



Director's Message
Ralf Gabriel

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Dear students, parents, and friends of the Victoria German School,

It is so nice to welcome you (back) this fall, to a school year that feels “normal” after more than two years of Covid-19 restrictions. Many of us used the summer holidays to reconnect with their families overseas and travelled for the first time to see their loved ones. This connection with the (former) home country is an important aspect that fosters a wholistic cultural understanding in our students. Now we are looking towards fall and winter with hopes to have all our regular festivities back in a face-to-face fashion. You will find the dates of the upcoming events on the next page of this newsletter!

I am happy to inform you that almost all the experienced teachers from previous years continue to teach at VGS, giving our students a sense of continuity. The same applies to our Administrator, Debbie Sherwood, who is still very committed to help the school. I would like to thank two teachers, Ben Litzcke and Petra Kixmüller, who have left us after many years – I could say “decades” – at VGS. They have contributed tremendously to the school, Petra even as director during the 2019/2022 school year. Both are still in close contact, and we will surely see them from time to time at the German-speaking Stammtisch or as substitute teachers in the classroom. New in the team is Birgit Martens. She took over Ben's class and is currently teaching Grade 3. You can find out more about Birgit below.

All in all, we have had a successful start to the school year. Our classes continue to take place at St. Patrick's Elementary School, where we have established a good relationship with the school's leadership and teachers. Our class sizes continue to be quite small for the most part. However, we have many very young newcomers, thus are running two “Spielgruppen” with 16 students in total. The little ones have started collecting fall leaves and will soon be busy crafting lanterns for the upcoming “Laternenlauf” during St. Martin's.

During our upcoming AGM in November, we will most likely look for a few new board members, so please consider joining the meeting – and maybe the school board! Also, if you would like to contribute in any other way to our school, we would love to hear from you: Are you a pro on Instagram and TikTok? Would you like to help us improve our presence on social media? Contact us! Are you thinking about going into teaching? Volunteer with us! Already have some teaching experience and like kids? Come teach at our school! Do you have any fun talents you would like to share with us? Contact us! Also please feel free to contact us at any time if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions. We are always happy to talk to you!

I would like to thank all of you for your continued support – Ich wünsche uns allen ein gutes Schuljahr!

Ralf

Save the Date!

Nov. 05, 2022: AGM

We would like to invite you to our Annual General meeting on November 5, at 9:45 at St. Patrick's Elementary School. We will have coffee and some snacks ready, so please stay after you drop off your child this morning. Of course, "Tuesday-parents" are also warmly invited!

Nov. 11, 2022: St. Martin - Laternenfest

The traditional annual Lantern-walk with Martin's Play, brass ensemble, hot apple cider and baked goods (bring cash) around an outside fire will take place at St Barnabas Church, 1525 Begbie St, Victoria at 4:30pm. Parking is limited, so please consider car sharing or public transport. Please be prepared for wet weather and bring umbrellas and appropriate clothing.

Dec. 10, 2022: Weihnachtsfest

The first real Christmas party after a 3-year Covid-related hiatus will take place on the morning of December 10. The venue will be announced shortly.

Support VGS



The Soap Exchange (1393A Hillside Ave) specializes in Canadian-made biodegradable personal and home cleaning products. They supply re-fillable bulk and commercial packaging, and encourage customers to bring their own re-fillable containers.

Let them know you are associated with Victoria German School, and they will donate a portion of the sale to VGS!

<https://victoriasoapexchange.com/> 250-475-0033



Bottle Drive: When you return your empty bottles, let them know you would like to donate the return money to VGS!

Facts and Numbers

We have 71 children registered this school year - and 22 adult learners in the fall term.

Meet our new grade 3 teacher: Birgit Martens

Birgit is originally from Baden-Wuerttemberg and is an early childhood educator (staatlich anerkannte Erzieherin). She emigrated to Canada in 1985, but only recently moved to beautiful Victoria. At her previous stops in Saskatchewan, the Yukon and Vancouver, she was able to gain a lot of professional experience and worked in a wide variety of areas: in day care centres, at schools for the disabled and in adult education. Birgit has taken part in a large number of professional development over the past 20 years and completed her Masters in Educational Leadership at Simon Fraser University in 2018. As a mother of four children, she doesn't always have the free time she desires, but when she does, she likes to go hiking.



Meet our assistant for the Spielgruppe : Hannah Pirker



Hannah is 17 years old and was born and raised in Canada to Austrian parents. Hannah is a former VGS student, and she successfully passed the DSD-2 exam in 2020, which entitles her to study at a university in Germany, Austria, or Switzerland. Hannah has been helping as an assistant in our playgroups since 2019. In her free time, she likes to play cello and clarinet, and she loves reading. After high school, Hannah wants to study economics. Maybe in a German-speaking country in Europe?!

Impressions from the first two months of school

