



**Director's Message**  
*Ralf Gabriel*

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

A new school year has started and it brings a few changes: For some of our families a lot of things seem to be new or have changed drastically: Covid seems to be a ghost of the past and the school has made a move to the facilities at UVIC. However, for parents and students that are with us already for a while, it seems more like someone has hit the “reset” button and we are back where we were four years ago. UVIC, in particular the department of Germanic and Slavic studies in the Clearihue building, had been our home for many years before Covid put an end to it all. We even had kept a storage room full of books, maps, games and other learning materials during the years we spent at St. Margaret's and St. Patrick's School. Thus far, the move had been a success, and we are hoping for more years to come at UVIC.

I am happy to inform you that many 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, Janine Wulz and Susan Pelny, who have left us after many years at VGS. They have contributed tremendously to the school. Both are still in close contact, and we will surely see them from time to time at some of the school events like the Stammtisch or as substitute teachers in the classroom. A special thanks goes to Erika Goetz-Lad and Petra Kixmoeller, two former teachers who filled in during the past year, when one of our colleagues had to go back to Germany for a longer period of time, due to a family emergency. New on the team are Sarah Martens, Emma Eisner and Tugce Demir. All three have a solid background in education and hold teaching certifications. You can find out more about them in this newsletter.

All in all, we have had a successful start to the school year. 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 a total of 15 students. We were also able to find two volunteer class helpers for these groups, Madeleine Howard, and Sienna Meyer. What a kind act of altruism in this time and day, to volunteer on a Saturday morning on a regular basis! Last year's class helper, Hannah Pirker, has left us to attend school at University of British Columbia. We cannot thank her enough for helping in the Spielgruppe for three consecutive years and we wish her all the best for her post-secondary education.

If you would also like to contribute in any way to our school, we would love to hear from you: Are you a pro on Instagram and TikTok, and would you like to help us improve our presence on social media? Contact us! 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. 04, 2023: AGM**

We would like to invite you to our Annual General meeting on November 4, at 9:45 at UVic. 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 invited!

#### **Nov. 11, 2023: 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. 16, 2023: Weihnachtsfest**

The Christmas party will take place on the morning of December 16 in lieu of a school day. The venue will be announced shortly.

### *Facts and Numbers*

We have 75 children registered this school year - and 18 adult learners in the fall term.

### **Madeleine and Sienna – Our volunteer class helpers in the “Spielgruppe”**



*Commitment: Madeleine and Sienna, two of our DSD students are volunteering their time every Saturday as classroom helpers for our two playgroups.*

## ***Meet our new teachers!***

Sarah grew up in northern Germany close to the North Sea and came to Victoria on a work & travel visa after finishing high school. She then returned to Germany to obtain a teaching degree in Latin and Philosophy. However, the seed was planted, and Sarah moved to Victoria for good in 2020. In Victoria, she continued her education and became a certified educational assistant amongst other diplomas. As you can see from the picture, one of her favourite past times is cycling!



Emma was born in Austria where she obtained her teaching degree (English and French) at the University of Salzburg. She has lived in Canada with her family since 2005 and first taught in Calgary at the German-English school in the bilingual program. Since moving to Victoria in 2014, Emma has taught English as a second language and French. Emma's teaching experience not only includes elementary and secondary, but adult education as well.



Tugce was born in Augsburg to Turkish parents, thus she speaks Turkish, German, and English. It was also the University of Augsburg, where she obtained her teaching degree in the subjects of German and geography. Tugce moved to Vancouver in 2018 and two years later moved on to Victoria. Besides VGS, she also works as a teacher on call. In her free time, she likes to go hiking, joined by her two rescue dogs.



## School Board Members cleaning out the storage room



*VGS has used a storage room at UVIC for the past decades, and we became a bit like a house owner who thinks: "What should I do with these old skis? Ah, I'll just put them in the basement with the other stuff!" So, from time to time, the basement needs a spring clean - and that's what we did in fall.*

*Thanks to our helpers Debbie, Gesa and Torsten, we managed to make some space for the Russian school with whom we will share the room in the future.*

**Are you a singer?  
Interested in joining a German Choir?  
Contact Angela: 250-721-0582**

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# Fall impressions!

