



## Country Report Germany

### Is parental involvement in the making of school laws and/or regulations a current topic?

The Federal Republic of Germany consists of 16 federal states. Within the framework of cultural and educational sovereignty, the responsibility for schools and higher education is in the hands of the federal states. The result of this is that the school system and the relevant school laws differ from state to state. Agreements between the states are reached via the Permanent Conference of the Ministers of Education of the Federal States "Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder" (KMK), a voluntary gathering of the ministers responsible for culture, education and research.

The school laws of all the federal states assume that parents and school bear a common responsibility for education and upbringing. Parents have, according to the legal regulations, the right, but also the duty to participate in education in school.

According to the school law in Lower Saxony, parents or legal guardians participate in: class parents' councils, the school parents' council, representation in the school executive committee, in conferences and committees (Nds. Schulgesetz §88).

#### Which parents deserve special attention?

The school laws and school regulations in the federal states relate, as a rule, to the involvement of parents in general.

In §90 of the Lower Saxony School Law, explicit reference is made to the parents and legal guardians of (im)migrant school children.

The text runs: "If a school is attended by at least ten (im)migrant pupils and none of their legal

representatives belongs to the school parents' council, then these legal representatives may elect an additional member plus deputy to the school parents' council.

The formulation "(im)migrant pupils" points to a basic problem. "Migration is not a homogeneous social circumstance, it actually conceals a pronounced heterogeneity of (im)migrant constellations and cultural identities, which are, above all, relevant for educational integration." (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung 2006, p. 139)

Immigration was registered in the official statistics up until a few years ago through the nationality of the (im)migrants.

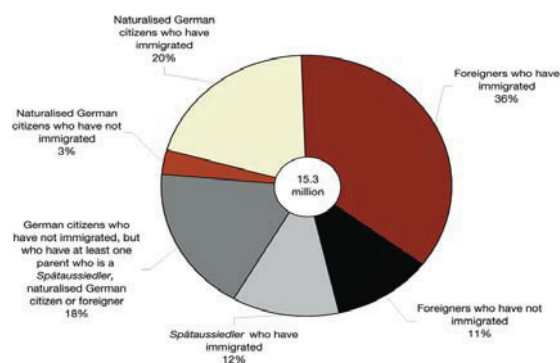
The exclusive registration of nationality is, however, not a sufficient indicator of a background of migration. The micro-census in 2005 revealed for the first time representative data for the whole population of Germany with the following characteristics:

- nationality
- place of birth in Germany or outside,
- year of move to Germany,
- naturalisation,
- nationality, naturalisation and place of birth of both parents as well as
- for children, young people and young adults who live together with their parents in one household, analogous data for the grandparents (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung 2006, p. 139).

According to this complex definition of a background of migration, more than one child in four and every fourth young person in Germany has a background of (im)migration (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung 2006, p. 178).

In the individual regions of Germany the percentage of the population with a background of migration is quite different. In Western Germany, 21% of the population has a background of migration, in Eastern Germany the figure is 8%. (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung 2008, p.11).

Figure 4: Population "with a migration background" in 2005



Source: German Federal Statistical Office

Nach: Özcan, Veysel. Country Profile Germany – see Focus Migration ed. Hamburg Institute of International Economics  
 ↪ [www.focus-migration.de/Germany](http://www.focus-migration.de/Germany)

Further differentiation in school statistics is not permitted by the data regulations of the federal states. However, some federal states use further indicators like "language in the household". OECD analyses point to the importance of language, because, approximately a half of the performance deficit in pupils with a background of migration can be explained by the lack of language practice in the family. (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung 2006, p. 175).

This restricted data overview is problematical, because international comparative studies have shown that pupils with a background of migration have distinctly less success in education than those pupils without a background of migration. This statement does not imply that these results are primarily influenced by culture, migration or social class.

As a result of a lack of success in education by their children, parents with a background of

migration and parents with a low educational profile have become the centre of interest.

