer". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

**Joachim Lauer**

Leiter der Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen

*Translation services by Linda Gaus, MadDocs LLC, Vienna.*