GAPP Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 13, 2013
GAPP Exchange 2014 – 2015

What is GAPP?

Frau Timmermann explained that GAPP stands for German American Partnership Program, an academic and cultural exchange between AHS and the Hans-Leinberger Gymnasium in Landshut, Germany . Students are housed wOur exchange will celebrate its 20th anniversary of partnership with the Hans-Leinberger Gymnasium of Landshut, Bavaria, Germany in 2014. Frau Timmermann handed out the pink GAPP Description and Participation sheet which details the program.

Dates: *Tentative Thursday, April 17, 2014 (Holy Thursday) to Thursday, May 8, 2014*

German students come during their Easter break, plus are allowed to add on another two weeks. Exact dates are set once partners have been chosen. Additionally, students and teachers fly into Chicago and spend 2-3 nights in Chicago. Families should anticipate the Germans being here during Easter. This year our Easter/Spring Break begins on Wednesday, April 16th and goes through Easter Monday, April 21st.

Number of Students:

The number of German students coming depends on the number of host families available. Hosting a student is open to anyone at AHS, but first priority is given to those in German class. Approximately 25 students come to AHS. Our highest number was 31 in 2012. Students are the same ages as the hosting students (9th and 10th graders).

Expectations of Host Families

*Meetings/Housing/Transportation*

Host families are expected to attend all planning meetings. These are typically held in September, January and shortly before the group arrives.

Your guest will need their own BED, not their own room. You will need to provide them with meals (some sack lunches on field trip days and/or hot lunch through the hot lunch program)

Transportation to school will also be necessary. If your son/daughter rides the bus, your German guest can do this as well. Transportation for local field trips will be needed for those planned after school. For those field trips planned during the day, transportation is only needed for inclement weather.

*Activities*

Families are expected to help plan and participate in activities. However, students are not expected to be on the go all the time. The GAPP guidelines require a Welcome Dinner (typically held on the day of arrival – tentatively Thursday, April 17th) and a Farewell Dinner (typically held a day or two before departure).

There are two joint field trips, one to Madison and one to Cashton. The tentative date for the joint trip to Madison is Monday, April 21st. The Germans also take several field trips on their own, e.g. to the mayor and city hall, a cranberry marsh, Golden Eagle Log Homes, cheese factory, maple syrup, courthouse/jail, and other sites of local interest. They will also take a bus trip to Lambeau Field, Manitowoc and Two Rivers as well as a trip to Wisconsin Dells.

All Germans are invited to Prom which is on Saturday, April 26th. Questions were raised about dresses, payment etc. More details on prom will come at the January 2014 meeting.

Other trips which families have planned independently have been to water parks in Wisconsin Dells or a visit to the Mall of America.

Fundraising Events

Fundraising monies are used towards our portion of each of the joint field trips. The bulk of the money goes towards the German portion of the exchange experience. Frau Timmermann emphasized that it is not her job to earn the money for the students to participate in GAPP. Frau Timmermann will bring fundraising ideas to the group, which are brought to her for consideration.

All fundraisers, which are new, must be approved by the Development Office. Fundraisers which are standard for GAPP are:

**Oktoberfest** which will be held on Friday, October 4, 2013

**Advent Calendar sales** our most profitable fundraiser

**Christmas Tree Lights** – recycling unwanted, old, and broken Christmas lights with collection sites set up at the local parishes.

**Other Fundraising Events:**Schwan’s sale, quilt auction, PAC concessions, cookie dough sale, and Student Auction
Frau Timmermann shared with the group that of these the PAC concessions have not been offered the past few years. The student auction , which allowed students to participate in bidding for items donated by the faculty, did not occur this year as part of the Royal Event activities. This is due to the parent auction portion being switched to an event separate from Royal Event, needing class time for the student body to participate in a fundraiser and changes to the faculty participants. A silent auction was attempted one year, but the student participation was poor.

GAPP 2015- Looking Ahead

How does my son/daughter get to travel to Germany in 2015?

Frau Timmermann shared with the group that hosting does not grant automatic participation in the trip to Landshut in 2015, nor does hosting require that a student travel to Germany. She highlighted the requirements detailed on the pink handout, e.g. German language study, grade requirement, eligibility, physical examiniation, letters of recommendation, behavior and meeting financial obligations to ACS . All of this information, plus more, is available at the GAPP web site <http://ahsgapp.weebly.com> There is a link on the ACS web site under Exchange Program. Frau Timmermann further emphasized that the German trip is for .5 credit and that participants receive a grade for the German portion of their GAPP experience.

Dates

Frau Timmermann shared a possible conflict with dates in 2015 due to the late WIAA state soccer tournament schedule of June 19 and 20, 2015. Our earliest departure, based on these dates, would be Sunday, June 21, 2015 and a return on Friday or Saturday, July 17 or 19, 2015. These mid-July dates put us with a potential conflict with the German school calendar, since this is almost the very end of the school year and exam time. This could mean that the GAPP 2015 trip might be shorter by a week, with our return on Friday, July 12th or Saturday, July 13th. Another option, which parents would have to decide upon in May 2014, would be to leave prior to the state soccer tournament, but after state softball tournament, Sunday, June 14, 2015 with a return on Friday, July 12th or Saturday, July 13th. Frau Timmermann will have more information from the principal at Hans-Leinberger regarding the 2015 dates upon her return.

How much will it cost for my son/daughter to travel to Germany in 2015?

GAPP is the most economical student travel program available. Since only a travel agent is used for booking tickets, there are no additional fees being paid to an organization to help plan the trips. The Americans plan the German itinerary and make the arrangements, while the Germans do the same for the Americans’ trip. Frau Timmermann shared that students for the past 4 trips have paid $1600, $1700, $1800 and $2200 for their month-long stays. True costs have been between $2000-$2800 for each trip. The amount that the students and families have fundraised for each trip has significantly reduced the total cost. Frau Timmermann cautioned that airfares, airline policies and the Euro exchange rate are factors which she cannot control. Parents should be prepared for the true cost of their child’s trip to be around $3000.

Other Discussion Topics

*Alcohol Consumption in Germany*

Alcohol consumption was a question raised by many. Frau Timmermann reiterated several times that there is a zero tolerance policy for alcohol consumption. Students who violate this policy risk being sent home early at their parents’ expense. American participants, their parents and the GAPP host families all sign documents acknowledging this policy. Further emphasis of this policy and signing of these forms will be done at the final pre-departure meeting held in April 2015.

*Mass Attendance in Germany*

Frau Timmermann assured families that German host families are made aware of their guests’ mass obligation. If a German host family is unable to take their American guest to mass, then the student will need to inform Frau Timmermann of this. She will work to make sure that the student can attend mass.

*American Application Forms*

Frau Timmermann had the application forms available for anyone who was certain about their child’s participation in GAPP. Forms will be available again at the September meeting.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 9, 2013

 Tentative Agenda Topics:

 Selected Partners/Questions to Applications
 Deadline for Hosting Decision
 Fundraisers: Oktoberfest, Advent Calendars, Christmas Lights