"Migration and Education" was on the agenda of the KMK as far back as 2002, when the report "Immigration" was published, dealing with the immigrants' situation. It also contained first ideas on the integration and support of children and young people with a background of (im)migration. The report was edited and updated in 2006. In the same year the KMK and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) produced an initial educational report focussing on "Education and Migration". In 2007, the National Integration Plan followed, explicitly dealing with education and the importance of the parents' role, on the basis of which the KMK, in concert with the (im)migrants' associations, issued a declaration entitled "Integration as an opportunity – working together towards equality of opportunity". (Nationaler Integrationsplan, ed. The Official German Press Office, Berlin, July 2007.  
 ↪ [www.kmk.org/bildung-schule/allgemeine-bildung/migrationintegration.html](http://www.kmk.org/bildung-schule/allgemeine-bildung/migrationintegration.html))

Mutual declaration "Integration as an opportunity – working together towards equality of opportunity". Ed. Office of the KMK, 13.12.2007.  
 ↪ [www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen\\_beschluesse/2007/2007\\_12\\_13-Integration-als-Chance.pdf](http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2007/2007_12_13-Integration-als-Chance.pdf)

### Are there measures to support certain pupils (im)migrants, ethnic minorities) at the level of school?

According to the recommendations of the Conference of Ministers of Education, various measures in the federal states are aimed at supporting children with a background of (im)migration before they enter school.

### Determination of the level of language and pre-school language support

The educational plans at elementary level give priority to the support of language development.

Language evaluation in the last year of kindergarten at the time of school registration helps to analyse the specific strengths and weaknesses of children. All the federal states also offer programmes and initiatives at school level as pre-school language support and language support for (im)migrants. However, not all schools are in a position to be able to set up special language courses for the children of (im)migrants. The reasons for this are mostly lack of teaching staff and/or organization problems

### **The bridging year and flexibilisation of the school entry phase**

In order to do justice to the right of every child to education, home, day-care centres and schools must work closely together. The foundation for lifelong learning is laid not only in the home, but also in day-care centres. To further reinforce and extend this foundation in primary school, kindergarten and primary school must carry on a dialogue and reach a common understanding of education and culture.

### **Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen)**

The aim of the project "bridging year" is to give the best possible support to children before school entry, so that they can continue their individual learning process, which began in kindergarten, without a noticeable break. In order to do this, the competences and skills of the children need to be identified 15 months before school entry and support measures must follow on.

50 advisory teams comprised of day-care centre specialists and primary school teachers have been coordinating the cooperation between kindergarten and schools since 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007.

Throughout the state of Lower Saxony 250 model projects to support pre-school children have been supported financially and staff-wise also since the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007. Specialists from elementary and primary level are being further qualified in common sessions.

### **Legal regulations: day-care centres**

»The day care centre should work together with such institutions in its catchment area, especially with primary schools whose work is connected with the educational objectives of the day-care institution.« (§ 3 Sect. 5, Law on day-care centres for children – Gesetz über Tageseinrichtungen für Kinder [KiTaG])

»In the agreement between day-care centres and primary schools it is necessary for parents to be involved. Mutual respect as well as basic common positions and guidelines, which are put into action together with the parents, are indispensable for parental involvement.« (Orientierungsplan für Bildung und Erziehung im Elementarbereich niedersächsischer Tageseinrichtungen für Kinder [2005])

### **Legal regulations: primary schools**

»The primary schools work together with the parents and guardians of the children, the kindergartens and with secondary schools.« (§6, Sect. 1 Niedersächsisches Schulgesetz [NSchG])

»The cooperation involves:

- mutual information and agreement on aims, duties, methods and forms of organisation in the respective areas,
- agreement on elementary knowledge, competences and skills which are the foundation for the work in primary schools.
- regular exchange of opinions and information on questions connected with the transition from kindergarten to primary school,
- mutual observation sessions,
- cooperative events and projects,
- mutual visits by groups from the kindergarten and the school, and
- cooperative further education sessions.« (No. 3 in the Circular »Die Arbeit in der Grundschule« dated 03.02.2004)

### Flexibilization of the school entry phase

Many federal states have introduced the flexible school entry phase.

