

Think Global, Act Local

The Franconian International School
1998-2008



Project 5: The Franconian International School (FIS) in Erlangen 1995-2017

Changes last made: April 30, 2016; Oct. 14, 2017]

It's still going ... and still growing: Think Global, Act Local.

On March 10, 2017 the first students enter the new High School Building located across the street from the original campus in the Rödelheim Park in Erlangen



Reminiscent of a typical country school in the American Midwest in the 19th century. The Franconian International School opened in the little Franconian town of Haundorf, Germany in 1998 with two teachers. One of them, (Petra Niemczyk) also served as director, nurse, janitor and everything else. The FIS currently (2016) has 95 teachers and 109 “Educational Employees”) from 31 countries and around 700 students. The capacity now is 850 students. The student-teacher ratio is 6:1. Germans comprise slightly more than 30% of the student body (our goal). Classes are small because most of the children are foreigners and require more intensive support especially in language skills. It is a day school, which provides a co-educational learning and living environment for students from 3-18 years old. The principal FIS graduation degree, the International Baccalaureate, is accepted for college and university admission worldwide. One of the major FIS sponsors, Siemens, also offers a “Duales Studium oder Ausbildung at Siemens AG.” This is the global world in action.

“International School” is a type of private day school with locations worldwide– at last count (2016) there were over 8000, 23 of which are located in Germany. The first one, [United Nations International School](#) (UNIS), was established in 1947 in Geneva by a group of United

Nation's ex-patriate parents who wanted to promote international education for their children while preserving their diverse cultural heritages. The schools adopted the [International Baccalaureate Program](#) (IB), which is the mainstay curriculum of most of the schools ever since. The school type promotes the appreciation of the diversity of persons and cultures, provides an optimal multicultural environment for learning and teaching, and offers to a global work force, a global curriculum which reflects the spirit of the UN Human Rights Charter and is similar worldwide.

The school's primary language is English with the second language usually being that of the host country. This school type caters to families of the global mobile work force with children, who are transferred to a foreign country usually for only a few years time. Young executives and engineers from English speaking countries, for example like those at Kennemetal in Fürth, adidas and Puma in Herzogenaurach and Siemens in Erlangen, want a school curriculum which allows their children to develop in depth their English language skills and universally recognized talents and skills, which enable them to transfer to new countries or back home with relative ease. For the partner of the employed person, families with similar interests and experiences are at hand. Families can transfer from the Franconian International School in Erlangen to one in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia easier than from Bremen to Bavaria.

Although the principal target groups for the international school are foreign children, international schools want to include about 30% native children. In this way the guest children can better learn the host country language and become familiar with its society.

There aren't too many diplomats and UN families in Franconia. And the Franconian people are cautious and reserved. The Wahlspruch of August der Jüngere, Herzog von Braunschweig-Lüneburg und Fürst von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel (1635-1666) was "Alles mit Bedacht." That would be a good slogan for the Franconians, too. Think and research carefully before you start or join something new. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." (Alexander Pope, Elvis). No snap judgments. This prevailing attitude is certainly not to disparage, but it is not conducive to starting new things.

Global developments don't wait for local responses. Sometimes an unexpected window of opportunity suddenly opens. New decisions can be made, new pathways trod. This window opened in Germany and in Franconia in 1995 and set the stage for the founding of the Franconian International School. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact made Germany and Franconia interesting for global companies and made it possible for the many NATO units stationed in this area to be dissolved, the American soldiers and their families repatriated and the military property to be returned to the German government and ultimately to the cities for civilian use.

As a result of the American Drawdown of Forces, the U.S. Department of Defense very precipitously closed the Darby Kaserne in Fürth in 1995. The DODDS schools, the only English language schools in Franconia, closed, too. This had little impact on German families and the very few non-German families in the region, who had enrolled their children in them. Most of the American military personnel stationed in Fürth were at the time on active duty in Iraq. The Army returned the soldiers home to the US directly from Iraq. For the few non-military English speaking families in Middle Franconia attending the DoDDS school and for those few Germans who wanted their children to learn English as a Second language in an English speaking environment, this posed a problem and a challenge.

Granted, not many families suffered. But the young management team from the American company headquartered in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania (Kennametal) did. Kennametal had just bought the Hertel company located in Fürth. The CFO was a problem solver with two young children. American corporate identity includes a commitment to the local community. For himself and the community Kennametal offered start-up capital to finance the establishment of an English language school in Fürth. He asked me for support.

