

Rede Klaus-Jürgen Hoffe

10-Jahresfeier des Fördervereins Internationale Schule und preschool am Schuldorf Bergstraße e.V. am 1. Dezember 2012

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we are gathered to celebrate the ten year anniversary of the Förderverein International School and Preschool at Schuldorf Bergstrasse.to bring forward our hopes for the future

Soren Kierkegaard, one of the most important philosophers of the 19th century said "Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards."

10 years in historic terms is not even a blink of an eye. However, for the development of a school they allow a considerable perspective.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Chairman of the Förderverein, it is my great pleasure to welcome you here to this beautiful new building for the Secondary of the State International School.

Welcome parents, students, guests, members, founders, board members and supporters of our Förderverein.

And welcome to all teachers and staff of our international institutions.

Among us are former district administrator **Landrat Alfred Jakoubek**,

the former Mayor **Bürgermeisterin, Brigitte Krusza**,

Acting Chief Town Hall, as well as our board member, **Bürgermeister Olaf Kühn**

Thank you for being here today and expressing your solidarity with us.

welcome the head of the Schuldorf, Ronald Seffrin and I thank him very much for giving us the hospitality in the Primary as the host here today.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the midst of the Rhine-Main and Rhine-Neckar we live in a region with greatest potential and development opportunities.

It is marked by the international nature of people, companies, organizations and institutions of higher education and research.

However, we can only be successful if government and society want to be successful and if we really take advantage of our opportunities.

Opportunities start with education. Education is our passport to the Future and learning is our greatest opportunity.

It is about the most important innovation in Germany, our children.

In an age of globalization, internationalization is essential for the education system in Germany.

Otherwise, we will not be successful in the long run, at least not in the competition of European Regions for jobs, economic prosperity and quality of life.

Education determines competition not only among companies, but also of locations.

Whoever wants to take this competition challenge must pave the way for international education opportunities for globally mobile families.

This must begin where the development opportunities are greatest, right here.

For this purpose I was determined to organize the political majority and to recruit colleagues to tackle the project of an international school.

The first and most important step was to contact, at that time, Managing Director of Frankfurt International School, Dr. Marie-Luise Stoll- Stefan.

I would especially like to thank her for sharing her experience with us.

As a consultant, she has been highly successful in lobbying many individuals in the field of political and school administrators.

Above all, she has conveyed to all of us that an international school wins its full value only through the pre-school offer of an international kindergarten.

Logically, the first decision of the Kreistag Darmstadt-Dieburg in August 2001, aimed to establish an international kindergarten as the first element to an international school and to establish a support team.

The decision was preceded by fierce political debate about the responsible authority, the curriculum alignment and a clear focus on unaffordable school fees.

However, it has been managed in the end for the first time, to establish an international school not in private, but as a public body, without fees, and thereby we proved all critics wrong.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I still remember well the beautiful summer evening in August 2002 in Seeheim "Hotel Hufnagel", when key figures from business and politics, and school site community came together for the establishment of the Förderverein..

The first step was taken. The first board meeting led to a clear objective.

As soon as possible, the political, geographical, financial and personnel requirements were presented for the construction of the Preschool.

At the same time, an ambitious schedule was developed:

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Opening of the international kindergarten a year after founding of the Förderverein 2003 and

- Seamless transition to the International Primary school 2 years later.

For me it is still unbelievable, that all of this was achieved.

Because it became apparent that even the preschool as the first step of the project at the very beginning almost failed, due to the fact that the majority of the first 90 interested parents were unable to raise the required fee of 650 euros.

Only the financial commitment of the entrepreneur, Peter Merck, in Darmstadt, ensured the timely start. The foyer of the Preschool, which bears his name, document our lasting gratitude.

Uncertainty surfaced again through doubts about the approval of applications and processes, and about whether the school would ever survive the crucial trial stage of the first years.

In addition, due to the high cost of the curricular development work, uncharted waters were entered, if only because of the Kultusministerium required similar international and German educational qualifications.