The flexible school entry phase is a federally recognized instrument to compensate for the increasing difference in the pre-knowledge of primary school children. Therefore, it belongs to the central recommendations of the Conference of Ministers of Education. On top of this, it has been decided to stop the growing trend that more and more parents are delaying the entry of their children into school. The flexible school entry phase was introduced in Brandenburg, Schleswig-Holstein, Thüringen und Berlin in 2003. In 2005 it was also introduced in Nordrhein-Westfalen.

The aim of the flexible school entry phase is to include all the children in a given year ready for school into primary school. The flexible school entry phase is supposed to include slow learners and faster learners on an individual basis with carefully directed support. A further decisive advantage of the new flexible school entry phase including two given, consecutive birth years is that the children remain in fixed groups. They do not jump a class individually, if they are especially fast learners, nor do they stay down on their own, if they are rather slower learners. Children who perform well in the first class can work together with those in the second class, children in the second class who perform less well, can repeat things with those children in the first class. It has also been shown that the school beginners learn a lot from their older class mates regarding the organisation of the school day. The older ones profit from explaining things to the younger ones.

### Basic Structure of the German School System

In accordance with the German Constitution, the responsibility for school and culture has been given to the 16 states of the Federal Republic of

Germany. The organisation and the educational aims of all school forms are formulated in the school laws of these 16 federal states.

Furthermore, each school describes in a school programme its own aims, main focuses and types of organisation based on school law, existing frameworks and curricula. The school programme is the basis for the work of the staff.

*Mandatory attendance* starts at the age of 6 and ends at the age of 18. All children attend elementary school till grade 4. After that, they can take one of four school paths (*Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, *Gymnasium* or *Gesamtschule*) based on their school performance at elementary level (see below).

*Graduation* at a *Hauptschule* can be achieved in grade 9 or 10 and at a *Realschule* in grade 10. Students of a *Gesamtschule* can achieve their graduation in grade 9 or 10 (level of *Hauptschule* /*Realschule*) or in grade 13 (level of *Gymnasium*). While the graduates of *Haupt-* and *Realschule* begin a cooperative program (work and school) or attend various *Fachoberschulen* (vocational colleges), students of a *Gymnasium* continue for two or three years, whereupon they receive their *Abitur* school-leaving certificate (A-level), enabling them to apply to university or college.

*Grundschule* is an elementary school where the children learn reading, writing and mathematics. There are other subjects of a creative and technical character like music, sports, painting and practical work, which complete the timetable. Last but not least, it is very important that the students are given guidance and practice in social skills.

*Hauptschule* is supposed to prepare mainly practically-oriented students and focuses on activity-oriented learning. *Hauptschule* meanwhile, more or less, has become a 'haven' for socially-disadvantaged children and (im)migrant students.

*Realschule* is supposed to prepare students practically and theoretically for working in commerce

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All German schools are primarily half-day schools. Only a relatively small amount of students are able to attend lessons and live in a full-day school environment. However, recently, the German Government has given financial support to enable the states to introduce full-day schools.

### Statistics on parental involvement and school achievement

At present, there are no nationwide statistics on parental involvement in Germany.

According to a study carried out by Infratest Sozialforschung in Bavaria almost all parents (95%) attended at least one parent teacher conference in 2002. 82% of all parents led individual talks with their children's teachers and 26% of all parents are engaged in the activities school boards, parents' associations etc.

A study carried out in 2005 by the Stiftung Bildungspakt, Bavaria shows that 15.6% of all parents hardly ever get involved with school, 74.1 % only occasionally and 10.3% frequently.