I liked the idea and was immediately convinced that it would be a welcome feature in Franconia. I was impressed with the tremendous potential in the region, more so than many of the more cautious Franconians. Furthermore I thought that it would be easy to realize; a “slam-dunk”. Costs would be minimal – excellent school facilities built by the U.S. Army were available, experienced American staff from the DoDDS wanted to stay in Fürth and teach, An American company provided the start-up capital, the Lord Mayor of Fürth (Uwe Lichtenberg) wholeheartedly supported it and I felt that I could justifiably make it an important project of the German-American Institute/America House Nürnberg. Furthermore the very experienced director of the Bavarian International School in Munich (Derek Malpass) offered to help in every way he could. He even offered to establish a branch campus of the well established Bavarian International School in Munich in Nürnberg, which we inexperienced amateurs welcomed. Unfortunately the Board of Governors of the BIS disliked the idea campus and criticized the school director for spending so much time in and with Nürnberg. The Nürnberg newspapers liked the project though, and provided us much valuable support.

Die erste internationale Schule Nordbayerns könnte bald in Fürth starten

Alles vorhanden, nur die Kinder fehlen

Von unserem Redaktionsmitglied
BIRGIT RUF

FÜRTH. — Die erste internationale Schule Nordbayerns könnte ab September in Fürth ihren Betrieb aufnehmen. Es ist alles vorhanden: ein riesiges Schulgebäude, kindgerechtes Mobiliar, zwei Turnhallen, eine vollausgestattete Küche, qualifizierte Lehrkräfte und über 100 000 Mark an Spendengeldern. Nur fehlen die Schüler. Ganze zwölf Kinder sind bislang angemeldet — zu wenige, um das Projekt zu starten.

Vor einer kleinen Gruppe interessierter Eltern schweigt William Sheldon, Leiter des Amerika Hauses in Nürnberg und Initiator des Schulprojekts, in Zukunftsträumen. Im ehemaligen Schulzentrum der Kalb Community in der John-F.-Kennedy-Straße soll eine private Ganztagschule entstehen, die Kinder bis zur Collegereife führt. Die Kinder sollen mittags in der Schule essen und schlafen können, und ein Kindergarten soll angegliedert werden. Begeistert erzählt Sheldon von seinem Besuch der beiden internationalen Schulen in Oberbayern. Die eine habe 350, die andere 650 Schüler. „Das sollte doch hier auch möglich sein. Wir müssen das Risiko wagen“, beschwört er die Eltern. Im Moment sind neun Kinder für die Klassen 1 und 2 sowie drei Kinder für die Klassen 3 und 4 angemeldet. Als sich das mangelnde Interesse abzeichnete, hat Sheldon mit der Regierung von Mittelfranken und dem Schulreferat in Fürth abgestimmt, daß die beiden ersten sowie die dritte und vierte Klasse zunächst jeweils gemeinsam unterrichtet werden können. Sobald genug Schüler da sind,



Einer der zwölf bislang angemeldeten Schüler für die „Franconian International School“ ist der kleine Sam (rechts). Für seine Schwester Annaroots hoffen die Eltern, daß es auch einen Kindergarten geben wird. Fotos: Sippel

sollen die Klassen dann geteilt werden. Um das Projekt starten zu können, braucht Sheldon mindestens 15 Anmeldungen für die Klassen 1 und 2.

Unterricht auf englisch

Das Konzept der geplanten „Franconian International School“ (FIS) lehnt sich an das der zehn anderen in Deutschland existierenden internationalen Schulen an. Die Unterrichtssprache ist Englisch, Deutsch wird zweigleisig als Fremd- oder Muttersprache unterrichtet. Die Schule soll einen international anerkannten Abschluß für die 10. Klasse („International General Certificate for Secondary Education“) ermöglichen, der der mittleren Reife entspricht. Der vorgesehene Abschluß nach dem 12. Schuljahr ist das „International Baccalaureate“. 86 Länder erkennen diesen Abschluß als Zulassung zur Universität an, Deutschland allerdings nicht.

Der Lehrplan unterscheidet sich in einigen Punkten von dem deutscher Schulen, erklärt Sheldon. So würden die Kinder noch zeitiger an den Computer herangeführt und mehr in Gruppen arbeiten. Besondere Schwerpunkte seien neben Sprachunterricht die Fächer Geographie und Geschichte.

Die meisten Eltern, die sich für das Schulprojekt interessieren, kommen aus dem Ausland. Wie etwa die Familie Ettlinger. Sie ist Französin, er Engländer. Im Sommer werden sie von London nach Fürth ziehen und sind verzweifelt auf der Suche nach einer

lang angemeldet. „Wahrscheinlich haben viele Eltern Scheu, daß ihre Kinder Englisch als Schulsprache nicht schaffen. Allerdings kann man in kleinen Klassen ja auch viel fördern“, meint Christine Lapp. Sie überlegt, ob sie ihren neunjährigen Sohn umschulen soll, denn „internationaler Touch hilft den Kindern, Berührungsängste abzubauen“. Jutta Sehringer hält das Angebot „für eine feine Sache“, denn, so meint sie, „das Englisch, das die Kinder in einer deutschen Schule lernen, kann man vergessen“.

