ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

working together to support learning

Policy Handbook
May 2023

'Working together to support learning'

Contents

Registered Name

The legally registered name of the Association of German International Schools (AGIS) is AGIS Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Internationalen Schulen in Deutschland e.V.

AGIS Mission Statement

The Association of German International Schools represents and promotes the educational and public interests of member schools and their communities, working together to support learning. As a community we foster sharing among member schools and support professional development.

AGIS Membership

AGIS is an umbrella organization, which represents and provides services to like-minded international schools within Germany. Member schools must:

1. be recognised as a private and non-for-profit (gemeinnützige) Ersatz- or Ergänzungsschule.
2. have been founded to serve the needs of an internationally mobile population.
3. provide an international education predominantly in the English language.
4. be members of one or more AGIS approved accrediting agencies.
   The AGIS Board will review the approved agency list on an annual basis.
5. be committed to continuous improvement through evaluation, accreditation and professional development.
6. be committed to ethical practice.
7. be committed to cultural inclusiveness to foster internationalism and international-mindedness.
8. participate in a free and open sharing of ideas, curriculum and benchmark data between member schools. All information is confidential and must not be shared beyond the AGIS group without permission from the schools.
9. attend at least one Heads' meeting a year as well as the AGM.

   AGIS must be notified of a loss of accreditation and/or loss of non-for-profit status without undue delay.

Process of Application and Acceptance

International schools in Germany who are applying for membership, must be proposed to the AGM by a 2/3 majority of all Board members. The AGM will then have the final decision. The condition of acceptance for AGIS membership is full membership in the Council of International Schools (CIS) a similar accrediting organization or authorisation as an IB World School. In addition, the applicant school must be recognised by its local education authority. Prospective schools will be visited by two AGIS Board members at their costs before regular membership is granted. One of the visiting Board members will be a Business Manager.

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List of **AGIS** approved accrediting agencies

- CIS
- NEASC
- COBIS
- AdvanceEd
- MSA
- WASC

Procedure for the approval of new schools into AGIS

In order to ensure that the process of gaining full membership of AGIS is clearly understood, the following represents a set of expectations and timeline for completion.

Step	Activity	Time frame	Responsible
1	Letter of intention to become a full member school written to AGIS Board signed by the School Head is received.		AGIS Secretariat
2	The school applying for membership is invited to fill out the application for membership form and submit it to the AGIS Assistant. Proof of not-for-profit legal status and proof of authorization and accreditation must be included with application. The Head of School and the Board Chair sign to confirm that they are willing to comply with the Principles of good Practice for AGIS member schools.	Within 4 weeks of step 1	AGIS Board member responsible for new membership and AGIS Secretariat
3	Upon receiving the information from step 2, a file is opened for the school in the AGIS Secretariat with a timeline established for completion of the process.	Within 2 weeks of receiving application form	AGIS Secretariat
4	The school's application documents will be reviewed at an AGIS Board meeting. The Board will recommend one of the following steps: • Continue with the school's application process. • The application process is postponed to allow for more documentation or clarification on the school's status. • The application is denied.	This will be dependend on when the next Board meeting is.	AGIS Board
5	The applying school is visited by two Board members. The conditions of membership are validated during the visit. The school pays the expenses incurred by the visit.	Within 3 months of step 4	Visiting AGIS Board members
6	The visiting Board members make a recommendation on acceptance to the AGIS Board, which decides with a 2/3 majority whether to propose the new school as a full member at the next AGM.	During the board meeting following step 4	AGIS Board
7	If 2/3 of the AGIS Board decides to propose the new school as a full member, the AGIS members are informed of the Boards recommendation to accept the applying school. There are four weeks in which members can ask questions or request further information.	Within 4 weeks of step 4	AGIS Board Chair
8	At the next AGM, a vote is held requiring the majority of 2/3 of all members.	At the AGM following the recommendation	AGIS members
9	A letter from the Board Chair formalises the acceptance if the majority of the members vote for accepting the application.	Within 2 weeks of step 7	AGM
10	At the next AGM, the school is welcomed and invited to make a short presentation.		

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Principles of Good Practice for AGIS Member Schools

AGIS is committed to articulating and promoting high standards of educational quality and ethical behaviour for its members. Members are expected to commit themselves to the same high standards and ethical behaviour in their practices.

INTEGRITY OF THE SCHOOL

A school should meticulously carry out the promises and contracts made with any person, school, organization or the general public.

A school must not make misleading or ambiguous statements about its work, situation or status.

A school should respect normally accepted conventions regarding confidentiality.

TRANSFER AND ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS

The rights of a student and his/her parents to visit and consider schools other than that which the student is presently attending is recognized, as is the right of such other schools to hold preliminary discussions about possible admission without notifying the school of current attendance. However, a school should not itself knowingly initiate an attempt to enrol a student currently enrolled elsewhere.