There are no statistics on the involvement of parents with an (im)migrant background. The relation between cultural background and school achievement was investigated within the

framework of the PISA study 2003. The research shows that students with an (im)migrant background are usually motivated to learn, but less successful in their performance than their native classmates.

Parental involvement is most prevalent in elementary schools. According to the study by Infratest Sozialforschung (see above) most parents of 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> graders (91%) have had talks with teachers, but only 43% of 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> graders. The same is true for parents involved in school boards, parents' associations etc. (41% compared to 11%).

### Projects and measures to foster parental involvement

There are numerous projects and measures at various levels to foster parental involvement. Some examples:

#### At a national level

"Educational buddies" – The installation of a nationwide network of buddies to support (im)migrant students in primary education, and in the transition period from school to work etc. ([www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Artikel/2007/07/Anlage/2007-08-30-nationaler-integrationsplan,property=publicationFile.pdf](http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Artikel/2007/07/Anlage/2007-08-30-nationaler-integrationsplan,property=publicationFile.pdf))

#### At a regional level

"Parents' guides" – a qualification project for (im)migrant parents in Lower Saxony (see detailed description below).

#### At a communal level

The "Rucksack project" – language training and parental work in primary education in various cities of North Rhine- Westphalia. ([www.raa.de/raa.html](http://www.raa.de/raa.html))

### At school level

COMENIUS network MIR (migration and intercultural relations): Talks between parents and teachers in cooperation with the Turkish Parents Association (see for example ↪ [www.ottowels.cidsnet.de/comenius.html](http://www.ottowels.cidsnet.de/comenius.html))

### Target groups

The majority of projects on parental involvement aim at parents in general. However, there are also specific projects on the involvement of parents with an (im)migrant and/or ethnic background. As parents with a Turkish or Russian ethnic background are most prevalent among (im)migrant parents in Germany, there are quite a few projects that focus on getting parents of these ethnic groups more involved.

### Initiators

Projects on parental involvement are mostly initiated by

- educational authorities at national and regional level
- municipal authorities
- church-related organisations
- (im)migrant and charitable associations
- schools and universities

The number of people and organisations involved is a positive sign that there is a broad consensus that it is not, and can not be schools alone who are responsible for improving education and upbringing in families at home.

The present measures and activities are based on the experience and preparatory work collected and done in the framework of various EU projects, supporting programmes and pilot schemes.

They include

- improvement of the communication to parents, including non-German media, on the topic of

- educational opportunities to guarantee equality of opportunity.
- management of advice to the parents during 'hotspots', when children start school, change schools and finish their schooling. Then subsequently, when they start a career.
- inclusion of parents in language support courses.
- further education of parents in parenting, with a view to integration and involvement in school life.
- close support of mothers as experts in upbringing. i.e. awareness of the effects of the crèche; knowledge of language acquisition and of the language needs of the children; provision of reading suggestions in the mother tongue; hints on access to the media for children and young people.

These key points are in harmony with the aims set out in the National Integration Plan of 2007 and with the mutual declaration based thereupon issued by the KMK and the immigrant associations.

### Parental involvement and intercultural learning as an issue in teacher education and in-service training

Parental involvement is an important issue in teacher education. The cooperation between school and parents is a major item in the curriculum of teacher education students. During teacher education, teacher students are, for example, trained in how to have a talk with parents. (↪ [www.kmk.org/doc/beschl/Elternhaus\\_und\\_Schule\\_04\\_12.pdf](http://www.kmk.org/doc/beschl/Elternhaus_und_Schule_04_12.pdf)).

In-service institutions of all federal states offer frequent courses for teachers of all school forms on various aspects of parental involvement, e.g. "Fostering parental competence", "Communication skills and conflict management" etc.



There are also courses for fostering the cooperation with (im)migrant parents.