Schulgeld schreckt viele ab

Die größte Hürde für deutsche wie ausländische Eltern dürfte das Schulgeld sein. Es beträgt pro Jahr 12 000 Mark plus einer Einschreibgebühr von 1000 Mark, die allerdings für die ersten 30 angemeldeten Schüler auf 500 Mark reduziert wurde. Da die FIS als eingetragener Verein gemeinnützig ist, zielt sie nicht auf das Erwirtschaften von Gewinnen, sondern das eingenommene Geld kommt den Schülern zugute, erklärt Sheldon. Für den Vereinsvorstand konnte er prominente Mitglieder gewinnen. Unter anderem gehören ihm der Oberbürgermeister von Fürth und der Präsident der Industrie- und Handelskammer an.

William Sheldon bleibt nicht mehr viel Zeit, um das Projekt zu verwirklichen. Stichtag ist der 31. Mai. Wenn bis dahin nicht mindestens 15 Anmeldungen für die Jahrgangsstufen 1 und 2 vorliegen, ist die Sache für dieses Jahr zumindest gestorben.



After reunification in 1989 this part of Germany, which had suffered economically with the divisive wall and the DDR, began again to look outward. Germany became attractive to global companies like Kennametal. Companies which buy an established German company usually don't have a choice of location; those wanting to invest in Germany and thereby also gain access to the European market do. Since they often send their young executives to their new location, who often have families and young children, one of their important criteria in the site decision is the availability of an English language school with diplomas recognized worldwide. English is the world's second language and important for many careers. Young executives are mobile and ambitious, also for their kids. Learning German is not high on their list of priorities. Munich had two well-established "International Schools," which is one reason why it was attractive for start-ups and companies expanding to Europe and Germany. Middle Franconia is very attractive in general. Its cities are safe, global players have headquarters here (INA, adidas, Siemens, Puma, Diehl, Hertel (later Kennametal) and many smaller companies. It never crossed my mind that an international school would not succeed in Middle Franconia. I anticipated no problem and was a little surprised that few others in the region shared my enthusiasm. For me the end of the Cold War and the Drawdown of Forces provided opportunities to reap the rewards of the Peace Dividend.

Schools in Germany are institutions of the state; in the federal system of government each state has its own requirements and regulations, also for private schools. And each state provides some control and financing for private schools, which have to be approved by state authorities. One is required to submit a school calendar, a curriculum, school philosophy, finance plan, and get approval of staff and facilities. With the help of the BIS, the regional state school representative in Ansbach and the mayor of Fürth, this was all relatively easy. Our idea was to open with a first grade class and to grow by one class per year until we had a complete school. The one state requirement, which took us 3 years to fulfill, was a minimum requirement of 15 students for a grade one class or a total of 25 for a combined first and second grade class.

How we got from Fürth to Herzogenaurach and from there to Erlangen is an interesting Franconian story. I edited a brochure on the first ten years of the FIS, which we presented at the opening of our school in Erlangen on Sept. 24, 2008. I wrote a section on this topic. Here are pages 27-33 of the brochure.

The Founding of the Franconian International School e. V. and the Site Decision (1995-2008)

Fürth

The end of an era set the stage for the Franconian International School. On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall came down, which signaled the beginning of a new period in European history. Germany was reunified; the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union were dissolved. The Cold War dissipated. New challenges and opportunities emerged.

Since the end of World War II, the US Army had stationed troops on elaborate military bases in Middle Franconia: in Fürth, Herzogenaurach, Erlangen and Nuremberg. In Fürth, a Department of Defense Dependents School (DoDDS) with generous sport facilities had been built. Suddenly and unexpectedly the U. S. Department of Defense lost its enemy and consequently reduced its foreign commitments. On October 27, 1994, HQ USAREUR announced a total closure of the remaining facilities in Nürnberg-Fürth, also the DoDDS schools, to be completed no later than December 31, 1995.

The end of an era provided a surge to globalization. International companies could expand in previously unknown ways, also in Franconia. A geographical disadvantage disappeared and foreign investors became more interested. In 1993 the American company Kennemetal acquired the Hertel AG in Fürth. In 1996, Lucent Technologies/Bell Labs purchased the Nuremberg branch of Philips Kommunikations Industrie (PKI) and built its major European R & D facility in Nuremberg.

