



## Introducing our German *Fast Track* Program for students entering GISB in grades 3 - 5

Do you wish your child could become bilingual, but worry the ship has sailed until they head off to college? Do you have a curiosity about or connection to Germany, but your child doesn't read (or even speak) any German? Are you seeking an independent school learning environment, with small classes, dedicated teachers, and unique opportunities?

By enrolling in GISB's German Fast Track Program, your child will participate in Germany's challenging academic curriculum after a year or less of intensive language support. GISB graduates are fully bilingual recipients of both the honors-level German International Abitur and a Massachusetts high school diploma. With friendships around the world and outstanding critical-thinking and problem-solving abilities, GISB students are prepared to meet the challenges and enjoy the benefits of an increasingly interconnected world.

### **GISB's Fast Track:**

- is engaging and intensive
- is designed and taught by experienced master educators
- prepares students to participate in GISB's regular bilingual curriculum
- involves one full day each week of German instruction, and one-on-one or very small group support in regular GISB classes
- is tailored to your child's individual strengths

The focus of the Fast Track is your child's German language skill development. GISB partners with you and your child to advance their academic and social abilities across a range of skills and subjects. Math, science, English, the arts, and physical education are all part of the Fast Track experience. Through a rigorous and exciting German language program combined with supported participation in a regular classroom, your child can form close friendships and enjoy their favorite subjects while working steadily on German fluency.

### **Strong applicants are:**

- eager to tackle the challenge of an intensive language-learning experience
- curious about the world and the people around them
- able to demonstrate above-average academic potential and achievement
- part of a family that looks forward to participation in GISB's active and friendly community

Please contact Marion Goodwin, Director of Admission & Enrollment, at [marion.goodwin@gisbos.org](mailto:marion.goodwin@gisbos.org) with questions or for details about the application process. Admission to GISB is selective and along with our regular admission requirements the Fast Track requires some additional information.

## Fast Track FAQ

### **How much German instruction will my child get each week?**

A lot! On a rolling basis, one day per week will be fully dedicated to German instruction with other children enrolled in the Fast Track. Additionally, throughout each week there will be scheduled periods of in-depth instructional support for German-as-a-second-language, customized for your child. These periods will often take place in your child's regular classroom with their peers. During these times, the Fast Track teacher will be present in addition to the subject teacher. Some classes at GISB are taught in English, so your child will also maintain and develop their English fluency.

### **What are the differences between the Fast Track Program and GISB's regular curriculum?**

Students in the Fast Track receive even more individual attention and significant additional hours of classroom instruction in German. This begins in late August, when Fast Track students will participate in an additional language orientation camp the week before the school year starts.

The Fast Track has a dedicated teacher who leads language instruction, working in close coordination with regular classroom teachers for grades 3 - 6. Together, faculty ensure each student's maximum participation in GISB's regular curriculum. Your child will be a full participant in their regular grade-level classroom, including going on field trips, making friends, and sharing recess.

### **Does my child have to wait a full year before they can switch fully into the regular curriculum?**

It depends on the child and their progress. Students will need to consistently demonstrate the ability to participate fully in GISB's regular curriculum in order to depart the Fast Track.

### **What if my child isn't ready to leave the Fast Track after one year?**

We are confident in the Fast Track model because of the growing number of similar language immersion programs across Germany and the US. Research in language acquisition and into specific programs with a similar model demonstrate the enormous success of such programs. That said, every child is different. For all students at GISB, we address individual learning needs on a case-by-case basis as a team. Ongoing, varied, and thoughtful assessment will help you and your child's teachers discuss possibilities far in advance if it appears that your child may continue to need significant language support beyond the one-year term of the Fast Track.

### **After my child moves to a regular classroom, is additional support planned?**

Yes. GISB already supports students with a range of exposure to different skills and subjects at every grade level. There will be German language support staff in many academic periods in middle school, as well as an additional German-as-a-second-language class to support all non-native German-speaking students. Additionally, all students study German throughout their time at GISB, and instruction is always differentiated for each learner. Please see the Academics pages for Elementary and Middle School at [gisbos.org](http://gisbos.org) for more detailed information about regular classroom support.

### **What are the qualifications of the Fast Track teacher?**

The teacher overseeing your child's German language acquisition is a native German speaker and long-time resident of New England with an MA in Education & Sociology from University of Heidelberg (Germany). With broad and deep experience teaching students at the university level, supporting elementary students with special needs, and teaching preschool in the US and China, in addition to work in the private sector, the Fast Track Teacher has a career-long focus and demonstrated success teaching German as a second language. She is known for her warmth and outstanding communication with students and families, sense of humor, patience, and dedication.

### **As a parent, do I need to speak German to support my child's learning and connect with other families at the school?**

It is completely fine for parents to have no German language skills. GISB is a multicultural community and parent meetings and communication are always in English. It goes without saying that we suspect those interested in this challenging program will make time at home for a child to read German books, watch videos, visit German websites, and listen to audio CDs. Beyond that, parents of all languages and backgrounds enjoy taking part in our annual festivals and celebrations, where GISB friendliness unites us!