### **Exemplary projects, measures or initiatives to foster parental involvement**

#### **Guides for parents**

"Guides for parents" is a modularized concept which is based on successful parents' projects carried out in the Schaumburg and Osnabrück region as well as the "Cultural Interpreter Project" in Göttingen. It aims at qualifying cascaders/multipliers, especially with an (im)migrant background, whose task it is to get more (im)migrant parents involved in school. "Guides for parents" was initiated by a bilateral German-Turkish working group in the Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and is funded by the Lower Saxony Ministry of the Interior.

Many (im)migrant parents are willing to get involved and cooperate with school but behave rather indifferently because their own experience doesn't correspond with educationalist approaches or because they sometimes don't feel welcome and accepted. Qualifying (im)migrant parents for active cooperation in school life together with various institutions dealing with (im)migrants is supposed to encourage (im)migrant parents to get involved by breaking down barriers and looking for new forms of culturally-oriented cooperation.

#### **Aims**

The main aim of the project is to raise the number of (im)migrant parents on school and kindergarten boards as well as to strengthen the educational competence of (im)migrant parents.

Other aims are to foster the exchange of views with (im)migrant parents in order to enable them to reflect their educational ideas and experience, to open schools and kindergartens for intercultural dialogue and to develop approaches to intercultural mediation.

#### **Implementation**

Qualifying "guides for parents" is a two module course which is planned with regard to the competences and needs of the group that has to be qualified. All measures have to be implemented within a network consisting of local professional services and experts such as native language teachers, counsellors for intercultural education, social workers etc.

*Module 1* is a basic course consisting of 13 seminar meetings (four full-day meetings, nine in the evening, 64 units altogether), led by a team of experts (see above). It focuses on topics like reflection of one's own experience in the migration/integration process, successful models of integration, (im)migrant and school laws, intercultural mediation, models of communication, conflict management etc.

*Module 2* is a special course consisting of 36 units, focusing on the qualification of particular guides for parents, here: guides for parents with a Turkish background.

The basic course (Module 1) was successfully implemented in 2007, the special course with a focus on qualifying ethnic Turkish guides to cooperate with parents of Turkish descent (Module 2) is planned for 2008 and deals with particular intercultural aspects related to Turkish (im)migrants ([↗ www.arkadas-hannover.de/frame.htm](http://www.arkadas-hannover.de/frame.htm)).

## "INVITING PARENTS" – A local initiative for ethnic German immigrants

'Inviting parents' was developed by the Haupt- und Realschule 'Pingel Anton' in Cloppenburg and aims at optimizing the transition from the Grundschule (grade 4) to the Haupt- und Realschule (grade 5) by involving parents who haven't cooperated with school yet. To do this, a three-step programme was established at the beginning of the school year, which focuses on teachers' visits to pupils' homes – an extraordinary measure in the German school system.

Cloppenburg in the North-West of Lower Saxony is the "youngest" town in Germany with a high number of young people and a very special population: More than 30 % of the inhabitants come from the former Soviet Union. They are called ethnic German immigrants, because their ancestors emigrated to Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Most of them are Baptists, their ideas about upbringing children and school education differ considerably from the standards in their new neighbourhood.

Usually these immigrants do not get involved in school, i.e. they don't participate in the activities of school boards, class or school conferences and parents' associations. Teachers in the Haupt- und Realschule 'Pingel Anton' complained about being unable to establish contacts, even in cases of severe school problems.

In some of these families Russian is still the mother-tongue, i.e. German is hardly spoken.

### Aims

The transition from the Grundschule to the Hauptschule is a critical phase for pupils at the age of 10: They have to get used to new and bigger school buildings, a different way to school, new classmates, higher requirements etc. Many

students have difficulties in meeting these challenges. The project "Inviting parents" aims at building a bridge between school and parents in order to support the children and to break down barriers between families and school. The first and very simple aim is to encourage mothers and fathers to enter the school building free of fear.

### Implementation

The Cloppenburg Project 'Inviting parents' consists of three steps:

#### *Step 1*

All parents of newcomers (5<sup>th</sup> graders) get a letter from their new school with the announcement of a teacher's visit to their home. These visits take place within the first month of the school year.