With the closing of the Nuremberg Military Community and the DoDDS school, foreign families with school-age children had a problem. The first question expatriates with kids ask their global employer before accepting an assignment abroad had been easily answered for Middle Franconia. English-speaking non-military personnel had been able to enroll their children in the DoDDS school in Fürth. What to do after the closure? The Lucent families solved their problem by renting homes in Pfaffenhofen. They bussed their children to the Bavarian International School in Munich (90 minutes) and commuted to Nuremberg (90 minutes). Needless to say, this was not a very attractive solution for them or for our region. The Financial officer of Kennemetal/Hertel, Wayne Moser, decided to explore the possibility of opening a new English language school in Fürth to meet the demand of the foreign employees in the region.

He approached me as Director of the German-American Institute/ America House Nuremberg and asked if I would get involved. I knew that educational facilities and English language instruction were absolutely necessary for regions interested in attracting foreign companies and employers. Munich had two international schools, which is one reason why foreign companies settle there. I made the establishment of the international school a principal goal of the America House and employed one of my staff, Marita Wotruba, to work half-time as secretary for the FIS.



Prof. Dr. William Sheldon

>>>

It looked to me like it would be easy to open an international school. The school facilities remained physically in Fürth, many of the DoDDS teachers expressed a desire to continue teaching there and the lord mayor of Fürth, Uwe Lichtenberg, made a school building available. Kennemetal/Hertel donated 50,000 DM as start-up capital. I persuaded the U.S. embassy to acquire excess DoDDS school equipment from the Department of the Army, which they granted to the GAI/American House and I, in turn, to the international school. The "International School," established world-wide as an institution, provided us the pedagogical and organizational concepts for the school.

I quickly learned that there was more to opening a private school in Bavaria than hanging up a shield. Before it could be opened, it had to be officially recognized as a "Staatlich anerkannte Ersatzschule." The professional educators at the Bavarian International School (BIS) in Schwaig/Munich came to our aid. They generously gave us their documentation for getting state approval, which we more or less copied: school calendar, curriculum, approval of staff, staff contracts. They advised us on the organizational form of a legal association.

The first step was to establish a legal structure for the school. On September 29, 1995, in the City Hall in Fürth, the Franconian International School e. V. was founded. I was elected Chairman of the Board; Vice-Chairman was the newly elected Lord Mayor of Fürth, Wilhelm Wenning; as Treasurer, the financial Vice-President

of Kennemetal/Hertel, Wayne Moser; as Secretary, the legal officer of Kennemetal/Hertel, Dr. Thomas Lask, who is still a member of the Board. The president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Nuremberg (IHK), Prof. Hubert Weiler, joined the Founding Board and was represented by Otto-Dietrich Knapp. The first meeting of the Board of Directors took place on November 15, 1995, in the City Hall of Fürth.

Thereafter many things had to be done simultaneously. Fortunately start-up capital was sufficient since all of the founders of the FIS worked voluntarily. Our only expense was for a half-time secretary. A building needed to be located and made ready, teachers recruited on a tentative basis, a curriculum developed, some supplies purchased (though most were available from the DoDDS transferal) and, what was most important, parents found, who wanted their children enrolled in an international school. We held our first press conference on Dec. 18, 1995, in the IHK, which was (and continues to be) an important ally. Our goal was to open with Grades 1-4 in August, 1996. By the summer, all of the administrative work had been done. The only state requirement which we had not yet fulfilled was to enroll the number of students required by the Bavarian Ministry of Culture and Education. On July 1, 1996, we had to announce that due to inadequate enrollment, the FIS could not be opened in the coming fall. The same fate awaited us the following year.

The FIS Board was disappointed that the school could not be opened. Wayne Moser, the Chief Financial Officer of Kennametal/Hertel and the person whose company provided the initial start-up capital, moved to Pfaffenhofen when the FIS was not allowed to open and enrolled his children in the Bavarian International School in Munich.

Although not legally a part of a "staatlich anerkannte Ersatzschule," we included an English language Kindergarten in our concept. Parallel to the work for the school, we negotiated with the Bavarian Red Cross, Section Fürth, to sponsor a Kindergarten offering English for our students. FIS Founding Member Gert Rohrseitz was also on the Board of the Red Cross and instrumental in setting up the Kindergarten. In a wing of the DoDDS Grade School for Monteith Barracks in Vach (Fürth), the "Little Friends" with 15 students began operations independent of the FIS on January 7, 1998. As a visible sign of its success, the city of Fürth built a new Kindergarten for them in Fürth-Oberführberg which opened its doors on December 1, 2003. The first English language Kindergarten in Northern Bavaria, it now has 40 places for Fürth residents and English-speaking families from the region.

