



GERMAN
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL
WASHINGTON D.C.



Independent. Bilingual. Weltoffen.

The German International School Washington D.C. (GISW) is a private, co-educational institution with more than 500 students from age 2 through 12th grade, set on a quiet campus in Potomac, MD. Representing more than 20 different nationalities, our student body is truly international, united by a shared interest in German language and culture. The only full-time German day school in Washington, we offer rigorous academics in a warm, multicultural setting.

The school follows the German curriculum, with additional elements of the American school system. Graduates receive the globally recognized German

International Abitur (DIA) as well as a high-school diploma from the state of Maryland. We have two academic focus areas: foreign languages and science. Students gain fluency in at least two foreign languages and achieve mastery of biology, chemistry, and physics. Our teachers prize critical inquiry, teaching students how—not what—to think. On graduation, they are prepared to enter any prestigious university worldwide.

The GISW is accredited by the German Ministry of Education and approved by the Maryland Department of Education. Our German curriculum is based on that used in the state of Thuringia, known for its high academic standards.

Small
classes

Campus includes three
libraries, state-of-the-
art science building,
extensive athletic facilities
(with heated indoor pool),
full-service cafeteria

Majority of
teachers are
German native
speakers





Preschool

In our preschool, children aged 2 to 4 enjoy play-based learning with plenty of time outdoors. Teachers are native German speakers and speak German exclusively with the children. However, preschoolers do not need to have prior knowledge of German before enrolling.

Preschool instruction is intimate, with a teacher-to-student ratio of one to six for two-year-olds and one to 10 for three- and four-year-olds. The

daily routine is structured yet flexible. Learning is achieved through hands-on and imaginative play, with activities that stimulate the senses. With teachers as their guides, children are encouraged to pursue activities of their choice and manage their own time. This fosters their self-discipline and confidence.

We offer half-day and full-day enrollment options at the preschool level.

Instruction
exclusively
in German

Additional language
classes offered for
students whose first
language is not German
or English

Starting in Elementary School, students learn biology, physics, and chemistry by conducting hands-on experiments in the state-of-the-art science building.

Elementary School

The Elementary School is centered on warm, personalized instruction in small classes. It runs from the School Entry Level (SEL) through fourth grade. The SEL prepares students by building their knowledge of literacy and math.

By first grade, students have the foundational skills they need to delve deep into reading and writing in German, social studies, science, music, art, and to start solving mathematical problems. English is taught at 3 different proficiency levels starting in first grade and continuing through high school.

From fourth grade on, science classes offer hands-on learning in the school's state-of-the-art science building.

Our athletic program in the Elementary School provides students with opportunities to develop physically, mentally, and emotionally, using sports to reinforce essential life skills such as teamwork and persistence. In addition to the traditional P.E. class, students have weekly swim classes in our heated indoor pool starting in first grade.





Upper School

In the Upper School, our students acquire mastery of 12 academic subjects — in the fields of natural sciences, mathematics, foreign languages, social sciences and the arts — while developing important leadership skills and critical judgment. In other words, our Upper School prepares them not just to excel in college and their professional careers, but to become

engaged citizens of the world.

At the GISW, students think in German and live German culture every day. Most classes are held in German, although some are taught bilingually in German and English on a rotating basis. In sixth grade, students may choose to study French or Spanish as a third language. Latin is offered beginning in eighth

AP courses offered in science subjects, foreign languages, and Calculus

Students graduate with degrees that grant easy access to universities around the world

Average class size of 16

Many alumni study in Europe, where tuition is very affordable



grade, and a fourth modern language in tenth. By the time they graduate, many of our students are fluent in three or four languages.

Classes in biology, chemistry, and physics are taught every year from seventh through 12th grade in our modern, fully-equipped science building. Students discover scientific principles primarily through hands-on experimentation.

College Preparation

We offer numerous Advanced Placement (AP) courses. However, we do not distinguish between basic and

advanced classes — all classes are taught at an advanced level. Students graduate with two qualifications, the globally recognized German International Abitur (DIA) and a high-school diploma from the state of Maryland.

GISW graduates are well-prepared to pursue further studies worldwide — whether they prefer a small liberal arts college, large research university, or specialty training program, for example. In recent years, these have included highly competitive colleges in the US as well as renowned universities throughout Europe.



A Welcoming Culture Rooted in Germany

At the GISW, we offer a caring and stimulating environment for students of all backgrounds, hailing from more than 20 countries. It is a home away from home for German students. For others, it offers an authentic experience of a different culture. We celebrate both American and German traditions such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, and the Oktoberfest.

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German and U.S. traditions celebrated all year

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Students are served a nutritious, freshly prepared lunch daily

Each year, we host a German Christmas Market, where visitors can browse handmade crafts. On the German holiday of St. Martin's Day, we stage a reenactment of the popular legend, and on the first day of school, first-graders receive a traditional *Schultüte*, a cone-shaped goodie bag filled with school supplies and treats.

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Various athletic, creative, and academic extracurricular courses offered in the afternoon program

Developing the Whole Person

The arts are vital to the German International School community. On any visit to the school, you will see student artwork displayed on the walls and may hear students singing or playing their instruments in the music room. We host regular performances, including a talent show.

Following the precept “a healthy mind in a healthy body,” we promote physical health through regular P.E. classes as well as extracurricular sports. Our athletics facilities are excellent: a pool, three gyms, two soccer fields, and basketball, tennis, and volleyball courts. We have several sports teams that compete around the region.

A robust after-school program supplements the school day with a variety of enrichment activities. In recent years, we have held after-school classes in karate, modern dance, photography, computer science, cooking, and other subjects.

Fostering Healthy Habits

In our cafeteria, hot, healthy meals are prepared from scratch every day. Parent volunteers help the cafeteria manager with the cooking. Menus feature dishes from Germany, the U.S., and around the world.





An Education With a Difference: Our Philosophy

At the GISW, we educate children to become exemplary scholars as well as responsible global citizens. German language and culture are at the heart of our philosophy. However, with such a diverse student body, the atmosphere here is one of tolerance and cross-cultural exchange.

Intellectual curiosity and the keys to a well-rounded life are what we hope

to bequeath to our students. This goal is reflected in all the ways we encourage them to pursue their own fields of interest, whether by drawing, painting, and sculpting in the art studio; putting on plays and musical concerts; competing in athletics; or attending guest lectures by scientists, journalists, authors, diplomats, and scholars.

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Three libraries
with literature in
English, German,
Spanish, and
French

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Bus service offered (for students age
4 and up) to and from Maryland,
northern Virginia, and D.C.

We can only guess what the careers of the future will be. With the strong academic grounding and whole-person education that the German International School provides, our graduates will be prepared for life.





There is no better way to see what we do than to visit our school. Our doors are open and we look forward to welcoming you soon.

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