They last for about an hour and have an informal character. The central message is: Let us together try to do the best for your child.

Experience has shown that these visits are highly appreciated by the participating parents, although there was some confusion about this initiative at the beginning. Sometimes a Russian-speaking social worker takes over this task from the teacher because teachers generally complain about having too many commitments at the beginning of a school year.

#### *Step 2*

A school weekend is organized for parents, pupils, teachers and social workers. The school offers tent camps for pupils who stay the night, parent-teacher workshops, exhibitions and school sightseeing tours. All meals are included, singing, dancing and other leisure activities are offered as well. Central workshops focus on planning further common activities (i.e. trips) during the school year. Furthermore, arrangements are made for parent-teacher cooperation, especially in case of pupil problems at school.



### Step 3 (planned)

The Haupt- und Realschule Pingel Anton will turn into an all-day school (normally a school day in Germany ends at 1 p.m.) and make additional offers for pupils in the afternoon. In this context, a significant number of parents will be able to play an active role: they can cook with children, run workshops and sports groups, organize tours or supervise the pupils' homework. Although this new initiative is highly appreciated by the school board, parents are still reluctant and need to be encouraged by examples of good practice.

### Cooperation between schools and parents in relation to the autonomy of schools (COSPRAS)

COSPRAS was initiated as a COMENIUS project coordinated by Bremen University in cooperation with universities and educational institutions in Spain, Italy and the UK as well as Europe project schools in Bremen.

The main objective of this project is to newly define the role of parents and to improve the link between school and parents by effective interactive training materials in teacher education and in-service training.

➔ [www.s-hb.de/~cospras/MatBremen.htm](http://www.s-hb.de/~cospras/MatBremen.htm)

The task of parents in the management and development of school has not been clearly defined yet. Even when school policy allows for more participation of parents (for example through committees), contacts between parents and schools usually take place on a mainly formal basis, e.g. in school bodies, conflict resolution or in school life. However, only a small percentage of parents get involved with these activities. Mostly parents are characterised as clients rather than responsible partners, professionals, co-developers or evaluators of schools. When parents are regarded solely as clients, a wide range of opportunities for an active and creative role of parents within school is neglected.

### Aims

The project aims at finding out through examples of good practice, how schools can cooperate with parents to support the children's responsibility for self-guided learning and how this aim can be supported in the school system.

The final objective is to define what measures are required for a good relationship between schools and families and how professional and personal attitudes of teachers can be modified by means of initial training and in-service training.

With the improvement of the cooperation between parents and schools – supported by the training of teachers – the project particularly aims at strengthening the opportunities of parents with an ethnic background or personal low schooling profile.

### Implementation

COSPRAS Bremen set itself the task of developing training materials for teacher education and in-service training to support and improve the cooperation between parents and school.

The project focuses on the following aspects:

- Establishing the cooperation of parents with schools
- Working with parents in the framework of innovative teacher education
- Parents in schools as experts for the world of work and careers
- Parents in Elementary School – participation and maintaining partnership

Student teachers participate in a six-month school training programme, where they closely cooperate with all persons involved in improving the quality of school (teachers, parents etc.).

They are trained with particular modules to improve the involvement of parents in school as well as the communication between parents and school. Furthermore, they learn to build networks between parents, school and university.

One example of a module used for teacher education is the role-play that focuses on involving parents in school as experts for the world of work and careers in craft/design/technology workshops or projects (→ [http://www.s-hb.de/~cospras/material\\_bremen/CosModul2-Dateien/frame.htm](http://www.s-hb.de/~cospras/material_bremen/CosModul2-Dateien/frame.htm)).

### Parental involvement as a public issue

Parental involvement is a constant issue in the German mass media.

In 2008 many major German newspapers have published articles on parental involvement.