Herzogenaurach

Unknown to the FIS Board of Directors, an important member of the adidas Board of Directors was also disappointed that the FIS could not open. A native of Switzerland with international experience,

Michel Perraudin was responsible for "Global Human Resources" and "Key Projects and Corporate Services." Since 1989 at adidas, one of his first policy changes was to make English the official company language. One of his goals was to recruit young American marketing specialists and to facilitate their integration into Middle Franconia. No leading businessman in Northern Bavaria realized as much as he the importance of having an international school in our area to attract mobile employees. In 2006, adidas alone had 500 "Third Country Nationals" working in Herzogenaurach. About 1/3 of them came from the US; 45 foreign countries were represented.

After seriously considering a relocation of company headquarters, adidas decided in 1995 to remain in Herzogenaurach. Michel Perraudin was responsible for the planning and execution of the new adidas headquarters, the "World of Sports," on the former "Herzo Base." He had a carefully thought-out vision for the FIS within the World of Sports. In 1997, he proposed to the FIS Board of Governors a long-term commitment by adidas. We wholeheartedly accepted – one of our goals had always been to gain the support of farsighted business people in Middle Franconia. We agreed to change the by-laws to reflect the concerns of adidas. I resigned as chairman but remained on the Board. We elected as my successor Rolf Witt, who was a Vice-President in Perraudin's section. The rest of the FIS Board remained in office, which provided continuity. In the words of business, it was a "friendly takeover" in everyone's best interest. The Board of Governors >>>

was delighted that a company as important as adidas was willing to get actively involved. Michel Perraudin was in a position to get professionals involved from the adidas staff. From this point on, the management of the school was largely in his hands. We were happy and proud to include in our Logo "supported by adidas."

Since almost all of the state requirements for opening a private school had been completed in the previous 2 years, Rolf Witt could concentrate his efforts on recruitment. He succeeded where we had failed: he enrolled 25 students for a start-up class with Grades 1 and 2 combined and got state permission to open the school in September, 1998. Witt located and refurbished a school building in Haundorf, a suburb of Herzogenaurach.

New Lucent families no longer rented houses in Pfaffenhofen, but now located in the Metropolitan Region of Nuremberg. Lucent became an important sponsor of the FIS. Witt hired staff and prepared a new set of by-laws.

In 1998 Michel Perraudin succeeded Rolf Witt as Chairman of the Board of the FIS. He became personally involved in advising and overseeing the school's development. The FIS profited immensely from his



Convent

expertise and insight and for the role he played in gaining and maintaining the support of adidas.

In 1989 adidas made available its beautiful Dassler Villa in Herzogenaurach and invested € 800,000 to transform it into a

handsome school. An additional grade, Grade 3, was added, and

since then the school has grown, as planned, one grade each year. By the year 2000, we had also outgrown the Dassler Villa. Again, adidas and the city of Herzogenaurach came to the rescue. Herzogenaurach bought the Convent, which the city and adidas renovated as a Middle School to meet our growing needs.



Dassler Villa

Our long-range planning goals always included the construction of a state-of-the-art school building with classes from pre-school to graduation after 12 years with the International Baccalaureate as the principal graduating degree. In the new plan for the World of Sports on the Herzo Base, Perraudin had the architects include an attractive site with 2.5 hectares for the FIS! He persuaded the adidas Board of Directors and the City of Herzogenaurach (Mayor Hans Lang) to continue their support.

Erlangen

In sporting fashion consistent with the adidas company philosophy, Perraudin opened up the site competition to the cities in the Metropolitan Region of Nuremberg. In the light of past experience, no one on the FIS Board of Directors expected any serious counter offers. For that matter, we were happy with the City of Herzogenaurach and the proposal of adidas. Many cities made offers, but none could compete with that of adidas. A meeting of the FIS Board of Trustees had been scheduled on September 28, 2004, to make a site recommendation. Everyone on the FIS Board of Directors and the other members of the Board of Trustees assumed that there would be no serious alternative to that of Perraudin and adidas. We were all surprised when the Lord Mayor of Erlangen, Dr. Siegfried Balleis, and the Siemens Site Manager, Manfred Hopfengärtner, made an extremely promising counter proposal. A window of opportunity opened for the FIS.