Hildegard Jansohn, the former Educational Director and project manager did remarkable ground-breaking work. She is here today and has prepared this feast with us. We owe her thanks!

All participants in the project experienced encouragement, as the Kultusministerium already at the inauguration of the primary said: "Here a new chapter in the history of education of this country is opened."

For the concept of the Preschool and State International School, in spring 2007, the Schuldorf was awarded a price in a Germany-wide competition as one of the 365 places where not only ideas are developed with passion, but also translated into success.

And the most recent success is this school building, architecturally very successful. It was completed in time for our anniversary, almost 10 years to the day after the Förderverein was entered in the register.

With all three buildings the Landkreis as the responsible authority, has now created the spatial requirements in his area of responsibility for our international educational institutions.

Many thanks to all policy makers who represent the citizens who live here and have already raised 14.3 million euros for the project.

Since teaching has started in the new SISS building, our patrons testify:

Visions and ambitious goals of the founder have become a reality!

We are filled with pride and deep gratitude.

Preschool and State International School will continue to go on a successful path, having taught children from 40 different nations so far.

And if organizations advertise for the Rhein - Main area within Germany and abroad, the international school is mentioned amongst the most important assets of the region.

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Of course, important targets for curriculum and instruction, school organization and life, education and care could be achieved more quickly and more effectively. This

requires, however, increased financial support for the Förderverein of the best effort.

We have acquired donations and sponsorship exceeding 230 thousand euros for the investment in indoor and outdoor facilities for the Preschool and international school. But more funds are required for relocation and training of teachers, music and art education for library, teaching and learning materials, research lab, PC equipment and for very complex however essential membership of the school of international organizations. (ECIS, CIS, AGIS).

The specific standards that are applied to quality and innovation of the internationalization of education require special efforts also financially.

Wherever the Federal State cannot afford it or cannot afford it yet, our Förderverein sees its duty.

For this school year alone, we could accommodate requirements of Preschool and State International School amounting to 50 thousand euros.

In this case, the acquiring of donations and sponsors is especially difficult. As it is always argued that a public school is the public sectors responsibility.

This demonstrates us how important the idea of Landrat Jakoubek was to develop partnerships with businesses and entrepreneurs from the region.

Peter Merck, Lufthansa Training & Conference, Fraport, Evonik Industries, Bilfinger and Berger, Sparkasse Darmstadt and especially the foundation of HEAG, Südhessische Energie AG (HSE) have supported us over the past 10 years. At this point, again, we want to express our special thanks!

Nevertheless, without the membership of all parents of children from preschool and the State International School in the Förderverein we would not manage to meet the expense of the ongoing requirements.

In addition to the collection of donations and sponsors unique challenges have approached us:

We are also addressing the responsibilities arising from the original vision and cornerstones of the mode) already started with the establishment of the Schuldorf in 1954 coined an the idea of the American "community schools" as a new educational offer.

Therefore, we have taken over the responsibility for full-time care for the entire Schuldorf at the beginning of last year.

This task cannot be performed by the school itself, for legal reasons. This responsibility, ladies and gentlemen, is now comparable with running a small company:

We now employ over 100 people as teaching assistants and tutors, freelancers, including some volunteers and organize the full school day for approximately 520 students.

Danke

unseren Paten und allen die uns fördern

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State International School

Passport for the future

This requires an annual budget of approx. 1.7 million euros, of which 85% will be raised by the parents, the rest from government grants.

Ladies and gentlemen, looking forward, it is essential that the plans of the Kultusministerium are brought in line with the efforts of the school and the expectations of parents:

Then, in 3 ¹/₂ years in the spring of 2016, the first students will leave this building with the completion of the IB diploma, the international Baccalaureate, as it is already the case in 119 countries around the world after 12 years.

Prepared to act responsibly as internationally mobile citizens and ready for their future endeavors in business, in social functions and qualifications in an increasingly complex world. These are the hopes of all who support our Förderverein.

Thank you very much for your attention..