Some examples:

- "Where do you do your homework?" Teachers go to their pupils' homes in order to get an impression of their family backgrounds.  
(DIE ZEIT, 10.01.2008 Nr. 03)
- "Calling on parents" – New concepts for parents in a state of emergency.  
(Frankfurter Rundschau, 19.01.2008)
- "Talks with parents become compulsory" Teachers have to invite parents of difficult children to talks at least once a year.  
(Sueddeutsche Zeitung, 15.01.2008)

### Press cutting

sueddeutsche.de

Neue Regelung an Schulen

## Elterngespräch soll Pflicht werden

Von Christine Burtscheidt

**Nach dem Willen von Kultusminister Schneider soll Lehrern, die mit schwer erziehbaren Jugendlichen zu tun haben, bald ein neues Mittel an die Hand gegeben werden: Verpflichtende Elterngespräche.**



*Schüler zeigen ihre Zeugnisse. Mehr Kommunikation zwischen Lehrern und Eltern soll nun Pflicht werden.*

(Foto: dpa)

Kultusminister Siegfried Schneider will künftig das Elterngespräch zur Pflicht machen. Zumindest einmal im Jahr sollen sie in der Schule ihrer Kinder erscheinen. "Es gibt nicht nur Elternrechte, sondern auch Elternpflichten", kündigte der Minister an.

Damit soll vor allem den Lehrern ein Mittel an die Hand gegeben werden, die mit schwer erziehbaren Jugendlichen zu tun haben. Weigern sich Eltern nachhaltig, der Pflicht nachzukommen, sollen Schulleitungen auch das Jugendamt einschalten können.

Das Thema war bereits Gegenstand im Ministerrat und versteht sich als Teil des Maßnahmenkatalogs der Staatsregierung zur Jugendgewaltprävention. Das Kultusministerium will dazu nun die erforderliche rechtliche Grundlage schaffen. Ob es tatsächlich zu einem Pflichtgespräch kommen wird, ist jedoch fraglich, denn bei Eltern und Lehrern stößt der Vorschlag auf Ablehnung.

"Beim Jugendamt die Eltern anzuschwärzen, kann nicht der richtige Weg sein", sagt Thomas Lillig, Vorsitzender der Landeselternvereinigung an bayerischen Gymnasien. Es bringe auch nichts, die Probleme auf eine Behörde abzuwälzen, die keine Kompetenzen habe. Statt eines "Zwangsgesprächs" rät er zur vertrauensvollen Zusammenarbeit auf gleicher Augenhöhe. Gebe es Probleme, sollten sie den Eltern gegebenenfalls schriftlich mitgeteilt und diese dann zu einem Einzelgespräch eingeladen werden.

Auch Isabell Zacharias vom bayerischen Elternverband fordert eine "Kultur des Miteinanders" zwischen Eltern und Lehrern und hält nichts von verpflichtenden Elterngesprächen unter Androhung der Einschaltung des Jugendamts. "Wenn das Kind in den Brunnen gefallen ist, ist es bereits zu spät." Skeptisch äußern sich auch Lehrer. "Wir brauchen an den Schulen gerade die Eltern, die nicht kommen", sagt der Vorsitzende des Realschullehrerverbands, Anton Huber. Doch hat er Zweifel, ob ein Zwangsgespräch pädagogisch sinnvoll ist. Da sei der Ausgang schon programmiert.

(SZ vom 16.01.2008/grc)

This article comments positively on the declaration of the Bavarian Min. of Education that parents not only have rights, but also duties. In the case of parents who show no insight, the local Official Office for Young People can intervene as a prevention measure (potential cause of violence in young people etc). The chairman of the regional grammar school parents' association did not approve of the measure. He suggested confidential chats with the parents. Other semi-official figures in the regional parent and teacher scene tendentially supported him. Parents should cooperate with the schools, not be forced to appear before local authorities.