A school's most important consideration in enrolling a new student shall be the welfare of that student. A school will not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, colour, ethnic origin or sexual orientation.

School representatives should speak accurately and comprehensively about the strengths of their own institution and not allege weaknesses, or other characteristics, in other schools whether it be verbally or in written publications.

An AGIS school must adhere to the rules of fair competition, e. g. when a student is taken off a wait-list and can be enrolled, the school should officially inform the student's current school.

Member schools must not misuse AGIS data or misrepresent other AGIS schools.

RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

The right of a person to visit and to consider employment in a school other than that in which they are currently employed without notifying the current employer should be respected.

The right of a school to hold preliminary discussions about possible employment with a staff member employed in another school without notifying such other school should also be respected.

No schools should attempt to influence a person to break a contract already signed with another school.

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The school discloses all information that is necessary for the candidate to make a well-informed decision.

AGIS encourages direct communication between the Heads involved with the applicant's consent.

Heads should contact each other when a teacher from another school applies.

AGIS DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND JUSTICE

We at the Association of German International Schools (AGIS) are rooted in values-driven representation.

We will develop an inclusive and culturally responsive workforce reflecting the diversity in our schools and the Germany community, to better meet the needs and aspirations of our students, their families, and communities. We are committed to improving the cultural security and responsiveness of our workforce and ensuring that culturally diverse people are well-represented and supported at all levels across German international schools.

We support our member schools to help students and colleagues across all racial and ethnic groups to deeply understand the realities of minority interactions with law-enforcement and judicial systems locally and elsewhere. We also encourage our members to form interracial coalitions that peacefully oppose racism and pursue racial equity for marginalised individuals. We strongly believe that we are responsible for standing up to and speaking out against racism and injustice.
We all must stand together.

We aim to develop and retain a diverse workplace by
- Acknowledging peoples' differences and strengths.
- Treating them fairly; and supporting their development needs, enabling equal employment opportunity and enhanced workforce participation.
- Promote and support career pathways to leadership for diverse staff.
- Provide professional learning that raises awareness of respectful workplace behaviours, discrimination, racism, harassment.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The performance of professional personnel should be subject to regular evaluation, formal or informal, by the School Head or their designated representatives.

The performance of the School Head should be subject to regular evaluation, formal or informal, by the Board or the owners of the school.

Each school should have an established procedure for dealing with claims by a staff member of unjust treatment or violation of their individual rights.

In any instance in which a school has taken the decision to dismiss a staff member or not to renew their contract, the staff member should, where necessary, be given a fair period of notice. If the staff member requests it, a hearing should be provided in accordance with established school policy.

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The staff member serves their school inside and outside the classroom in a manner established by the individual school and consistent with the responsibilities of a professional educator.

The staff member, as an employee of the school, represents it in all ways positively and enthusiastically within the school community and to the greater public.

AGIS Board Role

Board

The Board manages the business of the Association by:

- preparing for membership meetings
- being responsible for the policies of AGIS
- implementing the policies of the Association
- monitoring and evaluating programmes and services of AGIS
- setting guidelines and supervising working groups
- overseeing the operating budget
- setting an annual budget
- recommending annual association membership fees
- vetting applications for association membership
- recommending new membership to the AGM
- representing the AGIS membership to outside agencies
- promoting the interest of AGIS member schools to relevant decision-making bodies

Board Officer Responsibilities

Board Chair

The Board Chair:

- prepares agendas
- chairs Board and membership meetings
- directs and evaluates the functions of the Secretariat
- notifies membership of Annual Meeting with written agenda four weeks in advance
- signs minutes of each membership meeting
- answers correspondence beyond the purview of the Secretariat

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Board Secretary / Board Vice-Chair

The Board Vice-Chair:

- in absence of the Chair, performs the Chair's functions
- is together with the Treasurer responsible for new memberships

Board Treasurer / Board Vice-Chair

The Board Treasurer:

- presents financial update at each Board and membership meeting
- represents AGIS at meetings or in public in absence of the Chair or the Vice Chair
- is accountable for expenditures and functions as authorised signatory
- supervises billing and collection of fees, the finance report and investments
- is together with the Vice-Chair responsible for new memberships

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AGIS Assistant

The AGIS Assistant reports to the Chairman of the Board of AGIS and:

- prepares the financial planning and reporting
- keeps the accounts of the Association, under supervision of the Treasurer
- manages all financial transactions
- supports the Board and its Chair in the administration of the organisation
- maintains and manages an office which serves as the centre for the organisation
- organises all Board Meetings, Heads' Meetings, the Annual General Meeting and Conferences
- manages the organisation's website and promotional material such as printing of stationery
- maintains the organisation's archives
- deals with Vereinsregister and notary