What happened? External events had changed the scene. Whereas in the previous two chapters of FIS history, personalities – Wayne Moser and Michel Perraudin – were important, so now a new protagonist for the FIS appeared on the scene, Dr. Klaus Kleinfeld, who set new priorities for Siemens. In January 2004 he had become a member of the Siemens Central Board of Directors in Munich. In the middle of 2004 he was named Deputy Chairman of the Siemens Board of Directors. He knew and valued the institution International School, was fully aware of the importance of an English language school for the

global work force, knew from past work and experience our area, was involved in the expansion of Siemens in Erlangen ("the secret center of the concern") and realized how important an international school was for Siemens personnel. Shortly before the September meeting of the Board of Trustees, he gave Manfred Hopfengärtner the task of bringing the school to Erlangen.

Like Herzogenaurach, Erlangen had acquired additional property from a former US military base. Like adidas, Siemens also had hundreds of international families working for it in Erlangen. Because of the lack of support by Siemens in the past, the members of the FIS Board of Directors were taken completely by surprise when Dr. Balleis and Hopfengärtner made an attractive concrete offer of a site in Erlangen on the former Ferris Barracks. Many of us on the FIS Board had not even viewed this site since it was never considered a serious option. I arranged with Dr. Balleis and Klaus Roast to provide a tour of the site for the Board members so that we could make an intelligent decision in what had now become an open competition.

The final decision was not easy for the FIS Board of Directors to make. The proposal of adidas in Herzogenaurach was attractive. However, after considering all relevant factors, on February 25, 2005, the Board of Directors decided that the Erlangen offer was the best choice for the future development of the school.

>>>

The school continues to enjoy the support of major companies and prominent politicians in the region. In the good sporting tradition, adidas continues its considerable financial support of the FIS in Erlangen. Michel Perraudin left the Executive Board of Directors of adidas on March 31, 2005, and on November 22 officially resigned as Chairman of the FIS Board of Directors. His successor as Chief Human Resource Officer, Matthias Malessa, continues to serve on the FIS Board. On November 27 the General Assembly of the FIS elected Ralf Guntermann as Chairman and Perraudin as Honorary Chairman of the Board of Directors. Guntermann is the recently appointed Chief Financial Officer of the Section Energy at Siemens AG. Dr. Heinrich von Pierer, "Mr. Siemens," is Chairman of the Friends of the FIS Association (Freundeskreis der Wirtschaft der Metropolregion Nürnberg/Nordbayern für die Franconian International School e. V.) The Prime Minister of Bavaria, Dr. Günther Beckstein, was one of the early supporters of the FIS. The Industrie und Handelskammer Nuremberg for Middle Franconia continues its support. The honorary president of the IHK, Hans-Peter Schmidt, is Chairman of the FIS Kuratorium.

Ultimately, the success of a private school depends on the commitment of the parents, the students, teachers and staff. All are committed! A spirit of optimism prevails at the FIS, which is reflected in the articles in the Festschrift.

While looking to the future, it is worth reflecting a minute on the fact that without the support of the global players Wayne Moser, Dr. Thomas Lask, Michel Perraudin, Dr. Klaus Kleinfeld, Manfred Hopfengärtner and Dr. Siegfried Balleis, no doors would have opened on August 25, 2008, in the Röthelheimpark in Erlangen. They and others took advantage of the challenges offered by the post-Cold War period. They created a "home away from home" for expatriates and an international learning environment for Germans living in the Metropolitan Region of Nuremberg. They thought global and acted local.

Prof. Dr. William F. Sheldon

Founding Chairman (1995-1998) and now Secretary of the Board of Directors
Director GAI / America House Nürnberg 1981-2003

Celebration of the official Opening of the FIS in the City Hall of Herzogenaurach, September 16, 1998



Petra Niemczyk, Head of the first school in Haundorf



Thomas Lask, Vice-Chairman and Rolf-Dieter Witt, Chairman of the FIS BoD



Prof. Hubert Weiler,
President of the IHK Nürnberg



The Audience



Michel Perraudin, Board of Directors of adidas; Hans Lang, Mayor of Herzogenaurach; Rudolf Klinger, Bavarian State Secretary in the Ministry of Culture; Karl Inhofer, President of the Regional Administration of Middle Franconia; Marga Beckstein, Director for the Education of Elementary School Teachers; Günter Scharf, Head of the School Section of the Regional Administration of Middle Franconia



Frank Galuppo, in 1998 President of Lucent
Technologies' Optical Networking Group

Das Schulgebäude

We had an elaborate architectural contest for the school building. We told the architects that we wanted a state-of-the-art all-day school with pre-school for children aged 3-18 and a school cafeteria (which then was fairly new in Bavarian schools). Since for most of the children the building is also a home-away-from home, it should be inviting and comfortable for kids of all ages from all over the globe. The building itself should stimulate communication between different age groups from an international population. The teaching staff, children and parents were involved in the planning process. Many of the architects visited our facilities in Herzogenaurach, talked with our staff, got a feeling for the teaching and learning style of an International School and went to work. The Board of Governors selected the Munich-Erlangen company djp-Architekten GmbH. The “j” in this group, Frank Jakobs, described his philosophy in another article for the brochure “Think Global Act Local. 34-37.