## Presseartikel Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung

**Elisabeth Heister-Neumann: "Die Verzahnung von frühkindlicher und schulischer Bildung gelingt"**

## Bilanztagung des Projekts "Brückenjahr" mit 600 Teilnehmern

*Hannover, 26.11.2008*

"Das Brückenjahr ist ein beeindruckender Erfolg. Das zeigen bereits die Zwischenergebnisse nach nur einem Jahr", sagte die Niedersächsische Kultusministerin Elisabeth Heister-Neumann anlässlich der beiden Tagungen zum Projekt "Das letzte Kindergartenjahr als Brückenjahr zur Grundschule" in dieser Woche in Hannover. "Wie auch in der Qualifizierungsinitiative gefordert, wollen wir mit dem Projekt eine Verzahnung von frühkindlicher und schulischer Bildung erreichen und den Jüngsten den Übergang von der Kindertagesstätte in die Grundschule erleichtern. Die Bilanz des Brückenjahres' nach einem Jahr zeigt: Dies gelingt. Kinder empfinden Schule von Anfang an als selbstverständlich, verlieren Berührungsängste, fassen Vertrauen und gewinnen Selbstvertrauen", sagte die Kultusministerin.

Am Dienstag und Mittwoch haben sich zunächst die landesweit 48 Beratungsteams zu einer Arbeitstagung in Hannover getroffen. Am morgigen Donnerstag (27. November) schließt sich dann die große Bilanztagung im Hannover Congress Centrum an, an der auch Vertreter der Modellprojekte teilnehmen. Insgesamt werden morgen mehr als 600 Grundschullehrkräfte und Fachkräfte aus Kindertagesstätten über die Fortschritte des "Brückenjahrs" diskutieren. Zu den Schwerpunkten der Bilanztagung zählen die Chancen und Bedingungen für eine gelingende Zusammenarbeit mit den Eltern. Die Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer erörtern beispielsweise die Einbindung von Eltern in den Bildungsalltag sowie die gezielte Ansprache von Vätern und Müttern mit Migrationshintergrund.

In ganz Niedersachsen beteiligen sich 251 Grundschulen und 490 Kindertagesstätten an dem im August 2007 begonnenen Projekt "Brückenjahr". Gemeinsam werden jeweils entsprechend den Gegebenheiten vor Ort Förderangebote für Kinder im letzten Kindergartenjahr sowie ein gemeinsames Bildungsverständnis entwickelt. Das Land Niedersachsen fördert das Projekt über vier Jahre mit insgesamt 20 Millionen Euro.

In this article on a conference held in Hannover to evaluate the introduction of the bridging year, the Minister of Education (Nov. 2008) says that it has been a success. The advisory teams are meeting in Hannover to compare notes and over 600 teachers affected by the measure will be able to discuss the progress made during the conference. One special point on the agenda is the involvement of parents as prerequisite and opportunity for their successful inclusion. In particular, how to address (im)migrant mothers and fathers in a purposeful way was to be discussed.

The bridging year project so far involves 251 primary schools and 490 day-care centres. Lower Saxony is investing 20 million Euros over a period of four years in the project.

### Useful links

EU Projekt INNOCENT – Bayern  
➔ [www.innocent-project.eu](http://www.innocent-project.eu)  
➔ [www.km.bayern.de/km/lehrerinfo/infoboerse/fortbildungen/meldung/07314/index.asp](http://www.km.bayern.de/km/lehrerinfo/infoboerse/fortbildungen/meldung/07314/index.asp)

EU Projekt TICKLE – Offenburg  
➔ [www.tickle-project.eu](http://www.tickle-project.eu)

COPASCH – Brandenburg  
➔ [www.zusammenarbeit-eltern-schule.de](http://www.zusammenarbeit-eltern-schule.de)

### Glossary

*Grundschule* > primary school (grades 1-4)

*Hauptschule* > secondary modern school (grades 5-9/10)

*Realschule* > secondary modern school with higher secondary education (grades 5-10)

*Gymnasium* > grammar school (grades 5-13)

*Gesamtschule* > comprehensive school (grades 5-13/1-13)

*Fachoberschule* > vocational college

*Abitur* > A-level

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