Role of Working Groups

The role of working groups is to:
- provide a forum for the exchange of information
- identify and discuss matters of common interest within areas of responsibility
- organize appropriate and relevant professional development opportunities
- provide support to new colleagues

Examples for working groups are:
Administrative Assistants / School Secretaries, AGIS School Reps, College & Career Counselling, School Counsellors, Curriculum Coordinators, Marketing & Communication Managers, Data Protection, Early Years Principals, Early Years Teachers, Educational Technology, English as an Additional Language (EAL), Facility Managers, German, HR, Learning Assistants, Learning Support, Librarians, Middle School Principals, Multi- and Home Language Coordinators, Musicians, MYP Design, Primary Homeroom Teachers, Primary School Principals, Purchasing, PYP Art, Science, School Leaders (Heads and Business Managers), School Nurses

Responsibilities and funding of AGIS working groups

AGIS working groups are entitled to meet and may apply for a 1,000 Euros subsidy for an external expert plus a per capita grant of 45 Euros for meals and refreshments payable against receipts provided that:

- Official AGIS working group meetings are organized by an AGIS member school.
- Only AGIS member schools attend.
- The invitation and the agenda are sent at least 4 weeks in advance to the AGIS Assistant who will distribute it to the members of the Board for approval.
- The invitation and agenda are sent out to all AGIS Schools and at least 5 AGIS schools must attend to qualify for funding.
- Participant lists and minutes of all meetings are registered with the AGIS Assistant within 4 weeks.
- Receipts are handed in not later than one month after the event and before the end of the business year.

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- No participation fee is charged.

Procedure for the approval of external experts:

- Working groups to send proposal to AGIS.
- The Board Chair will decide on proposed external expert on a case by case basis.
- For any approved external expert, AGIS would support the working group with 1,000 Euros in addition to the 45 Euros per working group member, as mentioned above.

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Appendix 1

AGIS Meetings and Minutes

Meetings

The AGIS Spring Meeting will normally include the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGIS Autumn Meeting is designated for Heads of School. Three members from each school may attend the AGM, School Head, Board Chair and one other. In addition to the business portion of the AGM, time may be devoted for a workshop on a topic of common benefit.

Minutes of Board Meetings

Minutes of Board Meetings will be routinely distributed to the membership after each Board Meeting to ensure information and decisions are shared.

Information to New Heads of School

Upon request, an AGIS information packet will be created by the AGIS Assistant for AGIS members and distributed routinely to new School Heads. It will include:

AGIS directory
Articles of association in German and English
Policy handbook
List of upcoming meetings
Most recent minutes from the AGM
Access to the Head's section of the website.

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<u>Appendix 2</u>

Guidelines for the Billing of AGIS Membership Fees

1. The AGIS fiscal year is from 1st August – 31st July. The fees are payable in October.

2. AGIS membership fees are based on a per capita basis. Membership fees are based on the number of students on roll (SOR) in September of the current school year. The SOR figure has to be submitted by member schools to the AGIS Secretariat by October 1st each year.

3. Membership is confirmed by the Board and presented to the Association at the next Annual General Meeting. Membership fees are due from the month of membership acceptance onwards and will be calculated as a portion of the year.

4. Should it be necessary to levy an additional contribution to costs from all members, new members will be expected to pay a proportional contribution.

5. The annual fee is as follows:
   Fee per student   **€6.90**
   max. annual fee   **€7,650.00**

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Member Schools – current May 2023

Name	School Head
International School Augsburg gAG - ISA	Dr. Jessamine Koenig
Bavarian International School gAG	Dr. Chrissie Sorenson
Berlin British School	Georg Müsing
Berlin International School	Michael Cunningham
Berlin Brandenburg International School	John Searle
Black Forest Academy	Phil Dow
Bonn International School e.V.	Dr. Robert Sims
Independent Bonn International School e.V.	Tara O'Shea
International School of Bremen gGmbH	Jamie Perfect
Dresden International School	Carla Marschall
International School of Düsseldorf e.V.	Frank Tschan
Franconian International School e.V.	Dr. Liam Browne
Frankfurt International School e.V.	Dr. Paul Fochtman
International School of Hamburg e.V.	Alan Knobloch
International School Hannover Region e.V.	John Barker
Leipzig International School gGmbH	Brandie Smith
Munich International School e.V.	Timothy Thomas
International School of Stuttgart e.V.	Timothy Kelley
Thuringia International School Weimar e.V.	Philip Armstrong
International School of Ulm/Neu-Ulm	Luke Osborne
Internationale Friedensschule Köln gGmbH	Katharina Kren, Ingo Stolle
Metropolitan School Frankfurt gGmbH	Peter Ferres
Berlin Metropolitan School gGmbH	Silke Friedrich

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