Architecture has to do with people, not pushing buttons



Manfred Dittich, Frank Jakobs und Hubert Brenner

Die familiäre Atmosphäre und die Kleinteiligkeit der bestehenden Franconian International School in Herzogenaurach begeisterte uns schon beim ersten Besuch. Dieser Eindruck, den das Schulgebäude sicherlich auch der ursprünglichen Nutzung als Wohngebäude zu verdanken hat, entwickelte sich zum Leitgedanken unseres Entwurfes für den Neubau im Röthelheimpark.

Abwechslungsreiche Kleinteiligkeit und Individualität der einzelnen Bereiche sollten für die Lernenden und Lehrenden in der neuen Schule unbedingt erhalten bleiben – Ansätze, die im heutigen Schulbau leider fast gänzlich verschwunden sind. Wie sonst aber kann man den unterschiedlichen Bedürfnissen sowohl 4-Jähriger als auch junger Erwachsener gerecht werden? Aus diesem Anspruch heraus wurde das Konzept mit mehreren überschaubaren und in ihren Dimensionen angemessenen, miteinander verbundenen Baukörpern angelegt.



Es sollte ein Gebäude entstehen, das trotz neuer Größenordnung weiterhin behüteten Raum im Kleinen schafft und eben keine Schulmaschine darstellt. Dazu wurde der gesamte Raumbedarf auf verschiedene Gebäudeflügel verteilt, dazwischen liegen den Alternativen entsprechend gestaltete und geschützte Innenhöfe.

home away from home

Neben der Individualität steht die Schulgemeinschaft als Ganzes mit der Notwendigkeit, zeitlich begrenzt ein neues Zuhause für einen Großteil der Schüler zu bieten. Die Aula als Pausen- und Veranstaltungsraum liegt im Zentrum der Schulanlage, verbindet alle Bauteile und ist Schnittstelle zur Kommunikation.

Kindergarten, Elementary School, Middle und High School, Fachklassen, Cafeteria, Verwaltung und Sporthalle, hier in der Aula laufen die verschiedenen Wege zusammen und verschmelzen zu einer amorphen Form, zum Herz der neuen Schule, zur emotionalen Mitte.



Ruhepol im turbulenten Umfeld

Im Gegensatz zum transparenten und offenen Innenleben umgibt die Gebäudehülle nach außen behütend den Raum der Schüler, darf und soll gegenüber störenden Einflüssen des außerschulischen Umfelds im Erscheinungsbild der Baumasse auch entsprechend massiv wirken. Städtebaulich verbindet die Außenfassade die einzelnen Gebäudeteile zu einem zusammenhängenden Bauwerk.

Loungecharakter mit Ausblick

Allein die drei „FIS-Boxen“ – eigenständige, baumhausähnliche Raumkörper als Sonderbereiche für die Schüler – transportieren die Grundsätze des Innenlebens, den pädagogischen Gedanken „open mind“, in die stark frequentierte Allee nach außen. Hier treten die lebendige Schumatmosphäre und die dem Gebäude innewohnende Farbenfreude in einen Dialog mit der Umgebung. Die „FIS-Boxen“ als Werbeträger und Guckkasten: von innen nach außen und von außen nach innen.

>>>





flags

Wie stellt sich eine internationale Schule in einem farblich überladenen baulichen Umfeld dar? Mit der entsprechenden Behandlung der Fassadenoberfläche verwandelt sich die Gebäudehülle vom Raumabschluss zum Informationsträger. Ohne die Farbe als Thementräger weiter zu beanspruchen, erhält die Fassade der neuen Franconian International School eine fast subtile

Struktur, deren Inhalt sich erst dem interessierten Betrachter klar erschließt. Wie ein „internationales Band“ umhüllen abstrahierte Flaggen als eigenständige Struktur die gesamte Schule.

Vielfältigkeit in der Einheit

Beim Durchschreiten der einzelnen Schulbereiche wandert die Aufmerksamkeit von einem Punkt zum anderen, es eröffnen sich fortlaufend neue Perspektiven, Ausblicke und Blickwinkel. Eine Dynamik, die dem Leben der Schule entspricht. Geschlossene, räumlich reduzierte Flächen weiten sich auf zu hellen, transparenten Bereichen, die nicht nur Flurzone, sondern Handlungsraum darstellen.

