Advocating for your German Program

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• Teacher must be seen as a hard worker and willing to help
• Classroom placement must be prominent in the school
• Student work and posters displayed in the hallway or in the trophy case/entrance of the school
• Community service through German Club, visit middle and elementary schools to promote learning German
• Press releases (NGE results, travel, events, etc.) – invite the local newspaper/school PR staff
• German Week (or World Language Week)
• Power of positive thinking and promotion

Program Visibility
• Teacher needs to be willing to help the administration and extra-curricular programs
• Attend school events (sports, theater, music, presentation nights, fundraisers, etc.)
• Become a valuable member of the faculty (Lucas, for example, is Project Graduation sponsor, Senior Class sponsor, Senior Awards, Lunch Detentionmeister/organizer, work extra duty assignments)
• Remember, your actions reflect on your program

Teacher’s Position
• If possible, have a prominent position in the school, physically
• Promote German by placing posters and student work in the hallway – visibility
• Allow students to use colored paper to make work more visible – make large signs with German language
• Goethe-Institut will mail you a huge supple of materials (posters, stickers, promo items) from Chicago if you pay postage

Classroom and Displays
• Use German Club or similar to promote the program in the community – walking dogs at humane society, visiting nursing home to help or just to visit, sing Christmas carols at the local tree-lighting ceremony, volunteer to work elementary carnivals/events

• Build positive relationships with local community leaders, invite them to your class to observe or speak (helps if they have some German heritage, or experience in Germany)
• Have the local or school newspaper report positive things about your program
• National German Exam results
• Student travel to German speaking countries
• Promote student activities (particularly for holidays and cultural traditions)
• Invite local politicians and/or local Germans to visit or to be guest speaker – promote this!
• Send all staff emails – all district emails
• Co-curricular programing – German-Foods/Nutrition

The Press
PRESS RELEASE

Scott County student scores in the 98th percentile on national exam!

German student Nicola Rohr took the American Association of Teachers of German’s National German exam and scored in the 98th percentile as compared to other students in Kentucky.

Georgetown, KY (February 10, 2009)—Nicola Rohr, a senior at Scott County High School, is ranked 2nd in the state of level four German student. Her score on the AATG’s National German Exam (NGE) was in the 98th percentile - an SAT type score of 788.

Mr. Lucas Gravitt, Nicola’s AP German teacher, said, “It is such an honor to be able to work with and teach a student of this caliber. Nicola’s dedication to all things academic will enable her to go far in life. Her skills in German are extraordinary!”

The National German Exam is given by the American Association of Teachers of German, a national professional organization for teachers. The exam tests students in two parts: listening and reading. Students’ scores are then compared to other students in the state of Kentucky. This year, 182 students took the level two exam, 92 students took the level three exam, and 68 students took the level four exam.

“It’s hard to believe I am the second best level four German student in the state! This is such an honor,” says Rohr. Nicola lives in Georgetown with her parents Dr. Jurgen Rohr and Jeanne Rohr. Nicola plans to attend the University of Kentucky after graduation.
• Email the parents for positive things – good grades
• Maintain a web presence – either via a school website/online classroom/blog site/twitter/facebook or whatever
• Keep an open line of communication going
• (cc administration on group emails to parents – this goes a long way)
• Consider having a “German Week” or “World Languages Week” in which we have morning announcements in the target language, quiz for entry in a raffle of German products, signs in German (or with German trivia)
• Cultural traditions table outside of the cafeteria at lunch (perhaps with German candies, snacks, German name assignments)
• German class t-shirts – walking billboard!
• Keep the curriculum exciting, fresh, and engaging
• Activities that are fun
• Pop German music (loud so the classroom next door can hear)
• Consider a no homework and no test policy (call tests quizzes, give students 5 minutes at the end to do the work, then if they don’t finish it’s homework) OR a version of performance based grading
• AATG and KWLA Participation – Immersion Weekend, Showcase

Curricular Promotion
• It never hurts to be friends with the guidance counselors – they are the ones who put the students in your class
• Branch out to the middle school counselors
• Use www.aatg.org/advocacy to be directed to Goethe-Institut Advocacy materials
• Counselors Guide to German
• Use the tips on the next slide to save your program
• German Flier to course selection guidebook
• Push the business relationships German has with Kentucky
• Germany’s current economic success

Guidance Office
Steps to take – from GI Website

• Develop a proactive public relations program.
• Have an up-to-date website, Facebook and Twitter presence.
• Make German visible on your campus with bulletin boards, FL film festivals, articles in local newspapers, participation in major campus events, etc.
• Keep up with former students through Facebook or other social media platforms. Invite those former students using German in their careers to speak to your classes and inspire your current students.
• Know which businesses in your community are based in Germany or do business with German companies.
• Organize a letter writing campaign targeting decision makers such as school administrators, board of trustees, local officials, and state legislators.
• Keep the parents and taxpayers in your community involved as chaperones and supporters of German activities.
• Recognize supporters of your program with certificates of recognition or nomination for state and national awards.
• Be an active member of local, state, regional, and national language associations to keep up on the latest professional news and create a network of advocates for your program.
• Develop contacts with local companies or wherever you can get your students internships in the US and abroad.
• Encourage students to apply for Fulbright Teaching Assistantships, Congress Bundestag programs, Bosch Fellowships, DAAD stipends and help them with the application.
• Sponsor campus events for high school students in the local area. Design reciprocal class visits, Sprachfests, declamation contests, or Theaterfests.
• Guest lecture at a local high school, middle school, or elementary school and let young students know how important learning German is.
• Know how the educational priorities are determined on your campus and in your institution.
• Know how languages fit into the mission statement of your institution and make sure others understand the importance of German instruction.
• Build coalitions with other faculty members and campus organizations to maintain and expand your program.
• Become an administrator or union officer to get to know how budgets are decided, hone strategies for organizing advocacy campaigns, and learn the ins and outs of collective bargaining.
• Visit policy makers at all levels of government personally and make sure that they understand the value that learning German provides community members.
• Testify before state legislative committees and US Congressional committees on policy issues.
• Make sure your students understand the value of learning German and engage them in advocating for the program.
• Always be positive – when speaking with other teachers or staff or parents in particular
• The ubiquitous question: “How are you today?”
• Everyone’s standard response: “Looking forward to the weekend” (as if they despise working)
• German teacher’s response: “Absolutely wonderfully awesome!”

Positivity
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