Das Innenleben ist den Wünschen und Bedürfnissen der Kinder und Jugendlichen angepasst und berücksichtigt die Erfahrungen der Lehrer. Man fühlt sich unbedrängt in den hellen und großzügigen Räumen, die Platz bieten für Nischen, so wie Kinder sie mögen.

Die Vielfalt der hier unterrichteten Nationen spiegelt sich wider im Farbenspiel der Wandflächen, das abwechslungsreich und animierend die Flurzonen als Kommunikationsbereiche begleitet.



Die Raumwahrnehmung erneuert sich im Prozess des Gehens, entstanden aus der architektonischen Dynamik. Die Möglichkeiten von Kommunikation und Verständigung sind vorweggenommen in der Sprache des Gebäudes, die die jungen Menschen zum lebendigen,

fairen und demokratischen Umgang miteinander auffordern soll. Helligkeit, Transparenz, Fülle der Farben und Materialien, in Form und Ausrichtung frei und individuell, so stellt sich die Schule im Inneren dar, stimmig mit der inhaltlichen Wertschätzung von Fairness, demokratischer Struktur, Teamgeist und dem über alles schwebenden „open mind“.



Nach 2 1/2 Jahren Planungs- und Bauphase beginnt für die Franconian International School nun eine neue Zeit. Das eigene Gebäude ist fertig
 – von vielen hoch motivierten Planern, Beratern und in enger Abstimmung mit einer überaus engagierten Baufrauen-, Bauherren- und Leh-

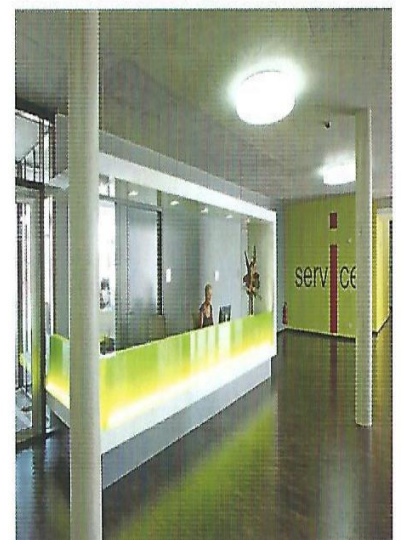


erschaft in einem sich stets freundschaftlich begegnenden Team erarbeitet. Eine Vielzahl von Pädagogen, Ingenieuren und Handwerkern hat ihr Bestes gegeben, ihnen sei hier für ihr Engagement gedankt.

Wir wünschen allen Kindern, Schülern, Lehrern und Eltern in ihrem neuen „Zuhause“ einen guten Start und hoffen, ihnen eine Schule gebaut zu haben, die die Umsetzung ihrer pädagogischen Ziele angemessen unterstützt.

Frank Jakobs
 djb-Architekten GmbH
 Dittrich - Jakobs - Brennauer

Fotos von Kurt Fuchs
 und Dr. Thomas Fath



The Board of Governors and involved staff were delighted with the architects and engineers and everyone was delighted with the results.

The demand for more space continued. In 2012 we expanded by adding a new theater, science laboratories and art rooms. We still could not meet the demands of international families in Middle Franconia. While the Board of Directors was anticipating future remand another window of opportunity opened. A lot reserved for Siemens in Röthelheim Park within walking distance to the FIS became unexpectedly available. The principal sponsors of the FIS, Siemens and adidas, described their plans for expansion and encouraged us to construct a new building. They assured us that their support and the need of their international workforce would continue. The FIS Board of Directors decided to expand again.

Always concerned about costs, an imaginative and unusual solution was reached with the Chairman of the Board (Ralf Guntermann), the prominent Erlangen developers Sontowski and Party Group, the Stadtparkasse Erlangen, the Lord Mayor of Erlangen Dr. Siegfried Balleis, and the IT company Sodtgate. Sontowski hired as architects those who had built the original school, djb architekten gmbh München-Erlangen with Frank Jakobs again as chief architect. Half of the building would be built according to FIS needs and rented to the FIS for a new high school. A high-Tech company, Sodtgate GmbH, would rent the other half. In this way, the FIS could afford the building and acquire a state-of-the-art high school for its students in the quality and spirit of the original building. It is possible that in the future an arrangement can be made with the IT company for some of the students to do practical training at Softgate. The opening of the high school took place on October 8, 2015.

It pleased the FIS Board of Directors that the Architecture company Sontowski Erlangen chose this same company to build the building in which the new High school is skillfully integrated. The FIS has thereby expanded from a 2-stream to a 3-stream school with a maximum capacity of 850 students.

We used another window of opportunity to build an institution crucial for attracting and retaining global companies in the region and for the long-term development of Middle Franconia and the Nuremberg Metropolitan Region.

